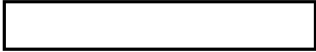
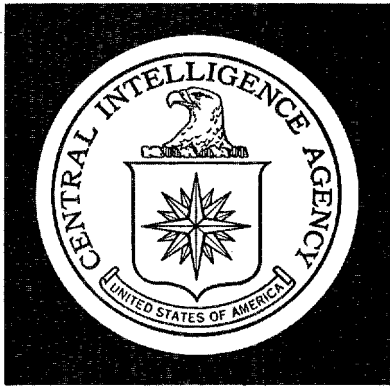


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Vietnam: Communist units in the delta attacked South Vietnamese bivouac positions on 17 April. The rest of the country was relatively quiet.

Localized actions, coupled with occasional coordinated shellings, have characterized Communist initiatives for several weeks. Captured documents suggest that this pattern will continue for some time in both I Corps and III Corps.

* * * *

Recently available press materials from North Vietnam indicate that domestic problems have taken much of the attention formerly given the war. Although some decline could be expected with the end of the air war in the North and the opening of the peace talks, the war news has fallen off significantly in the first quarter of this year. In March, the war probably occupied less than a quarter of the total news space in the main North Vietnamese party daily, compared with almost half last fall, and an overwhelming proportion a year ago.

This shift in press emphasis suggests that the Hanoi leadership has reoriented its priorities and is paying considerably more attention to domestic matters. A large portion of the news coverage is devoted to the problems of economic reconstruction and development, but even more attention is being paid to problems of restructuring the society along Communist lines. Some of the discussions indicate a feeling that there is considerable drift away from these lines at present.

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Korea: The North Korean regime is exploiting the shutdown of the US aircraft on 15 April to rally the population around the leadership of Kim Il-song and the Communist Party.

In a congratulatory statement to the unit which was involved in the attack, Defense Minister Choe Hyon called the US flight a link in a premeditated scheme to provoke a new war. He depicted the incident as showing that "war may break out at any moment."

The Pyongyang leadership long has used the threat of a US invasion to justify the party's harsh demands on the population. Periodic "proof" that the threat is real is essential if the war psychosis is to be sustained for exploitation by the regime.

* * * *

The South Korean Government appears anxious not to get too far ahead of the US position on the shutdown. In a relatively moderate statement, the government yesterday condemned the "outrageous, illegal, barbaric" North Korean action and called on the "US and the free world...to take prompt and effective countermeasures to prevent once and for all the Northern puppets from playing with fire and provoking war." The statement avoided any demand for immediate military retaliation and asserted only that North Korea's leaders "should receive due punishment for the crime they committed." The Seoul press, however, is continuing to call for immediate retaliation.

* * * *

Japanese Prime Minister Sato publicly censured Pyongyang in the Diet yesterday, stating that the North Korean action should be "internationally condemned." He noted that "all countries" engage in

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reconnaissance flights for the purpose of security, and he stipulated that such operations from Japanese bases did not require prior consultations under the security treaty. Sato, however, has expressed what is clearly the Japanese public's hope that the US will take a cautious attitude and that the incident will not develop into any further conflict. This hope has also been reflected in commentary by Foreign Minister Aichi, Japanese defense officials, and the news media. Sato also implied a concern that US retaliation might affect the progress of negotiations on the return of Okinawa to Japanese administration.



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GUSTAV HUSAK
New Party First Secretary

CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY
as of 17 April 1969

First Secretary

Husak, Gustav (M)

Members of the Presidium

Cernik, Oldrich (M)
Erban, Evzen (M)
Piller, Jan (C)
Polacek, Karel (L)
Strougal, Lubomir (C)
Svoboda, Ludvik (M)

Bilak, Vasil (C)
Colotka, Peter (M)
Dubcek, Alexander (M)
Husak, Gustav (M)
Sadovsky, Stefan (M)

Both Czech & Slovak leaders shown;
Slovaks in italics

M-Moderate
L-Liberal
C-Conservative

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Czechoslovakia: The Dubcek experiment to fuse socialism with democracy is over.

The "realism" of new party first secretary Gustav Husak replaces the idealism of Alexander Dubcek. To most Czechoslovaks, the change means succumbing to Soviet pressures with a new leadership responsive to Moscow's demands. There has been no reaction from Moscow yet, but the Soviets probably are pleased.

