



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 20 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
20 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

Signs are increasing that the Communists are using the current military lull to prepare for a new round of offensive actions. One [redacted] source says that the aim of a planned new "general offensive against the towns and cities" will be to enhance the Communist bargaining position during expected peace talks. Another forecasts a "second general attack" if US - North Vietnamese talks are "not successful."

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2. South Korea

Leading Seoul newspapers are enthusiastically hailing the Honolulu communiqué as a reaffirmation of US commitments in Asia.

3. Soviet Union

Kosygin will stop briefly in India tomorrow on his way home from his three-day visit to Pakistan. The surprise Indian announcement this morning says only that the Soviet leader will discuss the Vietnam situation with Mrs. Gandhi. This looks like a move to line up New Delhi behind Moscow's campaign to pressure the US into prompt talks with Hanoi.

Kosygin will doubtless also want to reassure Mrs. Gandhi that his foray into Pakistan in no way diminishes Soviet support for India.

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4. West Germany

The authorities expect a new round of student demonstrations this weekend in West Berlin and perhaps in various West German cities. They are sticking to their firm stand and are confident that local police forces will be able to cope.

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5. Czechoslovakia

Prague is now publicly airing its complaints about the ineffectiveness of Eastern Europe's Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. In a published interview on Wednesday, the foreign trade minister bluntly declared that CEMA's results have been minimal and that he is not optimistic about its future. He went on to plug for more independence for Czechoslovakia in international economic relations and greater participation in the "world economy."

Most other members are unhappy with CEMA, though they continue to stay in line with Moscow's standard position that Communist economic relationships should develop within the CEMA framework.

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6. Common Market

The Dutch, concerned about the continuing impasse over British membership in the Community, are thinking about proposing a bilateral treaty with Britain. The objective would be to stimulate the other members, particularly the Italians, to act against the hammerlock which the French have on the Community's future development.

The Dutch risk being accused of setting the stage for a new crisis in the Community, but they feel strongly that prolongation of the present stalemate is really the greatest danger facing European unity.

7. Haiti

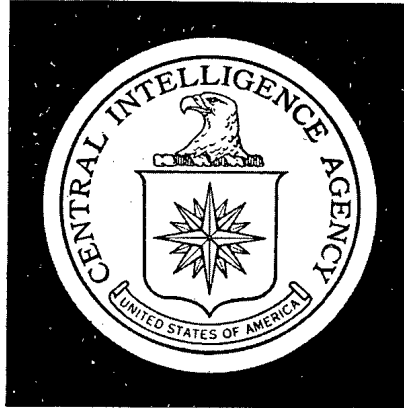
The streets of the capital have been almost deserted at night for the past week. The reason: rumors that roving gangs are picking up unwary pedestrians

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

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

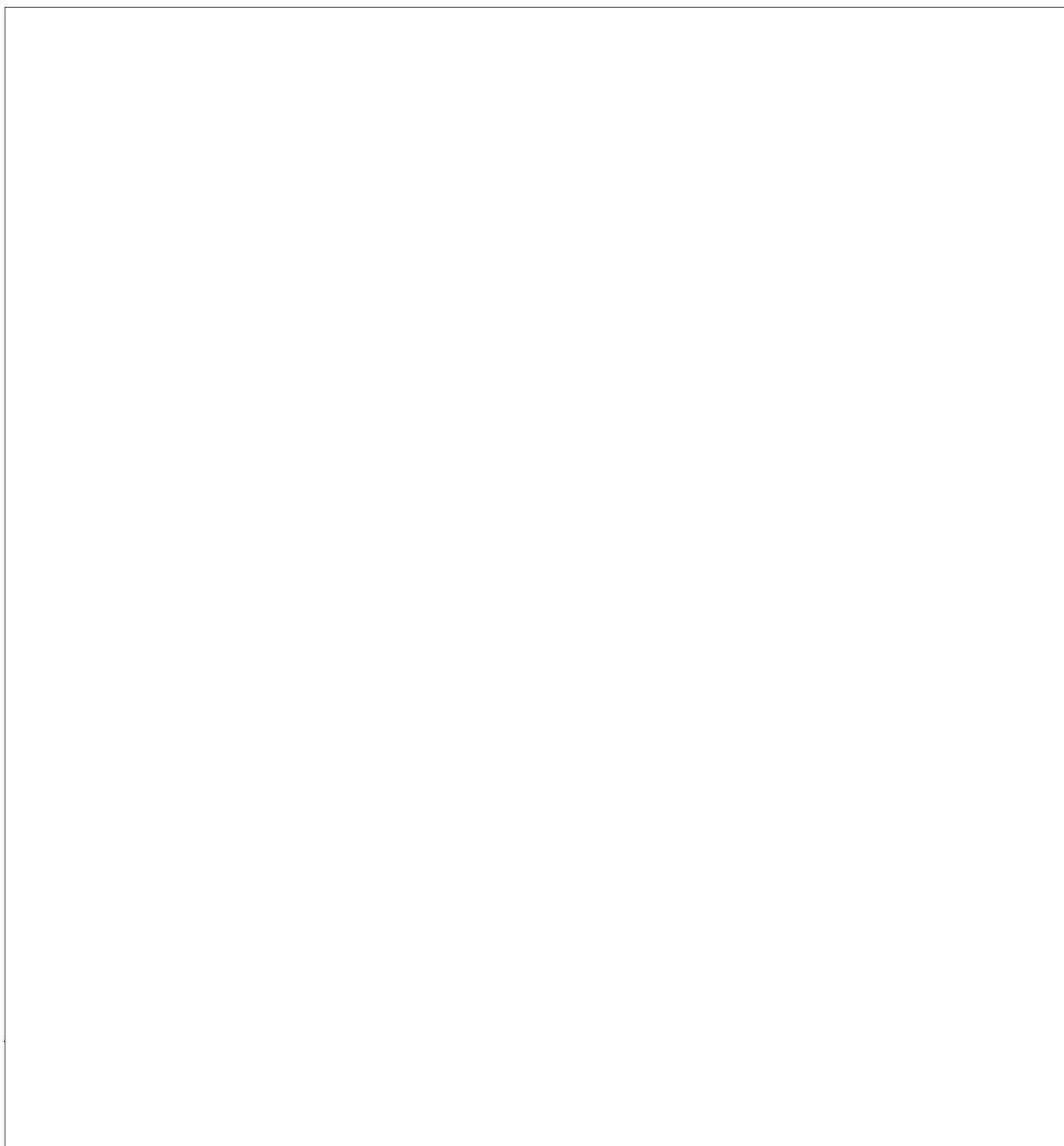
Hanoi Reaction to Rusk Offer: Hanoi promptly rejected the US offer of ten new sites for preliminary talks. The authoritative Foreign Ministry statement yesterday repeated the demand that the US choose Phnom Penh or Warsaw. In addition, the statement charged that the US had added new conditions to its terms for preliminary contacts. Hanoi took particular exception to an alleged US stipulation that the site of the initial talks be one that permitted attendance by representatives from Saigon. The North Vietnamese asserted that originally only the US and North Vietnam had to have representation in the city selected. Hanoi insisted that the US stop delaying on the issue of a site. It repeated an earlier implied threat to forgo the proposed contacts. All Hanoi commentary on 19 April focused on this issue.

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The North Vietnamese Line Abroad: North Vietnamese representatives abroad also continue to indicate that Hanoi is sticking on Warsaw or Phnom Penh as a site for preliminary talks.

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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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