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Mandatory Review  
Case # NLJ *93-68*  
Document # *146*

DIST 6 MAY 1966

1.5(e)  
3.4(b)(1)

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM  
DOI 27-28 APRIL 1966  
SUBJECT FORMER PRIME MINISTER QUAT'S VIEWS ON CURRENT  
POLITICAL SITUATION

ACC VIETNAM, SAIGON (1 MAY 1966) FIELD NO. [REDACTED]

SOURCE

[REDACTED]

1.5(e)  
3.4(b)(1)

1. (SUMMARY: FORMER PRIME MINISTER DR. PHAN HUY QUAT  
RECENTLY REMARKED THAT HE IS WILLING TO TAKE NO MORE THAN A PASSIVE  
ROLE IN PREPARATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS. QUAT SAID THAT  
AT A DINNER HOSTED BY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN CAO KY, KY TOLD A  
GROUP OF PROMINENT POLITICIANS AND CABINET MEMBERS THAT HE WANTED

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE

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(classification) (dissem controls)

[REDACTED]

A CERTAIN NUMBER OF MILITARY MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. KY OBSERVED THAT THIS MILITARY GROUP WOULD BE ABLE TO MANEUVER GROUPS NOT ALIGNED WITH THE BUDDHISTS, SO THAT THE BUDDHISTS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE ASSEMBLY. KY ALSO TOLD THE GROUP THAT THE MILITARY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STABILITY OF THE NATION AND THAT IF ANY GOVERNMENT OR GROUPINGS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT FAVORED COMMUNISM OR NEUTRALISM; THE MILITARY WOULD CRUSH THEM.)

2. DURING A CONVERSATION ON 29 APRIL, FORMER PRIME MINISTER DR. PHAN HUY QUAT REMARKED THAT HE DID NOT INTEND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PREPARATION OF THE MECHANISM FOR THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS. QUAT OBSERVED THAT HE WAS PERFECTLY WILLING TO TAKE PART IN MEETINGS WHICH WOULD SET FORTH THE GENERAL PLANS FOR THE ELECTIONS BUT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF HELPING TO FORMULATE THE VARIOUS DETAILS. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] DR. QUAT WAS IN HIGH SPIRITS BUT NOT AS OPTIMISTIC AS HE HAD BEEN ON A PREVIOUS OCCASION CONCERNING THE SUCCESSFUL CARRYING OUT OF ELECTIONS. ALTHOUGH QUAT DID NOT EXPLAIN HIS DECREASING OPTIMISM, QUAT'S SUBSEQUENT REMARKS INDICATED THAT HIS CHANGE IN FEELING IS PROBABLY DUE TO "RECENT IRRESPONSIBLE ACTIONS" ON THE PART OF KY.)

3. QUAT DESCRIBED A DINNER HE HAD ATTENDED WHICH WAS GIVEN

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BY PRIME MINISTER KY ON 27 APRIL. AMONG THE GUESTS WERE PROMINENT POLITICIANS SUCH AS LAWYER TRAN THANH HIEP, VIETNAM NATIONALIST PARTY (VNOQD) FACTION LEADER NGUYEN TUONG BA, LAWYER VUONG VAN BAC, DR. NGUYEN CAO HACH, REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SOUTHERN OLD STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION, AND SOME MEMBERS OF THE CABINET. KY TOLD THE GROUP, WHICH TOTALED MORE THAN TWENTY, THAT HE WAS HOLDING THE DINNER TO THANK THOSE PRESENT FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE DURING THE RECENT POLITICAL CRISIS AND IN MAKING PLANS FOR AN ELECTION-LAW DRAFTING COMMITTEE. BUI DIEM, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INFORMED THE GATHERING THAT THE ARMED FORCES WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS IN ONE OF TWO WAYS. ACCORDING TO QUAT, DIEM SAID THE ARMED FORCES WOULD ASK FOR A NUMBER OF SEATS IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY FOR MILITARY MEN SELECTED BY THE LEADERS OF THE ARMED FORCES OR WOULD PUT UP CANDIDATES TO RUN FOR ELECTION TO THE ASSEMBLY.

4. QUAT SAID THAT KY THEN INTERRUPTED BUI DIEM, STATING THAT THE ARMED FORCES WOULD MERELY SELECT AND SPONSOR THEIR OWN CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION, BUT WOULD NOT ASK THAT A SPECIAL NUMBER OF SEATS BE RESERVED FOR THE MILITARY. (FIELD COMMENT: [REDACTED]) QUAT TOLD [REDACTED] THAT KY CLAIMED THE ARMY WOULD

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PRESENT CANDIDATES WHO WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY BEING ELECTED SINCE ABOUT 500,000 PERSONS ARE IN THE MILITARY AND, COUNTING THEIR FAMILIES, THIS WOULD TOTAL SEVERAL MILLION PEOPLE. FROM THIS REMARK QUAT CONCLUDED THAT KY WAS STILL INFATUATED WITH THE IDEA OF A MILITARY POLITICAL PARTY ON THE KOREAN MODEL.)

5. QUAT EXPLAINED THAT KY THEN LAPSED INTO "HIS USUAL BOASTING" ABOUT THE ARMED FORCES AND TOLD THE GROUP THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT STABILITY WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ARMED FORCES, EVEN AFTER THE ELECTIONS. KY CONTINUED THAT THE ARMY WOULD HAVE TO BE ON ITS GUARD AND WOULD CRUSH ANY GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION OR GROUPINGS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT WHICH FAVORED COMMUNISM OR NEUTRALISM. (FIELD COMMENT: QUAT REMARKED DURING THE  CONVERSATION THAT HE WOULD BE THE FIRST TO SUPPORT THE RESUMPTION OF POWER BY THE MILITARY IF THICH TRI QUANG'S CLIQUE WERE TO GAIN POWER AND TRY TO IMPOSE A NEUTRALIST SOLUTION; BUT, QUAT ADDED, THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS WHICH SHOULD BE DONE BUT NOT SAID.)

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6. DR. QUAT SAID THAT AT 2230 HOURS KY ANNOUNCED THAT HE WANTED TO APOLOGIZE BUT THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE TO HAVE "A BIT OF FUN." KY DEPARTED WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN HUU CO. QUAT COMMENTED THAT HE THOUGHT THEY EITHER WENT DANCING OR GAMBLING.

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(classification) (dissem controls)

7. FIELD DISSEM: STATE USMACV USAID JUSPAO NAVFORV  
USARV 7TH AIR FORCE CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF PACFLT.  
REPORT CLASS CONFIDENTIAL [REDACTED]

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