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Ed -

I closed this file out - and sent Mr. Holdridge  
a xerox for his follow-up action on an  
Eyes Only basis - per Dr. K's office.

nancy

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By RST/MLD NARA, Date 8/2/2017  
1042-82/17052 [1 of 4]

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

**SANITIZED**  
EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

INFORMATION

October 13, 1970

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Communist Political Offensive in South Vietnam

Following Madame Binh's eight point proposal in Paris last month, a good deal of evidence has been uncovered which indicates that the Communists are embarking on new political offensive in South Vietnam designed to topple the Thieu-Ky leadership. [redacted]

[redacted] a high level directive was distributed throughout the Communist apparatus in South Vietnam well before Madame Binh's presentation. The directive emphasized the following:

- The Communist rank and file must be made to understand the importance of the coming political and diplomatic phase. Madame Binh's speech must be distributed to all Vietnamese groups and individuals of consequence.
- The rank and file must be mobilized in support of a political offensive. They are to win over uncommitted Vietnamese by convincing them that only the ouster of the present regime in Saigon and a U.S. troop withdrawal stand in the way of peace.
- Illusions of peace should not be entertained; military attacks must continue on all fronts, especially against U.S. forces.

Tactical Arguments. This directive clearly suggests that the Communists hope to use the eight points to help mount an extensive political campaign against the South Vietnamese Government. They will probably make the following arguments:

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*We need a very effective educational campaign during the 1971 elections of Thieu's opponents.*

The only barrier to peace is the existence of Thieu-Ky-Khiem.

-- Those three men should be disposed of soon, or at least must not be re-elected in 1971.

-- South Vietnamese political groups opposing Thieu-Ky-Khiem can make common cause with the Communists.

Problems for the Communists. However, the very fact that the Communists are using these political tactics reveals and may increase some of their problems.

-- They probably would not attempt to engage in such maneuvers unless they felt too weak militarily to follow any other course.

-- Hints of collaboration with other South Vietnamese political groups may cause real problems for the experienced Communist cadre, who do not like the idea of sharing power or collaborating with other groups. This will pose a difficult problem for Hanoi.

-- Moreover, most South Vietnamese political leaders distrust the Communists even more than they dislike Thieu.

Possible Problem for us. On the other hand, the new Communist line may pose a difficult problem for us, particularly as the 1971 elections approach. It is possible, particularly if the Communist campaign succeeds in deluding many South Vietnamese politicians, that a number of strong South Vietnamese groups will oppose Thieu's candidacy. Thieu may then use a number of questionable devices to rig the elections, raising questions about the validity of South Vietnam's claim to be a true democracy.

Your new proposal should help us meet this problem, since it can put Thieu on the right side of the peace issue in South Vietnam if he uses it properly.

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