



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 16 March 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
16 MARCH 1968

1. South Vietnam



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2. Czechoslovakia

Two of Novotny's staunchest supporters--the secret police chief and the prosecutor general--were ousted yesterday. The premier of Slovakia and a number of other big guns have also resigned. The defense minister could go at any time. In sum, the liberals are well on their way toward sweeping the conservatives out.

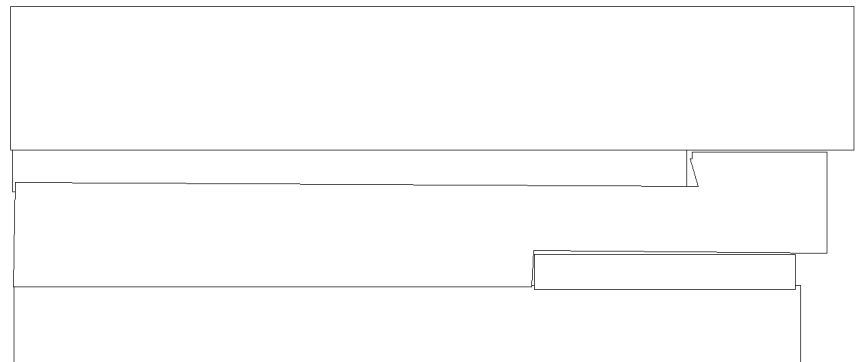


[Redacted] Lt. Gen. Janko, who committed suicide in Prague on Thursday, was deeply involved in marshaling military support for Novotny. [Redacted] Janko's suicide to mounting political pressures which were put on him by the liberals after Novotny was ousted.

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3. Soviet Union



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4. Poland

There were more violent student-police clashes in Poznan yesterday, and students in Warsaw and Krakow have gone on strike. Active support from other segments of the population is not materializing, however. At least some of the workers and other elements are sympathetic to the students but are afraid to act, knowing that continuing unrest will only benefit the party hard-liners.

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5. Uruguay

A leftist weekly in Montevideo this week published a letter signed by two national leaders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee asking support for H. Rap Brown and the Negro liberation movement. The letter asks for support which demonstrates the "international links" of the "struggle against racism, capitalism and imperialism."

The letter says, "no doubt that Brown will be sentenced to five to ten years. This should be protested along with the killing at Orangeburg. The type of protest is up to you; we suggest as objectives the US Embassy, USIS, and American installations and businesses."

"With cooperation of the people of the world, this enemy of humanity will be destroyed."

6. Guatemala

Terrorism in Guatemala City is expected to rise in coming weeks.

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7. Colombia

More violence is expected here too. In Bogota and other major cities, terrorist bombings and harassing activities are planned in hopes of disrupting the congressional elections tomorrow. Chances for this are not good.

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8. Philippines

The Philippine civic action group (Philcag) in South Vietnam has become embroiled in a maneuver by opponents of President Marcos. A coalition of opposition senators, in attacking the pro-Marcos leadership in the senate, has proposed that the Philcag engineering unit be replaced by a medical outfit.

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9. Nigeria

The current fighting is the heaviest of the war

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Swedish Red Cross Official to North Vietnam:
The secretary general of the Swedish Red Cross, Olaf Stroh, will visit North Vietnam soon to discuss possibilities for Swedish aid to the civilian population there and in Viet Cong - controlled areas in South Vietnam. Stroh's trip, if carried off, would mark the first visit of a Western Red Cross official to Hanoi since the bombing of the North began.

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

More from Hanoi on US Domestic Criticism: Hanoi is continuing to give unusually detailed propaganda treatment to current domestic criticism of US policy

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in Vietnam. The most recent statements contend that there is a growing body of popular opinion spear-headed by such "influential" senators as Morse, Fulbright, McCarthy, and Robert Kennedy opposing the war--particularly the commitment of more men and material.

One broadcast described the "fierce interrogation" Secretary Rusk was subjected to as he attempted to "defend US policy" at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings. It quoted statements by members of the committee rejecting Rusk's defense of the US position. Another broadcast ridiculed President Johnson's plea on 12 March for perseverance in the war and pointed out that many senators as well as former members of the administration were now in opposition to US policy. An editorial in the New York Times questioning the right of the administration to follow the path of escalation in a war which is not supported by the people formed a key portion of this broadcast.

Hanoi's army paper, in an article broadcast on 14 March, offered the most detailed comment to date on the issue of sending more troops to Vietnam. It reported much of the speculation in the US press about the number of troops to be sent and the measures the US would take in order to obtain them. The paper also claimed that the mere fact that the US felt compelled to send more troops to the war was an admission its policy had failed. It also spoke of the deep division in the US Government created by the troop issue and warned that even 200,000 more troops for Vietnam would not save the US position, but merely provide additional targets for Communist forces which will ultimately triumph.

Despite the fulsome treatment given these matters, Hanoi has yet to comment on the outcome of the primary election in New Hampshire.

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US Deserter's Statement Reported: The Viet Cong radio Thursday broadcast what it claimed was a statement by a Negro noncommissioned officer of the First

Infantry Division who it said deserted early last month. The statement criticized US policy in Vietnam and appealed to US servicemen to "avoid a useless death by refraining from participating in any military operation, by refusing to go into battle, by demanding to be sent back to the US."

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