

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

INCOMING RIO DE JANEIRO

POL VIETNAM

ACTION:AMB
POL-2

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Classification

Control: 5582

INFO R 140239Z DEC 67
 DCM FM SECSTATE WASHDC
 MINECONTO ALL EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS
 POL/R ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
 DAO RUESMO/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0467
 MILGRP RUESBA/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 0372
 -2 RUESUA/AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO 0868
 USIS RUQVGM/AMEMBASSY RAWALPINDI 0387
 BELEM RUQVKP/AMEMBASSY KARACHI 0210
 BHOR RUMJGM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0230
 PALEGRUB RUDKKR/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 0503
 CUR RUQTAN/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 0479
 SAL RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1109
 SPAULO RUDKBT/AMEMBASSY RABAT 0323
 RECIFE RUMJPH/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0289
 RDG RUEHOT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1279
 FILE RUABWE/HICOM RYUKYUS POLAD
 RUHHHQA/CINCPAC POLAD
 RUEDNKA/CINCLANT POLAD
 RUEDPSA/CINSTRIKE POLAD
 RULPAL/CINCSO POLAD
 RUFFBK/CINCEUR POLAD
 RUFFAG/CINCUSAREUR POLAD
 RUDLHA/SHAPE POLAD
 RUEPWB/CO USAJFKCENSPWAR
 ZEN/ALL OTHER DIPLOMATIC POSTS
 STATE GRNC
 BT

Recd: Dec 14 1967
0700

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 84388/1

REF: STATE CIRCULAR 80803

SUBJECT: VIET-NAM WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

1. ALLEGED MEETING WITH NLF. REGARDING ALLEGED MEETING BETWEEN HIGH LEVEL VC EMISSARY AND AMERICAN EMBASSY IN SAIGON, VIETNAM PRESS REPORTED THAT PRIME MINISTER LOC'S OFFICE HAD STATED THAT 1) A VC AGENT HAD BEEN ARRESTED, 2) DURING COURSE OF INVESTIGATION AGENT STATED HE INTENDED TO CONTACT VQSLBEP OF EMBASSY STAFF REGARDING POW'S, AND 3) THERE HAD BEEN NO INTERCESSION FROM US EMBASSY TO REQUEST RELEASE OF THE AGENT. GVN POLICE REPORT ALSO DESCRIBED INCIDENT AS LOW-LEVEL VC TRYING TO CONTACT EMBASSY ABOUT POW'S. IN DECEMBER 6 BRIEFING FOR VIETNAMESE PRESS, AMBASSADOR BUNKER DENIED THAT ANY MEETING HAD TAKEN PLACE AND STATED THAT ON MATTERS CONCERNING NLF, US AND GVN COOPERATE CLOSELY AS ALLIES, THAT "US DOES NOT ACT UNILATERALLY HERE".

2. GVN STATEMENT ON NLF AT UN. GVN FONOFF ISSUED OFFICIAL STATEMENT DECEMBER 4 EXPRESSING GVN VIEW THAT, WHILE GVN SU-

FORM 1-64 PS-50

AKC/14/0800

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REPORTS UN DISCUSSION OF VN PROBLEMS, NLF IS CREATURE OF HANOI AND SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO USE UN FORUM FOR PROPAGANDA OR AS SEPARATE POLITICAL ENTITY IN ANY CAPACITY. COMMENT: SUBSEQUENT US STATEMENT DECEMBER 8 CONFIRMING AMERICAN INTENT TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH GVN, TO OPPOSE NLF USE OF UN FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES, AND TO REJECT IMPOSITION OF GOVERNMENT COALITION WITH NLF AT EXPENSE OF GVN HELPED CALM GROWING SAIGON FEARS OF SEPARATE US-NLF PEACE TALKS.

