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Wednesday,
September 13, 1967

Pres file

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President:

Attached is today's situation report
on Vietnamese politics.

W. W. Rostow

Att.

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Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

September 13, 1967

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-361

Thieu-Ky Relationship

By ing, NARA, Date 10-14-94

We are getting numerous reports that the relationship between Thieu and Ky has deteriorated. Many of these reports are traceable to those in Thieu's and Ky's respective entourages who are trying to advance their own personal positions. However, in separate conversation with Bunker, both Thieu and Ky have expressed some concern regarding the attitude of the other.

Bunker and his staff are urging both sides to get together to work out their differences. Until these differences are resolved, they will render more difficult the problems of validating the election results, of forming a new government, and of moving ahead with government programs. Bunker is fully aware of the urgency of resolving these problems and we believe he is doing everything possible in this regard. We have also talked here to Ambassador Bui Diem, who is leaving for Saigon today. We think he will be a good influence on Ky, encouraging him to work with Thieu.

Election Complaints

The Assembly has forwarded to the Central Election Council the 15 formal complaints filed against the conduct of the presidential election. Several formal complaints against the conduct of the Upper House elections have also been filed.

An experienced government official, who is member of the Council, appears confident that the Council will recommend that the Assembly validate the presidential election results and that the Assembly would follow this recommendation. However, some allegedly pro-Ky Assembly members, as well as some Assembly members defeated in the Senate race, are reportedly tempted to try to invalidate the election results. Embassy officers are trying to counter this

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sentiment among Assembly Deputies, and Bunker is urging Thieu and Ky to work on Assembly members in favor of validation.

Formation of a Government

The Thieu-Ky differences are delaying decisions on the formation of a new government. Thieu has told Bunker that he favors a broadly based government, whereas Ky wants a government of technicians. Thieu's statement is undoubtedly partially for our consumption, but it also probably in part reflects Thieu's and Ky's differences over personalities.

Ky still apparently favors as Prime Minister his earlier Vice Presidential running-mate, Nguyen Van Loc, whom Thieu (and Bunker) considers inadequate. Several of the other key generals apparently are supporting Ky's choice. Thieu said he had offered the Primership to Huong but that Huong had declined because he felt that he could not work with Ky. So far, other good prospects for Prime Minister being considered by Thieu are not receiving support from other key generals. Thieu has told Bunker that the generals will discuss these matters again in the very near future.

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