



*The President's Daily Brief*

~~Top Secret~~ 4 April 1968



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PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF  
4 APRIL 1968

LATE ITEM

Vietnam

A Moscow domestic broadcast early today carries the first public Soviet reaction to Hanoi's official statement of yesterday. It said the significance of Hanoi's step, "taken with positive intentions for peace, is difficult to overestimate." Hanoi's move, the statement goes on, "creates real prerequisites for the liquidation of tension in Southeast Asia." Now it is up to the US to respond, Moscow said.

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DAILY BRIEF  
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1. Vietnam

Hanoi has yet to come out with any significant elaboration of its official statement of yesterday. A long editorial in today's party daily covers the same ground in more tortuous detail. The North Vietnamese press attaché in Laos, however, has dropped word that an "important policy statement" would be broadcast on Hanoi radio at 8:00 this morning, Washington time.

Ambassador Sullivan has learned indirectly that Charles Collingwood, now in Hanoi, expects North Vietnam to release additional captured US pilots in the near future.

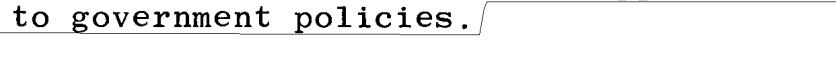
The Soviets have not yet commented on yesterday's statement by Hanoi. They have been even more cautious than usual these past days to avoid publicly getting out in front of Hanoi on the issues raised in President Johnson's 31 March speech.



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2. East Germany

Student restlessness is beginning to crop up, despite the regime's strenuous efforts to keep the country insulated from recent events in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Student rebels have staged small demonstrations in Magdeburg, and students in East Berlin have openly proclaimed their opposition to government policies.

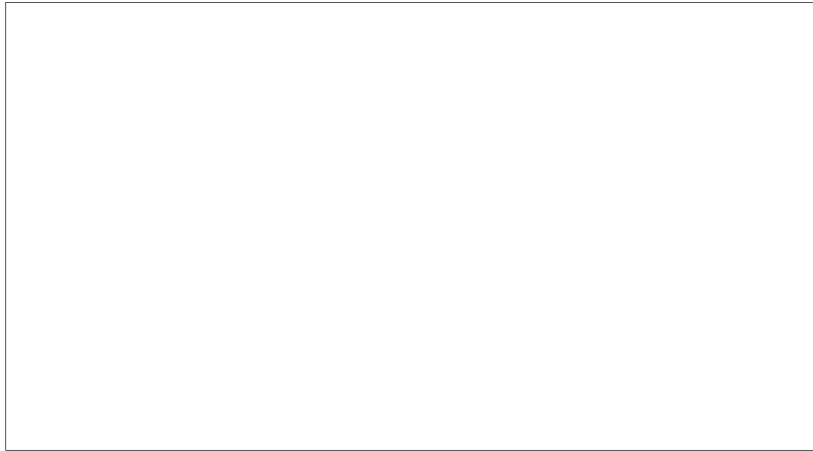


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3. Sino-Soviet Relations



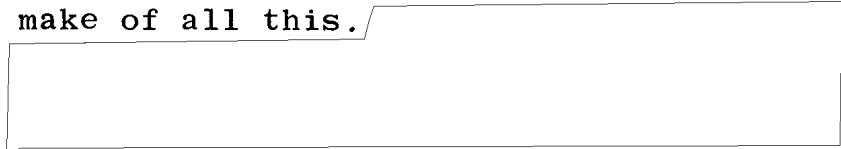
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4. Israel

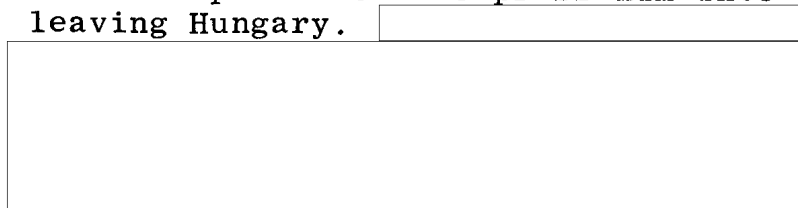
The Israeli military has been unusually active these past two days, and tanks have been seen moving north from Jerusalem. Official statements coming out of Tel Aviv are as belligerent as ever. We are not sure what to make of all this.



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5. Hungary

For the first time, the Vatican newspaper has publicly criticized Cardinal Mindszenty for obstinately remaining in the US Embassy. This looks like an open effort to press him into leaving Hungary.