3. US ON NLF AND UN. ON QUESTION OF NEGOTIATIONS AND SEARCH FOR PEACE, US POLICY REMAINS AS HERETOFORE, NAMELY WE ARE PREPARED TO DISCUSS PEACE WITH GOVERNMENT OF HANOI OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT AT ANY TIME. AS PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR JULY 28, 1965, AND SUBSEQUENTLY, VC OR NLF WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY BEING REPRESENTED AND HAVING ITS VIEWS REPRESENTED. US WOULD NOT OPPOSE REPRESENTATIVES OF NLF PRESENTING THEIR VIEWS TO UN SHOULD THEY BE OFFICIALLY INVITED FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS. QUESTION OF NLF COMING TO UN FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM ANY QUESTION OF THEIR ENTERING US FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES. HANOI'S AND NLF'S ATTITUDE AND INDIRECT DENIAL OF OCTOBER CONTACT BETWEEN NLF AND UN REPORTED BELOW. (FOR ADDITIONAL OF US POSITION SEE DEPCIRTEL 80803 PARAGRAPH 7 AND UNCLASSIFIED STATE 81617).

4. COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA. COMMENTING ON US PROPOSAL TO BRING VIET-NAM QUESTION TO UN, HANOI RADIO QUOTED MOSCOW'S PRAVDA AS SAYING THIS IS "NEW TRICK" TO HIDE US AGGRESSION AND PREPARE NEW WAR ESCALATION STEPS. UN IS NOT ENTITLED "LEGALLY OR MORALLY" TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM, HANOI'S REPORT SAID. HANOI ALSO CARRIED ON DECEMBER 9 LIBERATION PRESS AGENCY STATEMENT WHICH BRANDED AS SHEER FABRICATION "RUMOR THAT FRONT HAD EXPRESSED DESIRE TO SEND REPRESENTATIVE TO UN". FYI: US UNAWARE OF FURTHER NLF CONTACT WITH UN FOLLOWING RECENT APPROACH TO SECRETARIAT CONCERNING POSSIBILITY OF HAVING REPRESENTATIVE AT UN. END FYI.

5. ECONOMIC SITUATION. SAIGON PRICE AND IMPORTED COMMODITY INDEXES ROSE DURING WEEK AFTER MONTH OF RELATIVE STABILITY. GENERAL PRICE RISE RESULT OF RISING DEMAND AS LUNAR NEW YEAR (TET) APPROACHES, LOWER STOCKS AND LOW EXPECTED IMPORTS. IMPORTERS PRESENTLY RELUCTANT TO APPLY FOR NEW IMPORT LICENSES FEARING POSSIBLE CUSTOMS INCREASES AFTER TET.

6. VC TERRORISM. TERRORISM INCREASING ESPECIALLY IN DELTA, IV CORPS. ARMED VC UNITS VISITED DELTA HAMLETS WARNING PEOPLE TO PAY 1967 VC TAXES, THAT "STRONG MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST THOSE WHO DID NOT PAY".

7. VC MASSACRE. EARLY AM DECEMBER 5 VC OVERRAN VILLAGE OF BAK SON, PHUOC LONG PROVINCE, NEAR CAMBODIAN BORDER. INCOMPLETE REPORTS PLACE DEATH TOLL AT 108 KILLED, MOSTLY CIVILIANS, PRIMARILY BY GRENADES AND FLAME-THROWERS. ADDITI-

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ONAL 151 WOUNDED, 30 CRITICALLY AND 400 ARE MISSING. SOME VILLAGERS TOOK REFUGE IN BUNKERS AND BODIES NOT YET REMOVED. VILLAGE ITSELF ALMOST TOTALLY DESTROYED BY FIRE. APPROXIMATELY 1382 REFUGEES FROM DAK SON MADE WAY TO VILLAGE OF SONG BE WHERE THEY ARE BEING CARED FOR IN TEMPORARY REFUGEE CAMPS. MANY INJURED REFUGEES ARE BEING TREATED BY GVN. MIN SOCIAL WELFARE/REFUGEES PROVIDING RELIEF SUPPLIES.

