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September 6, 1967

FROM WALT ROSTOW
TO THE PRESIDENT

*sent Rostow
via wire
CAP 67753*

Herewith the daily situation report on Viet Nam political situation.

*1. ~~copy~~
2. Pres file*

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)

White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983

By 129, NARA, Date 9-13-91

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Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

September 6, 1967

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-365

By 412, NARA, Date 12-15-94

Bunker-Thieu Conversation

Thieu has told Bunker he expected his new government to be installed about the beginning of October, following the Assembly's validation of the election results.

Regarding a Prime Minister, Thieu said it would be advantageous to appoint a Southerner. Bunker stressed the importance of having a good administrator as Prime Minister. They discussed various possibilities for the position. Thieu indicated he was thinking of offering honorary positions, such as members of the Supreme Court, to both Huong and Suu. Thieu said that Loc, Ky's choice for Prime Minister, was probably not up to the job. Bunker agreed.

Thieu agreed on the desirability of broadening the government's base by inviting representatives of other candidates to participate. He said it would probably be necessary to have only two or three military officers in Cabinet positions.

Thieu agreed warmly when Bunker mentioned the need for a dynamic platform and program for the new government, and said that he would like to discuss this further with Bunker. In response to Bunker's query, Thieu said that he would take no initiatives regarding negotiations without further consultation with us. Bunker will follow up on this discussion and also intends to see Ky soon to get his reactions and thoughts. An Embassy officer meanwhile has stressed to an official close to Ky the importance of Ky and Thieu agreeing soon on broadening the government and related matters.

Dzu's Reported Protest Plans

Runner-up presidential candidate Dzu has claimed to Australian journalist Denis Warner that he had a large clandestine campaign organization behind him, that he had been sure of getting 1,800,000 votes (more than Thieu-Ky's 1,650,000), but that the Vietnamese Government had reduced

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his total vote in various provinces before reporting it to Saigon. Dzu claimed also that Huong, Suu, Ha Thuc Ky, and Tri Quang agreed with his plans for a massive protest and that a press conference would be held on September 7 to detail charges against the government. Dzu also spoke of his willingness to mount a coup and claimed to have enough military support to do it. He asserted that his organization was not connected with the NLF, but said that it had NLF members in it and that the NLF may have supported him because of his peace platform. We have cabled for our Embassy's urgent comment and assessment of this information. In our view, Dzu is vastly exaggerating his strength and particularly his coup-making potential.

Senate Race

At present, with all but four electoral districts represented, it appears that the Senate will be fairly well balanced in its representation and will include many well known political figures. The leading list, headed by retired General Tran Van Don, seems assured of election. Except for one Catholic slate, which probably would have done well anyway, all reportedly GVN-backed slates are doing fairly badly.

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