Telegram From the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the President's Special Assistant (Rostow), Secretary of State Rusk, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and the Director of Central Intelligence (Helms)

Saigon, December 29, 1967, 2052 Z.

CAS 6462.

1. Source: Department of State, Central Files, POL 27-7 VIET S/BUTTERCUP. Secret; Nodis; Buttercup. Received at 4:45 p.m.
TO THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVE FOR MR. HOSKIN
SECRET, EXCLUSIVE FOR SECRETARY RUSK,
SECRET, EXCLUSIVE FOR SECRETARY MONAGHAN
DIRECTOR CIA, EXCLUSIVE FOR MR. HEEMS

1. REVIEW BUTTERCUP FILES INDICATES NEED FOR EXPANSION
   OUR REPORT RE BRIEFING, PREPARATION AND FIRST LAUNCH OF BUTTERCUP
   2. DURING FINAL BRIEFING OF B-2 EVENING 17 DECEMBER HE
   INFORMED THAT THIS MISSION WOULD PROBABLY BE MORE RISKY THAN HIS
   LAST SINCE THERE HAD BEEN GENERAL STEP UP MILITARY ACTIVITY IN
   AREA WITHIN TRIANGULAR POINTS OF BEN SUC ON EAST, CU CHI ON
   WEST AND DUONG ON NORTH. WITH THIS IN MIND
   PROPOSED THAT: A) THOUGH B-2 AND NOT SAU HA WAS THE EMISARY
   BETWEEN US AND B-1, MIGHT WE PRUDENT HAVE SAU HA SIT IN ON FINAL
   DISCUSSION AND BRIEFING RE OUR RESPONSE AND RELATED MATTERS;
   B) SAU HA ALSO CARRY COPY (VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE
   VERSIONS) OF OUR WRITTEN RESPONSE TO B-1 WHICH HAD BEEN PHOTO-
   COPIED, MINIATURIZED AND CONCEALED IN BACK COVER OF VIETNAMESE
   NOTEBOOK SMALL ENOUGH TO BE CARRIED IN SHIRT POCKET. B-2
   READILY AGREED, NOTING THAT ON HIS FIRST TRIP INTO ZONE HE
   CAN BE CLOSE TO GETTING ZAPPED BY ALLIED ARTILLERY FIRE CALLED IN
   BY SPOTTER PLANE; IN ADDITION B-2 FELT THAT GIVEN THE ESTABLISHED
   RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST BETWEEN B-1 AND SAU HA, SAU HA'S IMPRESSIONS,
   OPINIONS, EXPERIENCES AND REPORTING WOULD GO LONG WAY TOWARDS
   REMOVING ANY DOUBT IN B-1'S MIND RE OBJECTIVITY AND RELIABILITY
   OF B-2 IN ROLE OF INTERMEDIARY.
   3. THUSLY BOTH SAU HA AND E-2 CARRY OUR WRITTEN RESPONSE
   PLUS VERBAL COMMENTARY/DISCUSSION TO OTHER SIDE. IN ADDITION
   BEING ABLE CONFIRM EACH OTHER'S STATEMENTS ESPECIALLY RE MADAME
   B-1, ONE OR THE OTHER, IF NOT BOTH, SHOULD GET THROUGH WITH
   OUR MESSAGE.
4. NEW SUBJECTS: A. SINCE DEPARTURE 5-2 AND SAU HA
FROM SAIGON ON 18 DECEMBER WE HAVE MOVED MADAME E-1 INTO NEW
SAFE HOUSE WHERE SHE HAS CIVILIAN STAFFER (LINGUIST) AS
COMPANION: IN ADDITION TWO OTHER CIVILIAN STAFFERS AND/OR CIVILIAN
OFFICER
MEET WITH HER ALMOST EVERY DAY FOR GENERAL DISCUSSIONS, WHICH LEADS
INTO ELICITATION SESSION ON HER, HER HUSBAND AND FAMILY, BACK-
GROUND AND THEIR ROLE WITH THE VIET CONG, ETC. THESE CONVERSATIONS
HAVE REAPED INTERESTING INSIGHT INTO HER AND HER HUSBAND'S THINKING,
INFORMATION, PERSONAL PROBLEMS, PLANS ETC. B. THOUGH UNLIKELY
IT IS POSSIBLE THAT WE MAY HAVE TO MOVE MADAME E-1 ALONG EITHER
THROUGH "DISPUTED" AREA SUN OR ONTO CAMBODIAN SOIL TO GET HER
BACK TO HER SIDE. WITH THIS IN MIND WE HAVE LEGALLY FAKECED
SUN IDENTIFICATION CARD PLUS CAMBODIAN ALIEN REGISTRATION DOCUMENT
EITHER OF WHICH WE WILL ISSUE TO HER JUST PRIOR TO HER LAUNCH.
SHE INSISTS THAT SHE KNOWS NO ROUTE INTO MR-4 AND WOULD BE
EQUALLY HELPLESS IN GETTING THROUGH TO COSVN; HOWEVER SHE DID
LIVE IN PHNOM PENH AND SAYS SHE RETAINS SOME KHMER LANGUAGE
FACILITY. C. MADAME E-1 WELL UNDERSTANDS THAT SHE HAS NO
"ROLE" NOR "MISSION" AND THAT SHE IS BEING SIMPLY RELEASED AS
HER OLD FRIEND SAU HA. HOWEVER, WHENEVER WE FIND HER IN A
RECEPTIVE FRAME OF MIND WE HAVE DISCUSSED WITH HER POSSIBLE
ADVANTAGES OF FACE-TO-FACE SECRET TALKS BETWEEN HER HUSBAND
AND/OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE VIET CONG OFFICIALS AND A REPRESENT-
ATIVE OF U.S. GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT IF SHE WISHES
to do so she could mention this to E-1 when she rejoins him
AND ADD THAT IN OUR VIEW THESE UNOFFICIAL MEETINGS COULD BE
HELD IN A THIRD (UNSPECIFIED) COUNTRY OR EVEN IN SUN AT A PLACE
WHERE THE U.S. COULD GUARANTEE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE
VIET CONG REPS; IN THIS CONTEXT SHE HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT THE
DAU TIEN/BEEN CIVI REGION LOOKS CLOSE TO THE IDEAL SINCE IT IS
MILITARILY QUIET, VC ABSENT: IN THE PROXIMITY AND THERE ARE NO
ARVN ELEMENTS OR CVN CHECK POINTS FOR THE VIET CONG REPS TO
CONCERN THEMSELVES ABOUT. SHE HAS PROMISED TO RELAY THIS PERSON-
ALLY TO HER HUSBAND AND HAS THE PERSONAL HUNCH THAT HE JUST
MIGHT BE INTERESTED WHEN HE HEARS OF THE SINCERITY AND RELIABILITY
OF OUR SIDE AS DEMONSTRATED TO HER AND SAU HA.

SECRET