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MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT

November 2, 1963 -- 4:30 PM, Subject: Vietnam

Others present: Secretary Rusk, Secretary McNamara, Director McCone, General Krulak, Administrator Bell, Acting Director Wilson, Assistant Secretary Bundy, Assistant Secretary Hilsman, Mr. Janow (AID), (CIA), Mr. Greenfield (State), Mr. Koren (State), Mr. Salinger, Mr. McGeorge Bundy, Mr. Bromley Smith

Director McCone said we have no direct evidence that Nhu and Diem are dead.

There followed a discussion of a draft aid telegram (copy attached) which authorized Lodge to end the suspension of aid programs. The draft also went into considerable detail about the actions which the new government should take in order to improve the economic prospects of Vietnam.

The President did not think that we should go into detail on economic actions to be recommended to the new government before Ambassador Lodge and AID Director Brent had discussed the joint position which we should take. We need an effective government more than a "pretty" government, but one that can maintain the support of the public. A draft telegram on political matters (copy attached) should not be sent now.

Mr. Hilsman thought that we should urge the head of the new government to recognize the importance of avoiding creating mystery about the deaths of Diem and Nhu.

Secretary Rusk suggested that in talking to the press all officials should be careful not to give out information known here in Washington which was not yet known to the correspondents in Saigon.

Bromley Smith

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3,4
NLK-90-20
By SCF NARA, Date 4/22/92

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