

up the training from the French. CINCPAC has requested in his 062352Z of 6 April that additional personnel over and above the present ceiling reach Viet-Nam in June of this year.

Other aspects of the problem of the ceiling include a request from President Diem for additional Army instructors at the Viet-Nam military academy, a proposal by CINCPAC to transfer underway training of the Vietnamese Navy from Subic Bay to Viet-Nam, and the current difficulty in operating MAAG and TERM efficiently within their present ceilings.

An increase in MAAG strength to achieve a rapid improvement in the effectiveness of Vietnamese forces to compensate for the withdrawal of French forces is considered a matter of urgency. While the French have withdrawn approximately 190,000 regular troops from Viet-Nam since the Geneva Agreement was signed the Viet Minh have continuously reorganized and re-equipped their forces during the same period so as to increase their regular combat strength from six to eighteen divisions. These forces have a capability of conducting combat operations at Corps level. The Vietnamese Army consists of ten divisions which are in the early stages of training at regimental and division level. The current military situation requires that the Vietnamese armed forces expeditiously attain a satisfactory level of combat effectiveness.

In view of the forthcoming visit of President Diem to Washington on May 8th, 9th, and 10th and of the impending training crises for the Vietnamese Navy and Air Force I recommend that steps be taken as a matter of urgency to secure the necessary international concurrences in the abolition of the ceiling on MAAG Viet-Nam. I feel it might be desirable to have this problem resolved, if possible, prior to the arrival of President Diem in Washington so that he could be informed at that time of our plans to assist him in the training of his Navy and Air Force.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Mansfield D. Sprague

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