

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 17 October 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
17 OCTOBER 1967

1. South Vietnam

The Communist terror campaign against Saigon's Chinese community continues. Seven attempts--five of them successful--have been made to assassinate men of Chinese ancestry since the 19 September bombing of the Chinese Nationalist Embassy. We suspect the campaign may be designed to impress Chinese businessmen with the advisability of resuming--or continuing--payment of "protection money" to the Viet Cong.

2. Soviet Union

The Soviets are having major maintenance problems with the icebreaker Lenin, their only nuclear-powered surface ship.

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3. Laos

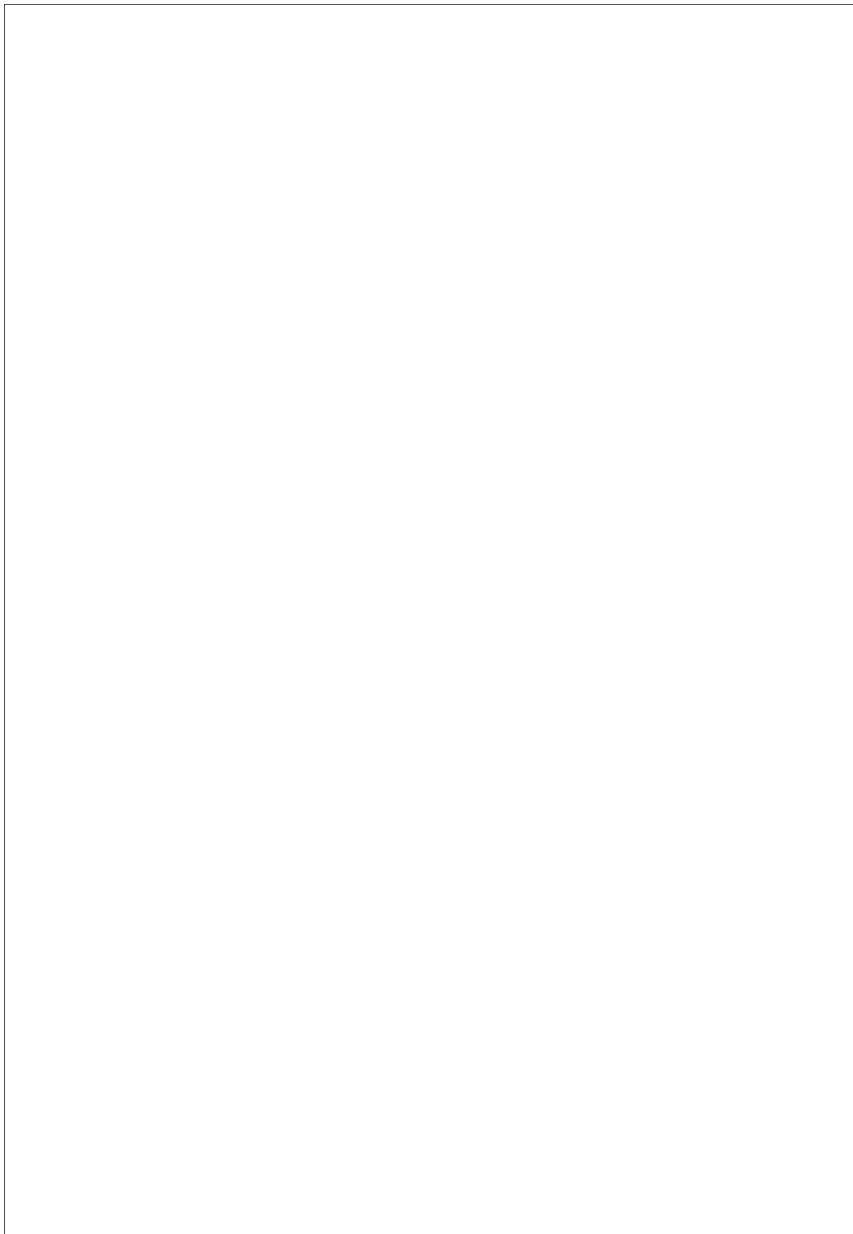
The Communists are stepping up their harassment of government positions in the north. This action has upset plans for a government offensive in the area, but is not likely to get beyond the "little war" stage. The government, determined to hold, has sent in reinforcements, and we doubt that the Communists are willing to pay the price of a direct assault.

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4. Jordan -
Soviet Union

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5. India

The Indians [redacted] are buying new SU-7 fighter-bombers from the Soviets. [redacted]

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[redacted] The Indians claim they need these supersonic jets to counter Pakistan's purchases of French fighter-bombers and to replace older Indian aircraft.