8. CHIEU HOI (RALLIERS). TWO EX-VC LT COLONELS WHO RALLIED TO GVN UNDER DOAN KET PROGRAM HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO HIGH SUB-MINISTERIAL POSTS IN THE CHIEU HOI MINISTRY AND WERE DECORATED THIS WEEK BY GVN. ONE NAMED SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO OPEN ARMS MINISTER AND OTHER WILL BE COMMANDER OF ARMED PROPAGANDA GROUPS. DOAN KET (NATIONAL RECONCILIATION) PROGRAM SEEKS TO PROVIDE COMMENSURATE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY TO HIGHER LEVEL VC WHO RALLY TO GVN. A 38-MAN VC UNIT DEFECTED NOVEMBER 5 TO GVN IN QUANG TIN PROVINCE, LATER LEADING TROOPS TO ARMS CACHE. RETURNEES CITE WAR WEARINESS AND HUNGER AMONG REASONS FOR RALLYING.

9. MILITARY. US, FWMAF, AND ARVNAF FORCES CONDUCTED 106 BATTALION-SIZE OR LARGER OPERATIONS. ENEMY INITIATED INCIDENTS INCREASED FROM 618 TO 1003 AND ENEMY INITIATED AMBUSHES/ATTACKS INCREASED FROM 78 TO 86. NUMBER ENEMY KILLED INCREASED FROM 1358 TO 1898. ENEMY SHELLING NEAR CON THIEN AT DMZ INCREASED. US AMERICAN DIVISION UNITS REPORTED KILLING 227 ENEMY WHILE LOSING 2 FRIENDLY IN FIGHTING NEAR QUANG TIN-QUANG NAM BORDER. IN II CORPS HEAVY FIGHTING REPORTED ON BONG SON PLAIN, BINH BINH PROVINCE, WHERE US 1ST CAVALRY REPORTED 269 ENEMY DEAD AND 19 FRIENDLY KILLED. SEVERAL HEAVY CONTACTS REPORTED IN II CORPS, AT BU DOP AND IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE. COMBINED US 9TH DIV AND VN MARINES COUNTERED HEAVY ATTACK IN IV CORPS' DINH TUONG PROVINCE. ACTION RESULTED IN 253 ENEMY KIA (156 BY VN MARINES) AND 53 FRIENDLY KIA (41 VN MARINES). IN ONE OF MOST SIGNIFICANT BATTLES IN DELTA TO DATE ARVN 21ST DIVISION FORCES, SUPPORTED BY ARTILLERY, TACTICAL AIR, AND DRAGONSHIPS ENCIRCLED AND TRAPPED ELEMENTS OF TWO VC BATTALIONS IN PHONG BINH AND CHUONG THIEN PROVINCES. BATTLE RESULTED IN REPORTED 439 ENEMY KIA WITH 66 FRIENDLY LOSSES IN TWO DAYS OF FIGHTING. BATTLE WIDELY HAILED. WASHINGTON POST LABELED IT "A REAL VICTORY", A DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT IS REQUIRED TO WITHER AWAY THE WAR.

10. WIRELESS.

"STORY OF VC EMISSARY'S ARREST COULD BE MISLEADING", MEF 234, EUF/SEFN 236, ARF 235, EAF 236.

"NO PRESSURE FOR US WITHDRAWAL FROM VN" RUSK SAYS, EUF/SEF 237, MEF 235, ARF 236, RIO 236.

"38 IN VC UNIT LAY DOWN ARMS", EUF/SEF 237, EAF 237, MEF 235, RIO 236.

"VN WAR DATA",
EUF/SEF 237, EAF 237, MEF 235, ARF 237.

"US AFFIRMS OPPOSITION TO NLF RULE IN SAIGON WITH TEXT"
ARF 237, AF 238, EUF/SEF 238.
KATZENBACH

Note: Relayed Brasilia

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