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Monday, September 4, 1967
2:00 p.m.

78
Pres file

Mr. President:

Since you will be seeing Lodge, you may wish to read his report on a conversation with an anti-Gaullist French general.

Amb. Bunker's comment is attached.

We are digging into the question of ChiCom rice flows to Hanoi.*

W. W. Rostow

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*P.S. A. requested quick
CIA comment just came
in and is attached.
(W.)

WWRostow:rln

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-364

By Lip, NARA, Date 6-23-95

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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By 4-9, NARA Date 12-15-54

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FOLLOWING IS A REPORT BY LODGE

1. OF ALL THE FRENCH GENERALS NOW LIVING WHO SERVED IN VIEN-NAM DURING THE INDO-CHINA WAR THE MOST INTELLIGENT IS PROBABLY GEN VANUXEM. HE LIVED HERE NINE YEARS AND STILL HAS MANY FRIENDS AND CONNECTIONS. HE HAS BEEN VERY BADLY TREATED BY DE GAULLE WHOSE POLICIES HE STRONGLY DEPLORES. HE VALUES HIS ASSOCIATIONS WITH AMERICANS IN WORLD WAR II AND IS WARMLY IN FAVOR OF GOOD FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HE TOLD ME THE FOLLOWING:

2. FOR YEARS NOW THE CHINESE COMMUNIST SHIPMENT OF RICE TO NORTH-VIET NAM HAS ARRIVED ON TIME LIKE CLOCKWORK AND ALWAYS IN THE AGREED AMOUNTS. NOW, HOWEVER, THE AMOUNTS ARE LESS AND THE RICE IS ARRIVING AT IRREGULAR INTERVALS.

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 4867 ~~SECRET~~

CHINESE RICE IS UTTERLY INDISPENSABLE TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WAR EFFORT. THIS THEREFORE COULD BE VERY BIG.

3. VANUXEM SAYS THAT WE HAVE NO GOOD CARDS TO PLAY WHEN IT COMES TO NEGOTIATIONS. THE ONLY CARD WE HAVE WHICH IS TO STOP THE BOMBING - IS "PURELY NEGATIVE." OUR SIDE SHOULD, THEREFORE, OCCUPY SOME LAND IN NORTH-VIET NAM AND THAT WILL GIVE US A "POSITIVE" CARD TO PLAY AND GREATLY INCREASE THE CHANCES OF BRINGING THEM TO NEGOTIATE.

4. VANUXEM IS CONVINCED THAT HE COULD RECRUIT "A CORPS OF THREE DIVISIONS" OF FRENCHMEN TO FIGHT IN VIET-NAM. MANY FRENCHMEN, HE SAYS, BELIEVE THAT THE US IS FIGHTING A WAR WHICH IS JUST AS MUCH IN THEIR INTERESTS AS IT IS IN THAT OF THE US. MANY ALSO KNOW VIET-NAM, ARE ATTACHED TO IT AND WOULD WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A VENTURE.

GP-1. BUNKER

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By ~~12-15-94~~, NARA, Date ~~12-15-94~~

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1. VANUXEM'S VIEWS AS EXPRESSED TO LODGE REGARDING SHIPMENTS OF CHINESE RICE TO NORTH VIETNAM ARE INTERESTING AND HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT IF TRUE. WE WILL BE TRYING TO VERIFY THIS REPORT ALTHOUGH RELIABLE INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT IS HARD TO COME BY.
2. HIS VIEWS REGARDING POSSIBLE LAND INVASION OF NORTH VIET-NAM WARRANT COMMENT. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD CONTEMPLATE, FOR WHATEVER REASONS OF BARGAINING ADVANTAGE, AN OVERT OCCUPATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TERRITORY BY FREE WORLD OR SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES. THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES IN THIS AREA, TO SAY NOTHING OF ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, WOULD BE INCALCULABLE, AND IT WOULD INVOLVE US IN WHAT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A BOTTOMLESS PIT. AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, WHAT IS REALLY NEEDED IS THE EFFECTIVE CHOKING OFF OF INFILTRATION FROM THE NORTH, NOT TO BECOME BOGGED DOWN IN A LAND WAR IN NVN SEEKING TO DESTROY ITS SOURCE WITH ALL THE RAMIFICATIONS THIS COURSE WOULD HAVE.
3. EQUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTEMPLATE IS HIS SUGGESTION THAT A FEW DIVISIONS OF FRENCH MERCENARIES RE-ORGANIZED TO FIGHT IN VIET-NAM. THE EMPLOYMENT OF FORCES OF THE FORMER COLONIAL POWER IN EITHER SOUTH OR NORTH VIET-NAM WOULD ADD THE FINAL CURSE TO OUR PRESENCE HERE AND CONFIRM UNSPOKEN VIETNAMESE FEARS STIMULATED BY THE VIETCONG THAT OUR INTEREST REALLY IS TO REESTABLISH A COLONIAL DOMINION HERE.
4. THESE COMMENTS ARE PRETTY OBVIOUS TO CLOSE OBSERVERS OF THE VIET-NAM SCENE, WHETHER HERE OR IN WASHINGTON, BUT I THINK THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT ABOUT OUR VIEWS ON VANUXEM'S SUGGESTIONS.

BUNKER

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