

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: W. W. Mode
Field Administration
FROM: . Nguyen Quan
SUBJECT: Field Administration

DATE: 29 October 1956

Planning for Province Administration Survey

Up to now field trips in provinces, districts or villages have had specific purposes which consisted in surveying a given ministry action (education, agriculture, agrarian reform and information).

In the next trips special attention should be paid rather to how do province chief and staff manages to have provincial services run well, being coordinated and supervised.

Processing:

It was proven that the flash-interview commando of a one-day trip or even half-a-day trip has given little result as an investigation process. It takes longer to make people less reticent and talk frankly with you.

In addition, the formal questioning process makes our interviewee feel cross examined and so he is prone to answer vaguely or follow some fixed pattern. 1/

1. Thus I would recommend granting more time for each province trip. (The minimum time required should be four days.)
2. Request more freedom in conducting investigations mostly by paying more attention to social relations and frank conversation than to formal interviewing. If we spend any petty money in drinks - - to support our talks with our host we should be reimbursed by the office.

Suggested Provinces to be Surveyed:

It shall not be necessary to send an interview-team down to all provinces. Would suggest the following typical units:

Central Vietnam:

1. Quang Tri: It would stand for provinces of Quang Tri and Thua Thien, more exactly the area beyond the Cloud Pass. It is the type of province where provincial services have to deal mostly with problems of
- security (infiltration of Vietcong cadres, border incidents)

1/ For example: "I care for good running of the province services" or "I report to the Delege on administrative matters and to the concerned ministry on technical matters". All these answers actually mean nothing.

- information and propaganda: rightly or wrongly it remains a fact that population living on the outside the Cloud Pass feel they shall be sacrificed in case the war is resumed.
2. Quang Ngai: It would stand for provinces of Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and represent provinces just recovered from Viet Minh. Main problems to be dealt with are:
 - security: sweeping left-over Viet Minh cadres
 - social welfare: supporting the population who's misery under Viet Minh regime was unbelievable
 - agrarian reform: prior to withdrawing, Viet Minh had distributed land to population and thus had overtaken the national government program
 - education: the population needed a brainwashing in order to eradicate all communist ideology
 - close relationship with PMS provinces of Kontum, Pleiku
 3. Quang Nam: Type of rare economic self sufficient province in Central Vietnam.
 4. Khanh Hoa (Nha Trang): It should stand for Khanh Hoa and Phan Rang.

Main problems involved:

 - agrarian reform: Phan Rang numbers two big landowners (rare case in Central Vietnam) A French society landlord and the Catholic Mission each own more than 2000 hectares. This is the type of difficulty the A. R. program has to deal with.
 - large population of fishermen with specific organization.
 5. Binh Thuan: Type of province to be grouped with Bien Hoa since it presents a lot of common features with South Vietnam.
 6. Bien Hoa: It would stand for Bien Hoa, Baria, Thu Dau Mot and represent the type of eastern provinces of South Vietnam. One of the main features is the existence of numerous rubber plantations as well as the presence of a major percentage of rubber workers.
 7. Tay Ninh: Type of province with cao-dai influence.
 8. My Tho: It would stand for My Tho, Tan An, Cholon, Ben Tre, Vinh Long. It is the sample of province typically agrarian.
 9. Can Tho: Type of province said Western province of South Vietnam. It would stand for Can Tho, Long Xuyen, Sadec, Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, Ha Tien.

10. Bac Lien: Type of province granary of South Vietnam (Bac Lien, Camau
Bach Gia
11. Highland (PMS): Djiring and Pleiku. Djiring is an exchange center between
highland and lowland. Pleiku is a typical mountain province.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: G. H. Fox, National Institute Division DATE: 31 October 1956
FROM: W. W. Mode, Field Administration *WWM*
SUBJECT: Compilation of Basic Statistical Data

Early next month we expect to send a survey team to My Tho Province. If time permits, they will look into the possibility of obtaining statistical data from the provinces on a regular basis.

The attached list itemizes some of the data that we think will be useful to Field Administration Division. I would appreciate you adding to the list any subjects on which you believe data can be gotten and which you think would be useful, and returning the list to me by November 10th.

