

Sept. 11, 1969
Dallas Townsend

PEKING-MOSCOW

Good evening everybody. East meets West - an unexpected Communist summit conference in Peking. Soviet Premier Kosygin making a detour to the Red Chinese capital - after attending the Hanoi funeral of Ho Chi Minh. Conferring briefly with Red China's Premier Chou En-Lai - before heading on back to Moscow.

All this at first denied - but later confirmed today by the Kremlin. The Soviets adding only that "both sides frankly exchanged opinions - and had a mutually useful conversation." Perhaps significantly - the brief statement avoiding the use of words such as "friendly" or "cordial". However, the fact that they met at all - a complete surprise to Western diplomatic observers.

As to what effect it will have on the lingering Chinese Soviet split - that we can only wait and see.

WHITE HOUSE

From the White House - another surprise announcement disclosing that President Nixon will address the United Nations General Assembly - next Thursday; thus becoming the first chief of state - to put in a U.N. appearance this session.

The President also to meet privately - we are told - with U.N. delegates from other countries; including - possibly - Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko; although - nothing official as yet.

STRATEGY

At the White House again - three names were added today - to the list of those attending that high-level Vietnam strategy meeting tomorrow. The trio including Vice President Spiro Agnew - Attorney General John Mitchell - and a member of the U.S. peace delegation at Paris.

At the same time - the White House cautions against any "great expectations." Asserting that tomorrow's meeting - will not - be followed by any immediate news break. As for the possibility of further U.S. troop withdrawals - the White House adding it could be days - or even weeks - before there's anything on that.

VIETNAM FOLLOW STRATEGY

Half-a-world away - it was back to business as usual.

The business of war - including some forty Viet Cong rocket and mortar attacks over the past twenty-four hours. These against targets - stretching mainly from Saigon all the way to Cambodia. In turn - Allied forces stepping up their own military activity. The U.S. Command stressing it had no alternative - in view of the enemy re-escalation.

(SUGGESTED LEAD-IN TO THOMAS TAPE SLUGGED "RAIN")

Honolulu and the Hawaiian Islands - first stop for Lowell Thomas on his current round-the-world tour. And one of Hawaii's natural phenomena - the subject of another special report tonight. Lowell...

...on my way to the Far East.

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RETAKE

(L. T. Tape Insert - unedited)

RAIN

Hello everybody: After five years of drought over much of the United States - the problem this past summer as you know has been rain, rain and still more rain! And where I am at this moment it rained the most of all. Here in Hawaii....on my way to the Far East.

Year after year - and again this year - Mount Waialeale on the island of Kauai, has been the wettest spot on earth. Average annual rainfall - more than four hundred and seventy inches. That's a total of nearly eighty feet - or enough to "drown" a good-sized office building.

Next closest to Mount Waialeale here in Hawaii is the little Indian village of Cherrapunji near the Burma border. Cherrapunji - like Waialeale - is at the precise point where the jungle meets the mountains; and Cherrapunji gets about four hundred and fifty inches of rain - each year.

Oh, by the way - a reminder from the National Geographic Magazine tells us that raindrops are almost

never tear-shaped, as we generally picture them. Actually they are like snowflakes - they come in all shapes; all different - some like hot dogs - some look like dumb-bells - some like telephone receivers; and some as you know - just like pennies from Heaven.

Solong.....

(SUGGESTED FOLLOW TO THOMAS TAPE SLUGGED "RAIN")

Thank you, Lowell. Back to the news....

positions today - in the occupied West Bank. According to
Cairo - a reprisal for earlier Israeli attacks - across the
Gulf of Suez, attacks which were themselves billed as
Israeli reprisal attacks.

In any case - this marking the first time in fourteen
months - that Egyptian planes have entered Israeli air space
in strength. Israeli jets - quickly rising to the challenge
in the resulting dog fight - both sides losing a number of
planes. Israel claims it shot down eleven Egyptian planes
and lost one of its own. Egypt claims it shot down four
Israeli planes and lost two.

SINAI

In the Middle East, Egyptian jets attacking Israeli positions today - in the occupied Sinai Desert. According to Cairo - a reprisal for earlier Israeli attacks - across the Gulf of Suez; attacks which were themselves billed - as Israeli reprisal raids.

In any case - this marking the first time in fourteen months - that Egyptian planes have entered Israeli air space in strength. Israeli jets - quickly rising to the challenge. In the resulting dog fights - both sides losing a number of planes. Israel claims it shot down eleven Egyptian planes and lost one of its own. Egypt claims it shot down four Israeli planes and lost two.

AUTO PRODUCERS

Two of the country's Big Three auto producers had major announcements today in Detroit. General Motors - number one - disclosed that its Nineteen-Seventy models will cost - on the average - about a hundred-and-twenty-five dollars more than the Nineteen-Sixty-Nine models.

But the real shocker came from Ford Motor company. The President of the company - Semon Knudsen - better known as Bunkie - has been fired. Knudsen announced that news himself. He said Henry Ford, Second, Chairman of the Board, told him about it last week. The Fifty-Six-year-old Knudsen joined Ford Motor company only nineteen months ago - leaving General Motors to take the Ford presidency. Knudsen saying that the relationship was planned to last ten years. Adding "In all fairness to my reputation and my family, I want to make clear that today's decision, in my opinion, is unwarranted in view of the accomplishments the company has made during my brief tenure." Knudsen going on to say "As an experienced

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businessman, I am puzzled by this sudden and unexpected action."

And the puzzle hasn't been cleared up by Henry Ford

Second. He merely expresses appreciation for Knudsen's services - and announced a new corporate arrangement under which there will be three operating groups.

Good Night.

VIETNAM-VETERANS HOUSE
ALASKA

The state of Alaska is up against a most unusual problem - how to spend nine hundred million dollars. That's the amount of money that was bid for leases of state-owned land on Alaska's oil-rich north slope. The money will be invested in US Treasury securities - drawing interest estimated at close to Forty-Five Thousand Dollars a day. But what to do with the principal - that's the question. And already the ideas are pouring in. Governor Keith Miller has set up several study committees to consider the alternatives. Most popular proposal so far - repeal the state share in the money." It's kind of dilemma you don't come across very often these days.

Good Night.