A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of


U.S. OPERATIONS MISSIONS

Series A: Mission to Vietnam

A UPA Collection

from

LexisNexis®

U.S. OPERATIONS MISSIONS
Series A: Mission to Vietnam

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A UPA Collection from

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Note</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorial Note</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reel Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reel</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reel 1</td>
<td>“A” through “C”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reels 2–3</td>
<td>“C” cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 4</td>
<td>“C” cont. through “E”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 5</td>
<td>“E” cont. through “F”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 6</td>
<td>“F” cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 7</td>
<td>“H” through “O”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 8</td>
<td>“P”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reels 9–11</td>
<td>“P” cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 12</td>
<td>“P” cont. through “R”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 13</td>
<td>“R” cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reel 14</td>
<td>“R” cont. through “S”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

U.S. Operations Mission to Vietnam

As colonial empires disintegrated during and after World War II, revolutionary movements swept across Asia. In British India, Dutch Indonesia, French Indochina, and the former U.S.-controlled Philippines, nationalist movements, some with a Marxist hue, pressed for political and social change. The U.S. government initially hoped that it might stabilize the region by bolstering friendly, anti-Communist regimes. But the inability of Europe’s colonial powers to extinguish the discontent led U.S. officials to conclude that direct intervention, mainly in the form of economic and military assistance to anti-Communist allies, would be necessary.

It is impossible to understand Washington’s policy in Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia after World War II without a delineation of U.S. interests in the region. American activism in the Far East dates back to the 1840s and 1850s when U.S. clipper ships first participated in the lucrative Asian trade. It accelerated greatly at the turn of the century when Washington lent support to U.S. businesses and the growing number of Protestant missionaries operating in China and Japan, and Washington acquired the Philippines as a colony as a consequence of the Spanish-American War. World War II and the cold war significantly deepened U.S. interests.

Policy makers were impressed by Southeast Asia’s strategic location, astride vital communications and transportation routes between the Indian and Pacific Oceans and suitable for allied air and naval bases. They also observed that the area’s natural resources—rubber, tin, tungsten, and oil—were all in short supply and critical to the U.S.-led postwar world economy. The food and raw material producing territories of Southeast Asia were especially viewed as integral to Japan’s economic revitalization.

American leaders viewed events in Asia through a global prism. The weakening of French colonial rule in Indochina, in their estimation, seriously threatened political stability in France itself—and jeopardized not only French postwar reconstruction, but European recovery as a whole. Thus, everything in the world seemed somehow interconnected. The containment of communism in Europe could not succeed without a similar effort in Asia, and a stable Asia could not be achieved without a strong non-Communist Europe. Thus, Washington’s inordinate fear of Soviet communism, all across the globe, became the driving force behind policy toward Asia. The global perspective often led U.S. leaders to oversimplify Asia’s unique challenges.

It was President Dwight D. Eisenhower who coined the well-known “domino theory,” which posited that the fall of one Southeast Asian state to communism would lead to Communist successes elsewhere. Yet as early as the late 1940s, the United States assumed that the weakening of one link threatened the whole Pacific chain. Perceiving communism as a monolithic force to be feared and contained, the United States failed to grasp how diverse national interests and Asian cultures mitigated against regional unity and Soviet control. Vietnam and China, for example, shared a
long history of mutual animosity and a hotly contested geographic border that strained relations throughout the cold war.

From Washington’s early postwar vantage point, however, the area seemed to suffer a coherent and eminently solvable set of problems. Colonial economies had been geared to the production of raw materials for the metropolitan power and stymied industrial development. It had also intensified inequalities between the landed elite and rural poor, and exacerbated ethnic and religious divisions. And decolonization had undermined political authority altogether. Together, these shockwaves created an environment conducive to communism.

President Truman became the first chief executive to involve the United States in the Indochinese quagmire when he recognized the ex-Emperor Bao Dai as the head of a new and ostensibly independent Vietnam in February 1950. Despite Bao Dai’s record of collaboration with both Japanese and prewar French authorities, and his lack of a popular following, Washington promoted the emperor as a nationalist alternative to Ho Chi Minh. Most Vietnamese, however, dismissed him as a French puppet, and the conflict raged on. In May 1950, Truman took another momentous step when he approved a Joint Chiefs of Staff recommendation that the United States send military aid directly to French forces in Vietnam.

Also during the first half of 1950, two U.S. aid missions surveyed conditions in the region and reported to Washington what additional assistance should be rendered. The first, led by Allen Griffin, focused on economics. Unlike Western Europe and Japan, which had already industrialized but needed postwar reconstruction, most of Asia remained “less developed.” Dependent on agriculture and mining, the newly emerged areas yearned for economic transformation. Most Asian leaders envisioned an “Asian Marshall Plan,” that would include massive funds for industrialization, transportation and communications networks, educational improvements, and the creation of modern banking and government administration. In light of America’s global commitments, and the overwhelming task at hand, the Griffin Survey recommended only modest outlays, mainly for rural health care, agricultural seed, fertilizer, and the like. The dollar transfers would be managed by the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) through operations missions to the individual countries. These transfers would be supplemented by local currency “counterpart funds,” raised through the sale of U.S.-donated food grains, agricultural equipment, and other commodities. Following congressional passage of the president’s Point Four program for developing areas in 1950, the Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA) assumed responsibility for sending agricultural and economic advisers to the region, also responsible to the individual U.S. operations missions.

