

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST--24 AUGUST 1963

1. SOUTH VIETNAM:

A. WE CANNOT DETERMINE AS YET WHO IS CALLING THE SHOTS IN SAIGON--DIEM OR THE NHUS.

B. GENERAL DON TOLD A US OBSERVER THAT DIEM IS MAKING THE DECISIONS, BUT THAT HE IS ACTING THROUGH NHU.

C. NHU HAS BEEN GIVEN CREDIT

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AS THE PRIME MOVER IN THE CRACKDOWN ON THE BUDDHISTS AND THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW.

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D. GENERAL DON ALSO STATED THAT THE PALACE IS ISSUING ORDERS DIRECTLY TO THE SAIGON COMMANDER GENERAL DINH AND TO THE SPECIAL FORCES COMMANDER COLONEL TUNG RATHER THAN THROUGH HIMSELF AS TOP COMMANDER.

E. AMBASSADOR LODGE THINKS--AND GENERAL DON TENDS TO CONFIRM THIS--THE MILITARY IS NOT AT PRESENT A MONOLITHIC STRUCTURE AND WARNS OF SERIOUS FIGHTING BETWEEN COMPETING MILITARY ELEMENTS IF THE MILITARY SHOULD DECIDE ON A COUP.

F. PEOPLE RECEIVED THE IMPRESSION FROM GENERAL DON'S STATEMENTS THAT THE CURRENT UNSTABLE SITUATION MAY BE THE FIRST OF SEVERAL AS YET UNREVEALED PHASES.

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