



~~TOP SECRET~~

26 October 1963

CAS Saigon-152 to CAS Washington

EYES ONLY

REF: [REDACTED] 63590

EYES ONLY

EYES ONLY MCGEORGE BUNDY FROM AMBASSADOR LODGE

1. AS REGARDS PROSPECTS OF ACTION BY DON, THE BEST INFORMATION IS THAT HE PLANS TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE NOVEMBER 2 BUT THIS IS STILL NOT AT ALL DEPENDABLE AND I HAVE NOT YET CONVINCED MYSELF THAT HE HAS THE IRON IN HIS SOUL.

2. AS TO POSSIBLE ACTION BY OTHERS, WE WILL HAVE A TELEGRAM LATER.

3. I AGREE THAT AN UNSUCCESSFUL COUP WILL BE LAID AT OUR DOOR BY CERTAIN PERSONS WHO WISH TO DAMAGE US. BUT I BELIEVE THAT IF WE COVER UP OUR TRACKS, AS I THINK WE ARE DOING AND WILL DO, THAT WE CAN ENTER A VERY VIGOROUS DENIAL AND EFFECTIVELY CHALLENGE THOSE WHO CRITICIZE US TO PRODUCE PROOF. THE TRUTH IS THAT THERE IS A WIDE-SPREAD DESIRE IN THIS COUNTRY FOR A CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT AND THIS HAS NOT BEEN CAUSED BY US BUT BY THE INCOMPETENCE OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.

4. YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED TO GIVE YOU EVERY CHANCE OF JUDGING AND WARNING. IF THERE EVER IS A COUP IN THIS COUNTRY, THE TIME WILL COME WHEN IT HAS STARTED ROLLING AND WE COULD NOT STOP IT. BUT I WILL DO ALL IN MY POWER SO THAT PRESIDENT HAS INFLUENCE ON THE SITUATION RIGHT UP TO

THE VERY LAST MINUTES.

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~~TOP SECRET~~

26 October 1963

FROM THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

TO AMERICAN EMBASSY, SAIGON

**EYES ONLY**

TOP SECRET, EYES ONLY, VIA CAS CHANNELS. CITE CAP 63590

AMERICAN EMBASSY, SAIGON, FOR AMBASSADOR LODGE AND GENERAL HARKINS.  
FROM MCGEORGE BUNDY.

YOUR 1964 MOST HELPFUL.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE GRATEFUL FOR ALL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION GIVING INCREASED CLARITY TO PROSPECTS OF ACTION BY DON OR OTHERS, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSING WITH YOU THE WHOLE QUESTION OF CONTROL AND CUT-OUT ON YOUR RETURN, ALWAYS ASSUMING THAT ONE OF THESE D-DAYS DOES NOT TURN OUT TO BE REAL. WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT HAZARD THAT AN UNSUCCESSFUL COUP, HOWEVER CAREFULLY WE AVOID DIRECT ENGAGEMENT, WILL BE LAID AT OUR DOOR BY PUBLIC OPINION ALMOST EVERYWHERE. THEREFORE, WHILE SHARING YOUR VIEW THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE IN POSITION OF THWARTING COUP, WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE OPTION OF JUDGING AND WARNING ON ANY PLAN WITH POOR PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS A LARGE ORDER, BUT PRESIDENT WANTS YOU TO KNOW OF OUR CONCERN.

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