

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SECRET

2456  
SEPTEMBER 5, 1960  
8:37 AM

FROM: . SAIGON

TO: SECRETARY OF STATE

NR: 538, SEPTEMBER 5, 2 PM (SECTION 2 of 2)

SENT DEPARTMENT 538, REPEATED INFORMATION CINCPAC POLAD 83,  
BANGKOK, VIENTIANE, PHNOM PENH, LONDON, PARIS UNNUMBERED

FURTHER ARMED SUPPORT AVAILABLE ARE CIVIL GUARD IN AREA, ABOUT 7,000, AND REGULAR ARMY FORCES, NUMBERING THREE BATTALIONS PARACHUTISTS, ONE BATTALION INFANTRY, PRESIDENTIAL GUARD BRIGADE WITH AUTHORIZED STRENGTH OF 1,500 BUT WITH CURRENT OVER-STRENGTH OF APPROXIMATELY 400, ONE BATTALION MARINES, ONE ARMORED COMPANY AND AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF PARTIALLY TRAINED RECRUITS FROM QUANG TRUNG TRAINING CENTER ON OUTSKIRTS SAIGON. OTHER FORCES TOTAL THREE BATTALIONS OF INFANTRY AND ARE AVAILABLE; HOWEVER THEY ARE NOW ASSIGNED TO PRIORITY SECURITY AREAS AND WHETHER OR NOT THEY COULD BE PULLED FROM THEIR PRESENT MISSIONS WOULD DEPEND UPON SITUATION.

8. ARMY. [SOME DISCONTENT EXISTS BECAUSE OF POLITICAL PROMOTIONS AND FAVORITISM THROUGHOUT ARMED FORCES STRUCTURE. SOME DISTURBING INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT SPIRIT FRUSTRATION AND DEFEATISM IN FIGHT AGAINST VIET CONG ALSO RECEIVED, SUCH AS STATEMENT ALLEGEDLY MADE BY GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH THAT FOR EVERY VIET CONG KILLED BY ARMED FORCES GOVERNMENT CREATING TEN IN THEIR REARM HOWEVER INDICATIONS ARE THAT GENERALS REMAIN IMBUED BY NON-POLITICAL APPROACH AND THAT DISCONTENT IS NOT OF SUCH PROPORTIONS THAT ANY GENERAL IS READY TO TAKE INITIATIVE IN LEADING COUP. WE CANNOT OF COURSE EXCLUDE EMERGENCIES OF A "KONG LE" FROM RANKS BELOW GENERAL BUT KEY UNITS IN AND AROUND SAIGON ARE COMMANDED BY OFFICERS BELIEVED TO BE CLOSE AND LOYAL TO DIEM.]

SECRET

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