

regarding USA plans. If his approach calls for comment on your part, paragraphs 3 and 5 of our Y-337 continue to represent line we are taking on this subject.

2. For your information we were told last week by USA Embassy that the one hundred additional military personnel (i.e. original figure mentioned by Americans) were already in Vietnam and regular notification procedures had been used.

743.

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*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Ambassador in United States
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 1909

Washington, June 15, 1961

SECRET. OPIMMEDIATE.

Reference: Our Tel 1805 Jun 6.†

Repeat for Information: London, Laosdel Geneva (OpImmediate), Paris (Priority), Delhi, Saigon (Priority) from Ottawa.

VIETNAM — MAAG INCREASE

You may have noticed press reports of June 14 referring to the visit to Washington of Nguyen Dinh Thuan, Vietnamese Secretary of State for Security Coordination. He is reported to have delivered a letter to President Kennedy from President Diem concerning an increase in military and economic aid to Vietnam. He is also said to have indicated that USA officials, including the President himself, had been sympathetic to Vietnamese proposals, which he said would require the presence of more Americans in Vietnam. USA Defence Department officials are quoted as saying that no repeat no final decision had been reached on one of the central points in the Vietnamese proposals, namely that USA provide instructors who would train Vietnamese forces directly. The reports indicate that under the present system training is done by Vietnamese instructors who have been trained by USA specialists.

2. It would seem from these press reports that public interest in the question of an increase in the MAAG in Vietnam will be intensified. In particular the question of the position of the ICSC for Vietnam on any possible increases in the MAAG may be raised in public discussion. Heretofore there have been, so far as we are aware, only the allegations of the DRVN régime to cope with.

3. As you know this Embassy has not repeat not made any direct response to Assistant Secretary McConaughy's notification to us on May 15 that an increase in the MAAG was contemplated. We realize that there have been some informal discussions with USA Embassy in Ottawa and in Saigon. (Your telegram Y-337 of June 5 and Y-357 June 14.) On the other hand there has been considerable uncertainty as to the scope of the increase in the MAAG (see for instance, Saigon's telegram 140 June 12). Perhaps associated with the ultimate size of the increase, if it is decided to increase it beyond the figure indicated by McConaughy, there seems to be some uncertainty as to whether there is an intention to regard some or all of the Ceasefire Agreement inapplicable.

4. It seems to us, particularly in the light of the public interest that may now be generated in this question, that it might be useful to put our views more formally on the record with the appropriate USA authorities, either in Washington or elsewhere if that were thought preferable. What concerns us is that if a substantial increase in the MAAG is being planned (i.e. beyond the theoretical limit mentioned in your Y-277 of May 17) it would seem essential