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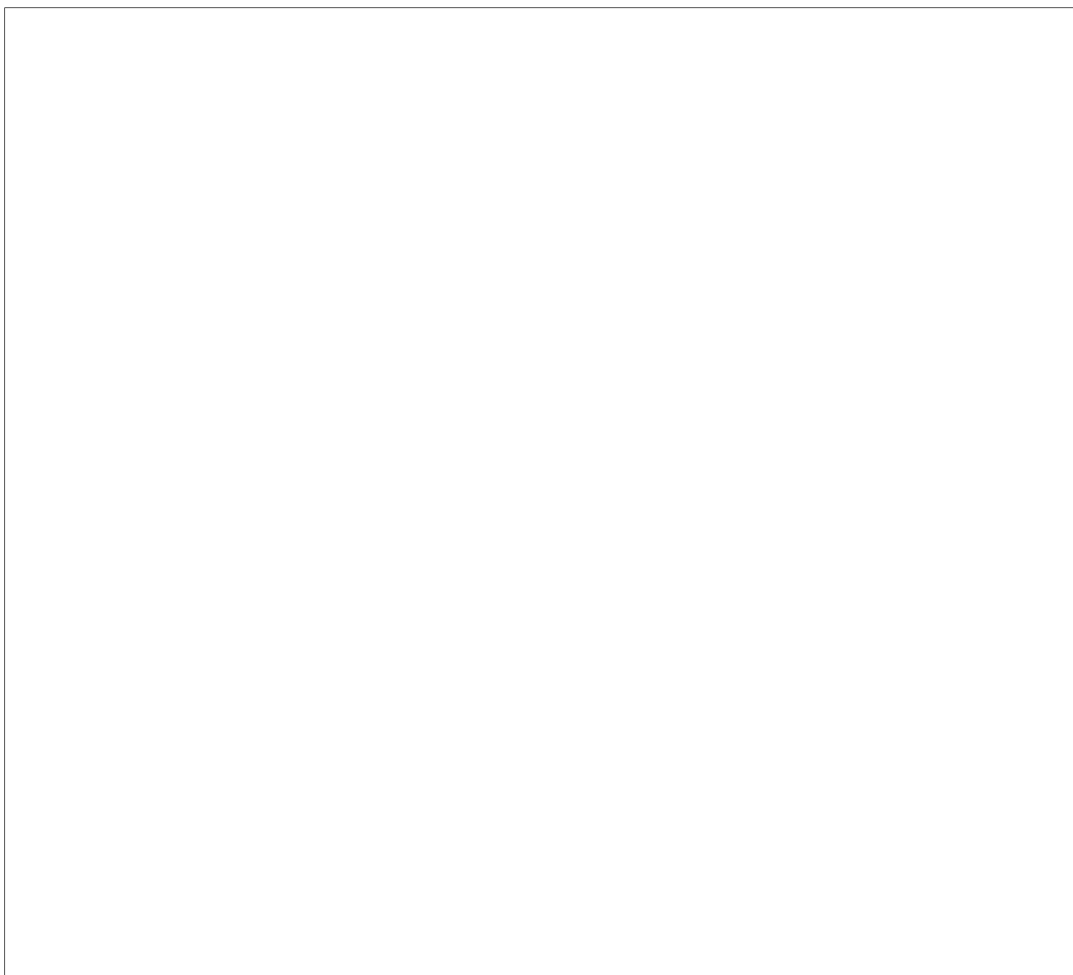
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SPECIAL DAILY REPORT ON NORTH VIETNAM

FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

17 October 1967

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Chinese Military Delegation May be in Hanoi:

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No high-level Chinese military officer is known to have visited Hanoi since 1961, except for Yang Te-chih, the commander of the Tsinan Military Region, who headed the Chinese National Day delegation which visited Hanoi from 27 September to 10 October. Yang's visit was publicized and the Chinese did not mention his military status. It is likely, however, that other Chinese military delegations have made unpublicized visits to Hanoi.

If a Chinese military delegation did arrive, it would probably be reviewing Peking's military assistance programs and inspecting the Chinese logistic and antiaircraft units now in the country.

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North Vietnam's Industrial Problems: An August article in a North Vietnamese journal seems to reflect the troubles encountered in keeping up some semblance of production in key industries. The

