



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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22 NOVEMBER 1965

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1. Indonesia

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The long-expected reorganization of the Supreme Operations Command was announced today. The outcome is a compromise. The new structure may improve the military's hand at the operational level, but Sukarno and his three deputies, including Subandrio, are still included in this "super cabinet."

The embassy in Djakarta now believes that Sukarno's self-confidence is growing. The president gives the impression of believing that a political watershed has passed and that time is increasingly on his side. However, there has been little actual change in his position and the army continues to go its own way.

2. Vietnam

The heavy fighting in western Pleiku Province, very near the Cambodian border, has prompted the Chinese to reiterate their pledge of "all-out" support if the war should spread to Cambodia. The latest warning that China "would not stand idly by" was made yesterday by Peking's leading military spokesman at a banquet honoring the visiting Cambodian defense minister.

The stubborn resistance put up by Communist forces in the face of heavy losses in the fighting in western Pleiku contrasts with the flexible, hit-and-move tactics they have usually employed. Some of the possible reasons for this are summarized at Annex.

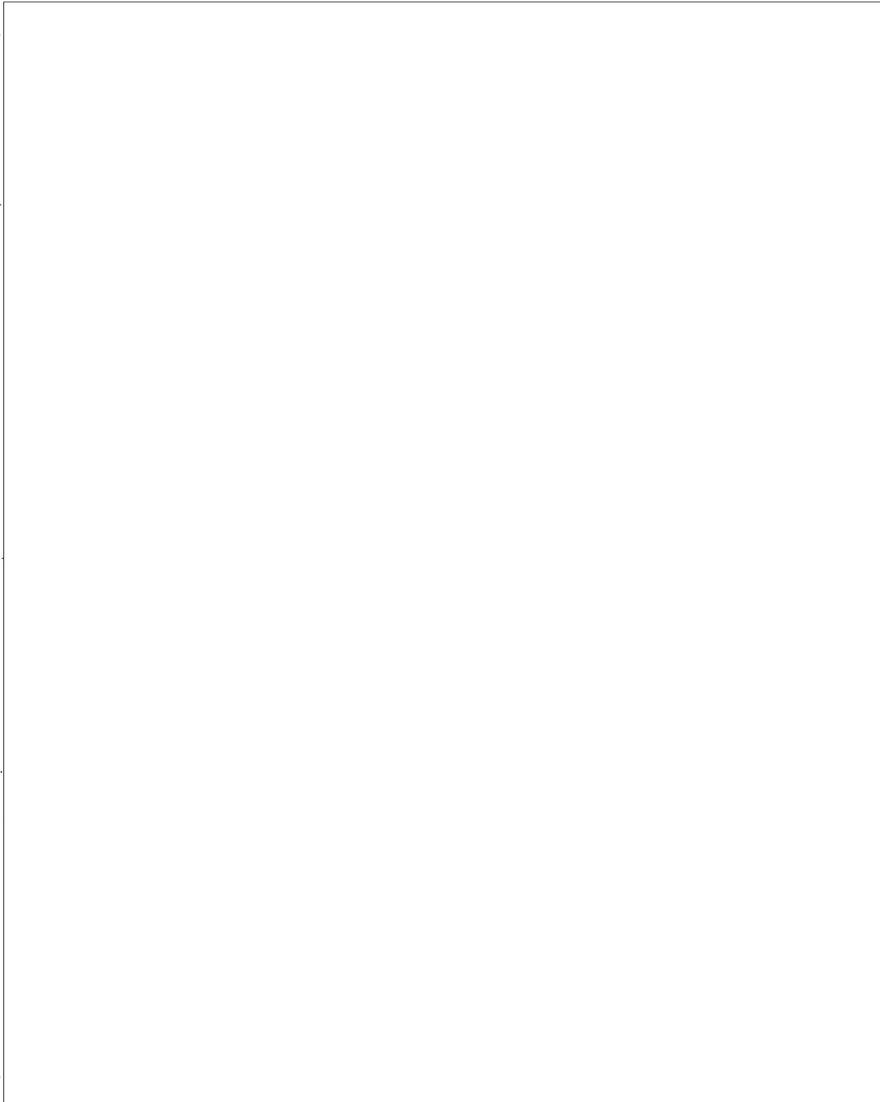
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3. South Vietnam

Premier Ky told Ambassador Lodge that if national elections were to be held in the immediate future, the voters in only about a quarter of South Vietnam's villages would be free from some kind of intimidation by the Viet Cong. He pointed out that in many villages now under government control the Viet Cong had planted persons who would make an orderly and free election impossible.

Ky's estimate corresponds roughly with the embassy's.

4. Communist China



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5. Rhodesia

The Organization of African Unity will probably hold a foreign ministers meeting next week to discuss using force against Rhodesia

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the organization's committee on Rhodesia has recommended such a session.

