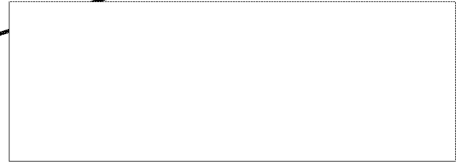


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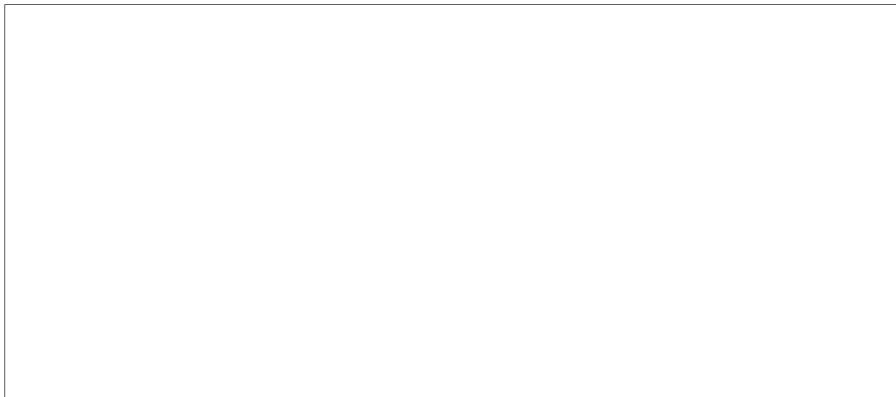
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*South Vietnam: Speculation continues that militant and moderate Buddhist followers may be heading for a break with their leaders.

Ho Huu Tuong, lower house deputy and a Buddhist university official, told an embassy officer on 2 November that a personal reconciliation between Thich Tri Quang and Thich Tam Chau, leaders of the militant and the moderate factions respectively, is unlikely. Tuong said he sees the removal of Quang and Chau and the merger of the two factions into a more middle-of-the-road "third force" as the only solution to the current impasse over the charter issue.

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[redacted] President Thieu's brother has indicated, moreover, that the government would be receptive to any charter recommendations made by a new, reconciled Buddhist grouping. There are as yet no indications, however, that such a break is imminent.

Significant contacts with enemy forces reported over the weekend were confined to the IV Corps Tactical Zone where mortar and ground assaults were launched against the towns of Chau Phu, Cai Lay and Long My. A total of 38 soldiers and civilians were killed and another 179 were wounded in the attacks which appeared to be a continuation of a series of hostile actions begun in this region on 28 October.

The situation remained quiet in the vicinity of Loc Ninh where heavy fighting has occurred during the past ten days. Officially adjusted casualty figures through 2 November indicated that 31 friendly and 720 enemy troops had been killed around Loc Ninh. Field reports on 5 November showed that the number of enemy dead subsequently had risen to 771. [redacted]

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