

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

At 1630, 1 November 1963, the Palace contacted us at the Residence. President Diem requested the Ambassador. The following conversation took place:

President Diem: Some military units have begun a rebellion, and I want to know what the attitude of the U.S. is?

Ambassador: I have heard some shooting but, of course, am not acquainted with all the facts. I do not feel well enough informed at this time to be able to tell you. Remember, it is 4:30 A.M. in Washington, and the United States Government cannot possibly have an official view at this time.

President Diem: You must have some idea. I am, after all, the Chief of State. I have always tried to do my duty and want now to do what duty and good sense require. I believe in duty above all.

Ambassador: You have certainly done your duty. I told you only this morning how much I admire your courage and the great contributions you have made to your country's well being. No one can take away from you the credit for all that you have accomplished. Now I am very worried about your physical safety. It has been reported to me that those in charge of the current activity against you offer both you and your brother safe conduct out of the country if you resign. Had you heard this?

President Diem: No. (And then after a pause) You have my telephone number.

Ambassador: Yes, and you have mine. If I can do anything at all to insure your personal safety, please call me at once.

John M. Dunn
Personal Assistant
to the Ambassador

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