Please initial and pass on:

Copies of this memo were sent to

F. R. Wickert
H. W. Hoyt

1 Enclosure

Dick RWJ

Dave

Marvin

Wayne

Can you think of anything which ought to be added to the list? Should "tapes" be broken down further?

I would suggest gathering inventory of data presently reported and brief description of procedure rather than contemplated program.

Dick

22-01
Mr. Quân

52-01-18
Would you look through your My-Tho notes and see if you have any information on the following:

1. The Administrative Bureau
 2. The Provincial Council
 3. Who collects indirect taxes such as on radios, exports from provinces
 4. Did we get a copy of the Province Chief's letter to the President?
 5. Is there an arrete dealing with the collection of taxes on property owned by people not residing in the province
 6. What is the no. of the arrete dealing with seizure of property for non-payment of taxes.
 7. What is the number of the directive which provides for the resumption of collection of land taxes.
- Radio & Wine License*

AR
Albert Rosenfeld

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO : Mr. Rosenfeld

DATE :

FROM : Nguyễn QUAN

SUBJECT : Additional information on
My Tho province.

--oOo--

The following are the answers to your questions as listed on the attached leaflet:

Question No.1

The Administrative Bureau (Phòng Hành Chánh) is more commonly called the Province Chief's Bureau (Văn Phòng Tỉnh Trưởng) His main functions are:

- Incoming and Outgoing Mail recording
- Archives
- Personnel Management
- Confidential matters
- Dân Vệ (Popular-defense Guards)
- Questions pertaining the Military
- Settlement of Complaints and protests against all officials from the population.

The personnel members:

- Mr. Lê văn Huấn, Bureau's Chief. He is a career's clerk and paid by the National Budget.
- 1 clerk responsible of Personnel management
- 1 clerk responsible of Confidential matters
- 1 clerk responsible of Military questions
- Mail clerk
- Archivist clerk

Question No. 2

The Provincial Council no longer exists in any province of South 17th parallel Viet-Nam. The last magistrature started on October 25, 1953 and terminated on October 24, 1956 (3 years of duration). Since the fundamental decree No. 107 which provided for complete reorganization of the administrative. System in South V.N., has no mention whatsoever on assembly at province level, it was understood that the Provincial Council has been abolished

Question No. 3

In principle:

- As far as direct taxes are concerned the Tax-Bureau (Within the Province Chief's Offices) merely establishes the list and the Province Treasury collects the money.

The Tax-Bureau collects itself the money from indirect taxes and pays in the Province Treasury.

All the time it has been so with the export-from-province duties.

Tax on radios set is regarded as a very funny thing by tax-men as it is collected directly by the National Broadcasting Service in Saigon. In principle the radio-owner has to declare his set and pay 200\$ per annum no matter with how powerful is the set, and pay by Postage "mandat". Even owner living on the field has to send the mandat directly to the National Broadcasting Service in Saigon. Actually hardly 10% of the owners pay and no penalty or action of any kind was provided for making them pay.

Question No. 4

Mr Chên has actually promised to give us a copy of his letter to the President. However he has changed his mind as he thought the document highly private. He merely let me read it and take notes. I have written down all his main comments and

proposals in my record of meeting with him.

Questions Nos 5,6,7.

For a better understanding of the tax-on-land system, let me give the following briefing:

Tax-on-land is a direct tax e.g. perceived on list. It is used to be that 2 categories of list are established.

- a collective list for the whole village where are recorded small holdings owners. Village authorities are responsible of collecting. This is a kind of collective responsibility, a consequence of the large autonomy the village community enjoys all the time vis-à-vis the central government.
- nominative lists for some big landowners.

As a matter of fact, nominative list is more appreciated and all the time fought for as it liberates the tax-payer from the usual graft of village authorities. The face question also played a large part as the taxpayer is being on an equal footing with the village unit.

Prior to 1945 collecting taxes on collective list was an easy thing because of the collective village responsibility. The villagers in turn could be sequestrated by villages authorities for failing in paying taxes. The only action the central government has to carry out was to see to it that not too much graft was done.

From time to time nominative lists led to some juridical action which followed this flow process: notice to pay, free summons, charged summons, seizure, sale.

I must here make clear that in persuance to the french-vietnamese principle on tax system, tax-on-land despite its name, merely involves the land product and never the ownership itself.