The central committee reduced the size of the party presidium from 23 to 11 members, in the process removing from power 11 of Dubcek's moderate and liberal supporters.

The new leadership is dominated by "realists," most of whom, like Husak, believe that the only feasible course is cooperation with Moscow. Dubcek was named to the new presidium, but the outspoken Josef Smrkovsky was dropped. The shifts probably presage similar changes in the government leadership. Future domestic policies will probably reflect Soviet desires for "normalization," that is, strict party control over all aspects of life.

Husak, the 55-year-old Slovak party boss, has a reputation as a pragmatic authoritarian and so fierce a Slovak nationalist that he spent the years 1954-60 in jail. He advocates closely controlled reform. In his maiden speech, Husak said that his administration would not abandon the reforms begun in 1968, but that their continuation was absolutely dependent on an end to anti-Soviet dissidence. He intends to review reform programs, and warned that under his leadership liberty would not be "without limits."

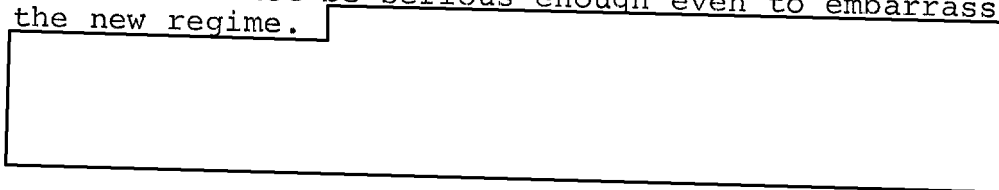
Husak faces an uphill task. He must try to convince the people that the changes are for the

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best. In order to be effective, he must overcome the distrust of the Czechs, many of whom despise his Slovak nationalism as well as his attacks on the liberal mass media. President Svoboda tried to smooth the way for Husak by giving him his strong personal endorsement.

Prague was quiet last night. The airport was closed and Czechoslovak Army convoys were reported to be moving into the city. Only a trickle of people passed through Wenceslaus Square after police chased away a band of 200 derisive young people. The general public may well turn sadly and fearfully away from politics following the ouster of Smrkovsky and the demotion of Dubcek--the champions of their hopes.

Young workers and students are likely to be less tractable. They are aroused and their reactions cannot be safely predicted. Police intimidation and the apparent futility of continuing further resistance, however, may mean that their opposition will not be serious enough even to embarrass the new regime.



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Australia-Malaysia-Philippines: Philippine misgivings over Australia's gift of ten Sabre jets to Malaysia could further damage prospects for Southeast Asian regional cooperation.

The Philippines, notified on 16 April of the gift by the Australian Government, has reacted calmly so far. Foreign Secretary Romulo told the US Embassy, however, that the Philippines could only view the gift as further evidence of Australian support for Malaysia in the Sabah dispute. The press in Manila has reported only factually but could easily become critical, forcing the Philippine Government into a jingoistic position.

Such a turn would reverse tentative steps toward a revival of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which has been in near suspension over the past year as a result of Philippine-Malaysian tensions over Sabah. Partly at Indonesian urging, Malaysia recently relaxed its demand for a prior guarantee from the Philippines that it would not question Malaysian sovereignty over Sabah at ASEAN political meetings. Kuala Lumpur, however, holds to its determination to walk out if the Philippines should raise the matter.

