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By me, NARA, Date 4-20-93

LBJL: Bromley K. Smith Papers, b. 2A, f. "Mtgs on Vietnam, Aug-Nov. 1963."

O Rush T.S. 4 p.m. / Aug 27
 @ Boale + the President
 8 Ken Coster Viet Nam
 3 Mac Namare THE WHITE HOUSE
 @ Kilpatrick WASHINGTON
 14 Helms (13) ~~(with other names)~~ Boyle Colby
 @ Helmsman
 @ Notting
 Forrestal
 @ Morrow
 1 Kaulack (14)
 6 Ken Taylor - Atty Gen. Bundy (15) BKS

- Mac N -
- 1 Appraisal of sit plus tactics
 - 2 Reconstitute ExCom
 - 3 Contingencies of coup fails what
 - 4 no decision today

Rustk - similar to ExCom operation - needing meetings daily
 Colby - bit in Saigon quiet - man for min
 1 review of sit report in sit in cabinet, quiet operations side
 saw 2 generals yesterday one seemed OK - coup in week (see this report)
 second got pump, success

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Conclude current traffic EO

Report of Lodge talk with Nghem

Rusk - Lodge hasn't come to grips with

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problems in WASHINGTON

talks with Diem or Nghem
He may be waiting to see what
generals going to do

Bundy - what election postponed
Colby replied - similar to
congressional elections

Knudsen - not significant - wouldn't
change composition of government
In reply JF/K question, generals
brought out of Diem or Nghem,
will be split, not enough
leadership, don't have personnel
force. Doubts can do in split
accord.

MacNairam

list of coup generals & their forces
which are few & scattered

list of Diem generals

forces near at hand & controllable
plus 1 very special force
near from Hahnemann message

In reply to JF/K query re effect of Viet Cong
civil disturbances on program against Viet Cong
slight but not degradation Kneiback

Rusk - not time for Viet Cong to take
advantage of disturbances

Knudsen - says 3 or 4 months

Effect in cities not yet in countryside
not much effect in country over
long run - uninformed + interested in food

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Krest - Thought we had won negotiations
on Aug. 14 - not convinced that
negotiation would be successful

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Between 14 and 20 riots & burnings
changed or lied, asked JFK

Krest - Changed minds - decided
to end it all - Dien & Nu together
moved from consultation to use of
force. Decided consultation wouldn't
pay off because Bourdier wouldn't
work out co-operation after
Madam Nu outbursts
Madam Nu not under any

↳ domination

Reply JFK that Nu is organized
of strategic hamlet program -
was cooperative - able.

not anti American but pro
Vietnamese. Both Dien &
Nu denied they were fighting
each other. Nu want to be disloyal
& throw out brother but younger
may replace older - 62 vs 54
Nu feared by people & V.P.

Could see ^{Nu} as authority because
he can command & nation
interested in this
martial law asked by generals

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Jay Bond to seek down. ~~has~~ Doubts
effect in country peasants want
food & security

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Buddhists not organized on a religion
Reply to SFK question why peasants
not upset by attack on Buddhists,
not real force in Buddhist church
SFK - If Buddhists not powerful why
did Diem move

Kuot - moved to end political work
of Buddhists - Buddhists went from
religion to political & overthrow
of Diem. They come to us asking
who we wanted.

SFK - any talk ^{by Diem} he really did

Kuot - ^{and keep promises} no promise Diem gave
he didn't try to keep - E got
effort - not liar - man of integrity
reference to madam nu -
Higgins question was way of
describing madam nu

SFK - Wilson told me he not forthcoming
Wilson - Referred to Honolulu meeting

Kuot Read his report of Aug 13 - Diem
promised to be conciliatory
& out mad nu. Asked destruction
to take her. Aug 12 nu gave
promise to be conciliatory
for world narrow but believed
Bud movement subversive
Diem said military worried
about effect on war.

me ~~said~~ checked with Diem &
ordered secret police to arrest
Buddhists at same time. Secret

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police used brutality but not
ordered to do so. Secret police
not jumpy

1400 Budd made arrest

1000 students

me told Lodge ^{monks} Budd being
released quietly & returned to
pagodas

Rush List of alternatives

① Some gen loyal, some coup
rebat them

② If coup fails

5 R.R. - no point trying coup unless
chance of success. Mil support
for coup?

1 Kn - not there now. might be if
US says must change Diem & me
movement rally to coup against
me but reluctance to oust Diem
because twins - want separate
of gen move against me
Diem go with them in palace
or come back to resist or quit
could engineer separation of
these two - might persuade
to separate by sending me

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K - 3 yrs ago - Durbrow told
Diem we must go but Diem
threw out Durbrow

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K - Don't fight internal politics
to hard - Keep eye on fighting
Viet Cong - newspaper pressure
Court clear up internal politics
of Vietnam for long time

JFK - Don't think Diem's actions
in last months will prevent
carrying forward war.

1 - It's slow & easy over night
General needs - brutal surgical
operation may succeed as
predicted by Diem & me. We
take our lungs but preserve
base for fight against V.C.
If sudden resentment
grows & begins to show in
mid units in such dimension
as to block war on this post base,
then how another problem
already CAS has told ^{some} generals
to move. If go back on them,
lose them. Unless we have place
& jump - relay jumps.

JFK I haven't gone so far that
we can't delay - They say
need to go - no VOA signal of
nothing there

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Heldman - Harkins says in
few days, generals will know that
Senior Officer ~~wont~~ ^{will} ~~leave~~ ^{will}
then go for Coup
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Mac N - ~~not~~ Ask appraisal whether
coup can be successful. If doubt,
^{speculate} Coulson general not to move
Danger Diem & we know of
coup & US interest in it
Can slow up action

Heldman - Longrange wait, harder to get
Diem out

JFK - Harkins position?
Taylor - Harkins never been asked
to get order

Rush - Council in countryside effort.
Does it make it imp to carry out
war? If Bud & anti Diem
people wont give up attacking
Diem, how can ^{war} go on, harder
for us to support Diem if local
opposition is great

In reply JFK, Knolly's said V.D
not forceful or ambitious
but respected.

Brady - General's not forceful
ask General Harkins & fudge re
operational situation
Rec that if coup fails, US not involved

Murrow - Ask if our generals could
reach accommodation with Boudr.

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JFK - Cable to Lodge & Harkness
ask prospects now of coup
movement continuing or
waiting
If sit deteriorates, what do.

Knot - would not be happy if sit
calms down + they get more
power. Dien must be forced
to limit me & get wife out of
country
not responsive to pressure but
could be convinced by Lodge
that situation must improve

Mac - ~~sum. facts~~ appraisal?

from
Delay increase chances?

JFK - If decide to cut losses, would
affect be harmful

IC - Pol. legislation of tests in law
& limit on test we should
try once again in Saigon

Rush - got changing directives
because people have moved

JFK - Knot says generals not
paid enough

attach copy of outgoing



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