

# INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

*Berlin*

46

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Action

EUR

Info

SS

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USIA

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RMR

NNNN FHE822 JCA409

RR RUEHC

MDE RUFHJA 031 06/1745Z

ZNR

R 061730Z ZNH

FM USBER BERLIN

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN

STATE GRNC

BT

UNCLAS ACTION DEPT 161 INFO BONN 145 LONDON PARIS MOSCOW

PARIS ALSO FOR USRO CINCEUR FOR POLAD USAREUR FOR POLAD

USNMR SHAPE FOR BURNS USELMLO UNNUMBERED FROM BERLIN SIXTH

JOINT STATE/USIA MESSAGE

FOLLOWING IS REVIEW OF WEST BERLIN PRESS COMMENTARY ON  
SOUTHEAST ASIAN SITUATION.

PRESS COMMENTARY ON AMERICAN RESPONSE GENERALLY APPROVING,  
IN CONTEXT OF SPECULATIVE AND ANATYTICAL COMMENTS ON MEANING  
RECENT EVENTS.

DER TAGESSPIEGEL (IND.) CHARACTERIZED SECOND ATTACK ON U.S.  
VESSELS AS "POLITICAL CHALLENGE WHICH REQUIRED A HARD RESPONSE."  
ATTACK ON PORTS AND SUPPLY DEPOTS, PAPER SAID, WAS  
RETALIATION UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW AND IS LEGITIMATE."  
U.S. IS ONLY WESTERN POWER CAPABLE OF MANTAINING PRESENT  
ARMISTICE LINES, PAPER SAID, BUT PRESENT STATUS OF WAR  
CASTS DOUBT ON POSSIBILITY OF WINNING. ON OTHER HAND,  
TAGESSPIEGEL CONTINUED, EXTENSION OF WAR TO NORTH VIETNAM  
INVOLVES RISKS, WHICH TEND TO GIVE COMMUNIST STRATEGISTS  
LATITUDE. AS LONG AS VIETNAM STRUGGEL UNDECIDED, RED CHINA  
WILL REGARD U.S. CAUTION AS WEAKNESS, PAER EUAD. IF THIS  
ATTITUDE PREVAILS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, PAPER WARNED, EROSION  
OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STATES "CAN HARDLY BE PREVENTED." CHINESE  
ACE IN HOLE IS RUSSIAN INVOLVEMENT IN STRUGGLE AND ABANDONMENT  
OF DETENTE POLICY.

POLICY FEELS RUSSIA MIGHT USE U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTHEASR  
ASIA TO GAIN DIPLOMATIC ADVANTAGES IN EUROPE.

TAGESSPIEGEL CONCLUDED THAT JOHNSON HAS SCORED POLITICAL  
SUCCESS BY SHOWING U.S. "WILL NOT SHRINK FROM HARSH MEASURES."

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-2- 161, AUGUST 6, FROM: BERLIN.

TELEGRAF (PRO-SPD) DESCRIBED SITUATION AS "EXTREMELY ALARMING." PAPER HAD NO DOUBT THAT U.S. WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO AVOID WORLD CONFLICT. BUT MOTIVES OF THE COMMUNISTS ARE "GREAT RIDDLE". AFTER TWO CHALLENGES IN THREE DAYS, TELEGRAF THOUGHT, U.S. HAD NO CHOICE, LEST IT LOSE CREDIBILITY IN WORLD: "THIS WOULD HAVE HAD UNORESEEABLE CONSEQUENCES FOR BERLIN."

PAPER FEELS IF THESE INCIDENTS WERE PART OF STRATEGY TO ENGAGE U.S. MILITARILY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WOULD PEACE IS ENDANGERED EVEN MORE, BECAUSE JOHNSON WOULD NOT HAVE FULL CONTROL OF SITUATION.

TELEGRAF NOTED DE GAULLE'S SILENCE IN LAST FEW DAYS, IN CONTRAST TO CUBA CRISIS, AND CALLS RECENT EVENTS "DRASTIC ILLUSTRATION" OF HIS PROPOSAL TO NEUTRALIZE WHOLE AREA. PAPER FEELS THAT FURTHER SILENCE FROM DE GAULLE WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY THE AGGRESSORS AS ENCOURAGEMENT.

