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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D.C. 20520

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

October 22, 1970

TO: EA - Mr. Sullivan

FROM: EA - Roger Kirk

SUBJECT: North Vietnamese Repatriation Delegation to Thailand -- INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Bill Stearman gave me the following thoughts on the reasons why the North Vietnamese repatriation delegation was sent to Thailand at this time. They make good sense to me.

1. There were numerous reports to which the North Vietnamese gave credence that the Thais were thinking seriously of taking administrative and possibly punitive measures against the North Vietnamese population in Northern Thailand. There was also renewed talk of breaking the community up or repatriating substantial numbers of these people to South Viet-Nam. These reports were the subject of concerned comment in North Vietnamese public media over the past few months. Stearman feels the primary purpose of the North Vietnamese repatriation delegation is to block such punitive measures and forestall any significant repatriation to South Viet-Nam.

2. The Vietnamese community in Thailand is more sympathetic to the DRV than to the GVN, In fact, the DRV has a significant degree of control within the community through well-placed cadre. The community is useful to the North Vietnamese both as a protential fifth column within Thailand and as a North Vietnamese--as distinct from a Chinese--asset in that country. Protection of the community is therefore important to North Viet-Nam.

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