

JUNE 26, 1962

PROFESSOR GUY H. FOX
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY GROUP
A.P.O. 143
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

DEAR PROFESSOR FOX:

AS THINGS NOW STAND, THIS WILL PROBABLY BE THE LAST BIT OF OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE VIETNAM PROJECT OFFICE TO THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP IN SAIGON.

I HOPE THAT THE CABLE WE SENT YESTERDAY WAS CLEAR. ACTUALLY, I WAS VERY RELUCTANT TO SEND IT SINCE I HAD NO IDEA WHETHER OR NOT THE INFORMATION REGARDING PHAT'S FAMILY WOULD BE AVAILABLE. PHAT SENT A LETTER TO US IN WHICH HE STATED THAT HE COULD NOT CONTINUE HIS PROGRAM SINCE HIS FAMILY NEEDED HIM SO BADLY. THIS WAS THE SECOND REQUEST OF THIS TYPE, THE EARLIER ONE HAVING OCCURRED IN JANUARY. I TALKED TO PROFESSOR EMERSON, HIS ADVISER AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY, WHO PRESENTLY IS AWAY ON VACATION. PROFESSOR EMERSON TOLD ME THAT PHAT HAD NOT PRODUCED MUCH WORK TOWARDS HIS PROGRAM IN RECENT WEEKS AND THAT HE HAD SEEMED QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT HIS FAMILY AND HIMSELF. EMERSON WILL RETURN TO THE HARVARD CAMPUS ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27TH AND WILL ATTEMPT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH PHAT IMMEDIATELY, AND WILL CALL US AS SOON AS HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO TALK WITH HIM.

I SHALL ASK LLOYD MUSOLF OR JASON FINKLE IF THEY WILL CALL PHAT AND ATTEMPT TO PIN-POINT THE PROBLEM. IF IT SEEMS NECESSARY, WE COULD PROBABLY SEND EITHER JASON OR LLOYD TO CAMBRIDGE. HOWEVER, EMERSON'S CALL ON WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY SHOULD PROVIDE US WITH MORE INFORMATION ON THIS.

HOWARD GRIDER'S OFFICE INFORMS ME THAT WE HAVE NO WORRY ABOUT PAYING TRANSPORTATION COSTS FOR OUR STAFF MEMBERS RETURNING FROM VIETNAM; THAT IS, OF COURSE, AS LONG AS THE TRAVEL IS WITHIN THE USUAL REGULATIONS. I HOPE THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A PAN AMERICAN STRIKE WILL NOT AFFECT OUR STAFF IN SAIGON, BUT I AM SURE THAT IF THE STRIKE TAKES PLACE, IT WILL PROBABLY CAUSE A NUMBER OF QUICK CHANGES IN ITINERARIES. WE ARE ALSO FACING THE SAME PROBLEM WITH OUR STAFF GOING TO BRAZIL.

AID/WASHINGTON INFORMS US THAT THE PIOP'S HAVE NOT AS YET BEEN RECEIVED BY THEM. I SHALL CALL THEM ON THURSDAY (REGARDING PHAT) AND IF THEY STILL HAVE NOT RECEIVED THEM AT THAT TIME, THEY HAVE ASKED THAT WE REQUEST A 90-DAY EXTENSION OF OUR CONTRACT SO THAT WE MIGHT PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE PARTICIPANTS. IF THIS IS THE CASE, AND THEY AGREE TO AN EXTENSION, IT WILL GIVE US SOME BREATHING SPACE SO THAT WE CAN COMPLETE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE REPORTS. THE BIDS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED TO AID AND WE ARE

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AWAITING WORD NOW THAT THEY HAVE RECEIVED THE BIDS AND WILL GRANT US THE SUPPORT REQUESTED. A PURCHASE ORDER MUST THEN BE ISSUED REQUESTING THAT THE PRINTER PUBLISH THE REPORTS, THEREBY COMMITTING THE FUNDS PRIOR TO JUNE 30TH.

DO WE HAVE AN ADDRESS THAT CAN BE USED FOR ANY MAIL WE MIGHT WISH TO SEND TO YOU DURING THE MONTH OF JULY? I DO NOT KNOW IF WE WILL NEED TO SEND ANYTHING, BUT WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP YOU INFORMED IF ANYTHING UNUSUAL OCCURS.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OFFICIALLY MY APPRECIATION FOR THE EXCELLENT JOB THE GROUP HAS PERFORMED IN EFFECTING THE ORDERLY PHASE-OUT. FRANKLY, WE ALL SHUDDERED AT THE THOUGHT OF CLOSING OUT THE PROJECT, BUT OUR JOB HAS BEEN SO SMALL IN COMPARISON TO THE ONE WHICH YOU FOUND FACING YOU.

