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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

7 March 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans (OIR)
Colonel H. J. Lemley, Jr., USA (AC/SI)
Captain B. E. Wiggin, USN (ONI)
Colonel Willis B. Sawyer, USAF (AFOIN-2B2)
Colonel Charles H. Dayhuff, Jr., USA (JIG)

SUBJECT : NIE 63-56: Probable Developments in North
and South Vietnam Through Mid-1957

1. The attached terms of reference were agreed on at the meeting of the IAC representatives on Tuesday, 6 March.
2. All agencies are invited to contribute to any section within their competence to do so.
3. It is requested that contributions be received in this office by the close of business on Friday, 11 May 1956.

Paul A. Borel

PAUL A. BOREL
Deputy Assistant Director
National Estimates

Distribution "B"

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

7 March 1956

SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE 63-56: PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS
IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM THROUGH MID-1957 *

THE PROBLEM

To analyze the current political, economic, and military situation
in North and South Vietnam and to estimate probable developments through/
mid-1957.

I. THE COMMUNIST POSITION IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM

A. Strength and Weaknesses of the DRV

1. What changes, if any, have taken place since the publication of NIE 63.1-55 with respect to the following:
 - a. Popular attitudes and the effectiveness of DRV controls in North Vietnam
 - b. The identity and the respective roles and influence of DRV leaders
 - c. DRV relations with other Communist countries

* This estimate will supercede NIE 63.1-55 and NIE 63.1-3-55

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- d. DRV relations with non-Communist countries
 - e. The DRV attitude toward the Geneva agreements, in particular the holding of all-Vietnam elections and the ICC?
- 2. What is the economic situation in North Vietnam?
 - 3. What are the present strengths and capabilities of the military and security forces of the DRV? What significant trends, if any, have been observed in the disposition, training, indoctrination, and development of the armed forces?
- B. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Viet Minh in South Vietnam.
- 1. What are the strengths and capabilities of the Viet Minh political and military forces in South Vietnam? What is the geographical pattern of Viet Minh strength and resources in the South?
 - 2. What progress, if any, has the Viet Minh made in South Vietnam toward infiltrating and subverting the government, the military and security forces, the non-Communist political groups, and the sects?

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3. What are present Viet Minh courses of action in South Vietnam? What preparations, if any, are in progress for other possible types of action?
- C. What changes, if any, are likely in North Vietnam through mid-1957 with respect to:
1. political developments
 2. economic developments
 3. military strengths and capabilities
 4. the international position and foreign relations of the DRV, particularly with respect to the other countries of Southeast Asia, France, the Soviet Union, and Communist China
 5. political, subversive, and military capabilities in South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia?

II. THE NON-COMMUNIST POSITION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

- A. Since the publication of NIE 63.1-3-55 what significant developments have taken place with respect to the following:
- a. Diem's position in South Vietnam, in terms of popular support, organization of his supporters, and his acceptance as a nationalist leader.

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- b. Organized opposition from the non-Communist sources. What is the influence and significance of expatriate anti-Diem groups in France and elsewhere?
- c. The effectiveness of the South Vietnamese government.
- d. The development of government control mechanisms and their effect on popular attitudes.
- e. The establishment of an assembly and adoption of a constitution. What are the popular attitudes toward the recent elections? The constitution? What will be the effect of the Constitution on the political stability of the country?

B. Security

- 1. What are the strengths and capabilities of the various components of the military and security forces?
- 2. What is the internal security situation in South Vietnam? What is the extent and nature of the threat posed at present by the sects and by the Viet Minh? By what measures and programs and how effectively is the government dealing with the security threat

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posed by the sects and by the Viet Minh within South Vietnam? What is the situation with respect to cooperation between government security organizations and the villagers? Has belief in the survival of a non-Communist state strengthened in the past year? Is the general populace willing to support openly the present government in the face of Communist pressures and propaganda? What factors are important in this situation?

3. To what extent are military leaders involved in political affairs? To what extent is the military loyal to Diem? In what manner does the military contribute to political stability? To instability? What is the status of integrated sect military leaders and troops?

C. The Economic Situation

1. What is the present economic situation? What are the major economic problems confronting the government? To what extent is the government aware of these problems and what programs are planned or have been initiated to deal with them?

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2. To what extent has the economic situation influenced political developments? contributed to political instability? increased the opportunities for Communist agitation and subversion?

D. External Relations

1. What is the status of South Vietnam's relations with the US? What is Diem's attitude toward the US and the various US programs to assist South Vietnam? Towards SEATO?
2. What is the status of South Vietnam's relations with France? What is the extent and nature of French influence, responsibility and commitments in South Vietnam?
3. What problems exist in South Vietnam's relations with Cambodia and Laos?
4. Relations with other non-Communist countries?
5. What is the attitude of the Diem government with respect to the Geneva Agreements? the International Control Commission? What is Diem's policy toward the DRV? unification of Vietnam? all-Vietnam elections?

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III. SOUTH VIETNAM THROUGH MID-1957

- A. What are the prospects for the development of increased political stability in South Vietnam?
1. What are the prospects that Diem will remain as a leader? That his government will become more effective? That it will induce general loyalty to itself as representing Vietnamese nationalist aspirations?
 2. What situation would be created if Diem, for whatever reason, were removed from power? Who might succeed him. What policies might be followed?
 3. What trends are likely in the political development of the South Vietnamese? What types of political groups will develop? What will be their motivations? their leaders? What policy will the government follow with respect to political groups and the expression of political views? To what extent will the military leaders become involved in political affairs?
 4. How will the government deal with its major problems? In particular how effective will it be in dealing with the refugees, agrarian reform, the sects, the Viet Minh and in extending its authority throughout the country?

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- B. What are the prospects for increased effectiveness of the South Vietnamese military and security forces? That they can largely eliminate the sect military forces? That they can seriously disrupt if not destroy the Viet Minh organization in South Vietnam? Effectiveness against aggression?
- C. What are the prospects for economic development?
- D. What will be the international reactions if no action is taken with respect to holding over-all elections in Vietnam?
- E. What courses of action are the Viet Minh likely to follow in their effort to gain control of South Vietnam? What successes are they likely to achieve? In what manner will their actions in South Vietnam affect and be affected by the situation within North Vietnam and actions with respect to Laos and Cambodia?
- F. What developments are likely in South Vietnamese relations with the US, the French, and other non-Communist countries? What will be the likely trends of French political, military, and economic influence in South Vietnam? What will be the future role of the ICC? the Geneva powers?

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IV. POST-MORTEM

1. What major intelligence deficiencies exist in our coverage of Vietnam?
2. What recommendations have you for meeting these?

V. VALIDITY STUDY

Briefly, what is your assessment of the validity of the major conclusions of NIE 63.1-55 and NIE 63.1-3-55?

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