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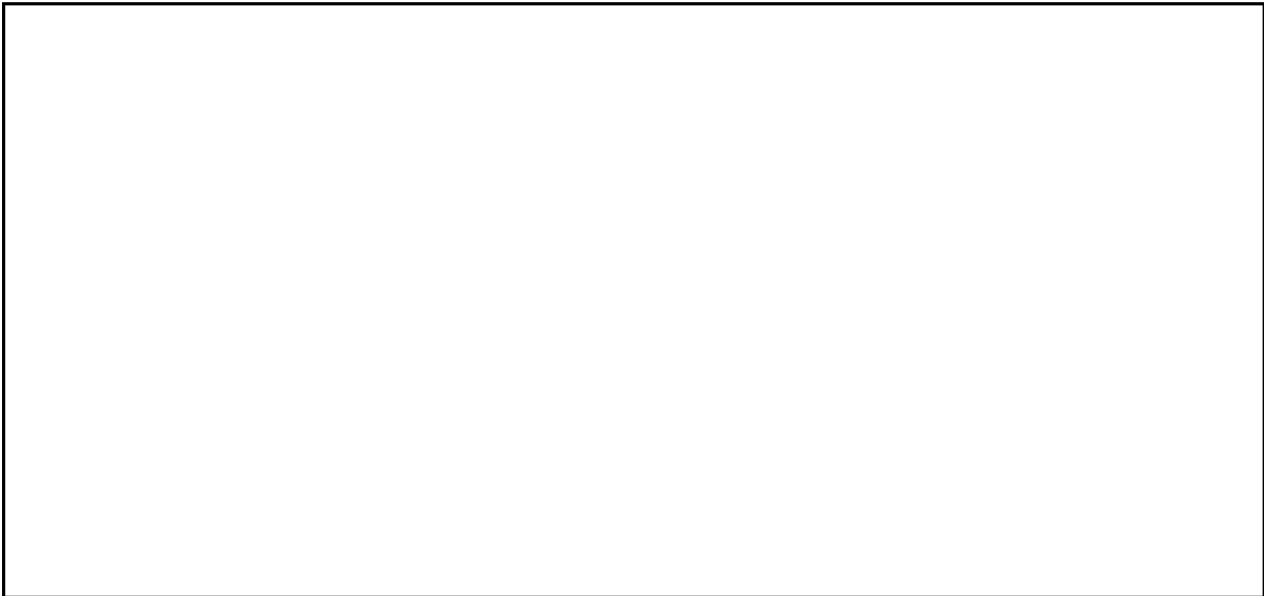
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Cuba: The high-level Cuban delegate at the meeting in Lima of the UN Economic Commission on Latin America has reiterated Havana's standard list of grievances against the US. In a lengthy speech, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez blamed underdevelopment in Latin America on US "strangulation" and compared Peru's expropriation of International Petroleum Company holdings with Fidel Castro's early moves "to win independence from the imperialist US." He also said that development can be achieved only "through revolutionary changes." Rodriguez' speech may be an indication that Cuba is trying to break out of its isolation in Latin America by cautiously associating itself with the Peruvian regime, while at the same time not changing its basic attitude toward relations with the US.

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Nigeria: The Biafrans still hold Umuahia, but the civilian administration has apparently left the town, and the Red Cross has moved its headquarters to a town about 14 miles from Biafra's one operating airstrip. Colonel Ojukwu was still in Umuahia on 16 April, but unless federal forces are driven back soon, he will probably leave. The large-scale civilian exodus from Umuahia, where many Ibo tribesmen had sought refuge during previous federal advances, will further complicate Biafra's already serious refugee problem.

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Turkey: Student unrest in Ankara and Istanbul appears to be quieting, at least on the surface, but protest activity has developed in the important southern port city of Izmir. There has been no new violence, however, and the grievances of the Izmir students concern educational rather than political issues. In Istanbul the search of school buildings continues for concealed weapons and explosives; some were found earlier in Ankara. The situation at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara remains quiet, but gendarmerie units probably will remain as a precautionary measure until the end of the month.

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Indonesia: The act of self-determination in West Irian is proceeding smoothly under Indonesia's direction. The initial phase--endorsement by West Irian's eight subprovincial assemblies of Djakarta's plan for consultation and consensus--has been completed. District committees will now select members for enlarged councils that will consult with the Indonesian Government and ultimately affirm West Irian's desire to unite formally with Indonesia. Djakarta hopes the entire process can be completed by 17 August, Indonesia's Independence Day. Armed dissidence appears to have ceased and local leaders seem to realize that there is no alternative to union with Indonesia.

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES

The United States Intelligence Board on 17 April 1969 approved the following national intelligence estimates:

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|---------------|---|------|
| SNIE 40/50-69 | Prospects for Regional Security Arrangements in East Asia over the Next Five Years [redacted] | 25X1 |
| NIE 24-69 | The Center-Left Experiment in Italy: Accomplishments, Shortcomings, and Prospects [redacted] | 25X1 |

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