

September 11, 1967
Monday

37

Mr. President

Attached is today's situation
report on Vietnamese politics.

Pres file

W. W. Rostow

272

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

September 11, 1967

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-361

Buddhist Attitudes Toward Elections

By ✓, NARA, Date 10-14-94

Conversations with leaders of all the major Buddhist factions over the weekend show disappointment with the election results. Thich Thien Minh, Tri Quang's chief lieutenant, complained of unfairness and Catholic domination particularly of the Senate elections. He did admit that two or three Senators-elect on General Don's list would be "favorable" to Buddhism. Losing vice-presidential candidate Mai Tho Truyen claimed widespread fraud and that the election "was twice as bad as any election under Diem".

Revolutionary Dai Viets Accept Election

A Dai Viet party leader told our Political Advisor in DaNang that the party had decided to accept the outcome of the election and drop public criticism of it. The party was apparently pleased about the victory of one of their Senate lists and was now looking forward to the Lower House elections. In this connection it is important to note that although several election complaints have formally been lodged with the Assembly, neither Huong nor Ha Thuc Ky, nor important Suu supporters, have associated themselves with these complaints.

Criticism of US Presence

An editorial in a pro-Catholic Saigon daily September 8 sharply criticized recent statements by U.S. officials on the fairness of elections and the formation of the new GVN. The Embassy thinks the editorial reflects growing sensitivity to the heavy U.S. attention focussed on Vietnamese internal affairs since the beginning of the presidential campaign. It may also indicate an increasing self-assertiveness by the Vietnamese vis-a-vis the U.S. presence. The Embassy comments this could be a healthy sign of the genuine nationalism we are trying to encourage in South Viet-Nam.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~