



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 25 April 1968



DAILY BRIEF
25 APRIL 1968

1. North Vietnam

Recent aerial photography shows an unusual type of surface-to-air missile radar near Hanoi. Satellite photography of China confirms that this particular radar is produced by the Chinese. [REDACTED]

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2. Communist China

Recent satellite photography of China's ICBM launch complex at Shuang-Cheng-Tzu shows that a major modification program is under way there. A new control bunker and launch pad are apparently being built. Also, the existing launch pad is being modified and will not be usable for several months. [REDACTED]

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3. Soviet Union

[REDACTED] last night after a standdown of almost six months.

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4. Sino-Soviet Relations

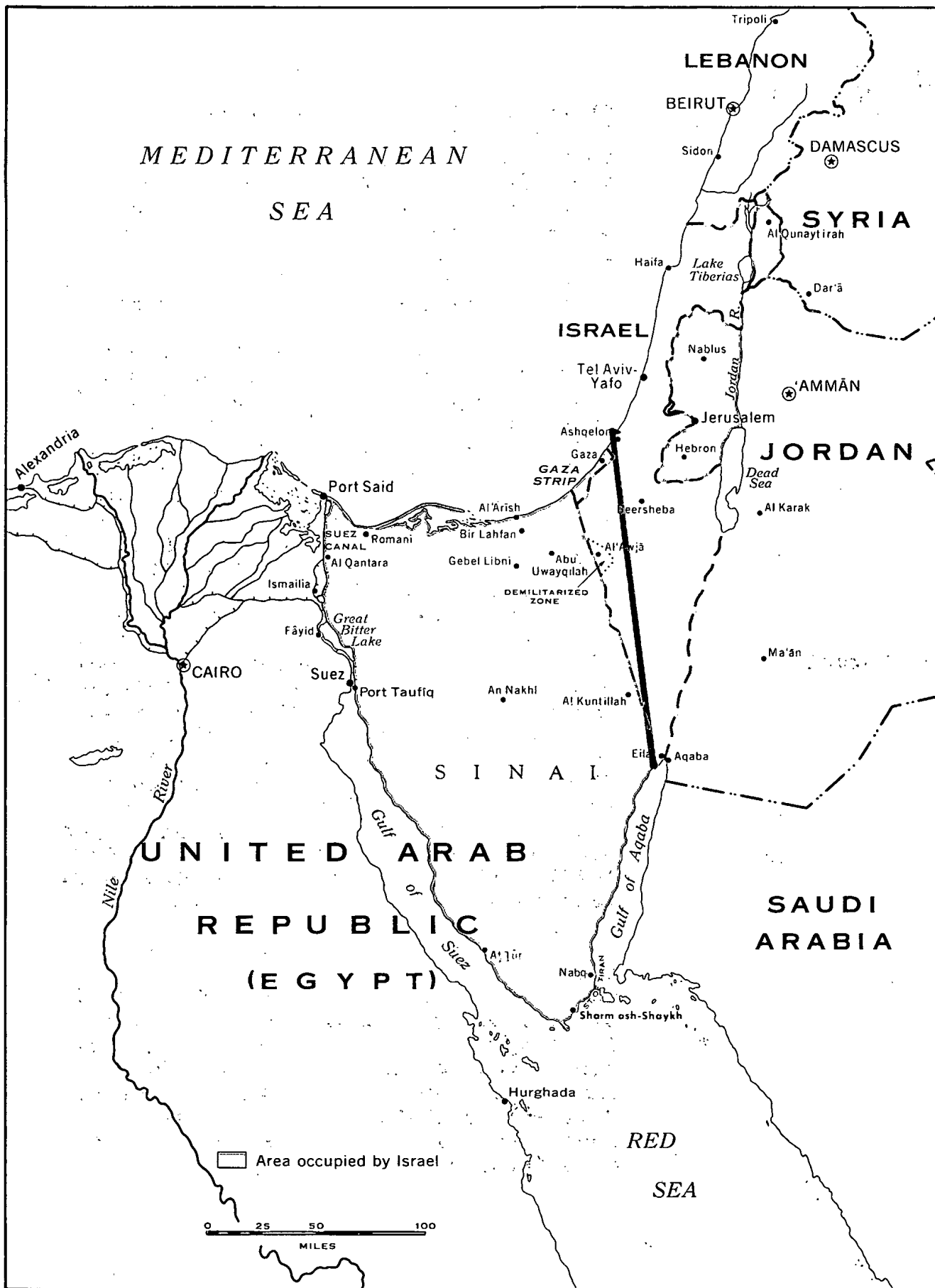
Timed to appear with the opening of the preparatory meeting in Budapest to plan a world Communist conference, the Russians have come out in their party journal Kommunist with a harsh polemic against the Chinese. The Soviet line here is that the very existence of Communism in China is in jeopardy, that this is a problem for all Communists, and that it should be on the agenda of the Communist summit meeting in November.

The article is intended to have a special meaning for Eastern Europe. For the Czechs, in particular, Moscow is saying that nationalism (the non-Russian variety) is a perversion and this can lead to the destruction of Communism. The message for Dubcek and company is: this far, but no farther.

