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~~SECRET~~(b)(1)  
(b)(3)

UNLESS SOUK IS ARMED WITH PROPOSALS AND CONCESSIONS WHICH ARE ACCEPTABLE TO SOUVANNA HIMSELF AND TO SOUVANNA SUPPORTERS ON THE RIGHT. AN INDICATION OF ATTITUDE OF LATTER MAY BE SEEN IN COMMENTS MADE BY NGON SANANIKONE, MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS, WHO HAS ALWAYS DEMONSTRATED MUCH SLEXIBILITY AND HAS CLOSELY COLLABORATED WITH SOUVANNA. WITH SOUKS DEPARTURE NGON SAID, CONTACTS BETWEEN BOTH SIDES WERE FINISHED AND, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF DIFFICULTY MILITARY SITUATION AND MILITARY AID PL WAS GETTING FROM FOREIGN COMMUNIST ALLIES, RLG SHOULD NOW ADOPT DIFFERENT POLICY BASED ON MILITARY COOPERATION WITH OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES IN REGION THAT IS, SOUTHVIETNAM, THAI AND CAMBODIA.

12. NGON [REDACTED] HAD SUBMITTED A MEMO TO SOUVANNA CALLING FOR QUOTE UNE COMMUNATE DE DEFENSE UNQUOTE BETWEEN COUNTRIES OF INDOCHINA AND THAI AND AGAINST COMMUNIST AGGRESSION. SUCH A COMMUNITY HE ARGUED, WOULD NOT/NOT BE OUTRIGHT MILITARY ALLIANCE BUT WOULD PROVIDE NECESSARY MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN PARTIES CONCERNED. SOUVANNA REPLIED, ACCORDING TO NEGON, THAT HE APPROVED PROPOSAL BUT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE CARRIED OUT BY A DIFFERENT PRIME MINISTER. NGON INTERPRETED THIS TO MEAN THAT SOUVANNA HAD NO/NO INTENTION OF ABANDONING HIS POLICY OF NEUTRALITY. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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13. IF VIEWS OF A MODERATE RIGHTIST SUCH AS NGON SANANIKONE ARE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY,  SOUVANNAS POLITICAL POSITION WILL COME UNDER INCREASING STRAIN AS HIS GOVT FACES VERY DIFFICULT MILITARY SITUATION DURING RATHER LENGTHY REMAINDER OF DRY SEASON. HIS POSITION, HOWEVER, CONTINUES TO REST ON TWO VERY IMPORTANT ASSETS: FIRM SUPPORT OF AMERICAN AND HIS OWN UNRIVALLED QUALITIES AND CAPACITY FOR LEADERSHIP

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