BEST WISHES FOR A PLEASANT JOURNEY HOME, AND WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL IN SEPTEMBER.

SINCERELY,

LAWRENCE K. FITZPATRICK
ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN

LKF:YN

JULY 12, 1962

MR. WILLIAM J. RICHTER, CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS STAFF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TRAINING DIVISION
AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

DEAR BILL:

I AM ATTACHING COPIES OF LETTERS WRITTEN BY ASSOCIATE DEAN RALPH SMUCKLER TO GUS HERTZ AND TO RECTOR THONG OF THE NIA IN SAIGON. I BELIEVE THEY ARE SELF-EXPLANATORY.

AS I MENTIONED IN OUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION THE OTHER DAY, TRAN NGOC PHAT HAS EXPRESSED STRONGLY THAT HE BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO VIETNAM WHERE HE HOPES TO COMPLETE HIS DISSERTATION FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE. HOWEVER, THE CONSENSUS OF OPINION HERE IS THAT HE HIMSELF DOES NOT WISH TO MAKE THE DECISION CONCERNING HIS RETURN, BUT RATHER THAT AID, MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY OR NIA DECIDE FOR HIM. IT WAS ALSO FELT THAT MUCH OF HIS CURRENT PROBLEMS ARE CAUSED BY HIS PRESENT FINANCIAL STATUS. HE HAD VERY LITTLE MONEY LEFT FROM HIS LAST PER DIEM CHECK AND CONTINUALLY ASKED, "HOW AM I EXPECTED TO EXIST WITHOUT ANY MONEY?" THE UNCERTAINTY OF WHEN HIS NEXT PER DIEM CHECK WOULD ARRIVE WAS DEFINITELY CAUSING HIM A GREAT DEAL OF CONCERN. WHEN HE LEFT HERE, HE SEEMED MUCH MORE CONFIDENT AND RELAXED THAN HE HAD BEEN AT THE TIME OF HIS ARRIVAL.

THIS WILL SUMMARIZE PHAT'S VISIT TO EAST LANSING AND I CAN ONLY SAY THAT I WISH THE SUMMARY WAS MORE COMPLETE. FEW OF OUR FORMER VIETNAM STAFF MEMBERS FEEL THAT IT WOULD BENEFIT PHAT TO COME TO EAST LANSING TO COMPLETE THE THESIS. THE MAJORITY OF THEM FEEL THAT IF HE IS GIVEN THE TIME, AND SOME FUNDS FOR LIVING EXPENSES, THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE IT IF HE RETURNS TO VIETNAM. WE HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED OVER THE PHONE THE DRAWBACKS INVOLVED HERE. I ALSO WISH THAT YOU WOULD HAVE SOME CHANCE TO VISIT WITH PROFESSOR RUPPERT EMERSON AT HARVARD, WHO IS PHAT'S ACADEMIC ADVISER. PROFESSOR EMERSON IS VACATIONING FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS AND WILL BE DIFFICULT TO CONTACT, SO IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO WAIT UNTIL THE TIME HE RETURNS BEFORE AID MAKES A FIRM DECISION REGARDING PHAT'S RETURN TO VIETNAM.

IF THERE IS ANY OTHER FURTHER INFORMATION THAT WE CAN PROVIDE HERE, DON'T HESITATE TO LET US KNOW. MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY HAS A GREAT DEAL OF

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INTEREST IN PHAT AND HOPES THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE CAN BE DONE TO ASSIST
HIM COMPLETE THE DEGREE. THANKS AGAIN FOR ALL THE HELP YOU HAVE PROVIDED.

SINCERELY,

LAWRENCE K. FITZPATRICK
ASSISTANT TO THE DEAN

LKF:YN

July 5, 1962

Mr. Gustav Hertz
Public Administration Advisor
for Europe and the Far East
Agency for International Development
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Gus:

I have had several long sessions with Mr. Tran Ngoc Phat, the Vietnamese participant who is working on his Ph.D. at Harvard in political science. In my opinion Phat is a bright and sincere individual who has much to contribute over the years ahead in Saigon. He is now very concerned about whether he should return before completing his dissertation or whether he should remain at Harvard. Ordinarily I would push to have him stay to complete the degree and even in this case it may well be the right course. He is quite disturbed, however, about many of the reports he hears from home and there may well be a good case for his returning earlier than we would otherwise hope. He has completed his prelims and has only the dissertation to do, and he is well into that.

