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Wednesday, October 4, 1967
3:00 p.m.

Profile

Mr. President:

Herewith today's report on the
Vietnamese political situation.

W. W. Rostow

cc: Mr Goldstein

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)
White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983
By jm, NARA, Date 10-15-91

Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

October 4, 1967

1. Buddhist Agitation. Tri Quang continues his "vigil" outside the Palace, but the Embassy reports little popular interest in his cause. Police Chief Loan requested that Buddhist monks and nuns cease immediately all forms of public gatherings and processions in the interest of national security. Prime Minister Ky also issued a communique requesting the monks and nuns to return to their pagodas and urging a peaceful solution to the Buddhists' internal problems.

Thieu explained to Bunker that he is trying to get the Buddhists to settle the problem among themselves. Thieu believes Buddhist restiveness can be controlled, but that Tri Quang may have to be given some face-saving device if he is to return to his pagoda (which he is reportedly anxious to do). Bunker told Thieu this approach seemed very constructive but noted that we do not intend to get involved in this matter and that we have no influence with or interest in Tri Quang. Bunker feels that validation of the election has taken much of the steam out of Tri Quang's political efforts.

2. Lower House Candidates. The final posting of candidates for the Lower House listed 1240 candidates for the 137 seats. 1650 persons filed originally; of the 464 persons whose candidacies were rejected at the local level or who withdrew, 152 subsequently appealed to the National Election Council. The Council upheld 54 of these appeals and rejected 98.

In the Bunker-Thieu conversation noted above, Thieu said the GVN is actively preparing for the Lower House elections. He expects an overall turnout below that of the Presidential elections, since the public may now be somewhat jaded with elections. Bunker stressed the importance of an active GVN campaign to stir up voter interest.

3. General Thang. The semi-official Viet-Nam Press reported that General Thang has been named Deputy Chief of Staff, JGS, with responsibilities for Regional and Popular Forces. This confirms earlier reports that Thang would take this position, and is encouraging in that Thang has decided to stay on. It can also be interpreted as showing that Ky is maintaining his influence in military inner circles.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-405

By mp, NARA, Date 3-29-95

4. Release of Dzu. The Embassy reports Dzu was released today. His arrest September 29 was probably to get him out of the way during the validation proceedings, though charges against him are still pending.