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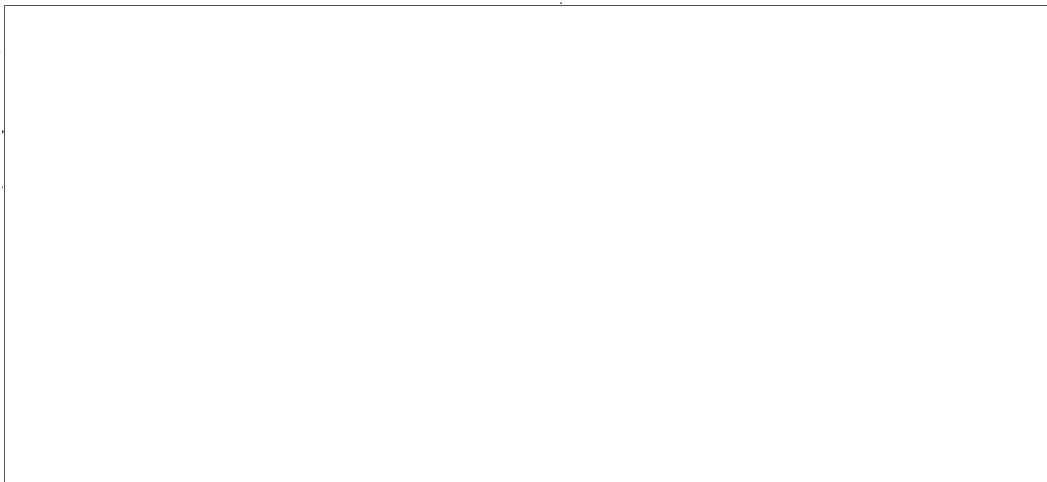


article reported that a conference called by the Ministry of Heavy Industries had stressed the need to achieve "as best we can" the plan for producing equipment for agriculture, transportation, and communications and to make a greater contribution to the development of local industries. These, evidently, are the priority areas in Hanoi's wartime industrial planning.

The article went on with some propaganda claims that "heavy" industrial output had risen considerably since 1964. This is pure fantasy. What "heavy" industries there are have either been shut down or cut back and very little new capital investment is being put into them.

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Propaganda on Haiphong Bombing: Hanoi propaganda statements on the recent raids on targets in the Haiphong area have drawn a picture of great physical destruction, especially to civilian installations. An international broadcast in English on 13 October accused the US of "monstrous crimes" and claimed that all hamlets near the city have been napalmed, and that schools, clinics, and hospitals have been damaged or destroyed. The broadcast also asserted, however, that despite the "barbaric US raids," adequate measures for evacuation had kept civilian deaths down. The broadcast ended on a confident note by claiming that even though the city

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had become the "Pentagon's main target" and that one-third of the population had been evacuated, life continues to go on in a normal fashion in the port city.

II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi Claims "President in Desperation" Over Vietnam: In a 13 October English language broadcast to American servicemen in South Vietnam, Hanoi asserted that President Johnson is "painfully anxious" about the "impasse" of the war and that US criticism of his Vietnam policy is growing stronger. The broadcast claimed that the President has to deliver speech after speech on Vietnam "to ward off further woes" and that by doing so, he hopes to stay in the White House for another term. According to Hanoi, President Johnson hopes to avoid becoming the first president to lose a war. Hanoi stated that the President cannot hide the truth and that American newsmen in South Vietnam have used the word stalemate to describe the war situation.

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Hanoi Reports on Appeals to US Antiwar Groups:
A 16 October Hanoi broadcast describes two appeals by Vietnamese Communist groups to sympathizers in the US calling for stepped-up efforts against the war. One appeal by the newly formed "South Vietnam People's Committee for Solidarity with the American People," called the US antiwar movement "a coordinated action of the two peoples (US and Vietnamese) against their common enemy." Hanoi also stated that a North Vietnamese women's leader sent a letter to American women hailing their "courageous and sustained" struggle against the war. The letter expressed confidence that American women would increase their efforts and compel the US Government to accept Communist conditions for peace in Vietnam.

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Martin Luther King Asked to Participate in Peace Efforts: A number of Nobel Peace Prize winners, who announced several weeks ago that they were seeking talks with all parties to the war

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Hanoi Cites US Paper on Increased Expenditures for Vietnam: A 12 October Hanoi broadcast to South Vietnam cites a recent New York Post article reporting that the war is draining US economic strength. The broadcast quotes the Post as stating that the war has caused a substantial decrease in US financial

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and moral strength and that no sources of supply are inexhaustible. The broadcast also notes that Arthur Schlesinger recently said that the US has spent \$90 billion on the Vietnam war during the last 32 months of "escalation."

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Hanoi on US Burnings: Hanoi's international broadcasting service on 14 October routinely noted the suicide of Miss Hiroko Hayasuki, a Japanese-American woman who burned herself to death in San Diego last Thursday. So far we have not received any North Vietnamese commentary on the two other burnings which occurred on Sunday. Hanoi's treatment of the woman's death was relatively restrained in contrast to its extensive propaganda coverage of earlier burnings in the US. The broadcast said Miss Hayasuki was the sixth American citizen to have used suicide by fire as a "protest against Johnson's unjust, illegal, and immoral war in Vietnam."

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