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7 April 1977

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L1 THE VIEW FROM LANGLEY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1974

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SR2L2 ADDRESS TO THE FUND FOR PEACE CONFERENCE ON CIA AND COVERT ACTIONS BY WILLIAM E. CO
LBY

3

RE HAVE ALSO BEEN, AND ARE STILL, CERTAIN SITUATIONS IN THE WORLD IN WHICH SOME DISCREET SUPPORT CAN ASSIST AMERICA'S FRIENDS AGAINST HER ADVERSARIES IN THEIR CONTEST FOR CONTROL OF A FOREIGN NATION'S POLITICAL DIRECTION. WHILE THESE INSTANCES ARE FEW TODAY COMPARED TO THE 1950'S, I BELIEVE IT ONLY PRUDENT FOR OUR NATION TO BE ABLE TO ACT IN SUCH SITUATIONS, AND THEREBY FORESTALL GREATER DIFFICULTIES FOR US IN THE FUTURE. IN OTHER SITUATIONS, ESPECIALLY AFTER NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV'S ENTHUSIASTIC ESPOUSAL OF THE THESIS OF "WARS OF NATIONAL LIBERATION," THE UNITED STATES BELIEVED IT ESSENTIAL TO PROVIDE PARAMILITARY SUPPORT TO CERTAIN GROUPS AND NATIONS. IN 1962, PRESIDENT KENNEDY, FOR NATIONAL POLICY REASONS, DID NOT WANT TO USE THE UNIFORMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES IN LAOS, BUT ALSO DID NOT WANT TO BE LIMITED TO A MERE DIPLOMATIC PROTEST AGAINST THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF 5,000 NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN LAOS IN VIOLATION OF THE GENÈVA ACCORDS, AND THEIR EXPANSION OF CONTROL OVER COMMUNITIES WHO WISHED TO RESIST THEM. THUS, CIA WAS DIRECTED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THOSE COMMUNITIES, A DUTY WHICH GREW TO A MAJOR EFFORT, KNOWN AND APPROVED BY THE LAO GOVERNMENT, BUT NOT CONFRONTING NORTH VIETNAM AND ITS ALLIES WITH A DIRECT AND OVERT U. S. CHALLENGE. MR. BANFMANN HAS TOLD YOU OF SOME OF THE TERRIBLE HUMAN PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ANY WAR WHEN IT GROWS TO A CONVENTIONAL SCALE INVOLVING ARTILLERY, AIR BOMBARDMENT, AND SO FORTH. WHAT HAS PERHAPS NOT BEEN FULLY PERCEIVED IS THAT THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCE TO THIS EFFORT INVOLVED A SMALL COMMITMENT OF CIA AMERICANS AND A SMALL EXPENDITURE OVER THE MANY YEARS IN WHICH THIS ACTION WAS UNDERTAKEN; AND THAT, AS A RESULT OF THE DEFENSIVE EFFORTS OF THE FORCES SUPPORTED BY CIA, THE BATTLE LINES AT THE END OF THE PERIOD WERE ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED FROM THOSE AT THE OPENING. AS WITH THE BAY OF PIGS, WHEN THE ACTIVITY BECAME TOO LARGE, IT NO LONGER REMAINED SECRET. BUT I THINK THE CIA PEOPLE WHO CONDUCTED THIS EFFORT DESERVE THE PRAISE OF OUR CITIZENS FOR THE EFFECTIVE BUT MODEST MANNER IN WHICH PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S MISSION WAS CARRIED OUT--A MISSION

