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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

Sub-series A: Alphabetical, 1914-1965, undated.

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American Friends of Viet Nam, 1959.



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\*Member of Executive Committee

# AMERICAN FRIENDS OF VIETNAM

INCORPORATED

*A non-partisan group organized in support  
 of a free and democratic Republic of Vietnam*

ROOM 402A

4 WEST 40th STREET

NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

LOngacre 5-2885

June 16, 1959

My dear Rabbi Silver:

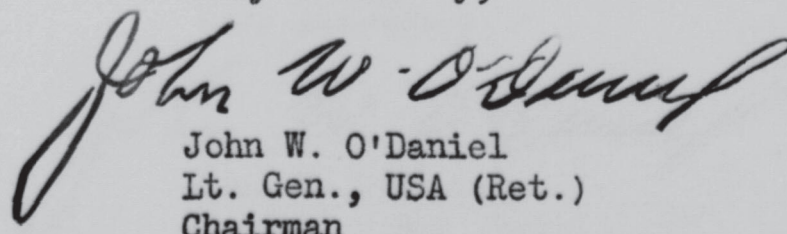
On July 7th President Ngo Dinh Diem marks his fifth anniversary as the Republic of Vietnam's Chief of State. In these five short years, the world has watched incredulously while a country given up by most political observers as lost to the Communists, a country torn by internal strife and the chaotic aftermath of a long civil war, emerged as a bastion of freedom in a crucial part of the world.

Under President Ngo's leadership, Free Vietnam has progressed dramatically in many fields. Shortly after Vietnam's tragic division in 1954, the rival war lords, armed sects and Communist cells were systematically routed. These decisive measures enabled Vietnam to achieve the stability necessary for reconstruction and democratic growth. Within two years, general elections were held throughout Free Vietnam, a constituent assembly was elected to draft Vietnam's first Constitution and the nation's first National Assembly was inaugurated. The Constitution--modelled in large part on our own--was proclaimed in October 1956.

During the first years of President Ngo's leadership, almost a million refugees from the Communist North were completely resettled as productive citizens. As part of a broad campaign to raise living standards, Vietnam's President launched a far-sighted program of agrarian reform, farm credit, cooperatives and land development. Private investment was encouraged to develop Vietnam's industrial potential. Steady gains were recorded in public health, education, civil administration and the building of a modern national army. Many of these achievements are described by New York Times Far East correspondent Tillman Durdin in the enclosed reprint.

Despite the partition five years ago, despite the countless obstacles and the continuing Communist menace from the North, Free Vietnam has forged a new and dynamic republic. Without the decisive leadership of Ngo Dinh Diem, this could never have been realized. I hope you, as a friend of Vietnam, will join me in recognizing these five years of historic achievement by signing a message of congratulations to President Ngo. I believe that this message, which I have enclosed, reflects the sentiment of most Americans. For your convenience, a reply card and envelope are also enclosed. I hope you will take this occasion to renew your support for this courageous Southeast Asian Republic. I look forward to your early reply.

Very sincerely,

  
 John W. O'Daniel  
 Lt. Gen., USA (Ret.)  
 Chairman



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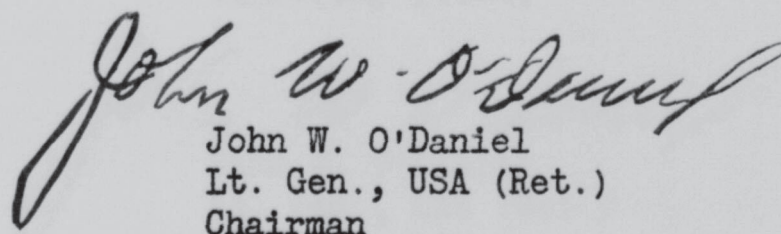
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Dear Friend:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuing support of a free and democratic Republic of Vietnam as evidenced by your signing the message of congratulations to President Ngo Dinh Diem on the occasion of his fifth anniversary as free Vietnam's national leader.

The message will be presented to President Ngo in Saigon on July 7th.

Sincerely yours,

  
 John W. O'Daniel  
 Lt. Gen., USA (Ret.)  
 Chairman