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Monday, July 10, 1967
5:55 p.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith today's situation
report on Viet Nam.

W. W. Rostow

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By SLP, NARA, Date 7-8-91

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Situation Report on Viet-Nam

July 10, 1967

New Developments

Members of the Central Election Council have told Embassy Saigon that the Council will consider complaints against the minor candidates before taking up complaints against Big Minh and the Thieu-Ky slate. One Council member states his view that the most serious problem for Minh's slate is the complaint against the citizenship qualifications of Minh's running mate, Lieng. He indicated that the Council would need more documentation to disqualify Minh on grounds of national security.

Ambassador Bunker continues to believe that action will be taken to disqualify both Minh and Thanh. However, he intends to discuss the Minh issue with Thieu and Ky at the next opportunity. In Bunker's mind, the issue boils down to the problem of the Directorate making a convincing case against Minh's candidacy or that of his running mate in legal terms which would be made public. The Directorate should stress the fact that it is a matter for the Election Council and the Assembly to rule on Minh's candidacy on the basis of the legal case put before them. Bunker believes that if this is

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done, excluding his candidacy will not damage the chances that the elections will contribute to the realization of US objectives in Viet-Nam.

Regarding Thanh, an Election Council member has told the Embassy that the Council has documents signed by Thanh which prove he has been a member of a communist organization. The Council member implied that he expected the Council to uphold the complaint against Thanh's candidacy.

Comment

We believe we should await the results of Ambassador Bunker's discussion of the Minh issue with Thieu and Ky before deciding whether to take any further action on this problem. We do not propose to take any further action on Thanh during the day, pending Ambassador Bunker's reaction to the views we transmitted to him over the weekend.

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