This collection consists of the records of various agencies established after World War II to control and direct U.S. foreign economic and technical assistance programs and to coordinate mutual security activities with foreign countries. These agencies included the ECA, Mutual Security Agency, TCA, Foreign Operations Administration, and International Cooperation Administration. In 1961, functions from all of these agencies were transferred to the Agency for International Development.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Washington’s inordinate fear of Soviet communism, all across the globe, became the driving force behind U.S. policy toward Asia. The collection demonstrates how this global perspective often led U.S. leaders to underestimate Asia’s unique challenges or to view Asia’s challenges through European eyes. This collection documents both U.S. impetus and resolve in fixing the problems of an emerging Asia. Concerned that decolonization created an environment conducive to communism, U.S. agencies stepped in, offering economic, technical, and security-related assistance. The documentation in this collection stimulates thought on how Washington’s cold war approach may have contributed to political and civil strife in the region.

*Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–1961, U.S. Operations Missions, Series A: Mission to Vietnam, Part 1: Office of the Director’s Subject Files, 1950–1954,* consists of unique records of U.S. agencies established to intervene in Vietnam—the country U.S. foreign policy deemed a lynchpin in the free world’s fight against communism. The Subject Files from the Office of the Director, U.S. Operations Missions, document the myriad concerns and rationales that went into the control and direction of U.S. economic and technical assistance programs, as well as the coordination of mutual security activities, with respect to Vietnam. Documents from the Economic Cooperation Administration, the Mutual Security Agency, the Technical Cooperation Administration, the Foreign Operations Administration, and the International Cooperation Administration are all featured in this publication.
SOURCE NOTE

This microform publication consists of documents from RG 469, Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–1961, Foreign Country Offices, Mission to Vietnam: Office of the Director, Subject Files, Entry 1430, at the National Archives, College Park, Md.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Sixteen of the seventy-six boxes of declassified materials in the records of the Mission to Vietnam comprise Part 1: Office of the Director's Subject Files, 1950–1954. These materials relate primarily to the administration and coordination of America's aid efforts. Part 1 includes such diverse topics as administration, agriculture, commodities, education, currency and exchange control, counterpart program, public works, and relief. There are also materials on North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The subjects are arranged in alphabetical order, with individual documents in chronological order. All of the open and declassified materials have been microfilmed. All documents, comprising boxes 1–16 in Part 1 have been filmed as they are arranged at the National Archives and in their entirety. Subsequent parts to Series A of LexisNexis's Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–1961, U.S. Operations Missions, will include the remaining boxes in the Mission to Vietnam records.
ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used three or more times in this guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEA</td>
<td>American Economic Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECA</td>
<td>Economic Cooperation Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOA</td>
<td>Foreign Operations Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>Fiscal Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSA</td>
<td>Mutual Security Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USOM</td>
<td>U.S. Operations Mission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REEL INDEX

The following is a listing of the folders that compose *Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–1961: U.S. Operations Missions, Series A: Mission to Vietnam, Part 1: Office of the Director Subject Files, 1950–1954*. The four-digit number on the far left is the frame at which a particular file folder begins. This is followed by the file title, the date(s) of the file, and the number of pages. Substantive issues are highlighted under the heading *Major Topics*. Major Topics are listed in the order in which they appear on the film and each topic is listed only once for each folder.

Reel 1

*Frame No.*

“A” through “C”


   *Major Topics*: Agriculture, health, and education projects; new codification of projects; mission activities.

   *Major Topics*: Transportation and public works; maps of Indochina.

   *Major Topics*: Living quarters, office space, and facilities; vehicles, transportation, and travel; changes in and recruitment of personnel; payment for inlay portrait of Dr. Lyman and family; administrative support personnel, costs, and services.

   *Major Topics*: Mutual Security Agency personnel and organization; communications via mail, cable, and airgram; travel and diplomatic passports; mission staff development program.


   *Major Topics*: Personnel requirements and responsibilities; program of the FOA in the Far East.

   *Major Topic*: Mission administrative publications.

   Major Topics: Landlord tenancy law for Cochin China; American Aid chemical fertilizer and tools; irrigation/hydraulics.

   Major Topic: Veterinary supplies and equipment.


   Major Topic: Public health personnel.


   Major Topics: Cold storage; bottling works.

   Major Topic: American aid to Indochina.

   Major Topics: Equipment procurement; personnel requirements and recruitment.


   Major Topics: Coastal vessel procurement; Laotian request for establishment of electric power generating stations.

Reel 2

“C” cont.

   Major Topic: Executive order setting up Committee for American Economic Aid.

   Major Topic: Funds.

   Major Topic: Construction of artisan and commercial sector.

0053  Committee Communications. February–December 1951. 79pp.  
   Major Topics: Exchange of information between diplomatic missions and STEMs; communications procedure.

  Major Topics: Asbestos used in public housing project; asphalt used in road
  construction; vehicles; cotton; DDT for Public Health Service antimalaria project.

