

32. **Telegram From the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the Agency**<sup>1</sup>

*Saigon, August 31, 1963—2:39 a.m.*

0499. This particular coup is finished. General Harkins cabling General Taylor results this morning's conversation with General Khiem.<sup>2</sup> Summary of Khiem's statements is to effect that Generals did not feel ready and did not have sufficient balance of forces. They had talked with Nhu yesterday and he has assured them that SVN would be able continue the war, finding means to do so where it could. Generals thinking of proposing to Diem that he bring senior officers into certain Cabinet positions with Nhu in charge of Cabinet, i.e., a kind of prime ministerial role. Harkins' judgment is that Generals were not ready and could not achieve balance of forces favorable to them.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Files, POL 26 S VIET. Secret; Eyes Only; Operational Immediate. The source text is a copy the CIA sent to the Department of State exclusive for Rusk, Ball, Harriman, and Hilsman. Copies were also sent to the White House exclusive for Bundy and to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army, exclusive for McNamara, Gilpatric, Taylor, and Krulak. Received at the Department of State at 4:47 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> *Infra.*

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33. **Telegram From the Commander, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Harkins) to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Taylor)**<sup>1</sup>

*Saigon, August 31, 1963—1:45 p.m.*

MAC 1583. Request that a copy be passed to State, CIA, and other interested agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Vietnam Country Series, Defense Cables. Top Secret; Eyes Only. Repeated to CINCPAC exclusive for Felt. A note on the source text indicates the President read this telegram. The source text is a copy Krulak sent to the White House for Bundy; Krulak also sent copies to the Department of State for Rusk, Ball, Harriman, and Hilsman; to CIA for Helms; to the Army for General Wheeler; to the Navy for Admiral MacDonald; and to the Marine Corps for General Shoup. A summary version of this cable is printed in *Pentagon Papers: Gravel Edition*, vol. II, pp. 740-741.