

June 13, 1958

M. Vo van Hai  
Chef du Cabinet Particulier du President  
Presidence de la Republique  
Saigon, Vietnam

Dear Hai:

At last we have completed our long and relaxing journey home and once again are getting settled in our house. The trip from Saigon to Lansing was most enjoyable, albeit a bit tiring (traveling with four children was never recommended as an aid to a pleasant vacation).

We were not able to make contact with your Ambassador in Paris, although I telephoned the embassy three times in an effort to get together with him. One of the Vietnamese whom I did see during my trip was Mr. Duong Vinh Mau, whom you will recall is the only Vietnamese who has not returned directly to Vietnam after completing his work at Michigan State. Perhaps by this time you or the Direction of Plan have received a letter from Mr. Mau in which he explains his reason for staying this long in France and tells you, as he assured me, that he will return to Vietnam either in June or October, after he completes his doctoral examinations. It took me three days of searching to locate Mr. Mau, but I think the time was well spent, for his reactions on certain subjects were remarkably similar to those I encountered in other Vietnamese students in France. I shall write to the President on this score within the next day or so for I feel that this situation is one on which he has not been well informed.

President Hannah asked me yesterday if something could be done to facilitate the securing of hunting permits for a prominent citizen of Michigan and his grandson who wish to hunt in Vietnam sometime during the period of December, 1958--April, 1959. Briefly, the story is this. Mr. Lewis Zimmerman (Traverse City Livestock Commission House, P.O. Box 28, Traverse City, Michigan) is a former member of the Legislature of the State of Michigan and is a well known Livestock Commission merchant. Mr. Zimmerman is also a devotee of big game hunting. On December 18, 1957, attracted by a notice in an American sports magazine concerning big game hunting in Vietnam, Mr. Zimmerman wrote to what he refers to as the "Hunting Bureau of the Vietnam Government" in Saigon asking for hunting permits for himself and his grandson David Zimmerman, age 11. To date, he has received no reply. He has also written to Ambassador Chuong in Washington for assistance, but you and I know what a long and devious route lies between the Ambassador in Washington and the securing of his hunting license in Saigon. In his letter to Ambassador Chuong, Mr. Zimmerman gave a number of names as references, including President Hannah and two members of the United States Congress who are his personal friends.

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He has hunted game from the polar regions to the equator and is well known in American sporting circles. It seems to me altogether desirable that such a man be encouraged to fulfill his desire of hunting big game in Vietnam, especially if your Government is as sincere as I believe it to be in wanting to develop the tourist industry in Vietnam.

If it is not too much trouble, could you take a moment to look into this matter? I feel sure that what has happened is that his application is setting on the desk of someone who has not yet decided what is to be done with it. Perhaps a bit of encouragement from your office would produce the necessary authorization for him.

The cause of Vietnam in the United States seems to me to be in for some difficulty in the days ahead. I am going to Washington and New York this weekend and expect to contact my friends in various agencies and offices in an effort to develop a method of averting the bad publicity I am afraid you will be getting. We shall have a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Friends' of Vietnam in New York next Wednesday and perhaps something will come of that session.

Very best wishes to your lovely wife and to all our friends,

Sincerely,

  
Wesley R. Fishel

WRF/abr