  Major Topics: Fertilizer; generators; hospital/medical supplies; assembly of huts;
  agriculture and farming machines.

  Major Topic: Requirements, requests, shipments, and disposition.

  Major Topic: “Saigon” heated coating station.

Reel 3

“C” cont.

  Major Topics: Requirements and distribution; rock and petroleum asphalt; road
  construction.

  Major Topics: Power plant; procurement of electrical generators.

  Major Topic: Inspection and purchase of salvage tires.

0382 Commodities—Vehicles and Motorized Equipment. November 1951–June
  1953. 23pp.

  Major Topics: Government financing and balance of payments; National Service of
  Cooperative Agricultural and Artisanal Credit; counterpart fund small loans
  program; commercial import program; Cambodian Rural Credit office; equipment
  and vehicles; Vietnamese economics and finance.

  Major Topic: Army reorganization.


  Major Topic: Excess telephone wire.

0794 Community Development Programs. October 1950–May 1951. 32pp.
  Major Topics: Philippines and Greece; employment development.
*Major Topic:* Cooley Associates refrigeration plant.

*Major Topic:* Construction.

*Major Topics:* Dr. Jacques Blaizot’s hospital surveys; delivery of vehicles.


Reel 4

“C” cont. through “E”

*Major Topics:* Pacification program for North Vietnam; administration of technical and economic aid; promotion, reassignment, and recruitment of personnel; special account of counterpart funds; study tours and visits to Philippines and U.S.; housing; construction and engineering; public health and sanitation; colonization problems of southern mountain area; improvement of policies, programming, and methods; discussions of USOM with Vietnamese officials.

*Major Topics:* Type A technical assistance projects involving Americans training overseas and Vietnamese training in U.S.; contract in public administration between Vietnam government and Michigan State College.

*Major Topics:* Revised contract in public administration between Vietnam government and Michigan State College; popular education and elementary teaching; equipment of artisan center at Ha Dong; distribution of American Aid cotton yarn; reequipment of National Artisan School at Hanoi; extension of equipment of the School for the Blind; equipment of the preparatory class of the National School of Art and Profession; equipment of the Industrial School in Haiphong.

*Major Topics:* Supervisory training; popular and technical education; malaria survey teams; summary of Type A projects; technical assistance; North Vietnam Committee on American Aid conference.

Reel 5

“E” cont. through “F”

*Major Topic:* AEA committee meeting regarding aid to South Vietnam.
Major Topics: War Relief Program; stocks of Fibro-Cement in provinces and refugee reception centers; evacuation, housing, and resettlement of North Vietnamese refugees; medical supplies and relief; Jeeps, food, and tents for relief.

Major Topics: School construction; working class children; popular education program.

Major Topics: Construction equipment; Electric Auto-Lite parts and services; procurement of heavy equipment; funding of public works equipment and projects; steam rollers; course on highway improvement and utilization.

0591 Equipment and Supplies. April–September 1951. 27pp.
Major Topic: Administrative equipment.

Major Topics: War relief and rehabilitation programs in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia; USOM controller responsibilities and functions; general and community development projects.

Major Topics: Piastre study; procurement of local currency and exchange control; records of checks cashed by U.S. personnel.

Major Topics: Housing and furnishing costs; travel expenses; allotment of funds; personal services costs.

Reel 6

“F” cont.

Major Topics: Personal service and staffing plan; local currency utilization.

Major Topics: Establishment of Vietnamese Credit Office; loan program for agriculture, artisans, and small industry; health and sanitation, agriculture, transportation, communications and power, and education and schools counterpart project descriptions.

0235 Funds. September 1952–April 1953. 43pp.
Major Topic: Listing of TAAs and purchase authorization numbers for FY 1953.

Major Topics: FY 1954 counterpart loans program; health and sanitation projects.
Frame No.

0342 Funds (Folder 2 of 2). March 1952–January 1953. 74pp. [Folder 1 of 2 missing in original box.]
   Major Topics: Economic counsel; plan to improve equipment and develop economy in Laos; tables of equipment.


0436 Funds—Budget. 1952. 9pp.

   Major Topic: Health and sanitation, agriculture and natural resources, and transportation, communication, and power projects.

   Major Topic: Programs for Laos and Cambodia.

   Major Topic: Health and sanitation, education and schools, agriculture and natural resources, and transportation, communication, and power projects.

   Major Topics: Tables of approved projects; administrative control of funds available under Bureau of Budget approved apportionments.

Reel 7

“H” through “O”

   Major Topic: Public health meeting.

   Major Topics: AEA low-cost housing construction projects; administration of AEA low-cost housing projects by the National Office for Reconstruction; drainage systems.


   Major Topic: Vietnamese newspaper.

   Major Topics: Report on AEA; emergency relief for Vietnamese refugees in Xieng Khouang; FY 1954 FOA program.

   Major Topic: Local currency projects.

   Major Topic: Relief distribution.
   Major Topics: Evacuation plan; war relief and rehabilitation projects; construction and inauguration of Khoai-Lac village for refugees; AEA committee meeting.

   Major Topics: Vietnamese complaints against AEA programs; Harold R. Isaacs’ article on the flaws of American policy in Vietnam.

