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*Pres file*

INFORMATION

Thursday, November 16, 1967 -- 8:00 p.m.

Mr. President:

I have been asked to summarize for your press conference tomorrow your meetings with the Saigon team. I would make the following points.

1. This is a routine meeting to take stock after 6 months' experience by the new team in Saigon and after the formation of the newly elected Vietnamese government.

2. There are no new great decisions before us because our policy in Vietnam is firmly established; and we are making progress in military, political, and economic terms.

3. We are examining how we can accelerate forward movement within an agreed strategy in the light of the priorities set by the South Vietnamese government and in the light of our own military operations.

4. We are heartened by the steps already taken by the new South Vietnamese government with respect to:

- corruption;
- the new responsibilities passed to elected local governments with respect to the collection and use of land taxes;
- the enlargement by 65,000 of the armed forces of South Vietnam;
- the program to assist the regional and popular forces;
- and in other fields.

We know the new government plans to take further steps in these and other areas and we want to be sure we can be of maximum assistance to it.

5. I have had long sessions individually with Amb. Bunker, Gen. Westmoreland and Amb. Komar. They each bring to me a story of solid progress in the right directions. They are each confident in our basic strategy. That strategy has our support here in Washington. We are simply discussing ways of moving forward more effectively within that strategy.

W. W. Rostow

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