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IDENTIFICATION FORM

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**TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM**

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

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<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b> <i>(When Filled In)</i>	CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS	16c ✓ Smith-Bundy Taylor
	<b>NOFORN/CONTINUED CONTROL</b>	-- Rustow -- Belk -- R. Johnson -- Haysen -- Corner -- Schlesinger -- Goodwin

<b>COUNTRY</b> SOUTH VIETNAM	<b>REPORT NO.</b> TDCS -3/490,238
<b>SUBJECT</b> BELIEF OF SENIOR VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS FOR NEED OF STATE OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY AND GOVERNMENT REFORMS	<b>DATE DISTR.</b> 18 OCTOBER 1961
<b>DATE OF INFO.</b> 17 OCTOBER 1961	<b>PRECEDENCE</b> PRIORITY
<b>PLACE &amp; DATE ACQ.</b> VIETNAM, SAIGON (17 OCTOBER 1961)	<b>REFERENCES</b> IN 47680
<b>APPRAISAL</b> 2 (THAT VIEWS WERE AS STATED)	<b>FIELD REPORT NO.</b> FVS-6566

THIS IS **UNEVALUATED** INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

**SOURCE** AMERICAN OBSERVER (B) FROM DR. TRAN KIM TUYEN, DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE.

1. A GROUP OF SENIOR GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) OFFICIALS CONFERRED ON 17 OCTOBER 1961 CONCERNING THE GRAVE COMMUNIST THREAT TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. THEY AGREED THAT NO AMOUNT OF US MILITARY OR ECONOMIC AID COULD SAVE THE COUNTRY UNLESS PRESIDENT NGO DINH DIEM IMMEDIATELY DECLARED A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, APPOINTED A SPECIAL EMERGENCY COUNCIL TO CUT BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS AND EXECUTE POLICY, AND REFORMED POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES OF THE GVN FROM THE TOP DOWN. THE GROUP BELIEVED THAT UNLESS THESE MEASURES WERE TAKEN TO FURNISH TIMELY, EFFICIENT AND INSPIRED LEADERSHIP, DEFEATISM WOULD SPREAD IN THE VIETNAMESE NATIONAL ARMY (VNA) AND AMONG GOVERNMENT WORKERS AND PEOPLE IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE, AND VIETNAM WILL BE UNABLE TO RALLY

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AGAINST THE INCREASING COMMUNIST PRESSURES. THE GROUP WAS NOT HOPEFUL THAT DIEM WOULD WILLINGLY CHANGE FROM HIS DISORGANIZED STYLE OF GOVERNING OR TAKE ACTION TO TOTALLY MOBILIZE THE PEOPLE AND WIN THEM TO HIS LEADERSHIP. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY FELT THAT ANY ILL ADVISED ACTION TO FORCE DIEM OUT WOULD BE DISASTEROUS. THE OFFICIALS THEREFORE BELIEVED THE SITUATION HAD REACHED A DESPERATE IMPASSE, UNLESS PRESIDENT KENNEDY COULD BY A DIRECT FIRM AND FRIENDLY APPROACH, INSIST THAT DIEM TAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES.

2. THE OFFICIALS INCLUDED SECRETARY OF STATE AT THE PRESIDENCY, NGUYEN DINH THUAN; TRAN KIM TUYEN, DIRECTOR OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY SERVICE, NGUYEN LUONG, MINISTER OF FINANCE; CAO XUAN VY, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF REPUBLICAN YOUTH; NGO TRONG HIEU, MINISTER OF CIVIC ACTION. THESE OFFICIALS HOPED THAT CENTRALIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT COULD BE BROUGHT ABOUT THROUGH A SPECIAL COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL EMERGENCY AS WAS DONE IN MALAYA, WHICH WOULD HAVE FULL AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE THE PRESIDENT'S POLICIES AND ENSURE THEIR RAPID IMPLEMENTATION WITHOUT DUPLICATION, CONFUSION OR INEFFICIENCY BY EXISTING GVN AGENCIES. THEY BELIEVED THAT IF THE PRESENT BUREAUCRATS AND OFFICIALS, EVEN THOSE AT CABINET LEVEL, COULD NOT RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGE, THEY SHOULD BE PROMPTLY REPLACED, SO THAT THEIR SUBORDINATES WOULD NOT CONTINUE TO BE DEMORALIZED AND VITAL PROGRAMS TO RALLY THE PEOPLE WOULD NOT BE FURTHER DELAYED. UNLESS THE GVN CREATED THE

