

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 4 July 1968



THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
4 JULY 1968

1. South Vietnam

Ky and armed forces chief Vien apparently hold an extremely gloomy view of Saigon's prospects in the event of another Communist offensive. Although they may be genuinely concerned about weaknesses in the city's defenses, their thinking may be colored by personal frustration as Ky's military associates are removed by Thieu.

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2. Guatemala

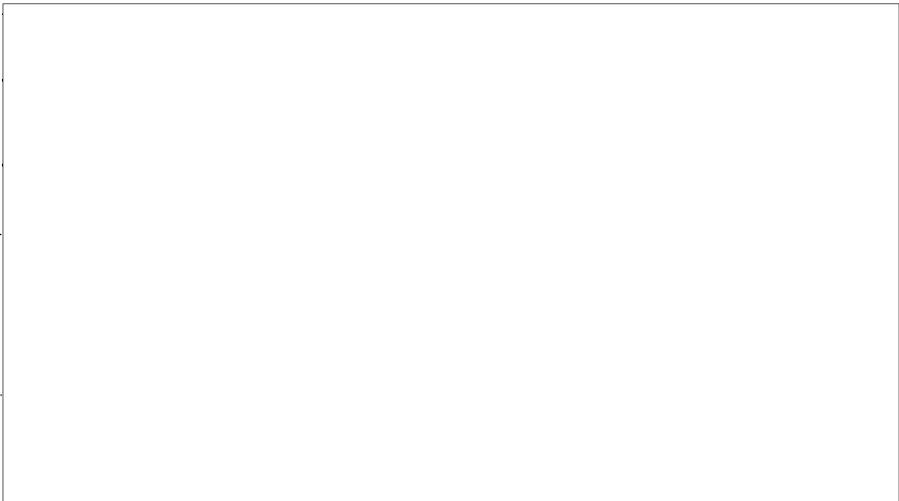
Tight security has been clamped on Guatemala City following a bold rocket attack by Communist terrorists Sunday. The Communists have been lying low for the past few days, but we know [redacted]

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[redacted] they were planning more bombings "in the immediate future." These plans were made before President Johnson's trip was announced. The terrorists, however, may try to time some action with the President's stop.

3. Chile



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4. Soviet Union

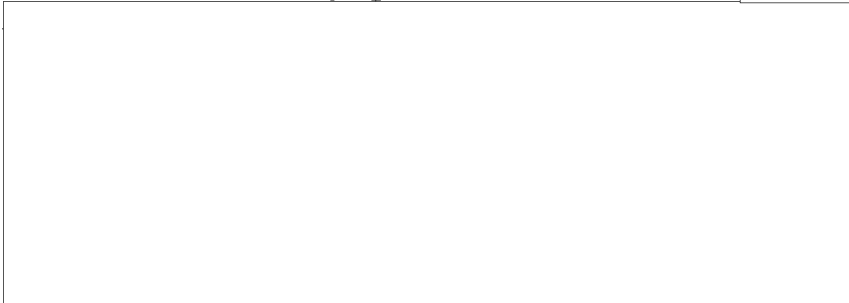
Yesterday Brezhnev made one of his most vindictive public attacks on the US in particular and on the West in general. The speech before visiting Hungarian leaders, however, was intended more to shore up fellow Communists than to herald a new shift in Soviet attitudes toward this country. What Brezhnev was saying, in effect, was that if the Communist world has troubles, the West has more.

Despite his language--the US social system "arouses contempt and revulsion"--we note that Brezhnev placed the party stamp of approval on talks with the US on limitation of strategic weapons.

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5. Soviet Union -
Pakistan

Soviet arms sales to Pakistan are in the offing. The Pakistani military delegation which went to Moscow last month apparently got a commitment.

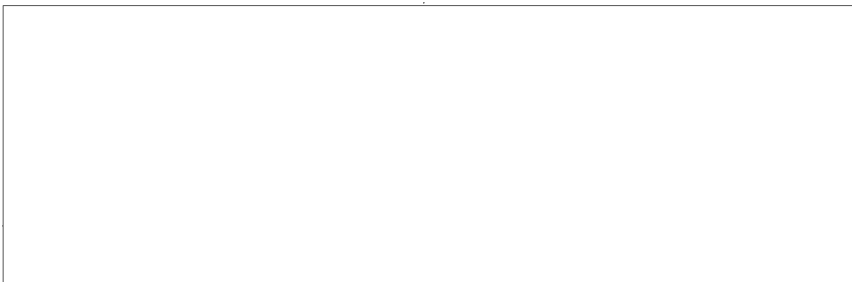


The Indians will not like this, but there is not much they can do about it as they are dependent on Soviet military aid themselves. Moscow's move is intended to cut into the US and Chinese positions as military hardware suppliers to Pakistan.