   Major Topics: Mr. Tep Youth’s visit to U.S. for conference on land tenure; U.S. Representative Isador Lubin’s statement on land reform problems challenging the free world; Official Bulletin of South Vietnam regarding land/agricultural reform.

   Major Topics: Relief and rehabilitation program; AEA committee meeting.

   Major Topic: Committee for a Free Asia.

Reel 8

“P”

   Major Topic: Program of AEA to the Pays Montage Sud.

   Major Topics: Federal employment applications for review; Community Development personnel recruitment and responsibilities; reorganization since development of refugee project.

   Major Topics: MSA personnel action requests and position descriptions; statutory position review requirements; instructions for using form MSA-6 AIRPAR.

   Major Topic: Requests to establish new positions.

   Major Topic: Mission organization and staffing.

   Major Topics: Currency exchange and check cashing; commissary products; vaccines and treatment available at the dispensary.

   Major Topics: Staffing; housing.
   Major Topics: Monthly medical reports from and activities of health unit in Saigon; use and costs of hospitalization in Hong Kong.

   Major Topic: Certificates of employment.

   Major Topics: Salary and overtime adjustment; appointments, promotions, and resignations.

   Major Topic: Travel regulations and allowances.


Reel 9

   “P” cont.

   Major Topics: Pay and allowances; employee separation policies and procedures; housing.

   Major Topics: Responsibilities and functions; rural community improvement.

   Major Topics: Recruitment and replacement of administrative assistants and experts; position reclassifications; staffing patterns.

   Major Topics: Administrative assistant recruitment; replacement of existing personnel; staffing patterns; personnel shortage.

   Major Topics: Administrative assistant and expert recruitment; staffing patterns; position descriptions; staff lists.

   Major Topics: Reductions in personnel; administrative assistant vacancies and recruitment; position establishment and reclassification; additional personnel requests; staffing pattern.

   Major Topic: “Measures for the Economic Development of Under-Developed Countries.”
Major Topics: French Parliament debates on the political and military situations in Indochina; considerations on social, agrarian, and medical reform projects funded by AEA; international politics, nationalism, colonialism, and the Franco-Viet War in Vietnam.


Reel 10

“P” cont.

Major Topics: Vehicles; war relief and rehabilitation and refugee assistance records, information, and equipment; lumber and emergency supplies for Operation Exodus; housing and road construction equipment.


0307 Procurement Policy. August 1950–April 1951. 7pp.

Major Topics: Kem amendment to H.R. 3587 for appropriating funds to government activities and restricting U.S. trade with the Soviet bloc; control of exports to the Soviet bloc; equipment defined as arms, ammunition, and implements of war.

Major Topics: Agricultural, medical, construction, war relief, and communication equipment; vehicles.

0519 PCIAA—Import Licenses. February–August 1951. 73pp.
Major Topic: Regulations for commercial sector import program.

0592 PCIAA—Status Reports. April–September 1951. 80pp.
Major Topic: Import license returns and problems.

0672 Direct Aid Program (Section Applying to Comments Division). January–February 1954. 37pp.

Major Topics: U.S. economic and military assistance; agricultural and mining resources in Vietnam; industry in Vietnam; political and military pacification; reconstruction and equipment; revised ECA programming procedure; plan for Production Assistance and Productivity agency; congressional reference notes of FY 1952 economic aid programs; equipment plans; AEA programs.
Reel 11

“P” cont.

   Major Topic: Cooperative economic development in South and Southeast Asia.


   Major Topics: Economic and military aid programs; procedures, techniques and reports; program planning.


   Major Topic: Transportation.

   Major Topics: Economic development and technical assistance programs; principles presented by the MSA Advisory Committee on Underdeveloped Areas; direction of development in terms of industrialization and resources; means of financing development; organization of administration of development; amendment to Mutual Security Act regarding mutual cooperation between U.S. and country receiving aid.

   Major Topic: Administration of AEA.

   Major Topic: Health and sanitation.

   Major Topic: Refugee relief and rehabilitation plan.

   Major Topics: Improvement of government organization and services; International Institute of Administrative Sciences meetings.

   Major Topic: Pacification in North Vietnam.

   Major Topics: Extension of hospital; construction and maintenance of roads, public buildings, houses and defense posts; refugee villages and resettlement; installation of water tower.

   Major Topics: Pacification; village regroupment; “Great Villages” and Dong Quan publicity; construction of public buildings and posts of protection; installation of roads, drainage, power, and water supply.
Reel 12

“P” cont. through “R”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Reel 13

“R” cont.


Major Topics: Budget for refugee programs; relief supplies and equipment; refugee evacuation and resettlement plans; Emigration Project of Vietnam; pacification villages.


Major Topics: Relief supplies and equipment requests, distribution, and stockpiles; reconstruction program; agriculture groups.


Major Topic: New MSA code numbers.


Major Topics: AEA methods; need for aeronautical supplies; import programs.


Major Topics: Special Near East Refugee Survey Commission report on Arab refugees from Palestine; Vietnam National Aid Committee meetings; discussion of agriculture and natural resources, public works, artisans, health and sanitation, education, and relief and rehabilitation programs; Social Action Shock Program.


Major Topics: Visits to observe agriculture and natural resources, housing, relief and rehabilitation, education, and public works projects; press releases; weekly information conferences; Vietnam National Aid Committee meetings; refugee relief, public works, health and sanitation, artisan, agriculture, and natural resources and education projects; Emergency Relief National project and Social Action shock teams; land redistribution.


Major Topics: Community Development programs; war relief and rehabilitation.

Reel 14

“R” cont. through “S”


Major Topics: War relief and rehabilitation monthly narrative program reports; development of refugee villages.


Major Topics: War relief and rehabilitation projects; relief supplies and equipment; resettlement villages; regional program of AEA to South Vietnam.
   Major Topics: Outline plan for handling refugees; resettlement villages; evacuation, reception, and resettlement assistance; statement of Ho-Bao-Thanh regarding the resettlement of refugees from North Vietnam; workshop project for young girls.

   Major Topic: Pit-privies.

   Major Topics: Information about products available for export; low-cost housing units and construction of houses; diesel electric generator sets; Bailey bridging; forwarding product information to the Chamber of Commerce for inclusion in Weekly Bulletin; solicitation of sales representatives in Vietnam for Gleason Corporation and associate companies; Electric Auto-Lite; Union Wire Rope Corporation.

   Major Topics: MSA Act, Section 538 on small business and procedure; information about products available for export; soliciting products for use in Indochina; trucks and spare parts; steel products and nonferrous metals; forwarding production information to the Chamber of Commerce for inclusion in Weekly Bulletin; Winter-Weiss machinery trailers; pharmaceutical and chemical products; construction of textile mill; plumbing hardware; markets for Indochinese products in U.S.

   Major Topics: Survey of historical, geographical, economic, and social data from South Vietnam provinces; refugee resettlement; meetings of AEA Committee.

Reel 15

“S” cont. through “T”

   Major Topics: Construction of roads, housing, and public buildings; resettlement of refugees.

   Major Topics: FY 1953 status report on war relief and rehabilitation projects; electric generator sets; health and sanitation equipment; Official Bulletin on Railways in Vietnam.

   Major Topic: Technical assistance projects.

   Major Topics: Equipment for construction and installation; vehicles; relief supplies; tents for resettlement areas; supplies for Social Action Impact Program.
     Major Topics: Symposium on the purpose of technical assistance programs; technical training.

     Major Topics: Instructions for training program candidates; orientation for Type A participants; procedure plan; applications and recommendation letters; mechanical training program and equipment; heavy equipment technician training program; schools.


Reel 16

“T” cont. through “V”

     Major Topics: Construction, installation, and assistance programs in Dong Quan; civil aviation.

     Major Topic: AEA medical, construction and installation, and agriculture equipment and vehicles.

     Major Topics: FOA/W inspection team visit to observe and evaluate S.T.E.M. program; notes on administration and itinerary for Dr. Raymond Moyer, regional director for Far East.

     Major Topics: Inspections of refugee resettlement villages and reception centers; construction of housing, public buildings, and roads; technical and relief aid projects; war relief and rehabilitation program administration; estimated relief supply needs of refugees; reinstallation plans; study of resettlement installations and social welfare activities in the Philippines; observation of medical and training facilities in Malaya.

     Major Topics: Intelligence report on agreements between France and Indochina; manufacturing, mining, and other industry projects and equipment; Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement between U.S. and Indochina.

     Major Topics: Policies, procedures, and programs of the Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction in China; Post Report for Saigon, Vietnam; Survey of Livestock Production and Disease Control in Cambodia, Laos and Viet-Nam.

     Major Topics: Travel and overseas security; health and sanitation report on Laos; reports on agriculture, social action, and public works projects.
   Major Topics: Commendations and awards; communication via mail; travel regulations; security regulations; responsibilities of the USOM controller; agreement between the Office of Education and FOA; construction, medical, and agricultural supplies and equipment; Randall report on Foreign Economic Policy; Field Advisory Service of the ECA Mission to Greece; FOA Procedures for Furnishing Assistance to Participating Countries.

1269 Vietnam—General. February–December 1953
   Major Topic: Projects not receiving AEA.

   Major Topic: Biography and platform of Ngo Dinh Diem.
SUBJECT INDEX

The following index is a guide to the major topics in this microform publication. The first number after an entry refers to the reel, while the four-digit number following the colon refers to the frame number at which the subject begins. Hence, 6:0416 directs the researcher to Frame 0416 of Reel 6. By referring to the Reel Index, which constitutes the initial section of this guide, the researcher will find the folder title, inclusive dates, and a list of Major Topics, listed in the order in which they appear on the film.

