

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 25 September 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
25 SEPTEMBER 1967

1. South Vietnam

The militant Buddhists launched their formal protest yesterday against the recent elections. They held a press conference and pledged their support for the "heroic campaign" to force the Provisional National Assembly to invalidate the elections.

Tri Quang and other militant monks were present, but the show was stolen by defeated "peace" candidate Truong Dinh Dzu. He left no doubt in his hard-hitting speech that he is fully committed to the militant Buddhist position on the elections.

A group of 200 students, also protesting the elections, paraded through Saigon yesterday. After a while, they were quietly but effectively dispersed by the police.

These were the first significant public efforts to put pressure on the Assemblymen who meet a week from today to validate the elections. We still expect Thieu and Ky to be declared the winners.

2. Soviet Union

Kosygin's announcement on Saturday of the new aid agreement with Hanoi underlines again Moscow's central role as economic and military supplier to the North Vietnamese war effort.

Soviet aid for North Vietnam--now almost all free--will continue to rise, but it does not represent a heavy burden for the Soviet Union. We feel that the estimates in the US press that the Soviet aid figure has already reached a billion dollars a year are exaggerations. It will be more on the order of 700 million when this year ends.

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3. Soviet Union

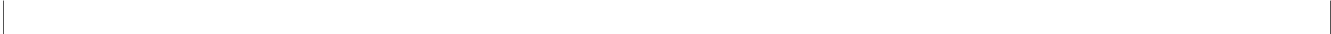
Some Soviet officials are [redacted] 50X1 dropping hints again on how we can bring about a settlement in Vietnam. The key, they say, would be US acceptance of the idea that the regime in Hanoi and the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam are distinct entities that do not always see eye to eye. A good first step, they go on, would be the initiation of secret talks between the Saigon government and the Viet Cong. Then, talks could begin between the US and the North Vietnamese.

It would be difficult to start with Hanoi, they argue, since it would be betraying an ally for Hanoi to stop aid to the Viet Cong just as it would be difficult for Moscow to stop helping Hanoi or for the US to make a deal with the Viet Cong against Saigon's wishes.

Joseph Kraft, who stopped over in Moscow last week, believes that Brezhnev at that time went out of his way publicly to build up the image of the National Liberation Front and to stress his hopes for a future "independent South Vietnam." Kraft speculates that Moscow was thus supporting an effort by Hanoi to give renewed emphasis to the idea that there are two wars going on in Vietnam--one in the north and one in the south, and that Hanoi is mainly concerned with the former.

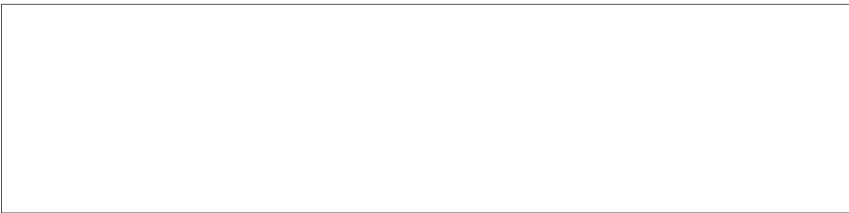
None of the Soviets, however, have come up with an answer to the clincher--how to stop the fighting in the south without a concurrent agreement about arms and men from the north. Furthermore, Front leaders in the south have continually insisted that they will never deal with Thieu and Ky.

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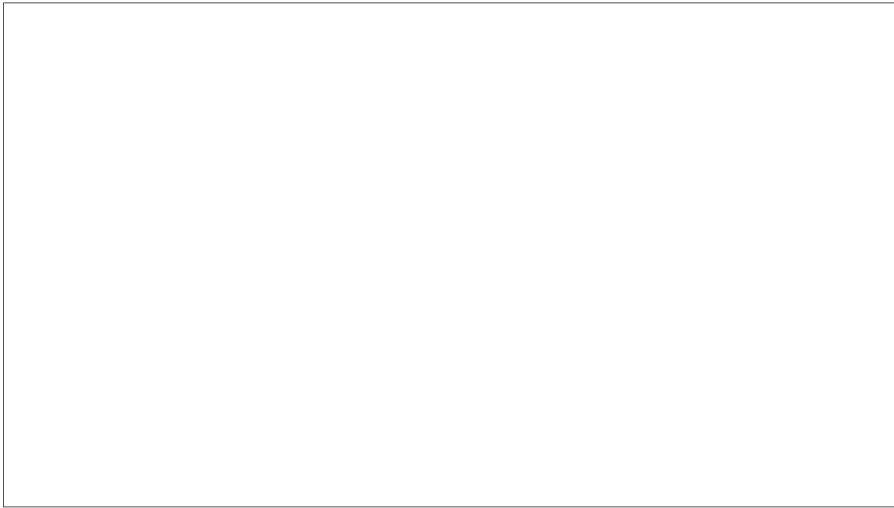
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4. Brazil



