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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 19, 1971

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

HENRY A. KISSINGER *Henry*

SUBJECT:

Information Items

Cambodia: With the National Assembly now transformed into a constituent assembly, the government is in a position to rule by decree indefinitely. It may be some time before a new constitution is adopted and another legislature is convened. Lon Nol and Sirik Matak probably decided against extending the term of the Assembly or dismissing it entirely for the following reasons:

- to eliminate the need for obtaining approval of government programs from a legislature dominated by civilian opposition elements and,
- to soften the adverse reactions that might have been generated by the outright dismissal of the Assembly, whose term expired on October 18.

The government is apparently confident that its action will not provoke a political reaction of serious proportions. However, this development is only the latest in a series of moves designed to increase the power of Lon Nol and Sirik Matak, and at least potential dangers will persist as long as the political transition from collective leadership to a strong single executive continues.

Indochina Military Activity: Except for two clashes in Military Region 3, ground combat activity was generally light and sporadic throughout South Vietnam. In Military Region 3, ARVN forces,

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Kosygin in Rowdy Ottawa: The Embassy reports that Soviet Premier Kosygin has been confronted by violent demonstrators, bomb threats, and one assailant who knocked the Russian leader off his feet during his first twenty-four hours in the Canadian capital. The demonstrators are thought to be Canadian Jews protesting the plight of Soviet Jews and assorted national minority groups including Hungarians, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians. Demonstrations have probably exceeded even the negative anticipation of the government, and press reports find security arrangements either lax or inefficient. Some Canadians are fearful of worse when Kosygin travels to places where security elements are more inexperienced, and antagonistic crowds more numerous. Late press reports also indicate that Rabbi Kahane, former head of the Jewish Defense League, was detained by immigration officials at Montreal International Airport last night.

The Embassy further reports that Premier Kosygin and Prime Minister Trudeau discussed international rather than bilateral questions yesterday. Kosygin raised the issue of India-Pakistan and with unusual animation emphasized the seriousness of the problem, stating that Pakistan had created the problem and now should solve it. The Premier seemed to come alive only on this issue even to the point of waving his arms, but offered no solution other than demanding that Pakistan create the conditions to relax the situation.

Indo-Pak Tensions: You may have noted increased press attention here over the weekend on the military situation in South Asia with coverage of charges of massing troops and war preparedness in both India and Pakistan. This results from two causes: (a) while we have been aware of the increased military preparedness on both sides for some time, the press is just beginning to catch up with those reports; and (b) there was special interest this weekend in a report that President Yahya had publicly mentioned the possibility of troop pullback and the Indian Defense Minister had rejected that proposal.

At the same time, while war by accident remains a real possibility, all levels of Indian officialdom, including Mrs. Gandhi, continue to insist publicly and privately that India will not initiate hostilities. There are still several ideas to be tried in keeping the proposal for a pullback of troops alive.

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supported by U.S. helicopter gunships and ARVN artillery, killed 28 of the enemy in a clash three miles southwest of Fire Support Base Pace near the Cambodian border. Seven ARVN soldiers were killed and 23 were wounded. Elsewhere a Regional Force company eight miles southwest of Xuan Loc was attacked by mortar and antitank rocket fire which was followed by a sapper attack. The defenders, who again were supported by ARVN artillery, killed ten of the enemy. Friendly losses were nine Regional Force and two civilians killed and seven Regional Force and six civilians wounded.

In Cambodia action was light with only a few friendly sweep operations producing several small unit contacts. In Laos combat is at a low level, but both friendly and enemy forces are preparing for increased activity. Several groups of irregulars launched a new operation yesterday designed to sweep along both banks of the Mekong River south of Pakse.

South Vietnam Political Situation:

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In particular, Vice President Ky's effort to forge a broad coalition of opposition groups appears to be on the verge of collapse. Personality conflicts between the leaders of difference groups have surfaced since the election. Some of the more moderate opposition figures have quit Ky's organization because they object to the activities of radical students, who still are trying to foment trouble. Moreover, some groups that originally associated themselves with Ky now have joined the rival organization set up by An Quang Buddhists.

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Ky himself reportedly has not taken an active role in leading the organization since the election. In contrast to the mood of gloom among his staff, the vice president is putting up a brave front. Some of his associates, however, believe Ky's real attitude is mirrored in the actions of his wife, who is said to be despondent and frustrated.

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October 18, 1971

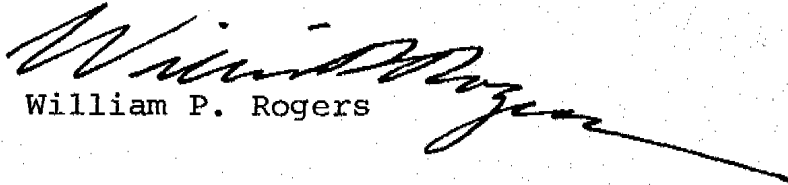
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT - Evening Report

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

Kosygin Will Visit Cuba - The Canadian Embassy has informed us that Premier Kosygin will go to Cuba upon completing his stay in Canada. Kosygin gave this information to Prime Minister Trudeau.

There had been an unconfirmed report that Party First Secretary Brezhnev planned to visit Cuba in December. A Brezhnev visit seems much less likely now that Kosygin is going.

Kosygin was last in Cuba in 1967, after the Glassboro summit meeting.


William P. Rogers