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Dear Wes:

Architects
Although the Articles have been giving me a rough time, I finally have my head far enough above water to start on an article about the Vietnamese Constitution. In organizing my notes I have come across several questions that I note I am unable to answer, and wonder if you can help me with some or all of them. The Secretary of Information's pamphlet, the Constitution of the Republic of Vietnam, on pages five and six lists the members of the 15-man Constitutional Commission of the Constituent Assembly, noted by an asterisk. Five of these also served on the original 11-man Commission appointed by the President. Can you give me the names of the other six men on the President's Commission?

Also, ~~is~~ the body of the pamphlet on page six (which conflicts with the footnote) correct in stating that one member of the President's Commission was elected to the Constituent Assembly but not appointed to membership in the Constitutional Commission? If so, who was this?

I note that the Constituent Assembly's Commission contained a woman school teacher, Mrs. Huynh-Thi-Nu. Can you tell me anything about her?

I note that 25 members of the Constituent Assembly were members of the Citizen's Assembly (Tap-Doan Cong-Dan), and hence I presume Catholics. This does not strike me as very far out of line with the percentage in the country, since the refugees must have added tremendously to the over all figure for the South. Can you tell me if this is now roughly estimated at 15 per cent or 20 per cent? World Almanacs and such always give the figure as 10 per cent Catholic.

A large number of members of the Constituent Assembly held positions with the Government that rendered them ineligible for membership in the Legislative Assembly. Do you have any figure indicating how many were faced with such a choice and what their choice has been? Have any elections been scheduled to fill the vacancies?

I assume that the first Legislative Assembly will meet next month. Consequently, I am assuming that no steps have been taken as yet to set up the Constitutional Court or the Economic Council. Is this correct?

Has the President suspended Articles 13, ¹⁵ 16 or 23 in accordance with the authority given him by Article 98? If so, I would like the date of his decree. Of course I would like the French or English text of the decree if this is short and easily obtainable.

If the President has not suspended these Articles can one now go to Annam or PMS without a "passport"? Has there been any change in the control of the ~~President~~ ^{Press} since I left Vietnam?

What happened to the preamble? It is not printed in the official pamphlet.

I have one query on Article 10: Who constitutes the "competent authorities" to issue "mandates" of arrest? Are these written, like an American warrant of arrest? Perhaps your police advisory team will know the answer.

One final question. I note that there is a woman judge in Saigon. Can you tell me who she is, where she was trained, and in which branch of the service she serves?

On reading this over I note that it is a long and formidable list. Also, in writing an article one always wants to know far more than one has occasion to use. So please just answer the ones that aren't too much bother. I hope that this finds Jane and the kids well and happy, and that you had a nice vacation on your junket to Japan.

Most cordially yours,

Cliff.

J. A. C. Grant

JACG:eb

Air Mail

ps. Please excuse the typist. I had to use a substitute, whose shorthand is rusty.

Answers to Mr. J.A.C. Grant's questions

1. The other six men on the President's Commission are :
Messrs. VU VAN MAU (Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs); VUONG QUANG NHUONG (Lawyer), NGUYEN KHAC CANH, NGUYEN VAN SI (Secretary of State for Justice), NGUYEN VAN THINH (Ambassador of Viet-Nam in Tokyo), CAO VAN TUONG (deputy).
The body of the pamphlet on page 6 is correct.
Mr. CAO VAN TUONG was elected to the Constituent Assembly but not appointed in the Constitutional Commission.
2. About Mrs. HUYNH THI NU. Born in 1927 at Bien-Hoa. Left primary school at the age of 13. Went in small trade to make a living from the age of 15 to the age of 22 years. Clerk in private companies from 1950 to 1952. Elected Secretary General of the Regional Workers Syndicate of Bien-Hoa in April 1954. Elected President of the Federation of Women Workers in the Confederation of Workers of Viet-Nam in May 1955.
3. Percentage of Catholics. Before the partition of Viet-Nam there were 450,000 catholics south of 17th parallel for a population of 10 million (1 catholic for every 22 inhabitants). With 860,000 evacuees from the North of whom there are 676,000 catholics, South Viet-Nam has at present 1,130,000 catholics for nearly 11 million inhabitants (i.e. 10% of the entire population).
In the National Assembly there are other Catholics members beside the deputies of the "Tap doan Cong dan".
4. Membership of deputies and positions in Government. Four Secretaries of State have been elected in the Constituent Assembly.
 - Mr. Tran trung Dung (National Defense)
 - Mr. Tran chanh Thanh (Information and Youth)
 - Mr. Nguyen huu Chau (Presidency and Home Affairs)
 - Vu quoc Thong (Public Health)At the expiration of the mandate of the Constituent Assembly, the first three have submitted their resignation from their position as Secretaries of State on November 5, 1956 and have been asked by the President to keep on their post in the Government. Partial elections have taken place on February 1957 to fill the vacancies. Mr. Vu quoc Thong has also resigned from his office of Secretary of State, has been elected Second Vice-President of the National Assembly.
According to article 53, "deputies may be charged with special missions lasting not more than twelve months". For example Mr. Vu quoc Thong is at the same time deputy and Director of the National Institute of Administration, Mr. Thai manh Tien is deputy and Director General of Youth.
5. Authority given to the President by article 98. No decrees have been issued to suspend articles 13, 14, 15, 16 or 23. At present Vietnamese citizens as well as foreigners can go freely from one place to another in the country. Press censorship has been suppressed in February 1956. Publications are subject to previous authorization from the Department of Information.
6. Enclosed is a copy of the preamble of the Constitution.
7. Constitutional Court and Economic Council. The first Legislative Assembly has met for the first time on November 9, 1956 but no steps have been taken to set up the Constitutional Court and Economic Council but they will be soon.

8. Mandates of arrest are issued by examining magistrates, they are written.
9. Mrs. Nguyễn Thị Võ, wife of Mr. Nguyễn Văn Kim, she was been graduated master of laws from the University of Hanoi and serves now as examining magistrate (juge d'instruction) in the 4th chamber (Penal), Saigon.