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PROPERLY FUNCTIONING MACHINERY CAPABLE OF ABSORBING CURRENT AND PROJECTED AMERICAN AID, THAT AID WOULD BE WASTED, AMERICANS WOULD LOSE FAITH IN VIETNAMESE ANTI-COMMUNIST EFFORTS AND VIETNAM WOULD FALL.

3. THESE OFFICIALS HAVE REALIZED FOR SOME TIME THAT MUCH OF THE PROBLEM LAY WITH THE PERSONALITY AND BACKGROUND OF DIEM HIMSELF. THEY THEREFORE HAVE ACCOMMODATED THEMSELVES TO THE SITUATION, TRIED TO WORK OUT ADMINISTRATIVE SHORTCUTS IN THEIR VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS, AND DO ALL POSSIBLE TO RALLY POPULAR SUPPORT EVEN FROM NATIONALIST OPPOSITION ELEMENTS. THEY NOW BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THAT THE SITUATION WAS SO SERIOUS AND MORALE DETERIORATING SO FAST THAT THE SITUATION COULD NOT LONG CONTINUE.

4. THEIR CHIEF CRITICISMS OF GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES WERE:

A. LAZY, INCOMPETENT OFFICIALS WERE TOO OFTEN RETAINED FOR MONTHS, EVEN AFTER THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF ADMITTED THEY SHOULD BE REPLACED, EITHER BECAUSE DIEM FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS HATED TO FIRE THEM, OR BECAUSE THEY WERE ABLE TO CLEVERLY FOOL THE PRESIDENT THROUGH FLATTERY AND FALSE OPTIMISM.

B. VITAL DECISIONS WERE HELD UP WAITING FOR A PRESIDENTIAL DECISION, WHICH ANY COMPETENT EXECUTIVE GROUP COULD MAKE.

C. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WERE SET UP WITH CONFLICTING JURISDICTIONS, OR REORGANIZATIONS, EFFECTED, SUCH AS THE ARMY OPERATIONAL FIELD COMMAND, THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION AND THE COORDINATING "SUPER" MINISTRIES WHICH REMAINED FACADES WITH LITTLE OR NO AUTHORITY.

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OR RESPONSIBILITY.

D. WORST OF ALL WAS THE NUMBER OF OFFICIALS WHO DIRECTLY CONTACTED THE PRESIDENT, OVER THE HEADS OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS, OR THE PRESIDENTS OWN HABIT OF TAKING UNILATERAL ACTION WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH HIS MINISTERS. THIS FREQUENTLY NULLIFIED WEEKS OF CAREFUL PREPARATORY WORK BY THUAN, TUYEN AND OTHERS.

E. ALTHOUGH THE RUMORS OF CORRUPTION AND FAMILY RULE ARE GROUNDLESS, MANY BUREAUCRATS HAVE ACHIEVED FAVOR THROUGH SYCOPHANTIC ATTENTION TO MONSEIGNOR NGO DINH THUC'S RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES, OR VENERATION OF THE PRESIDENTS MOTHER, WHILE DIEM HAS NOT ENCOURAGED THIS, IT HAS APPEALED TO HIS SENTIMENTAL NATURE. HOWEVER, THIS HAS ANGERED MANY OFFICIALS, INCLUDING SINCERE CATHOLICS, AND HAS BADLY IMPRESSED THE PEOPLE. MADAME NHU'S HIGH HANDED BEHAVIOR AND THE MANDARIN-ROBED FORMALITIES OF NGO FAMILY GATHERINGS AT HUE, HAVE SMACKED OF IMPERIAL DYNASTY PRACTICES AND HAVE PROVIDED PROPAGANDA THEMES FOR THE COMMUNISTS AND OPPOSITIONISTS.

