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Mandatory Review

Case # NLJ 96-M

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
9 OCT 1997

TO WHITE HOUSE (MR BUNDY)

STATE SECRETARY RUSK, MR SULLIVAN, MR BUNDAY, MR HUGHES

DEFENSE SECRETARY MCNAMARA, GENERAL TAYLOR, MR MCNAUGHTON

DIA GENERAL HALL

ZEN

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

CAS SAIGON 6334

1. ON THE AFTERNOON OF 16 MAY [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] LEARNED [REDACTED]

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] THAT DO MAU WOULD, WITH SEN NGUYEN KHANH'S CONSENT, BECOME PRIME MINISTER WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. [REDACTED] KHANH WOULD SIMPLY TURN OVER THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT TO DO MAU AND KHANH WOULD ASSUME SOME LESSER UNSPECIFIED POST. [REDACTED]

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] VICE PREMIER NGUYEN TON HOAN HAD SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION ON 13 MAY BUT HAD BEEN PREVAILED UPON TO KEEP HIS RESIGNATION SECRET FOR AT LEAST 48 HOURS. [REDACTED] LT GENERAL WILLIAM WESTMORELAND, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF MACV, WAS AWARE OF AND [REDACTED] APPROVED KHANH'S AND MAU'S AGREEMENT.

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

2. [REDACTED]

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

3. [REDACTED]

4. AMBASSADOR LODGE CALLED THE CAS STATION CHIEF TO FORMER'S RESIDENCE AT 1830 HOURS 15 MAY TO RELATE THAT A VIETNAMESE WOMAN WITH GOOD CONNECTIONS IN HIGH SVN CIRCLES HAD TOLD MRS LODGE AT ABOUT NOON ON 16 MAY THAT THERE WOULD BE A CHANGE IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GVN BY 19 MAY AND WAS SURPRISED THAT MRS LODGE WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS. THE VIETNAMESE WOMAN DID NOT GIVE DETAILS OR SPECIFY HER SOURCES.

5. THE CAS STATION CHIEF RELATED THE FIRST THREE PARAGRAPHS ABOVE TO AMBASSADOR LODGE. THEY AGREED THAT KHANH SHOULD BE INFORMED AT ONCE, BY TELEPHONE CALL TO DALAT WHERE HE WAS WEEKENDING. THEY DID SO AT ABOUT 1930 HOURS. KHANH SAID HE WOULD TELEPHONE GENERAL KHIEM, [REDACTED]

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] KHIEM'S REACTION WAS QUITE CASUAL, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE MANY RUMORS ABOUT DO MAU, THAT THEY (KHANH AND KHIEM) KNEW THAT HE WAS OPPOSED TO KHANH, AND THAT HE IS CONSTANTLY INTRIGUING AND PLOTTING, BUT CONCLUDED BY SAYING DO MAU HAS BEEN DELIBERATELY ISOLATED, THAT DO MAU COMMANDS NO FORCE, AND THAT HE IS

INCAPABLE OF SEIZING POWER. KHIEM STATED THAT HE DID NOT  
CONSIDER THE SITUATION DANGEROUS, AND THAT EVERYTHING WAS UNDER  
CONTROL. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AT HAVING BEEN INFORMED.

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

KHANH SAID HE PROBABLY WOULD RETURN TO SAIGON ON THE MORNING  
OF 17 MAY, AND ASKED THAT WE PHONE HIM IN DALAT AT 0900 HOURS 17 MAY.

6. [REDACTED] WILL  
ADVISE YOU FURTHER AFTER [REDACTED] 17 MAY [REDACTED]

1.5(c)  
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] ASSUME YOU WILL INFORM STATE. WE WILL DISCUSS ENTIRE  
MATTER 17 MAY WITH [REDACTED] GEN HARKINS. SEND TEXT OF CAS SAIGON  
3534.

7. CAS HAS COMMENT: PARAGRAPHS 1-4 ABOVE SEEM TO CONTAIN A CON-  
SIDERABLE PROPORTION OF RUMOR. SINCE THE KEY OFFICIALS (KHANH AND  
KHIEM) HAVE NOW BEEN INFORMED, THEY WILL PRESUMABLY TAKE THE NECESSARY  
STEPS TO PREVENT THE REPORTEDLY CONTEMPLATED ACTION FROM TAKING  
PLACE.

3535.

~~SECRET~~