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Monday, August 14, 1967

TEXT OF CIA MESSAGE

EO 12958 3.4(b)(1)-25Yrs
(C)

SUBJECT: Prime Minister Ky's Intention to Demonstrate that he
is still the Man in Charge, and his Displeasure
at American Pressure

As a close political adviser to Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky was leaving the latter's office at about 6:30 p.m. on August 11, shortly after Ky had met with Ambassador Bunker, he remarked to Ky that Director General of the National Police Brigadier General Nguyen Lgoc Loan was in an outer office waiting to see Ky. Minister of Social Welfare Nguyen Xuan Phong, Ky's campaign manager, and several others were also in the aide's room.

Ky was in good humor and responded that he needed to talk to Loan. After a few minutes of inconsequential conversation, Loan asked Ky to refrain henceforth from making sensational declarations while on trips to the provinces, or in statements in public or to the press, either local or foreign.

Ky suddenly became irritated and replied that it was his duty to speak his thoughts openly and that he had just finished explaining his position to Ambassador Bunker that afternoon. Ky said he had told the Ambassador that it was a waste of time for Ky to discuss such matters as campaign facilities with the various civilian Presidential candidates and that it was necessary instead to conserve everyone's efforts, including those of the Army and the population to fight the war. Ky then described the civilian candidates as "ordure" (dirt, filth, excrement), "traitors," and "destroyers of the national interest," and said that if they continued to group together and to attack him, it was very probable that he would set aside or cancel the elections.

Ky remarked that since everyone has said his position as Vice President will be to sit and take it easy, he is going

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to demonstrate to them that this is not true, that it is he "who decides, he who does everything," that his role is not to be discounted, and that he will not be content to "sit in his armchair and do nothing."

When Ky finished these remarks, Loan remained quiet and appeared embarrassed. In order to save the situation, Ky's political adviser spoke up and stated that he felt Loan was perfectly right, noting that he, himself, had recently urged Ky to take the same course. The adviser went on to say that if Ky needed to present his ideas frankly, he should do so within the walls of his own office and among his close associates only. He added that it would be much better if Ky were to allow Nguyen Can Loc, the official representative of the Thieu-Ky ticket, to make his (Ky's) statements for him.

In recounting his meeting with Ambassador Bunker to some of his close associates, Ky commented that he felt under considerable pressure from the American government. Ky made it clear that he does not like to bow to American pressure, 'particularly when he has done everything he can as regards fair and equal treatment of the opposing civilian candidates."

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