

#22/2

Nixon- 1972 election - VN 10/26/72

OCT 28 1972

From the CBS-TV a.m. news, the first quarter of which is just ended and was devoted entirely to the NVN broadcast on the aborted cease-fire agreement, it seems clear that Nixon has continued the war for the sole purpose of using it to get re-elected.

There was no provision in the agreed-to agreement that could not have been included the day he was inaugurated.

Peter Kalischer read the terms from Paris, not satellite by radio, voice only, but TV aired.

Bert Quint also by radio only from Saigon, transmission broken up from beginning, the only such b'cast from there I can recall. Perhaps coincidence. But CBS' airing of an almost incomprehensible signal is a measure of the importance given the story and the VN source.

In this country at any earlier time or in almost any civilized country today, agreeing to terms that were always available only on the even of an election would cost the incumbent the election.

So would permitted an imposed, two-bit tyrant to dominate the affairs of a major power, most of all at election time.

If it is obvious that Thieu can't survive this agreement. It is also obvious that he has no means of surviving anyway not even indefinitely with continued US support. That he would do to cling whatever he could can be assumed.

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What is not clear is that in his present position he does not have the tacit support of the US military and civilian/military.

He could be knocked off at any time and hasn't been. If even an attempt has been made, I do not recall the reporting. (His present situation is critical because some SVN patriot or patriots may understand this if they hear the agreed terms he spiked.)

He can continue, as he has, only with US support. He can be ousted at any time Nixon wants him out.

CBD devoted the entire first half-hour to this story alone, except for the regular five-minute commentary just before the half-hour. It then resumed with a spot analysis by radio by Kalischer from Paris.

One by-product was downplay of the other political news, including the WG, McG's paid speech last night, the Post response to the administration's yesterday attack. All this was covered in the next ten minutes, followed by a dateless film feature on Colorado recreational issues, a film that could have been aired any day and probably aired today to suit the entertainment concepts of modern TV "news" programs.

As switch to the other nets at 8:45 showed no attention, the ABC DC outlet presenting a regular program seemingly educational, NBC having its regular junk, in this moment two silly-looking young men for some reason reclining, one just turning to the other at the instant I switched to say, with feigned seriousness and incredulity, "The buffaloes don't roam any more". Which is the kind of thing that makes more possible the re-election of a genuinely unpopular President, particularly one who lack of scruple is historic, whose lack of principle is unequalled, and whose fear of public exposure is sui generis, never matched, I believe, in US politics.