Thus the above-mentioned distraint might merely be operated against the crop. It is called in french "Saisie-brandon".

Since 1945 and due to the lack of security, most of landlords moved to the towns and were not able to collect farm-rent. To the government taxes collector of course they can do nothing but saying : please collect on the spot and upon the crop. Then field authorities recommended to village authorities to make tenant-farmers pay directly. In brief the final result was that nominative list no longer run and village authorities are vested with more extensive taxes collection powers.

It remains to the government to confirm that situation and let all categories of land assessed in a single collective list.

Note

To : Mr. Rosenfeld
From : Nguyễn-Quân

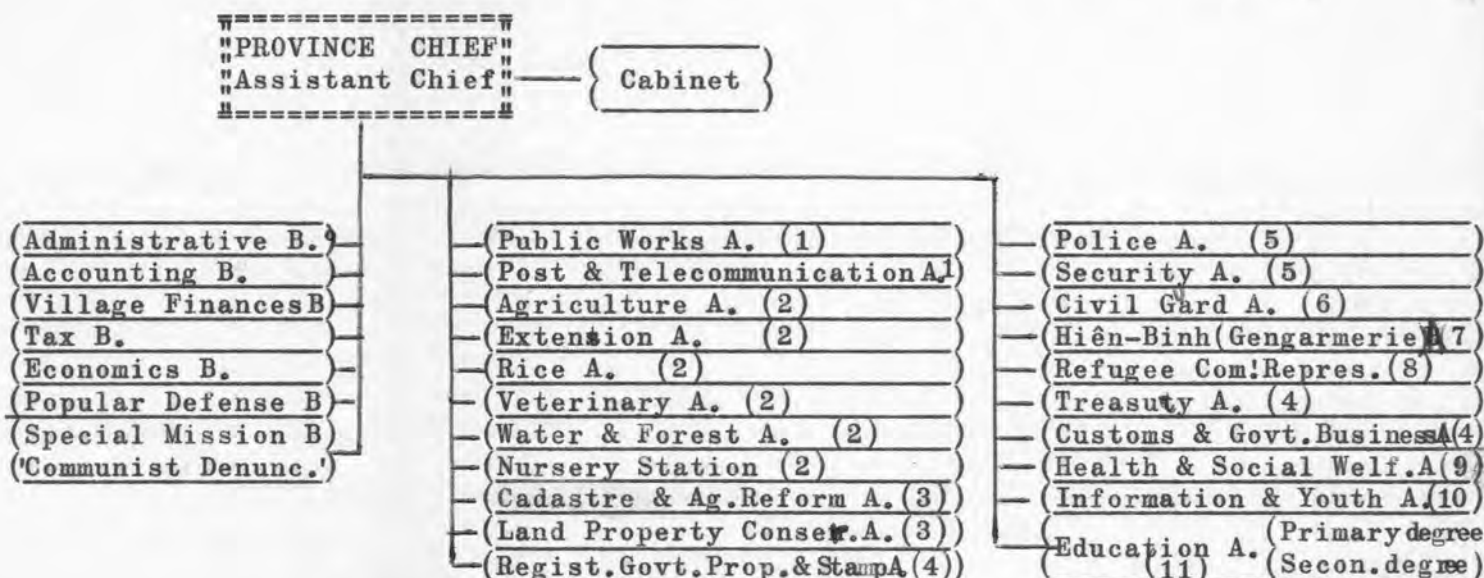
In order ^{officially} to standardize the administrative nomenclature in province it has been agreed that there are 2 kinds of offices in province: Phong (bureau) and Ty (agency).

A Phong is a Province Chief's office. The Phong's chief merely act on the name of the Province Chief's and all correspondence should be adressed under his name.

A Ty is rather the Department representative in province. It is commonly said that the Ty reports to the concerned Department on technical matters and to the Province's Chief on administrative matters. The Ty's Chief acts and corresponds on his own name. In practice the degree of subjection to the province chief so far depend on the Ty's concern. For example the Tys for Education, Public Works and Health work more closely with the province's Chief. On the contrary Tys for Customs, Post, practically ignores the Province's Chief and do not even send him copy of annual report. The recent Decree No.57 attempts to strenghten the Province's Chief action by making all province Tys report to him periodically.

