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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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GENERAL

1. Satellites returning Greek hostages and prisoners of war:

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Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria have been repatriating Greek hostages and prisoners of war held in Communist territory since the Greek civil war, according to the American army attaché in Athens. Bulgaria has already returned a sizable number of prisoners, and about 400 hostages are scheduled for return from Czechoslovakia on 25 October.

Repatriates recently returned by Czechoslovakia had been well treated, in marked contrast with the treatment experienced by the approximately 2,500 Greeks returned earlier this year by Hungary and Rumania. There were also more men of military age in the group from Czechoslovakia.



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Comment: Poland has thus far repatriated no Greeks but is expected to return some soon. The holding by the Satellites of hostages carried off in 1947-48 has constituted a major obstacle to easing the tensions between Greece and the Orbit. The current repatriations probably are another Soviet effort to relax tensions in central Europe and the Balkans. Repatriation presents a serious problem to Athens, since many of those returned may be trained Communist agents.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. French urge Vietnam government to yield to army demands:

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General Ely told Ambassador Heath on 12 October that Hinh was again making preparations for a coup in order to

forestall an imminent rapprochement between the government and the Binh Xuyen gangster organization. Ely told Heath he would urge Diem to "placate" the army by appointing Hinh's henchman, General Xuan, to the Defense Ministry.

Ely insists that the French army cannot oppose Hinh's actions because the 6,500 French officers and non-coms now serving with the Vietnamese army "would have their throats cut" if there were a clash between French and Vietnamese forces.

Comment: The failure of this coup to materialize--like many others reported planned during the past month--suggests that the French are taking an alarmist view of Hinh's maneuvers in order to pressure the Vietnamese government into virtual capitulation to its opponents. Diem's concessions to the Cao Dai, Hoa Hao, and Binh Xuyen were all undertaken at the insistence of the French, but have failed to elicit promised French support to bring Hinh into line.

Ely's assertion that the French army is incapable of preventing a coup is scarcely credible. Saigon is under French military control. The Vietnamese army is wholly dependent on French army services for its arms, ammunition, troop pay, and quartermaster supplies.

It is possible Hinh will attempt a coup, but only if he believes he can be sure the French will not interfere.

SOUTH ASIA

3. Afghan foreign minister proposes federation of Afghanistan and Pakistan:

Afghan foreign minister Prince Naim told Ambassador Lodge in an informal conversation in New York on 9 October that Afghanistan could be kept securely in the free world only by some form of federation with Pakistan. He pointed out that the USSR was pressuring Afghanistan to accept increased economic aid. Naim suggested

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a union in which the two countries would be brought together under one flag, and proposed that the United States offer its good offices to promote the plan.

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The prospect of federation--particularly if it involved American good offices--would evoke a bitter Soviet reaction, although this would probably fall short of direct military intervention. India also would probably react strongly against such a proposal. Neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan would be likely to agree to federation without a military build-up and a Western guarantee of their borders. [redacted]

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