



UNITED STATES. OPERATIONS MISSION TO VIETNAM

AMERICAN EMBASSY
SAIGON VIETNAM

March 26, 1965

Professor Wesley Fischel
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East Lansing, Michigan
USA

Dear Dr. Fischel:

We are at present contemplating two separate U.S. training projects for Vietnamese provincial and local officials. In the light of these plans, we are contacting qualified institutions to find out which would be interested in handling this type of training, and at what estimated cost. We are addressing this inquiry to you since we are aware of your expertise in the field of Vietnamese political and administrative problems and your knowledge of the difficulties involved in training Vietnamese officials. We trust you will bring this letter to the attention of the other appropriate members of MSU's teaching and administrative staff.

The first of the two projected projects will be a one-time affair, taking place this coming summer (1965). The project is to last for ten to twelve weeks, including travel and observation. The participants will number approximately fifteen. They have already been carefully chosen from among a large number of Deputy Province Chiefs for Administration. All were carefully tested upon their ability to speak and read French with complete fluency. The majority of those chosen are graduates of the National Institute of Administration. Those who are not are university graduates (Licenciés).

The primary objective of the training is motivational and attitudinal rather than technical. We hope to sensitize the participants to the fact that new administrative approaches based on analysis and constructive adaptation can be more effective than many of the traditional methods still adhered to in Vietnam. We hope to sharpen the participant's critical faculties and their analytical ability so that they will, upon their return home, seek ways of improving their administrative performance. The objective is not to encourage them to blindly accept American techniques, many of which would not be appropriate for Vietnam. It is rather to arouse in them a desire to discover better ways of carrying out their duties within a Vietnamese frame of reference. Most of these men have never seen an orderly, cohesive society functioning in a state of peace, nor a democratic society in which the community members fully participate in determining the direction of local government. They also have never been acquainted at first hand with an administrative organization imbued with concepts of service, in which the role of the official is that of an impartial servant of the public. We feel the participants would also profit from a close look at modern personnel practices (recruitment by examination, in-service

training, incentive awards, promotion solely by merit, adequate disability and retirement protection, etc.). We would envisage that the program would comprise a well-integrated curriculum of classroom presentations, seminar-type discussions, and carefully arranged outside observation. Instruction would have to be in the French language or with the use of interpreters. We frankly prefer the latter, since our experience with previous programs has been that American professors who speak French tend to overestimate their ability to lecture and conduct classes in that language.

The second project would have the same attitudinal objectives as the first, but would involve a series of shorter programs designed specifically for district and village officials. About three hundred such officials would be trained per year in this local administration project. The program would possibly run for two or three years, barring unforeseen obstacles. Groups would be kept small (from 10 to 15 persons) for maximum individual involvement. The duration of training for each group might range from a month to six weeks. In order to allow for careful planning and preparation, no groups would begin before July 1965.

The individuals selected for participation would be chosen from among: (a) 240 military officers serving as District Chiefs, (b) 240 of their civilian deputies, and (c) key village chiefs chosen from each of the 45 provinces. Obviously, not all 2,500 village chiefs could be sent; but representative individuals could, we hope, serve as "multipliers" for diffusing new ideas among the others. Most of the Deputy District Chiefs are graduates of the National Institute of Administration and therefore have a three-year academic grounding in administration. Many of the District Chiefs also have done university-level work. However, the village officials have a much smaller amount of formal education. Thus a wide range of educational backgrounds is to be expected. Though the more-educated officials would speak some English or French, the great majority of the participants would speak only Vietnamese. Interpreters would therefore be essential.

The scope and duration of the second project will unavoidably depend to an appreciable extent both upon the initial success with which the first groups are trained and upon the situation in Vietnam.

If either or both of these projects would interest Michigan State University, please send us a training proposal with an estimate of costs. We have no doubt that MSU has the talent and experience to organize and direct programs of this kind. However, in order to assure that the interests of AID and the Vietnamese local officials are served to the high-

Letter to Professor W. Fischel

3-26-65

est degree possible and that other qualified institutions are also accorded impartial consideration, we shall simultaneously be exploring alternate or supplemental training facilities.

We are looking forward to your reply.

Very truly yours,

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