6. Panama

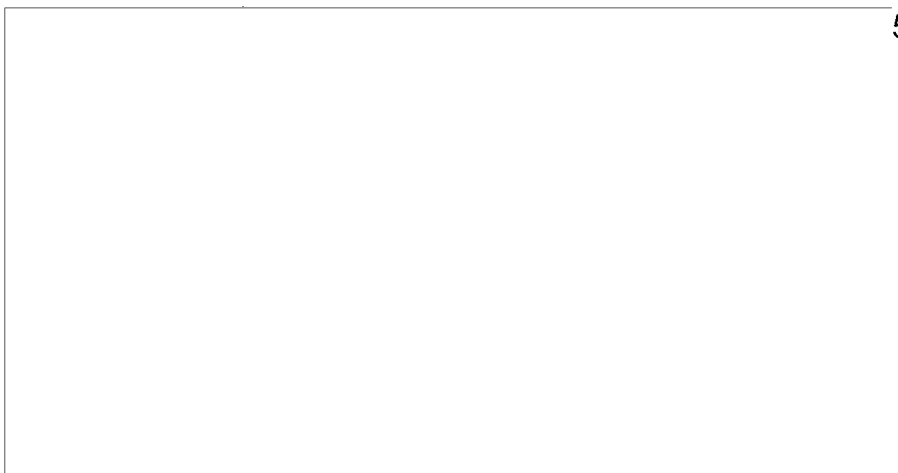
The draft canal treaties may be in trouble when Arias becomes president on 1 October. He is talking about throwing them out and starting all over with a fresh round of negotiations. Arias says the present drafts are too complicated, but what he really wants is a treaty that has his personal imprint. While Arias understands the need for close relations with the US, he also is a nationalist who will push for greater concessions to Panamanian sovereignty.

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7. Communist China

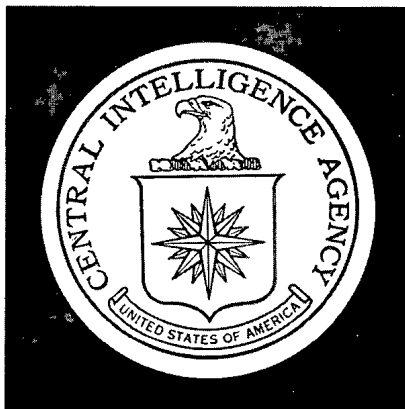
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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam

- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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4 July 1968

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

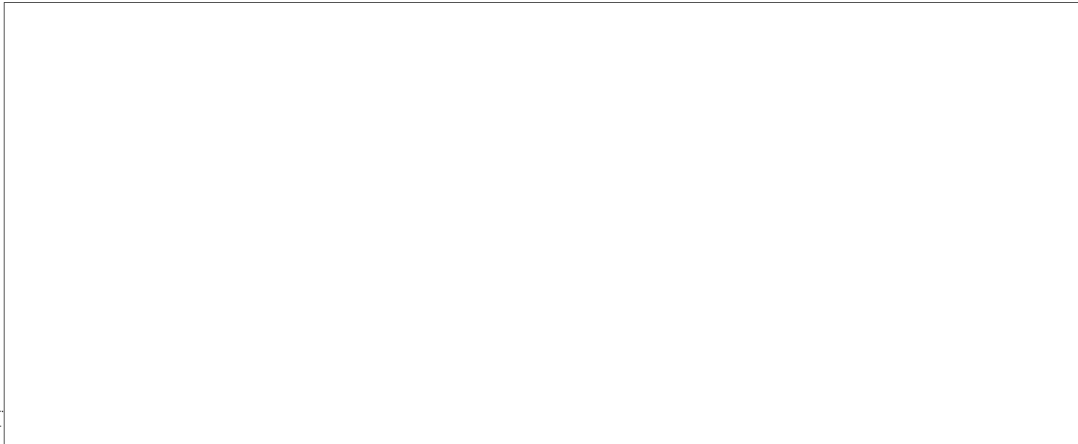
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



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American Fliers: Hanoi's 3 July announcement that it intends to release three more American fliers may be a move to improve the atmosphere for making some progress in the Paris talks. It is still too early to determine if the continuing lull in Communist military activity in South Vietnam also has this purpose, but the planned release of the pilots lends credence to this possibility. Hanoi may, however, simply bill the release as a gesture for the US Fourth of July celebrations or even in connection with the anniversary of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on 20 July.