3

COURSE, FOR CONGRESS TO DECIDE, AND I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT A FULLY SATISFACTORY SOLUTION WILL EVENTUATE. PHOENIX: THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN BADLY MISUNDERSTOOD IN PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS. I TESTIFIED FULLY ON THIS SUBJECT IN 1971, BUT SELECTIVE QUOTES FROM THAT TESTIMONY HAVE BEEN USED TO INDICATE THAT I DIRECTED A PROGRAM OF ASSASSINATION, MURDER, ETC., RESULTING IN THE DEATHS OF OVER 20,000 VIETNAMESE. I THEN DENIED AND I STILL FLATLY DENY SUCH A CHARGE OR SUCH AN INTERPRETATION OF THIS PROGRAM. PHOENIX WAS ONE OF A NUMBER OF PROGRAMS UNDER THE GENERAL PACIFICATION EFFORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM. ON DETAIL FROM CIA TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, I WAS THE PRINCIPAL ADVISER AND SUPERVISED AMERICAN SUPPORT OF THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM. THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM WAS FOCUSED ON SECURING THE WILLING PARTICIPATION OF THE POPULATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM AGAINST TERROR AND INVASION BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND THE VIET CONG. THE GVN'S PACIFICATION PROGRAM CONSISTED OF: --ASSISTANCE TO THE LOCAL TERRITORIAL FORCES TO INCREASE THE SECURITY OF THE VILLAGES; --THE DISTRIBUTION OF A HALF MILLION WEAPONS TO THE POPULATION TO USE IN UNPAID SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS (I KNOW OF FEW GOVERNMENTS IN THE WORLD WHICH WOULD UNDERTAKE SUCH A VENTURE AND HAVE IT MEET WITH SUCH SUCCESS); --THE INDUCEMENT, RECEPTION AND RESETTLEMENT OF OVER 200,000 DEFECTING MEMBERS OF THE VIET CONG; --THE TEMPORARY SUPPORT AND RETURN TO VILLAGE OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES; --THE ELECTION OF LOCAL VILLAGE CHIEFS AND PROVINCIAL COUNCILS; --THE DECENTRALIZATION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS AND PROGRAMS TO LOCALLY ELECTED OFFICIALS AND COUNCILS INSTEAD OF SAIGON BUREAUCRATS. ONE OF THESE PACIFICATION ACTIVITIES WAS THE PHOENIX PROGRAM, AIMED AT IDENTIFYING, CAPTURING, RALLYING AND, IF NECESSARY, ATTACKING THE LEADERSHIP

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1
SR1
L1 FEBRUARY 1, 1976 CHICAGO TRIBUNE BOB WIEDRICH INTERVIEWS WILLIAM E. COLBY

2
SR2
L2 AS COLBY LEAVES CIA: A WARNING ON RUSSIANS

3
NOTE WE COUNTERED THE MILITARY THREAT WITH NATO AND THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WITH THE MARS HALL PLAN. SUBVERSION WE MET WITH CIA HELP TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS. AND IT WORKED. LATER, IN LATIN AMERICAN, WE FEARED THE SWEEP OF CASTRO'S COMMUNISM AND CHE GUEVARA. WE OVERCAME THAT WITH POLITICAL PROGRAMS THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, MILITARY AID TO GROUPS FIGHTING INSURGENCY, AND THE HELP OF CIA INTELLIGENCE. LATIN AMERICA DID NOT FOLLOW CASTRO. SO WE WON THAT, TOO. THE CIA CAN HELP AMERICA'S FRIENDS WITHOUT INVOLVING AMERICANS. NO AMERICAN SOLDIERS GO ON CIA OPERATIONS. THE AMERICANS MERELY SUPPLY AND ADVISE. AND VERY FEW OF THEM DO THAT, GENERALLY. IN LAOS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE CIA WAS ASKED TO HELP BY OUR GOVERNMENT IN 1963. WE DID SO FOR 10 YEARS. WE NEVER HAD MORE THAN TWO OR THREE HUNDRED MEN THERE. THE BATTLE LASTED A DECADE. DURING THAT TIME, THE NORTH VIETNAMESE INCREASED THEIR FORCES FROM 7,000 TO 70,000. YET, THE BATTLE LINES AT THE END WERE THE SAME AS IN THE BEGINNING. AND A RELATIVE HANDFUL OF OUR MEN ACCOMPLISHED THAT, HELPING THE LAOTIANS FIGHT OFF A FOREIGN COMMUNIST INVASION OF THEIR HOMELAND. PEOPLE CALLED THAT A SECRET WAR. BUT FOUR COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS KNEW ABOUT IT. AND THE LAOTIANS FOUGHT IT, NOT AMERICANS. I'M PROUD OF WHAT WE HAVE DONE. WE MADE OUR MISTAKES. WE ALSO HAD OUR VICTORIES. AMERICA WILL NEED MORE SUCH VICTORIES IN THE FUTURE. FOR THE SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH. UNQUOTE

MEMORANDUM FOR:

DELETIONS MARCHETTI
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Zela Zelman

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Clark *1821]

OSF Zelman Boston

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Scientific Engineering
Institute

13 April 77

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Research Lab. no. Boston

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pub ops

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(DDA)