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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM
IDENTIFICATION FORM

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

SECRET

32

Action
FE

Control: 20409

Rec'd: AUGUST 24, 1963
2:05 PM

Info

SS

G

SP

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INR

RMR

FROM: SAIGON

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 329, AUGUST 24, 11 PM

OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE

ACTION DEPARTMENT 329, INFORMATION CINCPAC 212

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

FOR HILSMAN

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EMBTel 314

WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY CONVERSATIONS WITH VO VAN HAI (EMBTel 316), GENERAL KIM (EMBTel 320), THUAN (EMBTel 324) AND GENERAL DON (CAS SAIGON 0265).

THESE CONVERSATIONS CONFIRM FULLY CONCLUSIONS CONTAINED REFTel. IN ADDITION, THEY INDICATE THAT:

A) NHU, PROBABLY WITH FULL SUPPORT OF DIEM, HAD LARGE HAND IN PLANNING OF ACTION AGAINST BUDDHISTS, IF HE DID NOT FULLY MASTER-MIND IT. HIS INFLUENCE HAS ALSO BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED.

B) HE PROBABLY FOUND RELATIVELY FERTILE SOIL IN WHICH TO WORK, I.E. CERTAIN OF GENERALS WERE GENUINELY WORRIED ABOUT GVN HANDLING OF BUDDHIST SITUATION AND READY FOR DECISIVE MILITARY ACTION, SUCH AS MARTIAL LAW.

C) IT IS NEVERTHELESS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT REGULAR ARMY WAS NOT

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-2- 329, AUGUST 24, 11 PM FROM SAIGON

CUT IN FULLY ON PLANNED ACTION AGAINST PAGODAS, WHICH WAS CARRIED OUT BY POLICE AND COLONEL TUNG'S SPECIAL FORCES. (ON OTHER HAND, DON'S STATEMENT THAT ARMY PLANNED SIMPLY TO RETURN BONZES TO THEIR OWN PAGODAS IS DISINGENUOUS, IF HE MEANT TO DO THIS COULD BE DONE PEACEFULLY.)

D) FINALLY, AND MOST IMPORTANT, WE DO NOT RPT NOT CONCLUDE THAT ANY OF OFFICERS WITH ACTUAL MILITARY STRENGTH IN SAIGON (DON, DINH, TUNG) IS AT THIS POINT DISAFFECTED WITH PRESIDENT OR WITH NHU. WE MUST ASSUME THAT LATTER HAVE, OR MAY WELL HAVE, STRINGS OF POWER STILL IN THEIR HANDS.

SUGGESTION HAS BEEN MADE THAT U.S. HAS ONLY TO INDICATE TO "GENERALS" THAT IT WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE DIEM AND/OR NHUS GO, AND DEED WOULD BE DONE. SITUATION IS NOT SO SIMPLE, IN OUR VIEW. SPECIFICALLY, AS INDICATED (D) ABOVE, WE HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT OFFICERS WITH TROOPS IN SAIGON ARE DISPOSED TO ACT IN THIS WAY. MOREOVER, THERE IS NO SHOWING THAT MILITARY HAVE AGREED AMONG THEMSELVES ON A LEADERSHIP.

ACTION ON OUR PART IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD SEEM TO BE A SHOT IN THE DARK. SITUATION AT THIS TIME DOES NOT CALL FOR THAT, IN MY JUDGMENT, AND I BELIEVE WE SHOULD BIDE OUR TIME, CONTINUING TO WATCH SITUATION CLOSELY.

GP3

LODGE

DT

NOTE: ADVANCE DELIVERY TO S/S-O AT 2:09 PM AUGUST 24TH

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