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CIA Chief In Saigon Recalled?

By the Associated Press
Washington

The CIA chief in South Vietnam is reportedly being called home in what may be the first step of a shakeup of American personnel in Saigon.

John H. Richardson is officially being recalled to Washington for consultations. But reliable sources indicate that Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge wants somebody else to replace him as head of the Central Intelligence Agency mission in South Vietnam.

The report of Mr. Richardson's recall came only three days after Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, completed an inspection trip in Vietnam and reported to President Kennedy.

Mr. Richardson has been one of the key architects of United States effort to help President Ngo Dinh Diem's Government resist Communist guerrillas and State Department sources give him good marks in this respect.

But there have been persistent reports of differences between Mr. Lodge and the CIA mission and other agencies operating under Mr. Lodge's general direction in attempting to straighten out United States-Vietnamese relations.

Mr. Richardson, it is reliably reported, won't return to South Vietnam.

Mr. Lodge named by President Kennedy as Ambassador to South Vietnam at a time of worsening relations with the United States, is reported considering many changes in the United States staff in South Vietnam, which has been torn by internal troubles with Buddhist as well as the Communist threat.

It has been expected that Mr. Lodge would shake up the United States mission at Saigon and get rid of a number of officials believed to have outlived their usefulness there.

Just two weeks ago, Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield of Montana warned that this country's efforts in South Vietnam faced disaster unless all American agencies there responded promptly to policy changes ordered by President Kennedy.

Mr. Kennedy has stated United States policy in South Vietnam as basically to defeat the Communists and bring Americans home.

Mr. Mansfield's speech Sept. 20 was viewed as a thinly veiled rebuke to the CIA for giving the impression that the United States spoke with two voices in South Vietnam.

There have been unconfirmed reports that United States agencies split into two camps — one that wanted to overthrow the Diem government in hopes of finding a stronger anti-Communist leader, and those that believed it better to stick with Mr. Diem. United States spokesmen have denied the reports, calling them "nonsense."

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