I am writing to you about this because I think it might well be worth your seeing that he receives some personal attention from AID. I feel that Phat is a cut above the usual. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Law and of the Institute of Administration and he has been doing good work at Harvard. He represents one of the best hopes for a young progressively oriented Vietnamese faculty member and I want to be sure that we do not lose him as a result of any lack of personal attention which we might be able to give. I spent about a day and a half with him over the fourth of July and had ample time to talk through all of his problems with him. I do not know how AID is set up to handle these individual cases, but I think that your training officer will want to look at his case quite carefully.

The major issue at this time is whether or not he should return to Vietnam in the near future. On the side of returning is the fact that his research is on a subject which might be better advanced using materials in Vietnam. His dissertation is an analysis of the development of Vietnamese nationalism and materials in Saigon would be very useful. In addition to the professional reason, Phat has been under tensions of various sorts and seems quite nervous at times. For instance, he is now very concerned about his next allowance check and feels financially insecure. AID could alleviate that particular problem by expediting his payment and by looking

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into his book allowance which he tells me has been inadequate. Getting back to his home environment would probably be a good step to ease his mind concerning family and other problems.

On the side of staying is the strong argument that his completion of the degree would be delayed and endangered if he went back to Saigon due to the pressure of other responsibility. Is there any way of keeping him on some sort of participant training program while in Saigon, so that his time for research will be assured for three to six months? I don't know of any policy for or against this, so I raise it with you as a possibility. It seems to me it would represent a financial saving over keeping him in residence at Harvard.

I feel that, all things considered, his return to Vietnam during the next few months would be wise, especially if you can work out some arrangement as mentioned above.

I hope that you are still looking for or have already located some advisors for the National Institute of Administration. Now that our contract has ended our contractual involvement is no longer there, but I can assure you that many of us still have a very strong personal tie and hope that things go well. Michigan State University has a continuing interest and would do what it can to help. Of course we would do anything we can, personally or institutionally, to be of assistance to you in keeping the Institute program moving successfully.

The best of luck to you. I hope that something can be done so that we can realize Phat's full potential as an asset to the development of the Institute and public administration generally in Vietnam.

Cordially,

Ralph Smuckler
Associate Dean

RS:dy
Enclosure

July 6, 1962

Rector Vu Quoc Thong
National Institute of Administration
10 Boulevard Tran Quoc Toan
Saigon, Vietnam

Dear Rector Thong:

As Dr. Guy Fox has undoubtedly expressed to you, it is with sincere regret that we at Michigan State University witness the end of our contractual relationship in Vietnam. Those members of our faculty who have many good friends in your country and who have participated in the important developments of recent years in Saigon do not really feel that our work together has come to an end. Instead, many feel as do I that from now on the scholarly attachments may well become firmer as we move ahead with professional ties rather than contractual.

Personally, I am confident that what we have been trying to develop together will continue in a productive manner. I want to assure you that if there is anything we can do from here which will be of help, we would be very happy to assist. Similarly, we hope that in the months and years ahead our colleagues at the National Institute of Administration will be receptive to collaborating with or aiding members of our faculty or graduate students doing scholarly work on Vietnam.

During the past two days I have spent quite a bit of time with Mr. Tran Ngoc Phat. Mr. Phat is working on his dissertation at Harvard and he has been making reasonably good progress. As you know, he is requesting to return to Vietnam in the near future before the completion of his degree. He is sincerely interested in getting back into his home environment, and he wants to become once again a participant in the development of his country. He also recognizes that as a civil servant he should do all he can in a productive direction to complete his work at Harvard. Therefore, he is in many ways torn between the dilemma of, on the one hand, returning now and working on his dissertation while in Saigon, and, on the other, staying at Harvard for an additional period of time to get his degree before returning. On the basis of lengthy conversations with him I would say that he needs guidance from Vietnam. He is a young man but in my opinion very bright and capable. He is also very sincere and wants to do the right thing. I hope that you and others will be thinking about his future and writing to him to give him your advice about his work during the next few months. In fact he is ready to do whatever the government

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of Vietnam wishes -- either to stay at Cambridge or to return to Vietnam. He does not feel that he should make the decision but that it should be made by others.

In my opinion, he should return to Vietnam and be given some time there to finish his research and writing. Since he is writing on the development of Vietnamese nationalism, he could make good use of materials in Saigon. In fact, his dissertation research has reached the point at which it could greatly benefit from use of library sources and other materials in Vietnamese which probably can be found most easily in Saigon.

I hope that you will give this serious consideration and that the Institute will provide some guidance to Mr. Phat at this time.

Would you please extend my warm regards to the faculty of the National Institute of Administration and express to my friends there my sincere wishes for the continued successful development of your program.

With warm regards.

Sincerely,

Ralph Smuckler
Associate Dean

RS:dy

bcc: Guy Fox
L. Fitzpatrick
Gustav Hertz