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cabinet 1 (normass/deepe)

SAIGON, MAY 13--As the world peepholes the diplomatic birth of Washington-Hanoi peace talks, observers here are watching the political race between the anti-Communist government ^{He Re} and the allegedly pro-Communist peace alliance.

The tacit, crucial political race is considered to be shaping up—or already underway—as President Nguyen Van Thieu is slated to announce this week a change in his Cabinet. An important aim ~~in the~~ of the change is ^{REGARDED} ~~considered~~ ^{HS} here ~~to be~~ the dampening the widespread criticism of his ~~dem~~ regime and ~~the~~ blocking of potential defections of any more disgruntled Vietnamese ~~per intelligence~~ ^{per} intelligensia to the allied pro-Communist Alliance of National, Democracy and Peace Forces.

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cabinet 2 (normass/deepe)

Political
But, ^{on} on the other side, the ~~the~~ allegedly pro-Communist ~~all~~ peace alliance is reported to be organizing a "people's ~~congress~~ congress" to swell their ranks and leadership and to further indict the ~~Thieu~~ Thieu government and hasten its destruction. Underground cadre of ~~identifying~~ identifying themselves ~~themselves~~ themselves with the peace alliance have been circulating in ~~Sa~~ Saigon, ~~recently~~, urging, in face-to-face conversations, that national political party leaders, social and religious personalities ~~join~~ join their pro-Communist ranks.

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cabinet 3 (normass/deepe)

"The (pre-Communist) cadre told me I should be ready to ³leave for the big congress of the Alliance anytime after May 2," one ~~source~~ *personally* ~~politicians~~ who was contacted reported. "On e "One curious feature of the Congress was a guarantee that each participant would be placed in a separate stall so that no one would know who else was present. I invented a reasons why I couldn't go."

"Whether the current Allied military success in blocking the Communist big-unit offensive into Saigon has squelched or temporarily delayed the planned ~~congress~~ ~~people's~~ "people's congress" is unknown here at this time.

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cabinet 4 (normass/deepe)

President Thieu's scheduled Cabinet change, ~~still shrouded in secrecy,~~
came as no surprise to Saigon; the surprise was that it came so late. ~~While~~
~~Saigon has been dancing with rumors of a Cabinet shake-up since the Tet~~
offensive, when President Thieu actually considered a reshuffle, but
was blocked by ~~of~~ conflicting power groups within the government.

Even recently, ~~however,~~ sources close to President Thieu said they
did not know if the change involved only a Cabinet shake-up, or also a
change in the Prime ~~Minister,~~ ^{Minister,} or a shift in the character of the Cabinet
from one of technocrats to one of politicians.

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cabinet 5 (normass/deeps)

"Vietnam has a DeGaulle-styled Presidential system of government in which the prime minister and the cabinet act as sort of a safety valve," one informed source explained. ~~"The President is the only one who can let the steam escape without an explosion by changing the Cabinet or the Prime Minister. The continuity and legality of the government is maintained by the President offices of the President and the Vice President, and they can put the blame on the administrative administrators, implementers and technocrats in the Cabinet when things go wrong."~~

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cabinet 6 (normass/deepe)

Some diplomatic sources speculated ~~there~~ there might be an outside chance ~~of some key left-wing political personalities for a few key posts might reflect a slight modulation of current official policy against the formation of a coalition government with the Communist National Liberation Front.~~ the selection of some key left-wing political personalities for a few key posts might reflect a slight modulation of current official ~~poli~~ policy against the formation of a coalition government with the ~~Communist~~ Communist National Liberation Front.

"The Americans thought they could win the political war by making the government more democratic," one Western diplomat explained. "But after six months of an elected government, that plan does not seem to be working. Now, ~~an alternative~~ ^{an alternative} —since ~~they~~ no one can make this government more democratic — is simply to make 'less anti-Communist.'"

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cabinet 7 (normass/deepe)

From this vantage point, some informed sources and Western diplomats consider Paris "a the Paris peace talks as "a sideshow" to the increasingly bitter and bloody politico-military war being fought in the South. Not many seem to believe the Paris peace talks will decide many substantive matters ~~affecting the~~ ending the war in the South Vietnam until after the American Presidential nominating conventions, if not the American election.

"I can't see why Hanoi should negotiate very much with the a lame-duck Johnson Administration," one Western diplomat explained, "until after it is clear that (Senator Robert F.) Kennedy is not going to be nominated. If (Hubert H.) Humphrey gets the Democratic nomination, Hanoi might seriously start negotiating then. But, if Kennedy gets the nomination, they'll stall. Johnson has to promise Hanoi just as much as ~~King~~ Kennedy to get peace—and probably more. ~~is suspect Hanoi would rather~~ wait for a new administration. If Johnson and ~~King~~ Kennedy both offer Hanoi the same thing, I suspect North Vietnam would prefer to wait and accept the peace terms from Kennedy."

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cabinet 8 (normass/deepe)

Informed sources here view South Vietnam as the crucial military ~~political~~ ^{political} pivot area scene of the critical military-political initiative which would elicit decisive reactions and repercussions in both Paris and the American political campaign.

A captured Communist document explains: "GDF" "According to our policy, we must fight the war and negotiate at the same time. What then is the purpose of fighting and negotiating?

"Negotiations, if we are to have negotiations, will serve mainly to provide us the groundwork from which to launch our general offensive. Another reason is to expose the enemy's political attack upon us and to show that ours is the just cause and ~~his~~ his the unjust. This means that the war will be settled only on the battlefield, not in the conference room."

(Hank: I'll probably not file tomorrow unless the government is changed; otherwise we have a full day of briefings. Regards Bev).

-end router