



*The President's Daily Brief*

3 November 1969

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Some parts of a recent speech by party First Secretary Le Duan contain hints of policy differences among the North Vietnamese. (Page 1)

The Jordanians have asked Moscow for antiaircraft, medium, and long-range artillery. (Page 3)

India's Congress Party is again close to a formal split. (Page 4)



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NORTH VIETNAM

Some parts of a recent speech by party First Secretary Le Duan, given to district level cadre, contains hints of possible policy differences in the North Vietnamese leadership over both the war and domestic issues.

In an "abridged" version of the speech broadcast to domestic audiences Friday, Le Duan argues that the fighting in the South should continue to receive high priority because of the tremendous sacrifices already made. He uses Ho Chi Minh's authority to urge no compromise without "complete victory."

The dominant theme of the speech is a plea for party unity. This preoccupation could suggest that disunity has affected his own position as party first secretary. Le Duan says, for example, that "divergent views between two comrades in the party" are normal, but that discussion should produce "unanimity" or at least a "collective" view. It is inadvisable, Le Duan maintains, "to adopt the opinion of one person and force all others to follow it."

*Although this could be read as another routine prescription for party consideration of all views before final decisions are taken, we think it more likely that Duan is protesting strong-arm tactics by some party leader powerful enough to act without taking other views into account.*

*Had Le Duan been merely explaining the party decision-making process to local cadres, he would probably have stressed local issues, problems of policy implementation in which there is some room for local interpretation. Instead, he concentrated on support for the war, an issue on which local officials have little control. Le Duan did not use party authority to buttress his remarks; he left an impression he may have been speaking for himself.*

(continued)

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*It is difficult to draw hard conclusions about the leadership or the firmness of Le Duan's grasp on the party from this one speech. But it is suggestive of a serious contest for control. The other contestant could be Truong Chinh, the next ranking politburo member.*

*Assuming that there is a serious power and policy struggle, Le Duan's speech would put him in the role of a dissenter to current policy trends, both with respect to the war and certain domestic issues. The fact that his views have been broadcast, however, suggests that he retains considerable authority and that many policy and leadership questions remain to be decided.*

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JORDAN

Husayn says he has approved the assignment of a Soviet military attaché in Amman. The Jordanians for the first time have also inquired into Soviet willingness to supply antiaircraft, medium, and long-range artillery.

*There probably is a bit of gamesmanship in Husayn's informing US officials of these steps, but he has made it clear many times that he is indeed desperate for artillery. He also is in doubt at the moment about the merits of a British antiaircraft missile system currently on order.*

*The Soviets probably would be happy to fill some of Jordan's artillery needs.*

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### INDIA

The power struggle between Mrs. Gandhi and the Congress Party old guard came to a head this weekend. Her supporters claim they are making headway in their efforts to remove old-line party president Nijalingappa. Her opponents have responded by summarily dropping several of her supporters from the party's governing working committee and then calling a rump meeting of the group to declare her faction's activities "out of order."

*Neither faction has acknowledged yet that the party is formally divided, and neither really wants a split that would wreck the party. If worst comes to worst, however, Mrs. Gandhi probably believes she could put together a new government backed by most of Congress and by assorted leftist parties. If the dispute is not papered over again, she might even prefer immediate elections to capitalize on her increasing popularity with the electorate.*

*Meanwhile, a group of state leaders is trying to mediate the dispute, but neither Mrs. Gandhi nor the old guard has shown any sign so far of backing down.*

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