

September 12, 1958

To: Ralph H. Smuckler  
From: Stanley K. Sheinbaum  
Subject: Mr. Thong's visit

As I have already indicated and as Wes in the same enclosure concurs, the visit seems to be going extremely successfully. I had become quite discouraged by Mr. Trach's visit and I hope that this compensates to some extent. I spent yesterday with him at Ann Arbor where Lederle and Heady afforded us much time and a well-planned visit. From there he left directly for Chicago, where he was met by Hickey.

I am sorry I cannot provide the hilarious-type run down to which Wes is so good. Such items as stopping the car on Michigan Avenue, holding up rush-hour traffic to shake Glen's hand makes idealistic material, but I think you will get the picture.

I know that he feels satisfied with his visit thus far. However, I am still reluctant to evaluate the usefulness of the visit. As I had readily mentioned, he is preoccupied with the problems of the Research Center for EROPA; this preoccupation unfortunately distracted him from concern with the NIA affairs. However, yesterday driving down to Ann Arbor we discussed the NIA at length. He opened by asking my opinion of the number of MSU personnel. I tried to stick as much as possible within the context of your proposed draft memo for the period after June, 1959. Generally, I said I hoped we could continue in those consultive areas where progress is being made, and I also emphasized the need for us to provide teaching and research support. He is very preoccupied with the research function and almost all conversations reverted back to a discussion of research, mostly within the frame work of EROPA and some within the frame work of NIA. In the discussion on the later, he was very anxious to see us assist his staff to whatever extent we could (this surprised me) further, he also wanted to know if I could provide from Lansing any research support. He even had a specific suggestion: that when the Institute receives a research request from one of the ministers, he could feel free to turn to the Coordinator's office to find out how a particular administrative problem was solved, between the U. S. and other countries. He revealed a certain sophistication when he said he recognized that we would not be immediately prepared to provide the information regarding other countries. However, he said we have the library facilities with which we can search for the answers; he pointed out that these facilities in Saigon are still inadequate for these purposes. (This supports another impression of mine; that he has received an increased respect for the value of a good library.) I assured him that the East Lansing office was ready at all times to so support any research activity.

Ralph H. Smuckler

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he undertook in Saigon. As you may remember, this is a function that I have been hoping to develop, but so far unsuccessfully.

Before your memo arrived advising caution in discussing the problem of MSUG administration support by the NIA, Glen had already gone into the question with me. He was somewhat negative in his response although, of course very polite. In the car down to Ann Arbor he reopened the question and said that this is a very delicate and sensitive problem. I assured him that it is an issue we were approaching with extreme care and consideration. I further assured him that we would ~~only~~ want to follow through with the proposal if he and Mr. Thuan were ~~personally~~ inclined. Further, I agreed with him that if the proposal were to be implemented, then the decision would have to be handled over a long period with deliberate slowness and planning (shades of integration in Little Rock).

To back track for a moment in the discussion of MSU personnel, he expressed hope that we would send people out who could devote full time to teaching or full time to research; no one individual should do both. Here again, he showed a certain sophistication in stating a desire that his own staff be handled the same way, but that he realized that keeping an academic person on teaching full time would retard his intellectual development. However for MSUG staff who are only in Saigon for two years, full time assignment to a teaching function would not so retard them. He would also like some MSUG staff assisting full time in research.

With Lederle and Heady, he is mainly concerned with receiving advice with regard to the Research Center for EROPA. I have a feeling that he is faced with a problem in developing the Center that is beyond his present resource. He is not certain how to approach it, and he looks for any and all advice on the matter. One thing that particularly caused his eye to light up was the mention by Lederle that they were developing a research manual that would provide method~~of~~ logical insight, guides for statistical application, use of electronic computers, etc. Unfortunately, a draft mimeo was shown to Rector Thong and he wanted to keep it very badly. Lederle was not willing to let this out of his hands because it was not in its final form, but also because it was far too sophisticated, being oriented towards an American graduate program. I had the feeling that Thong felt that this document was a panacea, that once he had a copy of this he would be able to distribute it to the relevant people and that research would somehow occur. It hurt me to observe this. At any rate, it struck me that this kind of a manual should be developed. Lederle is sending me a copy for my own reading. I propose that we think seriously about assisting in *the development of such a manual*, possibly in Saigon. Another possibility would be to have a competent participant work with Stan Gabis in its development here. I would like to know your reaction to this.

One other point of interest was that he made it quite distinct that the Research Center was quite apart from the Institute, (although I understand that it will be physically housed by the Institute), and that therefore MSU was not involved.

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Despite this, he asked me if I, on a personal basis, would accept the responsibility of following up the fund raising work with the foundations. It was made clear that I would do this not as a member of MSU, but as an individual. On this, by the way, answer a question. Is he trying to raise \$51,000 or \$51,000 plus the dollar equivalent of \$7,677,534 piasters? Please cable immediately on this one.

I found Dr. Thong readily willing to adjust his schedule to our demands and still maintain his International stops. However, he had to shorten each of them. Unfortunately one of the substance areas that is neglected in the schedule in the US is a visit to a small college to see its administration. I thought this would be of use to him. He spent an entire afternoon at MSU viewing the Administration offices. I had briefed Tom Hamilton and Tom King on the need to emphasize the problem of academic standards. I think he was impressed. In general he showed great interest in the overall problem of Student Affairs. He was also very taken with our physical facilities. I think he may now prove to be a more informed critic in regard to the physical set up of the NIA; he was very impressed with the dormitory and the physical accommodations in general.

For the rest of the trip he will be in Washington and New York with Fishel. I will be with him for the last two days of his trip in New York. I have, as you know, serious reservations on the issue of accompaniment. This is a matter that has to be planned by ear. I think we over did it with Trach. Thong seems to be a much more independant man than I had anticipated. I came close to ruling against any accompaniment on the later part of his trip. However, I am letting Wes go East, but I am thinking the matter through for the future.

SKS/aeg