

Wednesday, October 18, 1967

71
Pres file

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President:

Attached is today's report on
the political situation in Viet-Nam.

W. W. Rostow

Att.

CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT

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Viet-Nam Political Situation Report

October 18, 1967

~~DECLASSIFIED~~

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-449

By , NARA, Date 10-30-94

Plans for Inauguration Ceremonies

The Vietnamese Government has informed us that the presidential inauguration ceremonies have been changed from October 30 to October 31, with delegations invited to present credentials to President-elect Thieu on the afternoon of October 30. The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has informed us that inauguration invitations have been issued to Chiefs of State of 26 countries, and that thus far 6 countries (excluding the U.S.) have announced their decision to attend. Korea will be represented by its Prime Minister, Australia and the Philippines by their Foreign Ministers, and Laos by the President of the King's Council.

Lower House Elections

Active campaigning for the Lower House elections Sunday began in earnest this week. So far no clear or specific issues have emerged -- though general criticism of the GVN and of corruption is being expressed by candidates. Candidates seem to be relying mainly on their local reputation and/or organization and on promises to represent local interests effectively in "far-off" Saigon. As a result, public interest in the candidates themselves is reported higher than in the Upper House race.

Latest statistics on the 1,200 or so candidates show 355 Northerners, some 385 Central Vietnamese, and 465 Southerners running. (This overrepresents the Northerners, most of whom are running from Saigon and nearby provinces.) About 150 military personnel and 240 civil servants are candidates (many others were denied leave from official duties to run). 42 women are running, as are 19 ethnic Cambodians, 23 Montagnards, and 5 ethnic Chams.

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