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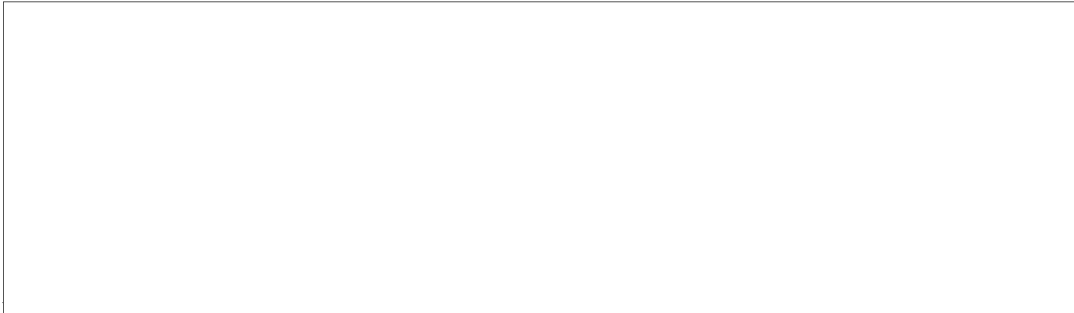
Release of South Vietnamese: In a move apparently coordinated with Hanoi's decision to release the pilots, Liberation Radio reported on 2 July that the Front had released eight South Vietnamese prisoners on 30 May. According to the broadcast, the prisoners were released in execution of the Front's "lenient humanitarian policy"--language identical to that employed in Hanoi's announcement of 3 July.

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Poles Protest Saigon Shelling: Members of the Polish International Control Commission delegation have told a US Embassy officer in Saigon that the Polish Government has protested the indiscriminate shelling of Saigon to the North Vietnamese and that General Giap did not reject the protest outright.

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The Poles also asserted that there would be no more such rocket attacks.



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Cuban Trade Official to Hanoi:



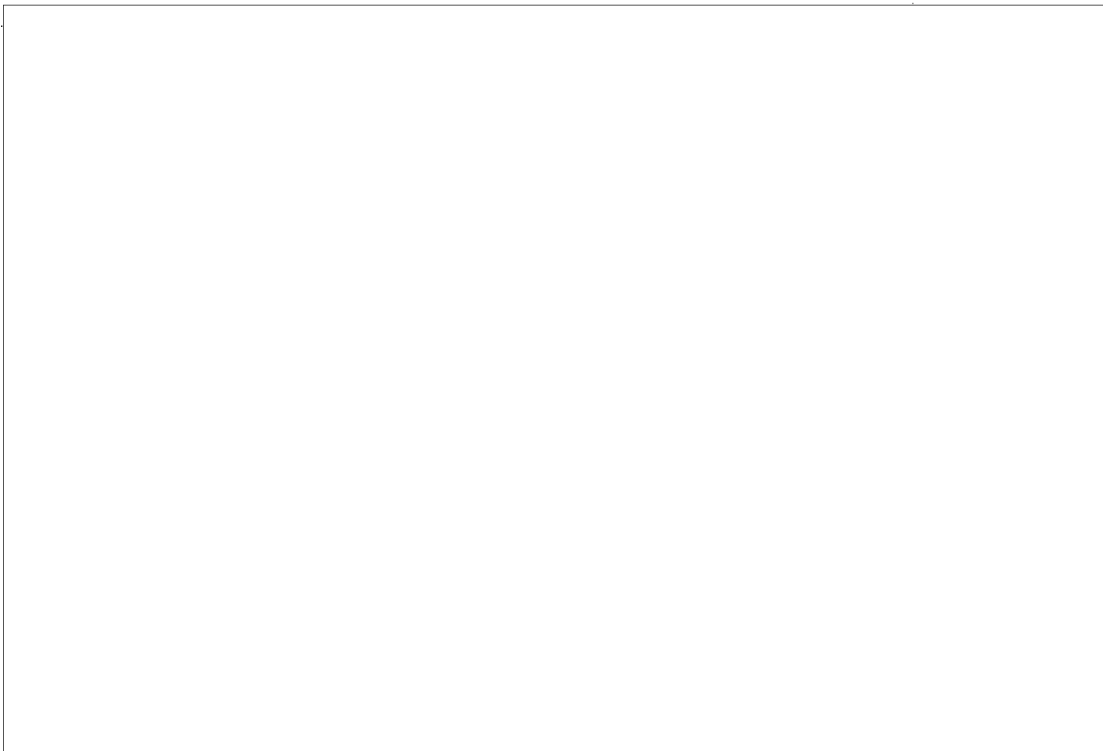
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Cuba's vice foreign trade minister will arrive in Hanoi on 8 July. The probable purpose is to sign the annual Cuban aid agreement. The visit is another facet of this year's North Vietnamese aid-seeking drive.

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

There is nothing of significance to report to-
day.

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