Besides there exists some outsiders like the Agriculture Credit Bank and the Central Station for Agriculture experimentation which are almost out of the Province Chief supervision.

Administrative Organization Chart of Province of My-Tho



- Outsiders: 1.- Agriculture Credit Bank
2.- Central Station for experimentation in Agriculture

The Province Chief has complete responsibility only for the operations of all the Bureaus. The below Dept concerned exercise functional authority over the Agencies.

Note

- (1) A. Public Works Department Agency
- (2) A. Agriculture Department Agency
- (3) A. Land & Agrarian Reform Department Agency
- (4) A. Finance Department Agency
- (5) A. Interior Department Agency
- (6) A. Directorate for Civil Guard's Agency (within the Presidency)
- (7) A. National Defense Department Agency
- (8) A. Refugee Commissariat's temporary Agency
- (9) A. Health & Social Welfare Department Agency
- (10) A. Information and Youth Department Agency
- (11) A. National Education Department Agency

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO : Mr. Rosenfeld

DATE : February 12, 1957

FROM : Nguyễn-Quân

SUBJECT :

1. Phong-Thanh and Móc-Hoa were nearby provinces. They included part of My-Tho province. Geographically speaking they covered the whole area of the famous "Dông-Thap-Muoi" (Plaine des Jongs). p.3

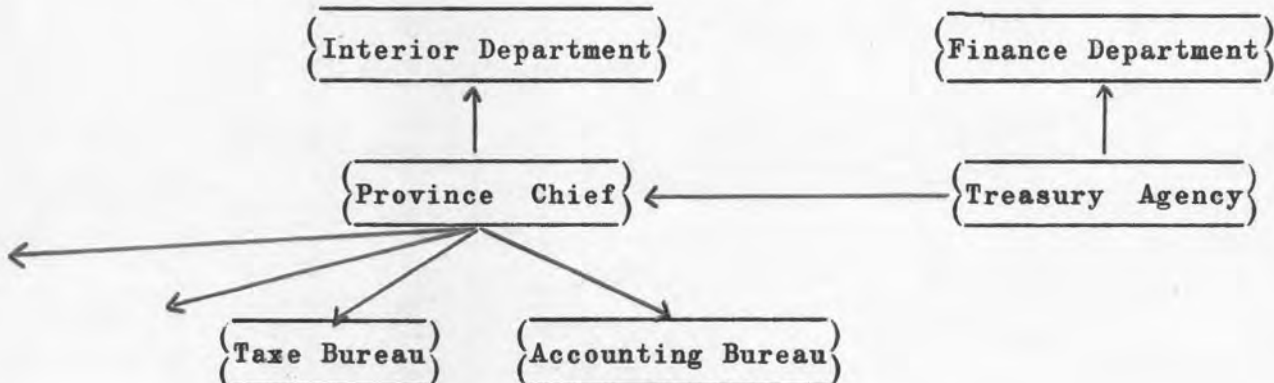
Phong-Thanh is now Kiên-Phong, and Móc-Hoa: Kiên-Tuong.

Tam-Cân was between Vinh-Long and Trà-Vinh provinces and composed of parts of each. It is now consolidated into Vinh-Long province.

2. By 1950-1953 a feudal warlord ruled in Bên-Tre province: Colonel Leroy, a french-vietnamese half-breed. His influence stretched over the big island South My-Tho (Hoa-Quoi and Hoa-Thinh cantons) which was then part of My-Tho area. Colonel Leroy obtained from the Central Government agreement that that island be "temporarily" cut off from the My-Tho Administration and placed under his authority.

In 1954 Col. Leroy was dismissed by President Ngô-dinh-Diêm. He joined the rebels but now lives in exile in France but the "temporary" transfer he initiated is still in effect. Furthermore that transfer is now legally confirmed by the creation of Kiên-Hoa province (new name for Bên-Tre)

3. The following break-down will clearly show the partition of functions between the 3 main finance agencies in province. p.14



The Accounting Bureau is a Province Office, and the Tax Bureau as well.

The Treasury Agency is a technical province service of the Finance Department. It is then said that it reports to the Finance Department on technical matters and to the Province Chief on Administrative matters.

