

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

VIETNAM ADVISORY GROUP

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

DATE: April 4, 1961

FROM: Guy H. Fox *G.H.F.*

SUBJECT: Conference with Vice Rector Dang, April 3, 1961

1. Library equipment. Dang recalled that Child and Miss Heyman had made studies and recommendations about library equipment, dividing equipment into two categories: that to be purchased with (1) American dollars and (2) Vietnamese piasters. Dang asked if MSUG had ordered any library equipment for the new campus. The orders for all equipment at the future NIA besides that for the library have already been submitted. I replied that insofar as I knew, MSUG had not ordered any library equipment. Emery had said, however, that it was possible for his office to make some of the needed items. It was my understanding that Emery is now waiting for Miss Ti to give him descriptions of items in order that Administrative Services might have patterns to follow. Dang said he would check with Miss Ti and I said I would check with our Administrative Services. Dang said he realized MSUG had no special funds in its dollar budget for the library, but in the event MSUG can buy any library equipment with dollars, he hoped we would turn in our order very shortly. Dang suggested that MSUG take care of dollar purchases, if any, for library equipment, and that Suu would be asked to take up the question of piaster purchase of library equipment at the next meeting of the Technical Committee. Dang expressed the hope that Musolf would back him up at the Technical Committee meeting. Of course, Dang said, if MSUG can supplement the request made to the Technical Committee either by making the equipment or by buying some with piasters, this would be fine.

2. Former participants holding M.A. Dang asked if MSUG and USOM had records of participants who have received Masters degrees in public administration. He desires such information in order to help in the recruiting by the NIA of a research assistant to replace the one (Mrs. Kien nee Nhanh). I answered that we have no convenient list of those having the M.A. but we would look through our records. I also agreed that I would ask Murtha at USOM if he could supply us with a similar list of USOM participants.

3. Ph.D. participant-selectees. Dang said the NIA would proceed at once to process Khanh, Tu, and Nang. Before Chi, presently at the Faculty of Law at the University of Saigon, can be processed, he should offer some evidence that he has successfully completed his examination for his license.

4. NIA's application to ICA for contract renewal. Dang asked if I thought it was desirable and necessary for the NIA to apply to ICA for a renewal of the contract. The reason he asked the question was his receipt of the Country Economic Program E-1, dated March 15, 1961. In the E-1 there is a provision for a contract extension for FY 63, 64, and 65, calling for MSUG to have an NIA Senior Advisor and advisors in public administration, in-service training, and law, and also a secretary. I said that it was my view that the NIA should make a presentation of what it considers its needs, but expressed the belief that Thong and Musolf should discuss the effect, if any, of the E-1. I said obviously the E-1 is a planning document and not binding on any one. I said I felt reasonably sure the E-1 does not preclude negotiations on contractual provisions.

Dang said he agreed the NIA should present its needs to ICA. But Thong is somewhat reluctant to do so and seems to believe that such a presentation would do no good. He believes that the minds of ICA and MSUG are already made up. Thong is sincere, Dang said, in believing that a larger group of MSUG advisors would be helpful to the NIA. Dang added that he himself believes that at least one advisor and perhaps two would be highly desirable. He mentioned specifically the need for an economist and sociologist. Dang asked if I would find out to what extent the minds of USOM officials are closed on the personnel provisions of the new contract. If USOM's (and ICA's) thinking is flexible, Dang would like to draw up what he believes are the true needs of the NIA and bring them to the attention of ICA. Dang believes if he takes up the initiative in drawing up such a plan, Thong in spite of his reluctance to bring up the matter will go along with it.

5. NIA students in the provinces. Dang was asked just what is the policy of GVN regarding the assignment of NIA graduates to the provinces. Dang said the NIA was created to provide students for positions in the provinces. Among government officials the NIA is generally thought of as an institution which trains provincial officials; its work for training officials for central agencies is considered secondary. The "spirit" of the decree creating the NIA calls for filling the needs of the provinces for civil servants. Dang recalled that the original school in Dalat sent all of its graduates to the provinces.

In 1957 the President of the Republic in an instruction to Ton That Trach of the Fonction Publique asked that all NIA students be sent to the provinces. Dang said the instruction was never carried out strictly but was circumvented to some extent by such subterfuges as "temporary" (which stretched into long) appointments. In 1960 the President revoked the instruction for two reasons: (1) in order to meet the security situation a number of military men were placed in districts, lessening the immediate need for NIA graduates; (2) the central ministries were seriously in need of category A officials.

Dang remarked that even when NIA graduates go to the central ministries, their positions there are often considered a stage before going into the provinces; for example, until security is established.

Those students who obtain their degrees in the administrative section of the NIA and enter the Doc Su class, are slated "in principle" for the provinces and as a matter of fact, the graduates in administration go largely to the provinces. However, students from the finance and economic section--they enter the Giam Su class--have been going predominantly into central ministries lately.

6. Japanese trip. A rather long discussion was held concerning Dang's schedule of visits in Japan.

Dang also wanted to know if his cash advance would cover needed expenses until he reached East Lansing. Dang said if Michigan State was going to advance American currency, arrangements would have to be made with the Vietnamese office of exchange. Who would make these arrangements, he asked. I said I believed our practice was to give checks to participants but that I would try to obtain answers to his questions and perhaps set up a meeting between him and Aschom.

I informed Dang that if I do not receive a telegram from Donoghue on Monday I would wire the Local Autonomy Agency to obtain their statement that they will receive him. Dang says he needs this statement as quickly as possible to show to the Planning Agency.