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Tuesday, July 18, 1967
5:50 p.m.

Mr. President:

Herewith another day in which
the Vietnamese solved their political
problem in their own mysterious way.

Free file

W. W. Rostow

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(h)
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By rg, NARA, Date 7-28-73

WWRostow:rln

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Situation Report on Viet-Nam

July 18, 1967

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-163

New Developments

By [redacted], NARA, Date 7-20-94

Embassy Saigon has just reported by phone that the National Assembly in an extended evening session just concluded approved the Thieu-Ky ticket by 56 votes out of about 70 deputies present. Earlier in the evening the Assembly voted to disqualify Big Minh's candidacy by 54 votes. In the afternoon session on July 18, the Assembly disqualified the Au Truong Thanh ticket.

The Assembly thus has overridden the recommendation of the special Assembly committee, which voted to disqualify the Thieu-Ky ticket on the grounds that Thieu and Ky had not taken leave of their government positions. The Committee had also voted to recommend approval of the Big Minh ticket.

The Assembly has now completed action on the candidacies, which will be posted on July 19 for the second and final time. There are 12 lists approved, including the tickets of Assembly President Suu, former Prime Minister Huong, the Thieu-Ky ticket, and Dai Viet party leader Ha Thuc Ky. Six tickets, including Big Minh's and Au Truong Thanh, have been disqualified.

Saigon 1307 reports a conversation between Vietnamese Ambassador Bui Diem and Ambassador Bunker on the morning of the

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18th. Bui Diem said he had come from a meeting of the top generals, including Thieu and Ky, and that the Generals were considering what course to follow should the Assembly vote against the Thieu-Ky ticket. Presumably, the meeting of the Generals has been overtaken by the Assembly's favorable action on the Thieu-Ky ticket, but we do not have any late reports confirming this.

Saigon 1232 reports a conversation between Thieu and Ambassador Bunker on the morning of July 16. Thieu agreed with Bunker that he and Ky must work together in a relationship of mutual trust. He said that he planned to divide the work of government operations with Ky, but he was not specific and made no mention of any written agreement with Ky.

Comment

We hope that the Assembly's favorable action on the Thieu-Ky ticket will dissipate what was obviously growing tension between the military leaders and the Assembly on the morning of July 18. Thieu and Ky should now be able to concentrate in working out their relationships and their campaign organization. Nevertheless, the actions of the Assembly Committee and the cliff-hanging session of the Assembly earlier today, could leave their marks on the relationships between the Assembly and the Generals.