Accounting
6: 0416

Administration
AEA 11: 0512
Far East office 1: 0490
general 1: 0001, 0110, 0294, 0490, 0572
intergovernmental negotiations 1: 0468
Office of Education–FOA agreement
16: 1015
regional director for Far East 16: 0267
support costs and services 1: 0140

Agreements, bilateral
economic, U.S. 1: 0574
France-Indochina 16: 0693
Mutual Defense Assistance—U.S.-Indochina 16: 0693

Agriculture and natural resources
development 11: 0312
fisheries 1: 0750
general 1: 0047, 0739; 6: 0075, 0445, 0709; 10: 0709; 13: 0230, 0579, 0728, 0898; 16: 0900
heavy equipment 2: 0449
irrigation 1: 0636
reform 9: 0857

Aid and assistance
transportation, in Dong Quan 16: 0001

AIRPAR
general 8: 0364, 0447
job descriptions 1: 0757

American Economic Aid (AEA)
Cambodian committee 2: 0001
committee meetings 7: 0425, 0853; 14: 0906
to Indochina 1: 0866
to Laos 7: 0289
methods 13: 0455
Pays Montage Sud 8: 0001
programs 10: 0709
to South Vietnam 5: 0001; 14: 0130
Vietnamese complaints against
programs 7: 0602

Animals
livestock production, disease control
16: 0791

Arms, ammunition, and implements of war
10: 0314

Army organization
3: 0741

Artisans
6: 0075; 13: 0579

Asphalt mixing plants
Cambodia 2: 0865

Bottling
1: 0837

Breweries
1: 0837

Budgets
for development 11: 0312
Dong Quan 12: 0610
general 1: 0866; 6: 0436
refugee programs 13: 0001

Children’s crèche
2: 0015

Cite Nguyen-Tri-Phuong
2: 0036
Cold storage
freezers 1: 0837
refrigeration, Cooley Associates 3: 0826

Colombo Plan
11: 0001

Colonization
general 9: 0857
problems in southern mountain area
4: 0001

Commendations and awards
general 16: 1015
Holiday, Herman 12: 0831
Jope, Clifford 12: 0831

Commissary
8: 0465

Committee for a Free Asia
7: 0920

Communications
general 1: 0294; 2: 0053; 3: 0767;
4: 0001; 6: 0075, 0445, 0709
Hue 3: 0909
mail 16: 1015
military 3: 0741
telecommunications 3: 0769

Community development
general 5: 0618; 8: 0364; 9: 0176;
13: 0927
personnel 8: 0036
programs in Philippines and Greece
3: 0794

Construction
Dong Quan 11: 0637, 0722; 12: 0001,
0038, 0145, 0238, 0293, 0340,
0537, 0610, 0742; 15: 0001;
16: 0001
drainage systems 7: 0045
general 2: 0036; 3: 0867; 4: 0001
housing 2: 0449; 7: 0045; 14: 0344;
16: 0378
public buildings 16: 0378
resettlement village 7: 0425
roads 3: 0001; 10: 0001; 16: 0378
schools 5: 0247; 12: 0140
supplies and equipment 2: 0229;
10: 0001
textile mill 14: 0604

Contracts
Anderson, Theodore 8: 0872
Cooley Associates 3: 0826
Johnson Division Company 3: 0867
Landis Brothers and Company, Ltd.
3: 0882
Little, Charles 8: 0872
Michigan State College 4: 0438, 0626
Sharp, Walter 8: 0872
Zisman, Joseph 8: 0872

Controller
functions and responsibilities 5: 0618;
16: 1015

Cooley Associates
refrigeration 3: 0826

Counterpart funds
administrative control 6: 0709
general 3: 0405; 4: 0001; 6: 0075, 0278,
0445, 0709
programs in Laos and Cambodia
6: 0614

Country allotment
11: 0059

Credit Office, Vietnam
loans program 6: 0075

Development
5: 0618

Diem, Ngo Dinh
16: 1308

Direct Aid Program
10: 0672

Dong Quan
committee meetings 11: 0637
film scenario 11: 0626
general 11: 0722; 12: 0001, 0038, 0140,
0145, 0238, 0537, 0610, 0742;
15: 0001
weekly reports 12: 0340

Economic agreements, U.S.
with Laos 1: 0574
with Vietnam 1: 0574

Economic aid
FY 1952 programs 10: 0709
general 4: 0001; 11: 0091
to Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam
1: 0468

Economic Cooperation Administration
(ECA)
Field Advisory Service in Greece
16: 1015
general 10: 0709
regulations 12: 0789
Economic development
   general 11: 0001, 0312
   “Measures for the Economic Development of Under-Developed Countries” 9: 0839

Economic policy
   16: 1015

Economics, Laos
   development 6: 0342

Economics, Vietnam
   3: 0405

Education, popular
   elementary 4: 0626
   general 1: 0047; 4: 0438; 5: 0001, 0010, 0247; 6: 0075, 0709; 13: 0579, 0728
   technical 4: 0838

Emergency relief
   general 13: 0001, 0230
   national project 13: 0728

Emigration Project of Vietnam
   13: 0001

Employment
   applications 8: 0036
   certificates 8: 0667
   development 3: 0794

Engineering
   4: 0001

Evacuation plans
   5: 0010; 7: 0425; 12: 0800; 13: 0001

Executive orders
   Cambodian AEA committee 2: 0001

Expenses
   Dong Quan 12: 0145, 0537

Exports
   14: 0344, 0604

Facilities
   1: 0140

Finance and payments
   3: 0405

Fisheries
   1: 0750

Foreign Operations Administration (FOA)
   agreement with Office of Education
   16: 1015
   Far East program 1: 0490
   FY 1954 program in Laos 7: 0289
   general 11: 0091

