

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

Friday, October 20, 1967
9:30 a.m.

P file

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MR. PRESIDENT:

The North Vietnamese Ambassador in Vientiane told Bill Sullivan the other day to keep our ears open for what Burchett would have to say in the period after he left Hanoi. He has been used before as a mouthpiece on a quasi-official basis. Here is the first take.

The British are going out to Phnom Penh to probe Burchett further.

Incidentally, our man K had a brief talk at the airport with M, confined to conveying a general mood of gloom and concern. He will see M and A at greater length today. The odds are that M has already rushed to B to convey the general atmosphere of K's arrival.

W. W. R.

~~SECRET~~ attachment (London 3141)

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 94-452
By sig, NARA, Date 7-17-95

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Thursday, October 19, 1967

TEXT OF CABLE FROM AMBASSADOR BRUCE (London, 3141)

The Foreign Office today received a message from its ambassador in Phnom Penh reporting a conversation he had on October 18 with Wilfred Burchett and the Polish member of the International Control Commission, both of whom had returned the same day from Hanoi after a week's visit. Burchett and the Pole both insisted Hanoi is taking as hard a line as ever. However, Burchett also said that he had had talks with Pham Van Dong and Foreign Minister Trinh, who had said, "If the bombing stopped, they were willing to have meaningful talks though whether they were fruitful or not depended on the other side." The North Vietnamese added they would not deal with the President or the Secretary, whom they regarded as "crooks."

Murray (head of the Southeast Asia Department) did not want to make too much of this, but in view of Burchett's previous activities as a channel, he believed the matter was worth looking into further. He showed us a telegram Brown has sent Phnom Penh instructing Ambassador to probe Burchett further if in his view Burchett was expressing "categorical North Vietnamese view." Murray has asked Embassy Washington to inform the Department.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-449

By 449, NARA, Date 12-23-94

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