

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
OFFICE OF THE NAVAL ATTACHÉ  
SAIGON

**SECRET**

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IN REPLY REFER TO

BN3-11/EF6  
RSB:hgl  
Serial: 001-56  
18 January 1956

From: U.S. Naval Attache, Saigon  
To: Director of Naval Intelligence

Subj: Recent conversation with French Commander, French  
Naval Forces Far East

1. Recently Vice Admiral Jozan, Commander French Naval Forces Far East, invited the U.S. Naval Attache to come to his office for a private and frank conversation about "problems". For about forty minutes the Admiral expressed himself at times quite emotionally and outspokenly on a long and already well known list of problems and issues affecting French relations with the Vietnamese and Americans. It is his opinion that as things are now going Vietnam may soon be lost unless the cumulative rubs and resentments, which have built up a "great and tragic misunderstanding" between French and Americans, and which have resulted from serious mistakes on both sides, can be aired and resolved and a new spirit of cooperation engendered. He regards US policy in Vietnam as aimed at shouldering the French out entirely and encouraging the Vietnamese to do the same as expeditiously and unceremoniously as possible. Not only is this an unnecessary affront to the French who have contributed so much, but a short sighted and tragic mistake because by virtue of their long experience in Indo-China, the French still have much to offer in an advisory capacity to both the Vietnamese and the Americans. He hopes that the Americans may realize and acknowledge this before it is too late.

2. As for Diem, he is OK, but those closest to him are not to be trusted, being out to play the French off against Americans, and may eventually turn against Americans too.

3. No attempt was made by the NA to rebut or argue out any of the points raised, no matter how controversial.

4. This invitation was not unexpected. It has been noted lately that the Admiral has been anxious to talk about his "problems" to any American who will lend an ear, from Admiral Radford on down.

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Now it seems that he may have decided or gotten the word that he himself has been a little too difficult, especially in TRIM matters, and wants to get the word around that he is ready to be more cooperative. He has since invited the Chief MAAG, the Naval Attache and top French and US Navy officers of TRIM to luncheon, apparently to further this idea.

  
R.S. BROOKINGS II

Copy to:  
Ambassador  
Chief MAAG