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Authority *NW 17871409*
By *MT* NARA Date *3/7/06*

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Army
FROM: USARMA Saigon
TO: Secretary of State
NO: MC 976-55, April 28 (Army Message)

Control: 15778
Rec'd: April 28, 1955
6:07 p.m.

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PRIORITY
SENT DEPTAR G2 FOR DISC. DEPTAR G2 REPEAT FOR INFORMATION
USCINCEUR, CINCPAC, CINCFE AND STATE DEPARTMENT.

Request distribution this message be limited to need to know
since comments not coordinated with other Saigon agencies.

After 1315 shelling of palace (nine rounds 81 mm mortar), heavy
fighting developed 28 April between Binh Xuyen and VNA areas
Y bridge, power plant, Petrus KY Lycee and Favj headquarters.
Light contracts elsewhere. VNA, after Diem notification to Ely
he had no choice but return fire, began firing mortars and
some 105 mm artillery principally in Y bridge area. This
action started fires that area which due to wind and inability
fire department act during battle quickly spread into major
conflagration (at 1800 these fires appeared under control). No
information on casualties other than French military suffered
two or three wounded in action who were guarding power plant.
Details relative fire fights this date to follow.

Comments: Heavy fighting localized and only isolated incidents
in European sector. Not known if French plan intervene or if
French plan added protection European sector other than troop
alerts already ordered.

Fighting died down vicinity power plant approximately 1800
lending support to unconfirmed rumor that VNA has issued orders
to cease firing probably to permit fire department fight fires
that vicinity. Further incidents expected during night could
result in resumption fighting.

ARMA believes any US actions at this time which could by
inference indicate lessening support for legal government current
fighting within city would be fatal to Diem Government and US
prestige here.

ARMA considers highly likely that French efforts at intervention
in area of heavy fighting (outside European sector) could well
result in VNA-French military clash. Do not downgrade.

AB/JNA

Note: Read by Mr. Young (PSA) 9:40 p.m. 4/28/55 FMH
45237
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