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5. Panama

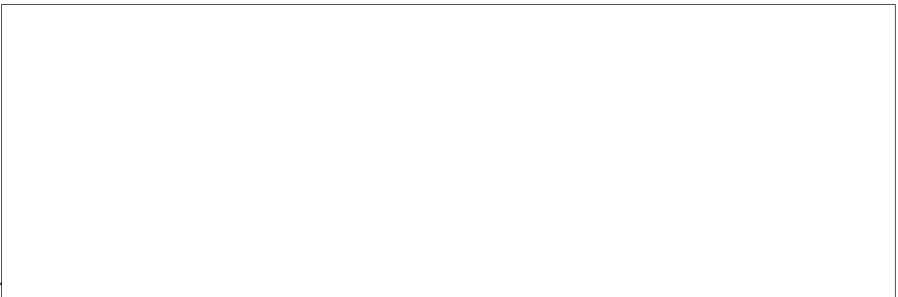


6. Guyana

The coalition government set up in 1964 to keep pro-Communist Cheddi Jagan out of power is now falling apart. The leader of the junior party in Prime Minister Burnham's two-party coalition intends to resign today. This is the culmination of a long feud which Ambassador Carlson likens to two goats butting each other on the edge of a cliff.

Burnham could probably muddle along for a while as head of a minority government. Prospects have definitely dimmed, however, for effective administration and political stability in this racially 50X1 divided country.

7. Nigeria



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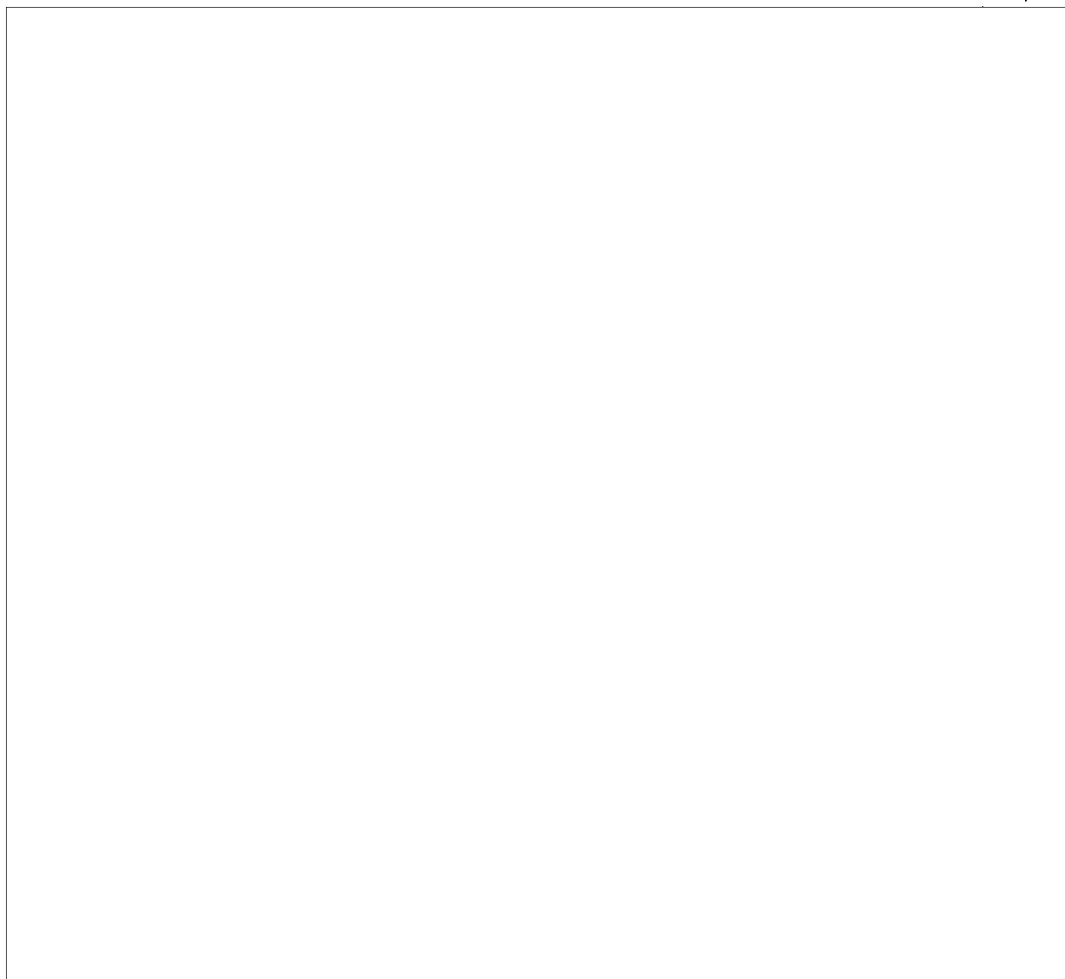


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SPECIAL DAILY REPORT ON NORTH VIETNAM

FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY



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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only**

25 September 1967



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The Chinese in North Vietnam:

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There may be a growing coolness between the Chinese and the North Vietnamese, but this has not been reflected in Chinese military and logistics support for North Vietnam.

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Some of the Chinese activity seems to serve Chinese purposes more than Vietnamese.

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North Vietnamese Foreign Minister's Interview:

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Trinh had little new to say. He insisted that the Communists are winning the war, and he rejected any United Nations' action to arrange a settlement.

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Trinh expressed himself somewhat more directly than usual on the question of whether Hanoi would, in fact, talk if the bombing is stopped. In response to a question about the timing of US withdrawal from South Vietnam, he said it is too soon to talk about that and that first of all the US must stop bombing, "then talks will follow."

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[Redacted]

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