The Accounting Bureau cares for accounts of all disbursements as it issues "mandats".

As for receipts, a discrimination should be made first between direct and indirect taxes.

Indirect taxes are collected on declaration to and by the Tax Bureau. It maintains the account for receipts and periodically issues "payment mandat" by which it transfers funds to the Treasury Agency.

Direct taxes are collected upon "list". The Tax Bureau establishes the lists or supervises and approves the lists established by the village officials. It then sends them to the Treasury Agency for collection. Accounts for receipts of direct taxes are then maintained by the Treasury Agency itself.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
VIETNAM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Albert A. Rosenfeld DATE: 26 March 1957
FROM: Walter W. Mode, Chief, Field Administration Division
SUBJECT: My-Tho Report

Wally

I have talked with Dale and I believe that he has covered all the points in his attached note. I believe that we should not attach these interviews as part of the report. I think it would be sufficient to make a statement at the end, saying that the interview reports are kept intact in the Field Administration Division.

jl

Kally -

Reference our discussions on the "Mytho-research material" -

Because of the modes of expressions used in English by the interviewers who are not sufficiently proficient in English to give the proper shade of meaning - it raises a question in my mind as to whether there shouldn't be a flat rule that none of the research material may be quoted. I can visualize some "eager beaver" researcher with "more flare for the bagao" than professional integrity taking great delight in quoting ^{that} some official was "a real ass."

The alternative, of course, would be to edit all research material before making it available to researchers, but what a job! and it would spail much of the "flavor" for the researcher with high integrity.

Just some thoughts. JH

Al -

Let's discuss. The further I got with these the more I wondered how despersonalized they should be - and if subject matter itself wouldn't give away personalities.

Update - I went in and talked to Wally to find out more about the nature of the publication. Our thoughts run like this:

1. He shouldn't publish controversies between staff members,
2. Nor what was told the interviewees in more or less confidence,
3. Nor what one really deduced from the interviews

That if we should do so, it would likely spoil our chances of gaining the confidence of personnel in future interviews

Should we completely obliterate identities it would be some less useful as research material.

Isn't there some other way of letting the proper people know this is available here? Those

Report on Field Trip down to My Tho

TAX BUREAU

Name of Province: My Tho
 Name of interviewee: Nguyễn tri Hiến
 Title of interviewee: Chief of Taxes Bureau

Project: Tax Collection and Administration
 Date: November 19, 1956
 Interviewer: Nguyễn Quân

 1o) The Tax Bureau personnel ^{consists of} ~~numbers~~ Mr. Hiến, Bureau Chief, and ^{five} ~~five~~ clerks.

Mr. Hiến states ^{that this} ~~such a~~ ^{is} ~~personnel~~ not sufficient to care normally of the job. He ^{to be done.} ~~has~~ ^{made a} ~~requested~~ ^{to} the South Vietnam Dele-
 gué - while the Delegré still existed - ^{for four} ~~additional~~ clerks ^{but his} ~~and~~
^{request} ~~has been~~ refused.

2o) The Bureau deals with ~~both~~ direct and indirect taxes. Some go exclusively to the Province budget while some ^{are divided} ~~other go~~ among partly to the Province ^{is} ~~budget~~, partly to the National, ^{and the} ~~or~~ Commu-
 nal budgets. The following breakdown will show the extension of each share.

	National	Provincial	Village	TOTAL
	B U	D G E T		
1 2 Annual Tax on Chinese residents.....		100,-		100,-
2 Exceptional Tax of Pacifica- tion.....				
3 Land Taxes.....	100,-	10,-	5,-	115,-
4 Tax on boats..		100,	200,	300,
5 Tax on animals and transpor- tation		100,	100,	200,

Piastres
Percentage

?

(3)

6	Indirect Taxes on business rice milling, ice consumption, oil products consumption, entertainments	100\$			100\$
7	Commerce Licence	100\$	100\$	100\$	300\$
8	Income Taxes	100\$			100\$

30) In the above breakdown the official way of calculating the share might appear surprising to a western collector who is ^{more familiar} rather used with a certain amount of percentages ^{rates}. However, it: a) is simple and easy to operate, ^{and} for the Village Councils most members of which are half illiterate; b) better stresses ^(not competent to handle a more complicated system) the final and principal beneficiary of a given tax, for example:

	National	Provincial	Village	TOTAL
Land Taxes	100\$	10\$	5\$	115\$

instead of:

	National	Provincial	Village	TOTAL
Land Tax	87 0/0	8,7 0/0	4,3 0/0	100 0/0

The former shows at once that Land Taxes should in fact go to the National Budget. The Province and Village shares are merely what officials call "additional hundredths".

