

~~SECRET~~UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF

4 April 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Vietnam Assessment

In accordance with your instructions, I visited South Vietnam during the period 28 March - 4 April. I have completed my assessment of the current situation there, analyzed what the Government of the Republic of Vietnam intends to do to counter the aggression from the North, assured President Thieu of your steadfast support in this time of crisis, and examined the options and actions open to the United States to assist the South Vietnamese.

The current military situation is critical, and the probability of the survival of South Vietnam as a truncated nation in the southern provinces is marginal at best. The GVN is on the brink of a total military defeat. However, the South is planning to continue to defend with their available resources, and, if allowed respite, will rebuild their capabilities to the extent that United States support in materiel will permit. I believe that we owe them that support.

We went to Vietnam in the first place to assist the South Vietnamese people--not to defeat the North Vietnamese. We reached out our hand to the South Vietnamese people, and they took it. Now they need that helping hand more than ever. By every measure we have been able to apply 20,000,000 people have told the world they fear for their lives, they cherish values that are closely allied with those of non-communist systems, they desperately seek the opportunity to continue their development of a way of life different from those who now live under North Vietnamese rule.

The present level of U.S. support guarantees GVN defeat. Of the \$700 million provided for FY 1975, the remaining \$150 million can be used for a short time for a major supply operation; however, if there is to be any real chance of

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