5. DR TUYEN HAS DISCUSSED MANY OF THESE FAULTS WITH NGO DINH NHU, BROTHER AND ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT. TUYEN BELIEVED THAT NHU WAS PHILOSOPHICALLY IN AGREEMENT WITH THE GROUP, BUT HESITATED TO TAKE ANY ACTION. NONE OF THE GROUP DARED APPROACH DIEM, EXCEPT WITH THE PLEA TO DECLARE A NATIONAL EMERGENCY, BUT IF DIEM REFUSED TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY OR TO STREAMLINE GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES, SUCH

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A DECLARATION WOULD BE WORTHLESS. TUYEN BELIEVED THAT ONLY DIRECT PRESSURE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE US WOULD CONVINCe DIEM. TUYEN THOUGHT A WORKABLE PLAN MIGHT BE TO INVITE NHU TO WASHINGTON AS A SPECIAL EMISSARY OF THE PRESIDENT. THERE THE CARDS WOULD BE LAID ON THE TABLE. TUYEN ADMITTED DEFICIENCIES IN THE PLAN, ESPECIALLY ITS VULNERABILITY TO CHARGES OF NEPOTISM, BUT FELT THAT NHU WAS THE ONLY PERSON WHO COULD FULLY REPRESENT DIEM AND RETURN TO CONVINCe HIM OF NECESSITY OF CHANGES. NHU ALSO WAS THE ONLY PERSON THAT DIEM WOULD TRUST AS EX OFFICIO CHAIRMAN OF THE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE, TO GET IT STARTED FUNCTIONING. TUYEN ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT NHU AND THE MEMBERS OF GHUAN'S AND HIS OWN GROUP HAD THE CONTACTS TO AND THE CAPABILITY TO RALLY GROUPS NOW OPPOSED TO THE GOVERNMENT WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP AGAINST THE VC BUT WHOSE HELP DIEM SPURNED. HE EXPLAINED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO YIELDING TO PRESSURES FOR LIBERALIZATION. DEMOCRACY WAS NOT WHAT WAS NEEDED IN VIETNAM'S EXTREMITY, BUT LEADERSHIP.

6. (FIELD COMMENT. CERTAINLY MANY OF THESE CRITICISMS ARE NOT NEW, BUT TUYEN HAS NEVER BEFORE ATTACKED FAULTS IN THE REGIME SO FREELY. HE HAS PRIVATELY EXPRESSED HOPE OF GOVERNMENTAL REFORM, MORE INTELLIGENT HANDLING OF GVN RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ESPECIALLY CULTIVATION AND USE OF TRACTABLE OPPOSITIONISTS. HE HAS ALSO CRITICISED DIEM'S ISOLATION FROM THE PEOPLE, BUT IN CONSTRUCTIVE TERMS. WHILE HE DISCLAIMED THE USE OF ANY FORCE AGAINST DIEM, IT

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APPEARED HE WAS SEEKING AMERICAN REACTION TO WHAT AMOUNTED TO A SUGGESTED PALACE REVOLUTION TO EFFECT REFORMS, RATHER THAN JUST OUTLINING A DILEMMA. HIS COMMENTS ON NHU WERE CONFUSED AND AMBIVALENT, ALTHOUGH HE CLEARLY (IF INCORRECTLY) STILL BELIEVES IN NHU'S ABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY. HE EMPHASIZED SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THE PERSONS NAMED.)

7. FIELD DISSEM: STATE ARMY NAVY AIR MAAG USOM CINCPAC PACFLT  
ARPAC PACAF

END OF MESSAGE

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