



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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10 SEPTEMBER 1966

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DAILY BRIEF
10 September 1966

1. South Vietnam

Preparations for tomorrow's elections are moving along as well as can be expected. At the same time, the Communist anti-election effort is following established patterns. In some places, the Viet Cong are collecting identity cards from potential voters in order to keep them from casting ballots. Sporadic acts of terrorism, anti-election propaganda, and threats against potential voters are continuing--but not at an alarming rate.

A moderate Buddhist leader expressed skepticism today that the militant Buddhist anti-election effort would have much effect on the turnout. There is still no evidence that the Buddhist and the Communist anti-election efforts are in any way linked. Many Buddhists are dismayed by the parallel, however.

2. Burma

The Burmese press is giving heavy and exceedingly favorable play to Ne Win's US visit, outstripping the coverage given his trips to the USSR and Communist China.

The embassy in Rangoon comments that the theme of US peace efforts coupled with respect for Burmese neutrality has come through far better than expected. The press has also emphasized President Johnson's warm and personalized treatment of Ne Win.

The Burmese, in turn, obviously feel that they got their main points across.

3. North Vietnam

The number of combat-qualified fighter pilots in the North Vietnamese Air Force has steadily increased since the Soviets took full charge of the training program last December. [redacted]

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4. France

At the North Atlantic Council meeting yesterday, the French representative clearly implied that France would not join in a Security Council appeal for U Thant to remain on the job. While evading a direct statement, the Frenchman plugged the line that Thant had made his decision and France doubted he would reverse it.

5. France

[redacted] information about De Gaulle's visit to Cambodia. 50X1

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Sihanouk [redacted] was pleased because he obtained French recognition of present Cambodian borders and assurances of sizable French military and economic aid. He also felt close contact with De Gaulle had raised his stock with his own people. 50X1

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The French, for their part, are said to be satisfied that the visit added to their influence in Cambodia.

6. South Africa

The behind-the-scenes struggle to select Verwoerd's successor is in high gear. The field is narrowing to two, one of whom, Justice Minister Vorster, seems to be picking up strength by the minute. All contenders lack Verwoerd's subtlety, and would implement the ruling party's apartheid policy even more rigidly while displaying less imagination in foreign affairs.

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