Franco-Viet War
   9: 0857

Funds
   administrative 6: 0001
   allotment 5: 0777
   appropriation 10: 0314
   general 2: 0015; 5: 0618; 6: 0235, 0278, 0342, 0416, 0436

Generators
   14: 0344; 15: 0174

Government, Vietnam
   organization, services 11: 0587

Greece
   community development programs
   3: 0794

Griffins Report
   13: 0455

Health and sanitation
   facilities in Malaya 16: 0378
   general 1: 0047; 4: 0001; 6: 0075, 0278, 0445, 0709; 11: 0525; 13: 0579
   hospitalization in Hong Kong 8: 0571
   hospital surveys 3: 0882
   Laos 16: 0900
   malaria survey teams 4: 0838
   pit-privies 14: 0329
   reform 9: 0857
   Saigon unit reports 8: 0571
   vaccines 8: 0465

Heavy equipment
   general 2: 0449
   steam rollers 5: 0348

Housing
   costs 5: 0777

Imports
   general 3: 0405; 7: 0239; 13: 0455
   licenses 10: 0592
   regulations 10: 0519

Information
   conferences 13: 0728

Information, North Vietnam
   7: 0602

Inspections
   resettlement villages and reception centers 16: 0378

Intergovernmental negotiations
   1: 0468
International Institute of Administrative Sciences
11: 0587

Investigation
1: 0140

Irrigation
1: 0636

Kem amendment
funds, trade 10: 0314

Landlord tenancy
1: 0636

Land reclamation
articles in Vietnamese newspaper
7: 0259

Land redistribution
13: 0728

Land reform
statement by U.S. Rep. Isador Lubin
7: 0756

Land tenure
7: 0756

Legislation
Cambodia 2: 0001

Livestock
disease control 16: 0791

Living quarters
1: 0140

Local currency
general 6: 0001; 7: 0363
piastre-U.S. exchange 5: 0672
U.S. exchange, cashed checks 8: 0465

Maps
Indochina 1: 0110

Markets, U.S.
14: 0604

Military
3: 0741

Military, Indochina
debate in French parliament 9: 0857

Military aid and assistance
10: 0709; 11: 0091

Military Support Program
1: 0795

Ministries, government
16: 1308

Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement
U.S.-Indochina 16: 0693

Mutual Security Act
aid and assistance 11: 0312
small industry 14: 0604

Mutual Security Agency (MSA)
code numbers 13: 0424
Committee on Underdeveloped Areas
11: 0312
personnel 1: 0294; 8: 0155
programs 15: 0298

