

TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

#521
68

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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CONFIDENTIAL CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

SUBJECT 1. BACKGROUND ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MARTIAL LAW
2. PROBLEMS OF GENERAL DON

DATE OF INFO. [REDACTED]

DATE DISTR. 23 AUGUST 1963

PRECEDENCE ROUTINE

PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON [REDACTED]

REFERENCES IN Ø5574

APPRaisal [REDACTED]

FIELD REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE [REDACTED]

1. SUMMARY. [REDACTED] THE PLAN TO DECLARE MARTIAL LAW FOR SOUTH VIETNAM WHICH WAS DEVELOPED ABOUT 6 AUGUST 1963 DURING A MEETING OF SEVERAL HIGH-RANKING ARMY OFFICERS HEADED BY MAJOR GENERAL TRAN VAN DON. GENERAL DON HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT NO CASUALTIES WOULD OCCUR DURING THE ROUNDUP OF BUDDHISTS.

2. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] THE PLAN EVOLVED ABOUT 10 AUGUST DURING A MEETING OF THE FOLLOWING: MAJOR GENERAL TRAN VAN DON, COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES; BRIGADIER GENERAL TON THAT DINH, III CORPS COMMANDER; BRIGADIER GENERAL TRAN THIEN KHIEM, CHIEF OF STAFF, JOINT GENERAL STAFF; BRIGADIER GENERAL TRAN TU OAI, DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE, WHO HANDLED THE PRINTING REQUIREMENTS; COLONEL LE QUANG TUNG, HEAD OF THE VIETNAMESE SPECIAL FORCES; NGUEYN VAN Y, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL POLICE; AND POSSIBLE ONE OR TWO OTHERS. AT THIS MEETING GENERAL DON WAS ASSURED THAT NO ONE WOULD BE HURT IN ACTIONS AIMED AT THE BUDDHISTS. DESPITE THIS ASSURANCE, 65 POLICE AND COMBAT POLICE WERE INJURED, SIX OF THEM CRITICALLY. BUDDHIST CASUALTIES WERE NOT KNOWN BUT APPROXIMATELY 1,400 BONZES AND LAY PERSONS WERE UNDER DETENTION BY 22 AUGUST; MOST OF THESE WERE TO BE RELEASED.

3. ON 22 AUGUST A PETITION INDICATING THAT THE SITUATION HAD DETRIORATED TO THE EXTENT THAT ACTION AGAINST THE BUDDHISTS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MARTIAL LAW WERE BOTH NECESSARY, SUPPOSEDLY SIGNED BY ALL GENERAL OFFICERS AND PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT DIEM BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MARTIAL LAW, WAS BEING CIRCULATED THROUGHOUT THE GENERAL STAFF FOR SIGNATURES BY THOSE WHO ACTUALLY HAD NOT SIGNED IT. MAJOR GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH, MILITARY ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT, SIGNED IT ON

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FORM 10-1
1-63

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WDG. 2-63

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22 AUGUST AND SEVERAL OTHER GENERALS OFFICERS HAD SIGNED IT AFTER THE MOVE WAS MADE AGAINST THE BUDDHISTS ON 20-21 AUGUST. [REDACTED] COMMENT. THIS WOULD SEEM TO IMPLY THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD NOT BEEN PRESENTED WITH A PETITION SIGNED BY A MAJORITY OF THE GENERALS.)

4. GENERAL DON EXPLAINED TO GENERALS DUONG VAN MINH, TRAN VAN MINH, LE VAN NGHIEM, AND LE VAN KIM ON 22 AUGUST EVENTS THAT HAD TRANSPIRED SINCE 20 AUGUST STATING THAT ASSURANCES TO HIM THAT NONE WOULD BE HURT HAD NOT BEEN FULFILLED. HE TOLD THEM THAT THE SITUATION WAS GRAVE, THAT HE NEEDED THEIR HELP AND THAT HE WISHED TO MEET WITH THEM EVERY MORNING. HE SAID THAT THE ARMY COULD HANDLE ONE SERIOUS OUTBREAK BUT IF MULTIPLE MAJOR DISTURBANCES ERUPTED, (PORTION GARBLED, BEING SERVICED)*

5. [REDACTED] DISSEM. STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMACV MAAG 9TH FLD STA 2ND AIR DIV. USOM USIS CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

6. [REDACTED]

END OF MESSAGE

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FORM 1-43

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