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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	SOUTH VIETNAM	REPORT NO.	TDCS-3/560,045
SUBJECT	VO VAN HAI'S VIEWS ON THE COHESIVENESS OF NGO FAMILY	DATE DISTR.	25 SEPTEMBER 1963
DATE OF INFO.	AUGUST - 16 SEPTEMBER 1963	PRECEDENCE	ROUTINE
PLACE & DATE ACQ.	VIETNAM, SAIGON (16 SEPTEMBER 1963)	REFERENCES	IN 26656
APPRAISAL	SEE BELOW.	FIELD REPORT NO.	FVS 9692

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE AN AMERICAN OBSERVER (B); FROM VO LANG.

APPRAISAL: IN VIEW OF HAI'S EXCELLENT ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION HIS ESTIMATE OF PRESIDENT DIEM AND HIS VIEWS OF THE NGO FAMILY ARE PROBABLY ACCURATE.

1. SUMMARY. BETWEEN EARLY AUGUST AND THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER 1963, VO LANG, NORMALLY RESIDENT IN PARIS WHERE HE IS IN PRIVATE BUSINESS, VISITED SAIGON AND HAD EXTENSIVE TALKS WITH HIS BROTHER VO VAN HAI, SECRETARY OF PRESIDENT DIEM'S PRIVATE CABINET. HAI TOLD LANG THAT:

A. THE NGO FAMILY IS A HIGHLY COHESIVE UNIT AND PRESIDENT DIEM IS PARTICULARLY CONSCIOUS OF FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS.

B. DIEM APPROVES OF NGO DINH NHU'S ACTIVITIES; SPECIFICALLY, NHU SUGGESTED TO DIEM AND THE LATTER APPROVED THE ATTACK ON THE BUDDHIST PAGODAS ON 21 AUGUST.

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C. DIEM IS NOT ISOLATED AND IS AWARE OF NGO FAMILY ACTIVITIES.

D. DIEM WILL NEVER SUCCUMB TO UNITED STATES PRESSURE TO DISMISS NHU AND MADAME NHU.

HAI ALSO STATED THAT NHU BELIEVES THAT SOUTH VIETNAM CAN OPERATE WITHOUT U.S. AID AND THAT THE YOUTH OF SOUTH VIETNAM SUPPORT HIM.

2. ON 16 SEPTEMBER 1953 VO LANG PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON VO VAN HAI'S VIEWS ON THE NGO FAMILY:

A. THE NGO FAMILY IS A UNIT WITH PRESIDENT DIEM STILL IN CHARGE. DIEM IS PARTICULARLY CONSCIOUS OF FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS AND PROTECTS FAMILY MEMBERS FROM OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE AND CRITICISM. FAMILY MEMBERS DIFFER IN OUTLOOK AND MAKE DIFFERENT RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING A FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION. DIEM, HOWEVER, IS AWARE OF ALL THAT NGO DINH NHU, MADAME NHU, NGO DINH CAN, AND NGO DINH THUC DO. NEITHER DIEM NOR NHU BELIEVES THAT CAN HAS MUCH ABILITY, ESPECIALLY IN TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT THEY PUBLICLY SUPPORT CAN.

B. THE RUMOR THAT DIEM IS ISOLATED AND RECEIVES NO REPORTS IS FALSE. DIEM KNOWS ABOUT AND APPROVES OF NHU'S PLANS AND ACTIVITY. NHU PROPOSED AND DIEM AGREED TO THE ATTACK ON THE BUDDHIST PAGODAS ON 21 AUGUST. THE VIETNAMESE GENERALS INVOLVED IN THE PROCLAMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MARTIAL LAW DID NOT KNOW IN ADVANCE OF THE HARSH MEASURES TO BE TAKEN AGAINST XA LOI PAGODA IN SAIGON. (SOURCE COMMENT. HAI ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD LITTLE PERSONAL CONTACT WITH

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TDCS-3/560,045

IN 26656

PAGE 3

THE GENERALS AND WAS NOT SURE EXACTLY HOW MUCH THEY KNEW.)

C. IN HAI'S OPINION DIEM WILL NEVER SUCCUMB TO U.S. PRESSURE TO DISMISS NHU AND MADAME NHU.

D. DIEM PERSONALLY REPRIMANDED HAI FOR DARING TO CRITICIZE MADAME NHU'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS. MADAME NHU IS AWARE OF HAI'S FEELINGS AND DOES NOT CONCEAL HER DISLIKE OF HIM. NHU ALSO DISLIKES HAI BUT THEY MANAGE TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE PRESIDENCY.

E. NHU BELIEVES THAT SOUTH VIETNAM CAN OPERATE WITHOUT U.S. AID FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME. NHU ALSO BELIEVES THAT THE YOUTH, PARTICULARLY IN THE RURAL AREAS, SUPPORT HIM AND THAT THE REPUBLICAN YOUTH MOVEMENT IS A STRONG WEAPON. HAI DISAGREES WITH NHU ON ALL COUNTS.

3. FIELD DISSEM STATE ARMY NAVY AIR USMACV MAAG USOM UFIS 9TH FLD. STA. 2ND AIR DIV. CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

END OF MESSAGE

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