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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM/SOUTHEAST ASIA /CHINA
SUBJECT COMMENTS OF PRESIDENT DIEM ON THE SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA
DATE OF INFO. 14 NOVEMBER 1962
PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (14 NOVEMBER 1962)
APPRAISAL SEE BELOW
REPORT NO. TDCS -3/528,822
DATE DISTR. 20 NOVEMBER 1962
PRECEDENCE ROUTINE
REFERENCES IN
FIELD REPORT NO. FVS-8190

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

SOURCE
APPR.

1. PRESIDENT NGO DINH DIEM STATED ON 14 NOVEMBER 1962 THAT THE FRENCH WERE ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN THEIR CONTROL IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BY THE NEUTRALIZATION OF THE AREA AND BY THE DIMINUTION OR EJECTION OF SIGNIFICANT AMERICAN PRESENCE. DIEM STATED THAT SUCH IS HAPPENING IN LAOS AND WHAT IS UNDER WAY IN CAMBODIA, WITH THE POSSIBLE FORCED WITHDRAWAL OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND ADVISORY GROUP THERE. THE UNITED STATES WILL DISCOVER THAT THE FRENCH ARE INCAPABLE OF DISCHARGING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES EITHER IN LAOS OR IN CAMBODIA. FRENCH JURISTS ARE DRAWING UP THE NEUTRALIZATION PROPOSAL IN PHNOM PENH, DIEM REMARKED.

2. DIEM CLAIMED THAT THE SITUATION IN LAOS WILL FALL TO PIECES, BECAUSE THERE IS NO BASIC STRUCTURE ON WHICH TO WORK. HE FELT THAT IT IS AN ABSURD ATTEMPT

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GROUP 1 Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

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TO IMPOSE IN LAOS A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM CHARACTERISTIC OF THE OLD AND ESTABLISHED COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE, AND EVEN MORE CHARACTERISTIC OF THOSE COUNTRIES AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. ALL OF THE LAO ARMED FORCES ARE NOT COMPLETELY LACKING IN FIGHTING SPIRIT, DIEM STATED, BUT CHANGING AMERICAN POLICIES IN LAOS HAVE TENDED TO DEMORALIZE THE LAO FORCES AND DESTROY THEIR SPIRIT. DIEM SAID THAT THAILAND STILL HAS SEVERAL COURSES OF POSSIBLE ACTION CONCERNING LAOS, FOR INSTANCE, THAILAND COULD DENY RICE SUPPLIES AND CUT OFF ACCESS FOR OTHER IMPORTS INTO LAOS. THAILAND SHOULD HAVE INVADED LAOS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SOVIET AIRLIFT, AND SHOULD HAVE WITHDRAWN STEP BY STEP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE TROOPS FROM NORTH VIETNAM. COMMUNIST CHINA MAY HAVE STARTED THE LAO VENTURE IN ORDER TO CONSOLIDATE PHONG SALLY, SAM NEUA, AND NORTHERN LAOS IN GENERAL, AS A PROTECTION FOR YUNNAN PROVINCE, WHICH DIEM DESCRIBED AS ONE OF THE MOST VULNERABLE AREAS ON MAINLAND CHINA. DIEM BELIEVED THE CHINESE NATIONALISTS SHOULD DIRECT PROBING ACTIONS INTO SUCH AREAS AS YUNNAN, INSTEAD OF CONDUCTING THEM FRONTALLY AGAINST THE COASTAL AREAS.

3. FIELD DISSEM. STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMACV MAAG AID USIA 9TH FIELD STATION 2ND AIR DIVISION CINCPAC ARPAC PACFLT PACAF.

END OF MESSAGE

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