BERLINER MORGENPOST (IND. SPRINGER) SAID PRESIDENT DISPROVED CHINESE "PAPER TIGER" THEORY ABOUT U.S. AMERICAN REPRISALS "AFFIRM THAT THE U.S. WILL NOT ALLOW SOUTH VIETNAM TO BE OVERRUN." WASHINGTON HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT THE U.S. WILL NOT ALLOW ITSELF TO BE PUSHED AROUND." PAPER FOUND IT "GRATIFYING" THAT PRESIDENT'S DECISION ENJOYS BIPARTISAN SUPPORT.

BILDZEITUNG (IND. SPRINGER) SAID "THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING WHICH PRESIDENT JOHNSON COULD DO," AND ADMONISHED DIPLOMATS TO SEE TO IT THAT CONFLICT DOES NOT DPREAD.

DER ABEND (INDEP) SAID JOHNSON HAD "NO OTHER CHOICE" THAN TO RESPOND AS HE DID. DOMESTICALLY, PAPER SAID, JOHNSON CANNOT APPEAR AS "SOFT" WHEN RUNING AGAINST "RADICAL OPPONENT". IN FOREIGN POLICY AREA, PAER SAID U.S. ALREADY LOST PRESTIGE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND THESE PROVOCATIONS WERE PART OF CHINESE-INSPIRED STRATEGY OF "MOCKING U.S. MILITARY POWER" TO MAKE U.S. LOSE FACE. PAPER REGARDED JOHNSON'S DECISION AS "WELL-CONSIDERED MIXTURE OF FLEXIBILITY AND FIRMNESS." "PRESIDENT HAS STOOD TEST IN A CRISIS", DER ABEND CONCLUDED.

B.Z. (IND.) THOUGHT THAT "SELDOM HAS MILITARY RETALIATION BEEN CONSIDERED, JUSTIFIED, AND CARRIED OUT WITH GREATER RESPONSIBILITY." JOHNSON HAS SHOWN CRITICS THAT DETENTE POLICY "MUST NOT BE MISTAKEN FOR WEAKNESS."

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CHINESE  
TO MAKE  
AS "WELL  
PRESIDENT  
B.Z. CIND.  
RETALIATION  
GREATER RES  
POLICY "MUS

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-3- 161, AUGUST 6. FROM: BERLIN.

SPANDAUER VOLKSBLATT (PRO-SPD) SAID DANGER POINT FOR U.S. ASIAN POLICY HAS BEEN REACHED AND CONFLICT THREATENS TO EXPAND.

WHILE COMMUNIST MOTIVES UNCLEAR, PAPER FEELS THE AMERICAN REACTION IS ALMOST AS HARD TO UNDERSTAND. PAPER CITES "STRANGE FEELING THAT THE AMERICAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN MIGHT HAVE INFLUENCED THE INTENSITY OF JOHNSON'S RESPONSE." INVERSELY, PEIPING MIGHT HAVE BEEN TRYING TO GIVE GOLDWATER A CHANCE, PAPER FEELS, FOR "A WEAKLY-REACTING JOHNSON MIGHT HAVE INCREASED GOLDWATER'S CHANCES OF SUCCESS." CHINA WOULD WELCOME GOLDWATER VICTORY, PAPER THINKS, "BECAUSE HE THINKS AS LITTLE OF COEXISTENCE AS THE CHINESE THEMSELVES."

DER DURIER (PRO-CDU) WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT MANTHEY, FELT THAT GOLDWATER IS PUSING PRESIDENT INTO MORE VIGOROUS COURSE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. PAPER CALLED THIS IRONICAL, FOR JOHNSON COULD WELL PROFIT FROM THIS IN NOVEMBER. A CONFLICT IS BREWING IN EAST ASIA, PAPER CONTINUES, WHICH WILL NOT REACH A CLIMAX FOR 30 TO 40 YEARS, AND AMERICAN PRESENCE IN THE AREA WILL PERHAPS SERVE FREE WORLD BETTER THAN SUDDEN VICTORY IN SOUTH VIET NAM.

PAPER SAID TENSION IN WASHINGTON NOT NEARLY AS HIGH AS AT TIME OF CUBA CRISIS, FOR SIMPLE REASON CHINA HAS NO ATOMIC WEAPONS, AND MOSCOW IS NOT EXPECTED TO TAKE ITS TREATY WITH CHINA SERIOUSLY. MISS MANTHEY'S REPORT CLAIMS U.S. PUBLIC IS BEING PREPARED FOR POSSIBILITY OF ONE MORE BECOMING INVOLVED IN ASIAN CONFLICT.

EAST BERLIN PRESS BEING TREATED IN SEPARATE MESSAGE.  
CALHOUN  
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