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This move comes in response to a growing frustration in several African capitals over Britain's rejection of military intervention. These countries also doubt that the Security Council's resolution will have much effect.

Inside Rhodesia, Smith seems to be in full control. There have been incidents of African violence and work stoppage in Bulawayo, Rhodesia's second largest city, but as yet they have not reached significant proportions.

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6. Yemen

Representatives of the republican and royalist factions are set to confer tomorrow in accordance with the Nasir-Faysal agreement of August to end the civil war.

The purpose of the meeting is to form a provisional government. This government is supposed to rule during a ten-month period while the 55,000 Egyptian troops in Yemen are being withdrawn.

Prospects for the conference are encouraging. Many Yemeni leaders on both sides are anxious for the Egyptian troops to leave. Egypt and Saudi Arabia also seem to want the conference to succeed.

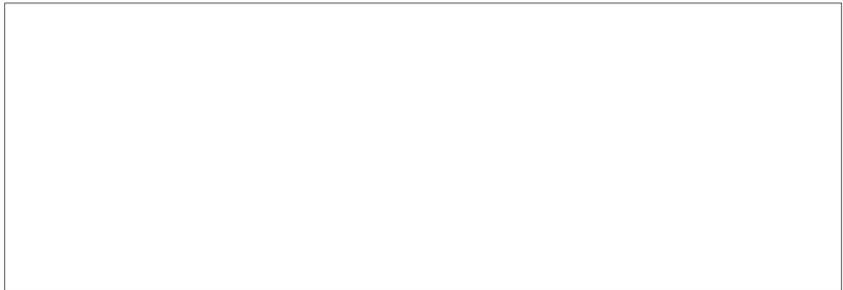
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7. Singapore

Lee Kuan Yew is determined to resume barter trade with Indonesia, and the Malaysians are said to be equally determined to prevent it.

Barter trade was broken off by Malaysia last year as a security measure against Indonesian infiltration efforts against Singapore. Since Singapore's separation from Malaysia, however, Lee Kuan Yew has been pressured to resume this kind of lucrative exchange.



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8. Dominican Republic

The rightist conspiracy in Santiago folded quickly today. Military and police units dispersed the rebels and arrested their leaders.

The plot was engineered by a discredited right-wing politician, Tomas Espinosa. He has been involved for some time in plotting against Garcia Godoy.

The conspirators had hoped for a nationwide uprising, but they were badly split from the beginning. The timely dispatch of small US troop contingents was another dampening factor.

The Dominican military leaders cooperated fully with the provisional government against the plotters. Garcia Godoy still suspects, however, that army chief Martinez and air force chief De los Santos have been conspiring against him. He may now decide to balance the ouster of leftist Attorney General Morel Cerda with an announcement that these rightist officers have also been deposed.

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ANNEX

Communist Military Tactics in Vietnam

The strong and prolonged resistance which Communist forces have been putting up despite heavy losses in western Pleiku Province has been in seeming violation of the tactical doctrine that has heretofore guided their military action in Vietnam. In the past, North Vietnamese main force units have generally tried to break off direct contact with opposing forces when they have suffered heavy casualties without having achieved their objectives.

In fact, however, present Communist tactics appear to be consistent with the doctrine of North Vietnamese Defense Minister Vo Nguyen Giap--the long-time mastermind of Communist military action and doctrine in Vietnam. He has always maintained that there must be a gradual tactical evolution as a "people's war" progresses and the insurgents' armed strength grows. Against the French the Communists gradually engaged in more intensive action as their strength increased.

Indigenous Viet Cong forces in South Vietnam have recently been under increased pressure from the north to take larger scale direct actions against US forces for the purpose of inflicting heavy casualties. Hanoi propaganda, for instance, wildly hailed the ambush of a US battalion on 11 November. This was in fact one of the first instances when Viet Cong main forces, apparently unaided by North Vietnamese regulars, attempted to take on a sizable US force in the field. (The actual losses were 20 US killed against over 200 Viet Cong.)

Another factor which may weigh heavily in western Pleiku is that the Ia Drang Valley has considerable strategic importance. It provides some of the best terrain in the Vietnamese central highlands for men and supplies moving either through Cambodia or from farther north in South Vietnam.

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In addition, there are indications that an important Communist supply depot and base area exists on the south side of the valley. The base was in fact the original US objective in this area.

The Ia Drang Valley action indicates a greater willingness by the Communists to accept serious losses in main force strength in situations where the territory involved is of major importance to them, or where they believe they can inflict heavy casualties on the forces opposing them.

The Communist goal in attempting to run up US losses, even at the cost of disproportionate losses of their own, is to cause a domestic outcry in the US against participation in the war. Communist statements suggest that they are, in fact, putting considerable store in just this. Whether or not this is their goal, it seems clear that the strategists in Hanoi still envisage a protracted war of attrition in South Vietnam.

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