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EO 12958 3.4(b)(1)-25Yrs
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TDCS-314/03243-66 (ADVANCE)
SOUTH VIETNAM

SUBJECT: INSUBORDINATION CHARGES AGAINST I CORPS COMMANDER THI
TO BE PRESENTED TO DIRECTORAT 10 MARCH.

DOI 9 MARCH 1966

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SOURCE:

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1. PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN CAO KY HAS CALLED A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DIRECTORATE FOR 1000 HOURS ON 10 MARCH TO BE ATTENDED BY ALL REGULAR MEMBERS. KY WILL ACCUSE I CORPS COMMANDER NGUYEN CHANH THI OF INSUBORDINATION AND ASK FOR A VOTE OF THE DIRECTORATE APPROVING THI'S REMOVAL FROM HIS COMMAND. KY'S CHARGES WILL BE BASED ON UNREST IN THE I CORPS AREA RESULTING FROM THI'S "WAR LORD" BEHAVIOR. KY INTENDS TO TELL THE DIRECTORATE THAT CONTINUED ACTIVITY OF THIS SORT ON THE PART OF THI WILL OBSTRUCT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE AREA. THIS WILL NOT BE CHARGED WITH POLITICAL MOVES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE DIRECTORATE'S TEN REGULAR MEMBERS WILL DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST THI.

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2. GENERAL [REDACTED] BELIEVES THERE WILL BE NO DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING A MAJORITY VOTE SUPPORTING KY. [REDACTED] HAS SPOKEN TO DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN HUU CO ABOUT THE CONTEMPLATED ACTION AGAINST THI AND CO IS FULLY PREPARED TO SUPPORT KY. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] THE ONLY DIRECTORATE EMBER WHO MIGHT POSSIBLE SYMPATHIZE WITH THI IS IV CORPS COMMANDER DANG VAN QUANG AND THIS IS UNLIKELY. [REDACTED] THINKS THI WILL ACCEPT THE DECISION OF THE DIRECTORATE.

3. PRIME MININTER HAS SPOKEN TO NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR PHAM VAN LIEU ABOUT THE CHARGES AGAINST THI, AND LIEU HAS INDICATED HE BELIEVES THE CHARGES JUSTIFIED. LIEU SIAD HE HAD BEEN AWARE THAT THI HAD BEEN ACTING IMPROPERLY AND THAT HE HIMSELF HAS NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY WAY WITH THI'S ACTIONS.

4. TWO POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR THI'S FUTURE ASSIGNMENT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED: THE POST OF VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR TO BANGKOK, OR ONE OR TWO YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES FOR STUDY OR TRAINING. THI WILL PROBABLY BE GIVEN SOME CHOICE IN THE MATTER.

5. ACCORDING TO GENERAL [REDACTED] NO SPECIAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS WILL BE TAKEN TO COUNTERACT POSSIBLE MOVES BY THI IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF A LACK OF CONFIDENCE OR AUTHORITY ON THE PART OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. ON THE CONTRARY, [REDACTED] SAID, GOVERNMENT LEADERS WOULD "ACT LIKE GENTLEMEN". [REDACTED] DOES NOT BELIEVE THI WOULD RECEIVE ANY SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FOR A CHALLENGE TO THE DIRECTORATE'S AUTHORITY. THE ONLY SUPPORT HE MIGHT POSSIBLY RECEIVE WOULD BE THE SIXTH AND EIGHTH AIRBORNE BATTALIONS IN CENTRAL VIETNAM.

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6. ACCORDING TO A MEMBER OF KY'S PRIVATE STAFF, ON THE EVENING OF 9 MARCH NGO TRAN ANH, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INSPECTION IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, WAS SENT TO HUE ON A SPCIAL MISSION TO MEET WITH BUDDHIST LEADER THICH RI QUANG. ([REDACTED] COMMENT: ANH'S MISSION MAY BE TO BRIEF TRI QUANG AS TO WHAT TO EXPECT. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT ANH MIGHT BE GOING TO HUE IN RESPONSE TO A WARNING FROM TRI QUANG THAT CENTRAL VIETNAM BUDDHISTS MIGHT QUESTION THI'S REMOVAL. WITHIN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, HOWEVER, THI AND TRI QUANG HAVE APPEARED TO BE MOVING APART. SELECTION OF ANH FOR THE MISSION TO HUE PROBABLY BASED ON THIS LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP WITH TRI QUANG.

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7. [REDACTED] DISSEM: STATE USMACV USAID JUSPAO 2ND AIR DIV CINCPC ARPAC PACFLT PACAF.

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