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ComposedDate: 12/22/1997

ComposedDate_Time: 5:03:10 PM

Subject: Re: Second (Some New Text) AP Story Today on Vietnam Document Release
 Dear Board Members, Below is the updated AP story. CNN is working on a story as well. I spoke with Ralph Begleiter -- he is working on the story. CNN will be interviewing Ronald Spector (GW). Begleiter has been researching Vietnam for about a year. He seemed quite knowledgeable -- he understand that there isn't anything new per se, but he has an appreciation for the documents in that they were not available before and they contribute to putting the assassination in its historical context. With that in mind, he feels the story is the documents, and not the release of the documents. At any rate, he said a mention of the story will occur around 4:00 today, and that the polished story should run at 6:00. To: Eileencc: From: Tom Samoluk/ARRB
 Date: 12/22/97 04:46:18 PM Subject: Second (Some New Text) AP Story Today on Vietnam Document Release
 To: Eileencc: From: Tom Samoluk/ARRB Date: 12/22/97 03:45:02 PM Subject: Second (Some New Text) AP Story Today on Vietnam Document Release
 Copyright 1997 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. The information contained in this news report may not be published, broadcast or otherwise distributed without the prior written authority of the Associated Press. By MIKE FEINSILBER Associated Press Writer WASHINGTON (AP) -- Newly declassified government documents support the theory that weeks before his assassination John F. Kennedy wanted his military leaders to draw up contingency plans for a U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam following the 1964 presidential election. The documents add to the historical controversy over whether the nation might have been spared the loss of 58,000 American lives in Vietnam had Kennedy not been killed. Some historians believe that Lyndon B. Johnson, upon succeeding Kennedy, deepened the U.S. commitment out of eagerness not to be seen as the first American president to lose a war. But historian Ronald Spector of George Washington University said the execution of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem three weeks before Kennedy's murder in 1963 may have been more decisive than the change at the top of the U.S. government. American leaders soon discovered that Diem had been hiding reports from the field that showed the war was going badly for the South Vietnamese, said Spector, who teaches a course on the U.S. role in Indochina. And Diem's successors proved even more ineffective than Diem in combatting the Viet Cong. The newly released documents did not discuss Kennedy's role in sanctioning Diem's assassination -- another contentious issue from those days. The document on plans for a withdrawal was among 800 pages of Joint Chiefs of Staff records that were made public Monday by the government's Assassination Records Review Board. The board was created by Congress to amass for public inspection any records that might shed light on Kennedy's murder. "All planning will be directed towards preparing RVN (South Vietnamese) forces for the withdrawal of all U.S. special assistance units and personnel
Body:
recstat: Record
DeliveryPriority: N
DeliveryReport: B
ReturnReceipt:
Categories: