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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO. TDCS-3/560,045

SUBJECT VO VAN HAI'S VIEWS ON THE COHESIVENESS OF
NGO FAMILY

DATE DISTR. 25 SEPTEMBER 1963

PRECEDENCE ROUTINE

DATE OF INFO. AUGUST - 16 SEPTEMBER 1963

REFERENCES IN 26656

PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (16 SEPTEMBER 1963)

APPRAISAL SEE BELOW.

FIELD REPORT NO. FVS 9692

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

SOURCE

APPRAISAL: IN VIEW OF HAI'S EXCELLENT ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION HIS ESTIMATE OF PRESIDENT DIEM AND HIS VIEWS OF THE NGO FAMILY ARE PROBABLY ACCURATE.

1. SUMMARY. BETWEEN EARLY AUGUST AND THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER 1963,

[] NORMALLY RESIDENT IN PARIS WHERE HE IS IN PRIVATE

BUSINESS, VISITED SAIGON AND HAD EXTENSIVE TALKS WITH [] VO VAN HAI, SECRETARY OF PRESIDENT DIEM'S PRIVATE CABINET. HAI TOLD [] THAT:

A. THE NGO FAMILY IS A HIGHLY COHESIVE UNIT AND PRESIDENT DIEM IS PARTICULARLY CONSCIOUS OF FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS.

B. DIEM APPROVES OF NGO DINH NHU'S ACTIVITIES; SPECIFICALLY, NHU SUGGESTED TO DIEM AND THE LATTER APPROVED THE ATTACK ON THE BUDDHIST PAGODAS ON 21 AUGUST.

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C. DIEM IS NOT ISOLATED AND IS AWARE OF NGO FAMILY ACTIVITIES.

D. DIEM WILL NEVER SUCCUMB TO UNITED STATES PRESSURE TO DISMISS NHU AND MADAME NHU.

HAI ALSO STATED THAT NHU BELIEVES THAT SOUTH VIETNAM CAN OPERATE WITHOUT U.S. AID AND THAT THE YOUTH OF SOUTH VIETNAM SUPPORT HIM.

2. ON 16 SEPTEMBER 1953 PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON VO VAN HAI'S VIEWS ON THE NGO FAMILY:

A. THE NGO FAMILY IS A UNIT WITH PRESIDENT DIEM STILL IN CHARGE. DIEM IS PARTICULARLY CONSCIOUS OF FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS AND PROTECTS FAMILY MEMBERS FROM OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE AND CRITICISM. FAMILY MEMBERS DIFFER IN OUTLOOK AND MAKE DIFFERENT RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING A FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION. DIEM, HOWEVER, IS AWARE OF ALL THAT NGO DINH NHU, MADAME NHU, NGO DINH CAN, AND NGO DINH THUC DO. NEITHER DIEM NOR NHU BELIEVES THAT CAN HAS MUCH ABILITY, ESPECIALLY IN TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT THEY PUBLICLY SUPPORT CAN.

B. THE RUMOR THAT DIEM IS ISOLATED AND RECEIVES NO REPORTS IS FALSE. DIEM KNOWS ABOUT AND APPROVES OF NHU'S PLANS AND ACTIVITY. NHU PROPOSED AND DIEM AGREED TO THE ATTACK ON THE BUDDHIST PAGODAS ON 21 AUGUST. THE VIETNAMESE GENERALS INVOLVED IN THE PROCLAMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MARTIAL LAW DID NOT KNOW IN ADVANCE OF THE HARSH MEASURES TO BE TAKEN AGAINST XA LOI PAGODA IN SAIGON. () COMMENT. HAI ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD LITTLE PERSONAL CONTACT WITH

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THE GENERALS AND WAS NOT SURE EXACTLY HOW MUCH THEY KNEW.)

C. IN HAI'S OPINION DIEM WILL NEVER SUCCUMB TO U.S. PRESSURE TO DISMISS NHU AND MADAME NHU.

D. DIEM PERSONALLY REPRIMANDED HAI FOR DARING TO CRITICIZE MADAME NHU'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS. MADAME NHU IS AWARE OF HAI'S FEELINGS AND DOES NOT CONCEAL HER DISLIKE OF HIM. NHU ALSO DISLIKES HAI BUT THEY MANAGE TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE PRESIDENCY.

E. NHU BELIEVES THAT SOUTH VIETNAM CAN OPERATE WITHOUT U.S. AID FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME. NHU ALSO BELIEVES THAT THE YOUTH, PARTICULARLY IN THE RURAL AREAS, SUPPORT HIM AND THAT THE REPUBLICAN YOUTH MOVEMENT IS A STRONG WEAPON. HAI DISAGREES WITH NHU ON ALL COUNTS.

3. FIELD DISSEM STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMACV MAAG USOM UFIS 9TH FLD. STA. 2ND AIR DIV. CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

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