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6. Poland

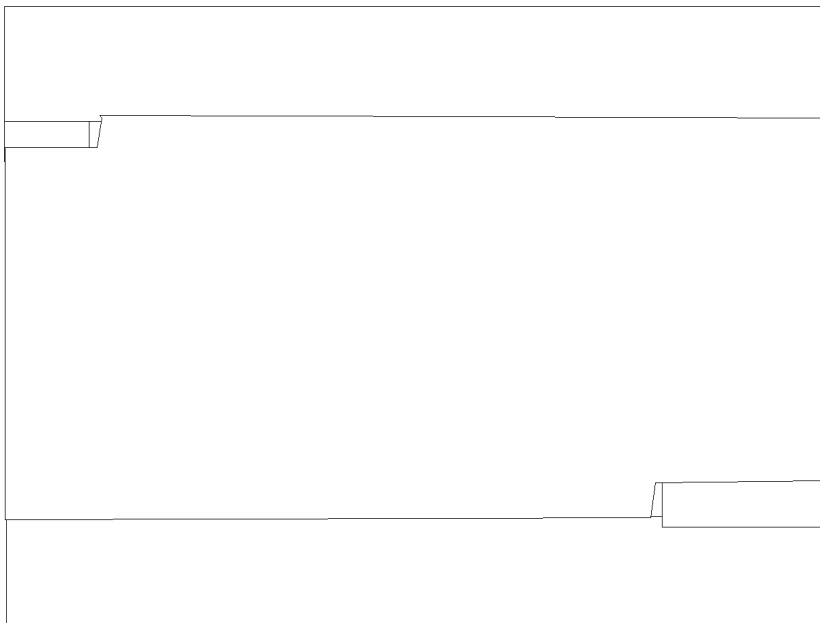
The struggle inside the party is spreading and becoming more vicious. The military are now involved; some generals have been disciplined for "ideological subversion." This lends support to rumors that some army commanders were opposed to the harsh tactics used against the rebellious students last month.

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For the first time, Edward Gierek has been fingered [redacted] [redacted] as the head of a group in the leadership "dedicated to taking over from Gomulka's old guard." This powerful Politburo member, who has long been regarded as the most likely eventual successor to Gomulka, appears to have allied himself with some of the hardliners.

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7. Panama



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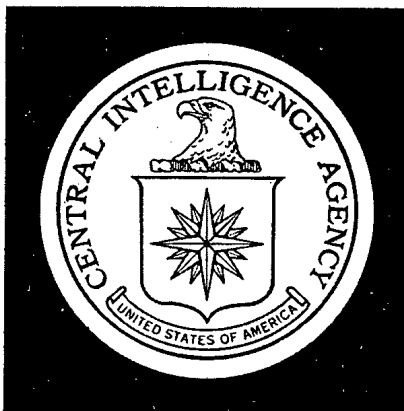
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*FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY*

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
  
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S  
Political Attitudes



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4 April 1968

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

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



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Released Women Prisoners: In an attempt to wring additional propaganda mileage out of the recent release of two American women by the Viet Cong, Hanoi broadcast yesterday what it claimed were statements by the women critical of US policy in Vietnam. According to the Hanoi statement, the women pointed out that US policy in Vietnam "is wrong" and urged the US Government to "end the bombing immediately and withdraw US troops as soon as possible." The women were also quoted as comparing the war to the American Revolution and as pledging themselves to work for peace once back in the US.

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Mid-East and African Delegation to Hanoi:  
Hanoi's continuing efforts to obtain greater support in Africa and the Middle East will include playing host to a delegation from the Cairo based Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization later this month.

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Food Distribution: Hanoi has altered the distribution system in agricultural cooperatives in an effort to divide food more evenly and perhaps to reduce the flow of food into the rural free market. According to North Vietnamese magazine articles, all of the cooperatives were ordered recently to divert most of the extra rations usually paid as incentives to efficient farmers to those members of cooperatives who are unable to feed themselves without government aid. Efficient workers can still get "a little more food" and a few extra privileges, but only after government quotas and minimum rations for everyone are satisfied.

The reduction of incentives will almost certainly hamper agricultural efficiency and production, but the North Vietnamese are apparently more concerned about distribution problems in rural areas and in controlling inflationary pressures in the free market than they are about the possibilities of losing some production.

North Vietnam has experienced a succession of poor rice crops since the spring of 1966, but ration levels--at least in the cities--have been held up by food imports. Last year imports of grain and grain products reached record proportions--about 367,000 tons or 8 percent of the usual 4.5 million-ton rice crop.

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

There is nothing of significance to report.

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