National Committee, North Vietnam
meetings 4: 0838

National Committee, Vietnam
meetings 2: 0132; 13: 0579, 0728

Nationalism
9: 0857

National Service of Cooperative Agricultural and Artisanal Credit
3: 0405

Natural resources
see Agriculture and natural resources

Operation Exodus
10: 0001

Operations manual
1: 0001

Orders
1: 0572

Organization
development administration 11: 0312
general 8: 0447
MSA 1: 0294

Pacification
Dong Quan 11: 0626
general 13: 0001
political and military 10: 0709

Pacification, North Vietnam
Dong Quan 11: 0722
general 4: 0001

Pay and allowances
8: 0708; 9: 0001

Personal services
5: 0777; 6: 0001

Personnel
consultants 8: 0872
controller 5: 0618; 16: 1015
functions and responsibilities 1: 0490;
9: 0176
general 8: 0155, 0364, 0523; 9: 0648
health reports 8: 0571
local 8: 0667, 0708
MSA 1: 0294
promotion 4: 0001
Public Health Service officers 8: 0811
records of cashed checks 5: 0672
recruitment 1: 0140; 8: 0036; 9: 0246, 0351, 0500
requirements 1: 0875
responsibilities and performance 1: 0001
separation policies and procedures 9: 0001
staff development program 1: 0294
Philippines
  community development programs 3: 0794
Piastre
  purchases 5: 0672
Point Four 9: 0839
Policies, programming, methods
  ECA 10: 0709
general 4: 0001; 11: 0091
Issacs, Harold R. 7: 0602
  Joint Commission of Rural Reconstruction in China 16: 0791
Politics 9: 0857, 0920
Politics, Indochina
debate in French parliament 9: 0857
Power
general 6: 0075, 0445, 0709
  Phat Diem plant 3: 0270
Procedures
  FOA 16: 1015
general 11: 0091; 15: 0626
Production Assistance and Productivity Agency
general 10: 0519, 0709
  priorities 11: 0244
  status reports 10: 0592
Public administration
  4: 0438, 0626; 11: 0587
Publications
  administrative 1: 0572
general 12: 0789
Public health
  antimalaria project 2: 0229
  meeting 7: 0001
  personnel 1: 0757
Public Health Service, U.S.
officers 8: 0811
Publicity
  “Great Villages,” Dong Quan 11: 0722
  press releases 13: 0728
Public works
  briefing data 1: 0110
  Dong Quan 11: 0626, 0637, 0722; 12: 0001, 0038, 0140, 0145, 0238, 0293, 0340, 0537, 0610, 0742
general 1: 0795; 11: 0249; 13: 0579, 0728; 16: 0900
Purchase authorization numbers 6: 0235
Reconstruction
  administration of low-cost housing projects 7: 0045
general 10: 0709; 13: 0230
Refugee resettlement
  general 5: 0010; 12: 0800; 14: 0906; 15: 0001
  in Philippines 16: 0378
Refugees
  bulletins 12: 0800
  programs 13: 0001
  reception centers 5: 0010; 12: 0800
Regional director for Far East 16: 0267
Relief
  12: 0831; 16: 0378
Resettlement villages
  development 14: 0001
  Dong Quan 11: 0637, 0722
general 13: 0001; 14: 0130, 0214
  Khoai-Lac 7: 0425
Rural Credit Office, Cambodia 3: 0405
Schools
  Artisan Center at Ha Dong 4: 0626
  for blind, deaf and dumb 5: 0001
general 6: 0075, 0709; 12: 0140; 15: 0626
  Industrial School in Haiphong 4: 0626
  National Artisan School at Hanoi
  4: 0626
  National School of Art and Profession 4: 0626
  School for the Blind 4: 0626
  for working class children 5: 0247
Security
  Dong Quan 12: 0537
general 3: 0767
overseas 16: 0900
  regulations 16: 1015
Small industry
Chamber of Commerce Weekly
Bulletins 14: 0344, 0604
development 11: 0312
Electric Auto-Lite 14: 0344
general 6: 0075; 10: 0709; 16: 0693
Gleason Corp. 14: 0344
Union Wire Rope Corp. 14: 0344
Winter-Weiss 14: 0604
Social action
16: 0900
Social Action Impact Program
11: 0525
Social Action Shock Program
funds 12: 0145
general 13: 0579, 0728
Social reform
9: 0857
Social welfare
in Philippines 16: 0378
Special Near East Refugee Survey Commission
report on Arab refugees 13: 0579
Staffing
general 6: 0001; 8: 0447, 0523
patterns 9: 0246, 0351, 0500, 0648
STEM programs
inspection of 16: 0267
Supplies and equipment
administrative 5: 0591
aeronautical 13: 0455
agricultural 1: 0636; 16: 0144, 1015
asbestos 2: 0229
asphalt 2: 0229, 0797, 0865; 3: 0001
chemicals 14: 0604
communication 10: 0366
construction 10: 0366; 16: 0144
cotton 2: 0229
cotton yarn 4: 0626
DDT 2: 0229
education 5: 0010
Electric Auto-Lite 5: 0348
fibro-cement 5: 0010
general 3: 0405; 5: 0618, 0672; 6: 0342;
10: 0709
generators 1: 0947; 2: 0449; 3: 0270
health and sanitation 15: 0174
installation 16: 0144
medical 2: 0449; 5: 0010; 10: 0366;
16: 0144, 1015
nonferrous metals 14: 0604
pharmaceuticals 14: 0604
plumbing hardware 14: 0604
procurement
arms, ammunition, and implements of war 10: 0314
authorization 10: 0001, 0212
general 1: 0875; 10: 0366
Korea stockpile 10: 0281
policy 10: 0307
for public works 5: 0348
purchase records 10: 0366
refugee needs 16: 0378
relief 5: 0010; 7: 0411; 13: 0001, 0230;
14: 0130
scrap rubber 3: 0321
small industry 16: 0693
for Social Action Impact Program
15: 0298
steel 14: 0604
tires 3: 0321
veterinary 1: 0739
war relief 10: 0366
TAA numbers
6: 0235
Technical aid and assistance
general 4: 0001; 10: 0672; 11: 0312;
12: 0038; 16: 0378
statistics 15: 0264
symposium 15: 0584
Type A projects 4: 0438, 0838
Trade
exhibits 15: 0816
U.S. with Soviet bloc 10: 0314
Training
candidate applications 15: 0626
general 5: 0247
heavy equipment technician program
15: 0626
Malaya facilities 16: 0378
mechanical program 15: 0626
overseas, in U.S. 4: 0438
supervisors 4: 0838
technical 15: 0584
Transportation
arrival reports 16: 0144
Bailey bridging 14: 0344
briefing data 1: 0110
civil aviation 16: 0001
Travel
- diplomatic passports 1: 0294
- expenses 5: 0777
- field trips 16: 0378
- general 1: 0140; 8: 0872; 16: 0900
- regulations 8: 0811; 16: 1015
- visitors 16: 0267

Typhoons
- 7: 0411

U.S. Mission activities
- master list 1: 0047

Vehicles
- construction, installation, agriculture 16: 0144
- Jeeps 5: 0010
- procurement of coastal vessels 1: 0947
- procurement records 10: 0366
- trucks, spare parts, machinery trailers 14: 0604

War relief and rehabilitation
- aid and assistance, supplies and equipment 10: 0001
- in Laos 7: 0289
- monthly reports 14: 0001
- statement of Ho-Bao-Thanh workshop project 14: 0214

Vietnam, South
- general 14: 0001, 0130
- survey of provinces 14: 0906

Visits
- general 13: 0728
- inspection of STEM programs 16: 0267
- Philippines, U.S. 4: 0001
- to U.S. by Tep Youth 7: 0756
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