In general, however, there is a considerable lack of realism in the piece-- a sense of longing for the iron discipline of the Stalinist era and the return of "proletarian internationalism." The Soviets know full well that it is too late for this, but they want to start the Budapest meeting in the old orthodox style.

5. Cambodia

Sihanouk, in a special address to the nation on Monday, accused the Communists of fomenting the tribal rebellion in northeast Cambodia. He claimed to have considerable "evidence" of Pathet Lao and Vietnamese Communist presence among the tribal dissidents and said that a number of Communist agents have been captured. Sihanouk may be exaggerating somewhat about the threat in the northeast, but he has long considered this area a prime target for Vietnamese expansionism.



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6. Laos

We have reports that the Communists may be planning a coordinated terrorist campaign against major Lao towns in the near future. It is possible that these reports have been generated by the Communists to play on the jittery nerves of the Lao leadership. Similar rumors of a widespread offensive to celebrate the Laotian New Year two weeks ago did not materialize.

The Communists, however, almost certainly have the capability to conduct such raids at a time and place of their own choosing. Furthermore, there has been an increase in Pathet Lao terrorism this year. Over the past week, for example, they have destroyed the quarters of US attaché and AID officials in two towns in southern Laos. There were no US casualties in either incident.

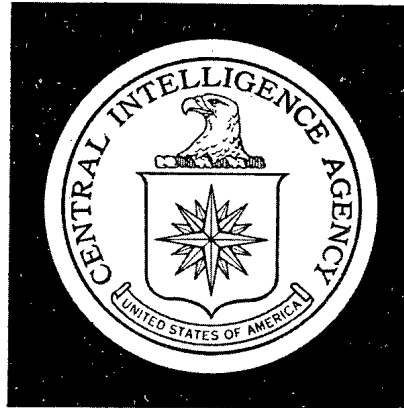
7. Israel

Israel is about set to start work on a 42-inch oil pipeline by-passing the Suez Canal and running from Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba to Ashkelon on the Mediterranean. Completion of the first stage of construction--planned for next year--will provide an annual capacity of about 20 million tons. Completion of the second stage (by about 1975) will bring capacity to 50-60 million tons a year.

Iran is the only likely source of substantial quantities of petroleum for the pipeline. This petroleum will probably go mainly to Eastern Europe. A fleet of supertankers will unload at the deep-water facilities at Eilat; smaller tankers will load at Ashkelon. This will probably be a less costly route than oil carried via the cape or even through the canal.

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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

North Vietnamese to Japan: North Vietnamese delegates have been admitted to a meeting of a Japanese leftist group for the first time in three years. The delegates will attend the 10th general session of the Japan-Vietnam Friendship Association in Kobe on 28 and 29 April.

On several occasions in the past, Hanoi delegates to similar meetings have been denied entry permits by the Japanese Government. This time, however, Tokyo said that "new developments" in the international situation would make it inappropriate to refuse entry. The three Vietnamese are not high-ranking personalities but propaganda types who will try to promote anti-Americanism and make a pitch for Japanese support of Hanoi.

Now that the ice has been broken, additional visits by North Vietnamese seeking to promote better Hanoi-Tokyo relations can be expected. The Japanese Government says that applications in the future will be considered on a "case-by-case basis."

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Low-Pressure Hanoi Propaganda: Hanoi is trying a new propaganda approach to American audiences. Radio Hanoi on 24 April broadcast the first of a series of talks to the American people by a folksy North Vietnamese lawyer named Tran Cong Tuong. Tuong identifies himself as a member of the Vietnamese Communist delegation to the 1954 Geneva conference on Vietnam. More recently he has traveled extensively to Free World propaganda forums, such as the various "war crimes trials," to drum up popular support for North Vietnam. The broadcast of 24 April was beamed in English to Havana, probably for transmission over Cuban short-wave radio facilities.

In his broadcast Tuong appeals directly to the American people to imagine themselves in the position of the North Vietnamese with foreign planes and warships coming from another continent thousands of miles away to "kill their mothers and children." The broadcast is replete with references to "justice, freedom, legitimate demands for self-defense and peace," and the technique is a sort of informal fireside-chat approach. It is obviously tailored to American audiences and designed to be more effective than Hanoi's usual propaganda tirades.

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Hanoi Takes Credit for the F-111A: Hanoi claims to have brought down the US F-111A in its southern Quang Binh Province on 21 April. A Hanoi radio broadcast of the 24th says this is the third F-111A which North Vietnamese air defenses have brought down.

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

Hanoi Quotes US Senators: A radio Hanoi transmission in English to Havana relayed some recent statements on the war by Senators Robert Kennedy, Mansfield, and McCarthy. The broadcast noted a Reuters report of a Kennedy statement in Los Angeles in which the Senator allegedly said the US should keep its promise "to go anywhere any time to negotiate peace in Vietnam." Senator Mansfield was quoted as favoring a coalition government in Saigon and a US withdrawal from Vietnam as soon as possible.

A statement by Senator McCarthy charging that Secretary Rusk was "hamstringing" attempts to start peace talks was also cited. The broadcast did not mention Senator McCarthy's assertion that the Secretary should be replaced.

In keeping with its usual practice, Hanoi made no editorial comment of its own. Nor did it make any particular point of the fact that two of the Senators it quoted were presidential candidates.

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