

May 18, 1963

Dear Senator:

I have the honor to address to you a copy of my letter to President Kennedy on January 5, 1963, with the attached presentation on the current situation in Vietnam and a plan of attack against Communism.

I hope this presentation will reveal certain essential aspects of the problem which so far have not been known to the outside world, and the deeply-rooted causes which led to the present situation. These causes did not arise from a set of unavoidable circumstances. Rather, they were the result of a series of mistakes made by the Saigon government which had erroneously speculated on a third World War and since 1958 has sought to avoid the struggle by making attempts to take a neutral stand between the two blocs.

The recent policy of Saigon of holding its troops in check in this decisive phase of war illustrates its defeatism. This also demonstrates its incapacity of organizing and leading the struggle. Needless to say that this policy will permit the Communists to digest their gains, consolidate their position, reinforce their organizations for a coming and massive offensive.

The outlook of such a situation cannot be but gloomy not only for the Vietnamese people, but also for the security of the Free World and the prestige of the United States with some 13,000 of its troops now engaged in endeavoring to render vital aid to South Vietnam.

At present, there is another danger facing Vietnam. This is the well-known Communist plan to carry out its efforts to control an area large enough to set up a neutral government which Russia and Red China would only hasten to recognize. Vietnam would thus be another Laos.

Some attempts have been made to pressure the Saigon government to change its policy, but they have not been sufficiently strong to be effective. The United States has shown itself too eager to safeguard Vietnam, and the

May 18, 1963

Saigon government mistakes this eagerness for a sign of weakness and capitalizes on it to refuse any kind of reform, thus allowing the situation to worsen every day.

If exceptional circumstances require exceptional measures, the most peaceful means to remedy this situation is still a complete suspension of all financial and technical assistance. This suspension in my opinion, should not take the form of a public pressure which could publicly humiliate the Saigon government and give the Communists another opportunity for propaganda. On the contrary, it should simply be preceded by a prompt, firm and personal warning to President Ngo Dinh Diem. If, within a short period, such a warning produces no effect, then all financial assistance will be cut and the entire machinery of technical aid will be stopped.

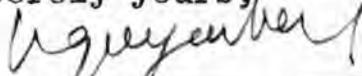
A few days of this drastic step would suffice to alter President Diem's thinking and bring him to concessions. Undoubtedly, hundreds of Vietnamese soldiers might be sacrificed without the technical help of the United States in case of an attack by the Communists, but, however costly, these sacrifices are necessary to show President Diem his fragility as well as the firmness of the United States. Furthermore, these hundreds of human lives might help save many thousands of others in the future, and, more important, it might insure our victory. I also have the conviction that the improvement of the situation in Vietnam will help improve the situation in Cambodia and Laos.

It is these convictions which lead me to address you today, as representatives of the American people and champions of the cause for liberty and justice. I am hopeful that your special interest in and insight into the problem of Vietnam as well as your influence in policy-making and your well-known firm stand on Vietnam will help shape up a solution which not only will save Vietnam, consolidate the position of the Free World, but also enhance the leadership role of the United States.

It is with this hope that I shall leave the United States in a few weeks to return to Vietnam where my duty as combatant recalls my presence.

I have the honor to be,

Sincerely yours,



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