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**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**

4 September 1967

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** The Honorable Walt W. Rostow  
Special Assistant to the President,  
The White House

**SUBJECT:** General Vanuxem's Comments to  
Ambassador Lodge

**REFERENCES:** A. Saigon Embassy Telegram 4867 (NoDis)  
B. Saigon Embassy Telegram 4868 (NoDis)

1. General Vanuxem was one of Marshal de Lattre's most dashing and colorful young colonels and made a great military name for himself during the Franco-Viet Minh War, principally as the commander of Group Mobile 3 operating in the Red River delta. A fine military officer, he is not noted for political sophistication. He is bitterly anti de Gaulle and believed to have had ties with the OAS.

2. On the rice issue, China has and continues to supply North Vietnam with rice. In recent years China has been the major source of North Vietnam's rice imports. The full extent of such deliveries in the past and at present is not known--only sketchy material is available on seaborne and rail cargoes from China to North Vietnam. It is possible that transport disruptions and other activities associated with the cultural revolution have upset delivery timetables or reduced deliveries. Chinese exports elsewhere, however, have been affected very little.

3. This year we have noted a striking increase in North Vietnam's import of foodstuffs from Communist countries. During the first half of 1967 about 220,000 tons was delivered, compared to about 30,000 tons in the first half of 1966. If China has reduced its rice shipments, other Communist countries may be making up for such losses by growing deliveries of other grains and foods. Imports, however, are only a

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small part of food supplies in North Vietnam. Food allocations in North Vietnam do not appear to have been cut in recent months. Reports indicate, however, the substitution of other grains for part of the rice ration. We have received no unusual reports of food deficiencies in North Vietnam.

4. Even if Vanuxem could raise a three division force of French Mercenaries, which we doubt, it would be hard to envisage a military unit whose introduction into the Vietnam conflict would have more unfortunate political consequences. Any US employment of French mercenaries would be a propaganda windfall of major proportions for Hanoi and would be an act our South Vietnamese allies would almost certainly consider politically unacceptable.

5. Any significant land invasion of North Vietnam would greatly increase the risk of direct Chinese intervention in the Vietnam conflict with major ground forces.

6. In short, we are very much in accord with Ambassador Bunker's comments as expressed in Reference B.



George A. Carver, Jr.  
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

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