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Free file
Wednesday, August 30, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President:

Attached is the daily situation
report on Viet-Nam political situation.

W. W. Rostow

Att.

~~SECRET~~-EXDIS Attachment

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~~SECRET EYES~~

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Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

August 30, 1967

Ky made an appearance with presidential candidates or their representatives before a large crowd in Hue. The crowd was unsympathetic and at times hostile to Ky.

Huong held a press conference on August 29 in Saigon and made the following major points:

1. The campaign has proceeded normally despite the great discrepancy between the means available to the Thieu/Ky slate and those available to the other slates;
2. Pressure and intimidation by local authorities against civilian campaign workers has declined as a result of denunciations by Huong and other candidates;
3. The reduction of pressure tactics does not mean that the elections will be entirely honest; and
4. The elections hopefully would be an opportunity to unite rather than further divide the nation.

A reliable source

states that if the

Thieu/Ky slate is elected, Ky will wield more power than Thieu only as long as he behaves properly toward Thieu. The Generals do not expect any difficulty in this arrangement, the source said, but if friction should develop at a later date the "inner circle" will be forced to make the necessary adjustments. The inner circle of Generals is supporting Ky's former vice presidential running mate, Nguyen Van Loc, as the best man to be Prime Minister. Thieu has said that he will withhold judgment until he knows Loc better, and we understand he may have in mind an alternative candidate. The inner circle assumes that Thieu will eventually accept Loc. Loc is a Southern civilian lawyer, respectable but undistinguished.

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SANITIZED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

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By , NARA. Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET EYES~~

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A CIA assessment concludes that the Viet Cong regard political development in South Viet-Nam as a serious threat to their objectives. The assessment points to strong evidence that the Viet Cong are making a serious and sustained effort to disrupt the forthcoming elections. The VC plans to do so are basically the same as those used against earlier elections and involve propaganda, terrorism, harassment and military activity, time to occur during the immediate pre-election period. There has been an increase in VC incidents in this immediate pre-election period, and the VC are enjoying somewhat greater success than during the Constituent Assembly election last year. Nonetheless, the Embassy believes VC efforts will probably not have a significant over-all effect on the elections.

The Mayor of Saigon has expressed concern that defeated candidates and the militant Buddhists may join forces to foster civil disturbances in the post-election period.

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