

Monday, July 10, 1967

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MR. PRESIDENT:

1. As of June 1, 1967, there were 5,465 Australians fighting in South Viet Nam.

2. Following is statement by Lt. Gen. Krulak:

"The Australians are fighting in one of the richest and most populous areas near Vung Tau. They are addressing themselves to the systematic reduction of the Viet Cong infrastructure. They are doing this in a professional and workmanlike way. We all admire the cool fighting qualities of the Australians."

W. W. R..

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*Pres. file*  
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FROM WALT ROSTOW  
TO THE PRESIDENT  
CITE CAP67722

**DECLASSIFIED**  
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4  
NIJ 91-437  
By ✓, NARA, Date 12-2-92

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM WALT ROSTOW

HEREWITH SITUATION REPORT ON VIET-NAM, JULY 9, 1967 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

AN ASSEMBLY DEPUTY CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE DIRECTORATE HAS NOW FILED A FORMAL COMPLAINT AGAINST AU TRUONG THANH'S CANDIDACY. THE COMPLAINT CHARGES THAT IN 1964 AND 1966, WHEN THANH WAS MINISTER FOR NATIONAL ECONOMY, "HE IMPLEMENTED THE MARXIST/LENINIST POLICIES OF THE COMMUNISTS WITH A VIEW TO SABOTAGING AND WEAKING THE NATION'S ECONOMY." THE COMPLAINT STATES THAT THE ELECTORAL LAW EXCLUDES FROM CANDIDACY "THOSE WHO HAVE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY WORKED FOR COMMUNISM OR PRO-COMMUNIST NEUTRALISM OR WORKED IN THE INTERESTS OF COMMUNISM" AND ATTRIBUTES SUCH ACTIVITIES TO THANH.

THE NEW YORK TIMES THIS MORNING QUOTES THANH AS COMMENTING THAT "IF I SUPPORTED THE VIET CONG, I WOULD HAVE TRIED TO RUIN THE ECONOMY. BUT I DIDN'T DO THAT. I CONCENTRATED ALL MY EFFORTS ON TRYING TO CREATE ECONOMIC STABILITY. IN THE PROCESS I HELPED KY."

THE EMBASSY ALSO HAS TRANSMITTED THE TEXT OF THE COMPLAINT AGAINST "BIG" MINH'S RUNNING MATE, TRAN NGOC LIENG. THE COMPLAINT CHARGES THAT LIENG IN THE PAST SIMULTANEOUSLY HELD FRENCH AND VIETNAMESE NATIONALITY. THE COMPLAINT POINTS OUT THAT THE ELECTION LAW REQUIRES PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TO HAVE VIETNAMESE CITIZENSHIP SINCE BIRTH. THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE BASIS FOR CLAIMING THAT THE ELECTORAL LAW DISQUALIFIES A PERSON BECAUSE OF DUAL CITIZENSHIP.

COMMENT

WE HAVE ASKED AMBASSADOR BUNKER TO DISCUSS THE CASES OF "BIG" MINH AND THANH WITH THIEU AND KY.

DTG: 091606Z JULY 1967

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