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Thursday, November 9, 1967

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*Pres file*

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President:

Attached is a preliminary estimate of the new Vietnamese Cabinet. It looks like a competent but fairly lackluster group. We expect a more detailed estimate from the Embassy in the next day or so. The geographic distribution of the new Cabinet looks quite good.

W. W. Rostow

Att.

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-477

By 428, NARA, Date 6-28-95

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Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

November 9, 1967

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NIJ 94-478

By 06, NARA, Date 2-22-95

New Vietnamese Cabinet:

The new Cabinet was announced today. It includes 17 ministers, 7 vice-ministers, 2 secretaries, and 2 directors-general attached to the Prime Minister's office. Only 3 are military officers -- the Ministers of Defense, Interior, and Revolutionary Development.

Tran Van Do was retained as Foreign Minister and Truong Thai Ton resumed his former position as Economics Minister. General Nguyen Bao Tri is Revolutionary Development Minister, although his responsibilities are greatly reduced from those of his predecessor General Thang.

The Cabinet seems to have fairly good religious and regional balance. There are 13 Southerners, 9 Northerners, and 6 Central Vietnamese. However it is not clear at the moment whether the more radical or activist Southerners are represented.

The Cabinet is composed primarily of technicians rather than political figures. It does not include any of the defeated candidates. In fact, it contains few new faces. There are seven incumbents carried over from the Ky Government (though some titles or positions have changed) and seven others who were already in second-level positions in the Ky Government. The newcomers appear to be mainly technicians.

We are awaiting the Embassy's assessment of the new lineup. Our own immediate reaction is that the Cabinet is politically unexciting though probably technically qualified.

A list of the new ministers, including their previous positions, is attached.

One of the best, sub-cabinet appointments is that of Nguyen Ngoc Linh as Director General for Information. He is the current director of Viet-Nam Press, and is young, intelligent and able. He should do more than any previous holder of this post to improve the GVN's press relations and information programs.

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The new ministers and their previous positions,  
in parentheses, are as follows:

Prime Minister (Lawyer and campaign manager  
for Ky).....Nguyen Van Loc

Minister of Foreign Affairs (Minister of  
Foreign Affairs).....Tran Van Do

Minister of Defense (Chief of Staff, Joint  
General Staff).....LtGen Nguyen Van Vy

Minister of Revolutionary Development  
(Minister of Information and Chieu Hoi).....LtGen Nguenyn Bao Tri

Minister of Chieu Hoi /Open Arms/ (Secretary  
of State for Social Welfare).....Nguyen Xuan Phong

Minister of Interior (Minister of Security).....LtGen Linh Quang Vien

Minister of Economy (Asst to the Prime  
Minister).....Truong Thai Ton

Minister of Finance (DirGen of Budget &  
Foreign Aid).....Luu Van Tinh

Minister of Agriculture (Asst to the Prime  
Minister).....Ton That Trinh

Minister of Labor (Economics Professor, Dalat  
University).....Pho Ba Long

Minister of Communications and Transport  
(Head of the state-owned Nong Son Coal Mine)....Luong The Sieu

Minister of Public Works (Unknown).....Buu Don

Minister of Justice (2d Deputy Chairman of the  
Peoples' Army Council).....Huynh Duc Buu

Minister of Culture and Education (Dean of  
Can Tho University Law School).....Dang Kim Dong

Minister of Veterans (Sec of State for  
Veterans Affairs).....Nguyen Tan Hong

Minister of Health (Sec of State for Health).....Dr Tran Van Luy

Minister of Social Welfare and Refugees  
(Special Commissioner for Refugees).....Nguyen Phuc Que

Minister of Minorities (Special Commissioner  
for Montagnard Affairs).....Paul Nur