

July 14, 1966

AIRMAIL

H. E. Vu Van Thai
Ambassador of the Republic of Viet Nam
2251 "R" Street NW
Washington 8, D. C.

Dear Thai:

I enjoyed talking with you the other morning, and will look forward to continuing our conversation at an early date.

In connection with the informational activities of the Embassy, it occurred to me that it would be very useful to scholars, journalists, and the interested public as well, if the Embassy would put out a summary of the election law, pointing up the significant paragraphs and offering a little interpretation of each. This does not mean either reprinting the complete law - since it is extremely long and complicated - nor does it require an elaborate analysis. It would, however, help Americans to understand somewhat better the legal frame of reference in which the election will be held and, hopefully, improve their understanding a bit.

By the same token now that all of the candidates have put forth their names, it would be extremely useful to have one-paragraph biographies of each of these individuals. After all, most Americans know nothing about the kind of men and women who will be candidates for election to the Constituent Assembly and are therefore easy prey for careless or malicious newspaper men or politicians who seek to convey a particular impression of the character of the election and of the candidates. In this connection, it seems to me the experience of the Japanese during the early 1950's is edifying, and I suggest as a model the kind of thing which they have done:

Le Van Vien. Age 42; married, 7 children; native of Long Truc Village, Ninh Hoa district, Tay Ninh province; school teacher for 10 years; Cong Hoa (Republic party).

I suggest the above imaginary material as an example of what might be done, compilation of candidates by party affiliation and other such breakdowns would undoubtedly be appreciated by your readers.

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I understand very well that this would entail a great deal of trouble for your already over-burdened staff. But perhaps Linh, with Miss Capps's assistance, could work up this material for the Embassy's use. In any case, whether it is feasible or not in your opinion, it seemed to me important enough to bring it to your immediate attention.

Cordially yours,

Wesley R. Fishel
Professor

WRF/ghg