

83
Pres file
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 4, 1967
Monday 6:30 am

Mr. President:

• Vietnam election reports are attached

1. CIA summary of latest returns

Thieu-Ky have 35.1% of votes tallied
Dzu is second with 17.4%

2. Message from Ambassador Bunker
giving his first comments on the
election.

3. United Press morning story
Thieu-Ky overwhelmingly elected
Dzu charges fraud

Bromley Smith
Bromley Smith

ELECTION 9/4 NX

DAY LD

BY DANIEL SOUTHERLAND

SAIGON (UPI)--CHIEF OF STATE NGUYEN VAN THIEU AND PREMIER NGUYEN CAO KY WERE OVERWHELMINGLY ELECTED PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM TODAY BY AN 83 PER CENT TURNOUT OF VOTERS WHO DEFIED FIERCE TERRORISM TO DEAL COMMUNIST INFLUENCE A STUNNING SETBACK.

THEY IMMEDIATELY FACED A GATHERING POLITICAL STORM THAT THREAT NED TO BUFFET THEIR NEW GOVERNMENT BEFORE IT GETS A TOEHOLD ON DEMOCRACY.

THIEU CELEBRATED VICTORY BY GOING DEEP SEA FISHING WITH AN ARMED GUARD. HIS CLOSEST CIVILIAN CHALLENGER CHARGED THE THREE-STAR GENERAL "WON BY FRAUD."

THE ACCUSATION BY SAIGON LAWYER THUONG DINH DZU, WHO TRAILED THIEU BY A 2-1 MARGIN BUT WAS THE SURPRISE VOTE-GETTER OF THE ELECTION, FOLLOWED ANNOUNCEMENT BY FORMER PREMIER TRAN VAN HUONG, THE THIRD-PLACER FINISHER, THAT HE AND ASSOCIATES WOULD FORM AN OPPOSITION GROUP TO THE NEW REGIME.

THERE WERE ALSO REPORTS MILITANT BUDDHISTS WERE ABOUT TO DECLARE THEY WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE THIEU AND KY AS LEGITIMATELY ELECTED.

THIEU AND KY, THE TWO GENERALS WHO HAVE RULED SOUTH VIETNAM SINCE 1965, APPARENTLY WON BY THE 45 PER CENT MARGIN THIEU HAD PREDICTED.

IT WAS A BIG VICTORY FOR THE "EXPERIMENT IN DEMOCRACY" BACKED STRONGLY BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON.

UNOFFICIAL RETURNS WITH NEARLY THREE-FOURTHS OF THE 4.9 MILLION VOTES COUNTED SHOWED THESE TOTALS: THIEU 1,570,374; DZU 709,569; HUONG 431,429.

THE BIG LOSERS IN THE NATION'S FIRST FREE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, WHICH ALSO CHOSE A 60-MAN SENATE, WERE THE COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED VIET CONG WHO FAILED

TO DETER VOTERS DESPITE THEIR BLOODIEST TERROR CAMPAIGN OF THE WAR. THE TURNOUT WAS A STUNNING POLITICAL SETBACK FOR THE GUERRILLAS WHO KILLED, WOUNDED AND KIDNAPED MORE THAN 2,500 CIVILIANS IN A FREE-WHEELING FRIGHT WAVE TO SCARE VOTERS AWAY FROM THE POLLS.

DURING THE HOURS THE POLLS WERE OPEN, SQUADS OF TERRORISTS ATTACKED EIGHT PROVINCIAL CAPITALS AND BOMBED DOZENS OF POLLING PLACES, INCLUDING SEVERAL IN SAIGON, KILLING OR WOUNDING AT LEAST 273 VOTERS, ELECTION OFFICIALS AND POLL WATCHERS.

IN ONE VILLAGE VOTERS WOUNDED BY A BOMB BLAST STAGGERED TO THEIR FEET, BOUND THEIR WOUNDS AND PAINFULLY CAST THEIR BALLOTS IN A SHOW OF FORTITUDE THAT "AMAZED" SEN. GEORGE MURPHY, R-CALIF., ONE OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S 22 APPOINTED ELECTION OBSERVERS.

