

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 29, 1963

CHECK LIST FOR 4 PM MEETING

(Not intended to be exhaustive)

1. Intelligence

- A. Estimate of prospective balance of forces; ✓
- B. Estimate of quality and quantity of military leadership committed; ✓
- C. Summary of intelligence questions on which it would be profitable to ask further field assessment, e.g.,
 - 1. Can we insist on independent process of confirmation or cross-check?
 - 2. Should we ask for a separate evaluation on these questions by Harkins?

2. Lodge's Movements

- A. If we keep him in place, what are consequences for
 - 1. Plausible denial;
 - 2. Possible indefinite delay in return while nothing happens;
 - 3. Possible bad signal to Nhu or to coup group.
- B. If he returns on schedule, who is in charge in Saigon, and under what instructions. (There should be a draft instruction to Truehart and Harkins on this point for the 4 o'clock meeting.)

3. Contingency Planning

A. CINCPAC - Presumably Defense will draft instructions for Felt which will preserve cover but move substantial forces to within easy range of Saigon.

B. Response to coup. Presumably Harkins should be asked for detailed plans on use and withholding of U. S. forces so as not to choose up sides.

C. There should be a political scenario of U. S. posture;

1. while in a possibly prolonged struggle;
2. if coup succeeds;
3. if coup fails.