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December 1, 1961

STATUS REPORT

on the

INSTRUCTIONS TO AMBASSADOR NOLTING

(Deptel 619 of November 15)

Prepared by:

Task Force Viet-Nam
Department of State

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December 1, 1961

STATUS REPORT

For ease in reading we are not repeating the points in Deptel 619 underlined in the last report. However, the following paragraphs are responsive.

1. Ambassador Nolting reports he has appointment with Diem at 3:30 p.m. Saigon time December 1 (3:30 a.m. EST December 1). (Saigon's 735)

2. Viet-Nam language press criticism is tapering off. November 30 articles generally in philosophical vein with no mention US "conditions" on aid or "capitalist imperialism." (Saigon's 731 and 736)

3. Embassy Saigon reports problems with UK Mission. Contrary US-UK agreements on procedure, Thompson submitted plan to Diem without prior consultation with US, without real effort determine thrust our counter-insurgency plans, and without limiting it to intelligence and civil aspects. Substantively, Thompson Plan (which Thuan said Diem accepted) strikes blow at US efforts get Diem delegate authority to Field Command which by-passed in Thompson command scheme and gives priority to Delta when MAAG would like emphasize area north of Saigon. Diem's acceptance Thompson recommendations may also be prompted by attitude toward current US proposals. (Saigon's 737)

4. Diem expressed his frustration with the new US proposals to CAS on November 27. Compared Taylor Mission to Marshall China Mission; reiterated view that good people hard to find to whom authority can be delegated; deplored fanfare of Staley program and failure aid to materialize; said difficulties with Cabinet which would have resulted had he shown them the new US proposals; expressed frustration at dealing with US press representatives. However, he going ahead with extra financial expenditures, and would establish provincial councils. (TDCS 3/494,403)

5. After many Indian delaying ploys, Canadians succeeded getting Indian agreement refer GVN letters on subversion to ICC legal committee with time limit. (Saigon's 732)

6. The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr. Keith Holyoake, in announcing a gift of over £ 10,000 of tents, blankets, canned meat and soap to South Viet-Nam, said: "The future of South Viet-Nam and its brave people is of

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deep concern to New Zealand. Anything we can do to help them, not only in their present plight but also in pressing on with economic development and raising their living standards, is in our own interests as well as theirs."

7. The Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. R. G. Menzies, has informed the Secretary that "I have put under immediate study your proposals for action to help South Viet-Nam counter Viet-Cong insurgency. In general, they seem admirably adapted to meeting a very difficult situation. I am also having examined the possibility of Australia increasing its assistance to Viet-Nam and hope to be able to make a decision on this after the elections next month."

8. Viewing with "profound concern the deteriorating situation" in SVN Foreign Secretary Serrano of the Philippines reportedly said, "...we are still studying in what form and manner the Philippines could chip in. For the moment we are not thinking of military or economic matters. There is the possibility of sending nurses and doctors..." The Embassy reports that despite apparently lack of immediate response to US course of action in SVN, Serrano appeared pleased at Ambassador Hickerson's outline of US decisions.

9. WHITE PAPER - Printed and is being pouched today to all interested posts with instructions to embargo release pending further instruction. Balance of scenario depends upon Diem response to Nolting.

10. A status report of military actions is attached.

11. A status report of intelligence actions is attached.