40) Following the French tax administration system, direct taxes are those collected upon list (numbers 1,3,4,5 and 7) while indirect taxes are collected upon declarations (numbers 6 and 8).

50) As far as direct taxes are concerned, the list which remains the masterpiece of the collecting process, is established by the Village Council, first checked by the district chief and finally by the Bureau. Then the Province chief gives his approval

?
Demand assessments

which stands for authorization for implementation. Village authorities actually collect money and ask the Bureau for a payment bill which entitles them to prefer the money to the Treasury Provincial Agency.

In brief ~~in the matter~~ ^{case} of direct taxes, the Bureau ^{does} not ~~to~~ handle the cash.

60) On ^{the} contrary, as far as indirect taxes are concerned, the Bureau receives both declarations and money ^{from} the taxpayers. Every week Mr. Hiên brings the money to the Treasury.

70) ^{also,} Weekly, ~~too~~ ^{report} Mr. Hiên sends a wire to the Finance Ministry to ~~let the latter informed of the amount of taxes collected;~~ and monthly, he send a written report to the same department. ^{Theoretically} Or ^{this is done by} rather, the Province Chief ~~does it~~ as all operations are said carried out ⁱⁿ his name.

80) ^{by} ~~in~~ the light of his experience, Mr. Hiên express the following very interesting comments on the current provincial taxes system:

a. The Exceptional Tax of Pacification hits the ~~outing~~ ^{and going} and coming of merchandises between My Tho and other provinces. In fact it constitutes a kind of internal custom duties, a leftover ^{from} of the French, ^{who} during the Independence war (1945-1954) ^{used it} in order to ^{foretell} impose products ^{from crossing} passing over the demarcation line of 2 zones. Logically, it ~~is to~~ ^{should} be abolished.

However, it now provides nearly half the amount of the receipts of My Tho and the Government should ^{give it some consideration} ~~think over.~~ ^{before abolishing it.}

b. Prior to 1945 Land Taxes constituted the main source of income for the then Cochinchina (South VN) Government. Since

1945, ~~as~~ most of ^{the} landlords ^{have} collected no rent, similarly the government ^{has} collected no taxes. ~~So far it was so.~~ The Province chief has just received directives to ^{require} ~~make~~ the farmers ^{to} pay taxes from now on.

c. In normal peace time, ^{delinquent} ~~feeling~~ tax payers are ^{subject to} ~~liable~~ of the following successive procedures:

- warning
- free summons
- charged summons
- legal prosecution
- legal seizing
- adjudication of the land.

Since 1945 none of ^{the} landlords ^{have been} was involved in any of these procedures. It means ^{that} a great deal of landlords owe the government for a ^{rather large} ~~pretty big~~ amount of money. On the other hand the Agrarian Reform Program is now moving ^{into} ~~over~~ its decisive phase which consists ~~of~~ purchasing the land from the landlords and distributing it to the farmers. The Government then may ~~recall the owed taxes and~~ deduct ^{the delinquent taxes} ~~them~~ from the land purchase price.

d. Declarations on which the Bureau bases ^{the} ~~to~~ collect ^{of} ~~indirect~~ taxes, are false most the time. The Bureau needs a team of ~~investigators,~~ ^{checkers,}

e. Up to a very recent date taxes on entertainments were collected on ^a ~~contractual~~ basis. They are now collected by stamping the tickets. They profit ^{at} ~~to~~ the paupers' ~~expense,~~

Disposition?

Why? from now on.

?

f. Mr. Hiên foresees a dropping ~~down~~ⁱⁿ of the receipts for 1957 because:

- ~~the~~ rice quotations are going down .
- ~~the~~ aliens are forbidden to ~~hold~~^{engage in} 11 professions. A great deal of the Chinese are involved in this prohibition.