

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

27 FEB. 1962
~~TOP SECRET~~

50X1

1. The air attacks on Diem's palace

They were carried out by two South Vietnam Air Force fighter-bombers that separated from a strike mission planned against the Viet Cong. One of the pilots was captured when he crashed near Saigon. We are not sure where the other is, but he reportedly landed his bullet-riddled plane near Phnom Penh. Neither has yet been identified with any of the groups reported plotting coups. They could be disaffected individuals who took things into their own hands.

2. Berlin air corridors

Yesterday the Soviets filed flight plans for two corridors: two aircraft out from Berlin in the northern corridor; two in from the West in the southern corridor. A US C-124 and a UK Hastings flew round-trips in the south and north corridors, respectively, without sighting the Soviet aircraft, although the Soviet representative in the Berlin Air Safety Center protested a near miss with the Hastings. This is the first time that the Soviets have filed flight plans for two corridors on the same day, and that two of the aircraft began their flights at the western end of a corridor.

3. Laos

We do not yet know Souphannouvong's reaction to Souvanna's proposed cabinet. Prior to meeting Souvanna, [redacted]

[redacted] he (1) rejected the concept of a government of councils headed by the King, (2) reacted strongly to Phoumi's insistence on the Defense and Interior posts [redacted]

50X1

50X1

4. Vietnam

a. Ambassador Thompson, noting that Moscow prefers to avoid both enlarging the fighting in Laos and South Vietnam and confirming Chinese ideological arguments of softness on the expansion of communism into colonial areas, thinks that Moscow may use the growing tension over Vietnam to attempt to reconvene the 1954 Geneva Conference. He believes the Soviets are not so much concerned over revelation of the split with the Chinese as with preserving their influence with the North Vietnam regime. He thinks it possible that the USSR will promise the North Vietnamese logistic support in order to "preempt" the Chinese intervening as they did in Laos.

b. The ten Soviet air transports [redacted] en route to Hanoi have arrived, five moving on to Vinh, near the South Vietnamese border. We do not yet know if they are replacements or augmentation. If the latter, their location at Vinh would indicate an intention substantially to increase air lift support for operations in southern Laos or South Vietnam. [redacted]

50X1

50X1

NOTES

A.

50X1

- B. The Soviet Union has formally protested to the US the extension of a West German customs law to West Berlin.
- C. Unofficial election returns indicate Krishna Menon's reelection by nearly two to one.
- D. USSR delegate Zorin is "wild" about the outcome of the Ruanda-Urundi debate in the UN. His attacks on U Thant and the US were so heavy handed that the UAR representative said he has hurt Soviet interests by "showing the Soviets want disorder rather than real independence in Africa."

50X1

- F. The French OAS has distributed a tract calling for a 24 hour general strike beginning the morning after announcement of the Algerian cease fire. According to press reports the Algerian rebels have approved the cease-fire agreement, which would be announced tomorrow.

DOCUMENTS OF INTEREST

I.

[Redacted]

50X1

50X1

II.

[Redacted]

50X1

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE