**Vietnam: Document 8**

Henry Cabot Lodge was the American Ambassador to Vietnam  
  
**Source:**  
Foreign Relations of the United States  
1964 - 1968, Volume 1  
Department of State, Washington, D.C., page 456.

**Telegram From the Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State**

Saigon, June 5, 1964--2 p.m.

Literally eyes only for Rusk and McNamara from Lodge.

1. It would help here, and possibly in Laos and Thailand, if there were some screams from North Viet-Nam that they had been hit. They are really looking much too tall, particularly considering the military potential of both sides, which is so heavily in our favor. They are able to enjoy the great advantage of total silence which makes them look still bigger, whereas the U.S. looks as though we are talking a great deal without doing very much.

2. There must be a number of different ways to make them scream. Could rocket carrying planes, flying along the North Viet-Nam-Laos border, let something go on the pretext that they had been fired on and were firing back? Could something be done some night in North Viet-Nam, possibly using personnel and equipment which would be Vietnamese [less than 1 line of source text not declassified]; can Tchepone not be hit immediately?

3. We want a scream from them that they had been hit by something coming from our side. I would not object if they blamed us. They could prove nothing. We could either be totally silent, or challenge them to provide proof, or say we are looking into it.

4. In a situation such as is described above you don't have to escalate if you don't want to. Surely this kind of limited carefully modulated action does not require approval of Congress--especially when it is against North Vietnamese targets which are thoroughly illegal.

5. Not only would screams from the North have a very tonic effect and strengthen morale here; it is also vital to frighten Ho. Do not believe our 34A operations bother him much, if at all. If he is sufficiently frightened and could do so without losing face, he might cease his intrusion, save many lives and avoid the much greater cost to him and to us involved in the procedures discussed in Honolulu. [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] should, above all, be able to hold out the prospect of the cessation of punishment and not just a shipment of rice and a verbal assurance that the Americans are really very angry.

6. In this part of the world and in this kind of situation, silence and action often the best ways to achieve results.

Lodge

**Vietnam: Document 9**

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

Democratic Republic of Vietnam

North Vietnamese Response to Tonkin allegations

**Statement by the Spokesman of the Viet Nam People's Army High Command Regarding U.S. Warships' Provocative Activities in North Vietnamese Territorial Waters**

In the last two days, American news agencies made a fuss about the so-called "unprovoked attack" by Navy ships of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam on the U.S. destroyer Maddox which took place on August 2 off North Viet Nam's coast. Meanwhile, the U.S. State Department spokesman bluntly denied the denunciations made by the High Command of the Viet Nam People's Army and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam Foreign Ministry concerning the shelling by U.S. warships of islands belonging to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the bombing of North Vietnamese localities near the Viet Nam -Laos border by U.S. aircraft coming from the direction of Laos.

In this connection, the Spokesman of the Viet - Nam People's Army High Command declares as follows:

Public opinion in Viet Nam and the world knows very well that in carrying out their policy of aggression and war in South Viet Nam as well as in Cambodia and Laos, the U.S. imperialists have not only used their 7th Fleet in the Pacific for shows of force in the open seas from the South China Sea to the Gulf of Thailand, but have also used warships of that fleet to cover the forces of their henchmen in South Viet Nam in their provocative activities against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Over recent times, in an attempt to retrieve their defeat and flounder in South Viet Nam, along with increased military buildup and intensified war efforts, the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen have not only ranted about extending the war to the North but have also frantically conducted provocative and sabotage activities against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Warships of the U.S. 7th Fleet stationed on a permanent basis off Da Nang naval port have on many occasions covered ships and boats of their henchmen in South Viet Nam which come to the North daily to carry out provocative activities, infringe upon the territorial waters of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, seize fishing boats and land spy-commandos for sabotage activities in the coastal areas.

At the same time, their aircraft increase activities in the airspace of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, dropping spy commandos on North Viet Nam. Spy-commandos landed in the coastal area of Quang Binh province recently as well as all other groups of U.S - Khanh agents introduced into North Viet Nam have fallen into the hands of our armed forces and people.

Continuing their feverish plan to provoke and sabotage the North, on July 30 the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen dispatched warships to encroach upon North Viet Nam's territorial waters and shell Hon Me and Hon Ngu islands which are part of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam's territory.

In the night of July 31-August 1, the U.S. imperialists again sent a destroyer to encroach upon North Viet Nam's territorial waters in Quang Binh province. This warship had been cruising for two days, August 1 and 2, between Hon Mat island (Nghe An) and Hon Me island (Thanh Hoa) to intimidate fishing boats of our people, openly infringing upon our territorial waters. In the afternoon of August 2, it encountered our patrol boats between Hon Me and Lach Truong in our territorial waters. In face of the provocations by the sea rovers, our patrol ships took action to defend our territorial waters and fishermen and chased the enemy ship out of our territorial waters. Afterwards, our patrol ships returned to their bases.

This is what happened in the afternoon of August 2. The U.S. imperialists are raising a hue and cry about what they call "an unprovoked attack by three torpedo boats of North Viet Nam". They have made such clamors to cover their own acts of provocation and sabotage, their violation of the territorial waters and airspace and their encroachment on the sovereignty and territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

It should be pointed out that the above-mentioned activities of the U.S. Navy in North Viet Nam's territorial waters coincided with the activities of U.S. aircraft which, taking off from bases in Thailand and Laos, bombed the Nam Can border post and rocketed Noong De village in Ky Son district, Nghe An province, near the Viet Nam-Laos border on August 1 and 2, 1964. The High Command of the Viet Nam People's Army strongly denounces to public opinion at home and abroad these provocative activities of the U.S. Government and its henchmen in South Viet Nam and Laos. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam regards them as extremely serious violations of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos, and blatant encroachments upon the sovereignty and territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, which resulted in aggravating the situation in this area. Determined to defend the peaceful construction work of the North Vietnamese people and the security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the army and people of Viet Nam sternly warn the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen that any acts of provocation, sabotage and aggression on their part would be subject to due punishment.

The High Command of the Viet Nam People's Army declares that the U.S. Government, together with its henchmen in South Viet Nam and Laos, must bear responsibility for all the consequences arising from their acts of provocation, sabotage and encroachment upon the security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

Hanoi, August 4, 1964