THE BOMB EXPLODED IN THE TUY HOA POLLING PLACE ONLY 10 MINUTES BEFORE MURPHY AND NORTH DAKOTA GOV. GUY S. WHITE WERE TO ARRIVE. THEIR PLANE ARRIVED THREE HOURS LATE.

"HALF OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE WOUNDED DRESSED THEIR WOUNDS AND, BY GOD, THESE PEOPLE GOT UP AND VOTED," MURPHY SAID. "ANY PLACE WHERE YOU FIND ENTHUSIASM LIKE THAT SHULD GET THE BEST WE CAN GIVE THEM."

THE 21 OTHER OBSERVERS INDICATED THEY FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF CROOKED VOTING AND WERE PLEASED WITH THE ELECTION'S CONDUCT. THEY MADE NO GROUP EVALUATION, HOWEVER, AND SAID THERE WOULD BE NONE FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION.

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THERE WAS LITTLE DOUBT THE THIEU-KY MILITARY TICKET WOULD WIN OVER THE 10 CIVILIAN HOPEFULS BECAUSE OF STRONG MILITARY AND CIVIL SERVICE BACKING.

THE BIGGEST SURPRISE, EVEN GREATER THAN THE 33 PER CENT TURNOUT, WAS THE SHOWING OF DZU, THE SELF-STYLED "PEACE" CANDIDATE WHOSE SYMBOL WAS A WHITE DOVE.

LITTLE KNOWN IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, HE SWEPT PAST HUOI AND PHAM KHAC SUU, CHAIRMAN OF THE PROVISIONAL ASSEMBLY, WHICH LAST YEAR WROTE THE NATION'S CONSTITUTION.

SUU HAD JUMPED QUICKLY TO SECOND PLACE BUT FELL TO FOURTH AS OUTLYING PROVINCES REPORTED IN.

DZU, LOUDEST CAMPAIGN CRITIC OF THIEU, CALLED HIM "DISLOYAL" DURING THE CAMPAIGN. THIEU RESPONDED BY SAYING DZU BELONGED IN A CAGE AND CALLED HIM A "DOG" AND A "HORSE."

INTERVIEWED TODAY BENEATH A BROILING SUN ON THE STEPS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUILDING WHERE THE VOTES WERE TABULATED, DZU CHARGED THIEU AND KY "WON BY FRAUD."

HE SAID, "WITHOUT FRAUD THEY COULD NEVER WIN. WITHOUT FRAUD, WE WOULD HAVE WON BECAUSE WE HAVE THE PEACE PROGRAM."

DZU SAID HE WOULD SHOW THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY EVIDENCE OF "NATIONWIDE FRAUD." POST-ELECTION COMPLAINTS ARE TO BE FILED WITH THE ASSEMBLY, WHICH MUST STILL GIVE FINAL APPROVAL TO THE ELECTION. IT COULD DECLARE IT VOID AND ORDER A NEW ONE.

IF THIEU AND KY ARE DECLARED WINNERS AS EXPECTED, THEY WILL BE INSTALLED IN OFFICE SOMETIME EARLY IN OCTOBER. BOTH WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP THEIR MILITARY OFFICES.

ON OCT. 22 A PERMANENT 137-MEMBER ASSEMBLY, OR LOWER HOUSE, WILL BE CHOSEN. THE TWO-HOUSE LEGISLATURE WILL EXERCISE CONTROL OVER THE BUDGET AND TAXES. BY A THREE-FOURTHS VOTE IT CAN DECLARE A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT AND FORCE AN ELECTION FOR A NEW ONE.

THIEU AS PRESIDENT WILL NAME A PRIME MINISTER TO FORM A GOVERNMENT. AMERICAN OFFICIALS HAVE QUIETLY TRIED TO PERSUADE HUONG TO ACCEPT THE JOB BUT AIDES SAID HE ANGRILY REFUSED TO "LEGITIMIZE" THE MILITARY TICKET.

CM/YM/FM509AED