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1. There was general agreement that the analogy was valid that the Diem government is resting on a melting ice floe, with a considerable portion of its key supporters withdrawing but few indications of replacements joining. This process of melting, however, is slow although the potential of collapse at any moment does exist. Despite this, both the soldiers and the civil servants are apt to continue their normal performance of their duties, so that there is a basic continuity in Vietnam despite the difficulties of the government. There is latent respect for the leadership of President Diem and a still remaining effort in many Vietnamese minds to distinguish Diem from the bad implication of the Nhu. One of the critical losses of personnel by the regime was Tran Kim Tuyen, whose intelligence and political manipulation ability would have been apt to have resulted in a better handling of the Buddhist crisis. Duong Van Hieu, Ngo Trong Hieu, and Colonel Tung have assumed various of Tuyen's activities but none can match him in capability.

2. The possibilities of a replacement regime are as follows:

A. A military junta, probably including some civilian figures. The primary officers who might conduct such a junta are General "Big" Minh, assisted by Le Van Kim, General Khanh and General Chieu.

B. A transitional regime with the Vice President as a figure-head, although Tho has lost much standing in recent weeks by his silence.

C. A civilian Prime Minister under a symbolic Chief of State. Candidates for this might be Tran Trung Dung, Pham Khac Suu. As a symbol, the following might serve: Tho, Vu Van Mau, or Suu. Dr. Dan is thoroughly discredited due to his pro-government apologies to Diem at the time of his trial.

3. If Diem and Nhu should be eliminated by an accident, it could be expected that the generals might continue to run the war and leave the administration to continue to run by the civil servants. Phan Hui Quat might serve as an effective leader. No exiles would be acceptable, except possibly Nguyen Ton Hoan might serve in a cabinet. The most likely result would be some sort of struggle for leadership from which some leader would arise.

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