

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 11 July 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
11 JULY 1968

1. Soviet Union -
Egypt

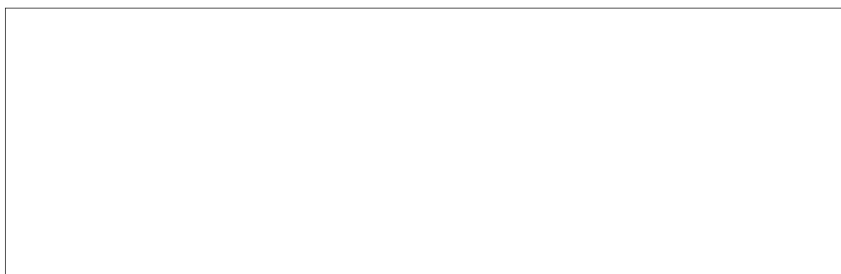
The Soviets may be moving toward a more active role in the search for a solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute. In late June Kosygin gave Jarring every indication that Moscow wants to find a solution, and does not want the issue returned to the United Nations. The Soviets, and Jarring himself, are said to be interested in having the US and the Soviet Union "get in on the act" without interfering with the Jarring mission itself. Jarring expects to have more talks with Kosygin in Sweden over the next three days.

The Soviets [redacted] also [redacted] [redacted] would like Jarring to draw up concrete proposals to put to either side.

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We see in Moscow's efforts not only a wish to encourage Jarring to be more active, but perhaps a willingness to press the Arabs to be more flexible. No such flexibility, however, was evident in the communique issued after Nasir's recent visit to Moscow.

2. Nigeria



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Federal troops now hold about two thirds of Biafra and are slowly pushing ahead against strong resistance. Gowon, who has never fully committed himself to a military solution, is now said to see no alternative.

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3. Pakistan

Ayub no longer seems on top of things. Ambassador Oehlert recently found him disinterested and lethargic and apparently hemmed in by his ministers and staff.

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In his talk with the ambassador, Ayub reneged on his earlier suggestion that "a smaller, less visible" installation might replace the Peshawar facility. Ayub said the Russians had predicted this very thing and had advised him that they would consider it "a very hostile act." Ayub of course is being careful not to upset Moscow at a time when a new military aid program is shaping up. However, anti-US elements in his Foreign Ministry probably helped matters along by leaking his idea for a smaller installation to the Russians.

4. Panama

The freewheeling finance minister is at it again. Last month he engineered a decree allowing Panamanian ships to trade with Communist countries. President Robles later withdrew the decree.

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5. Presidential Trip

Overwhelmingly warm and friendly comments continue to characterize the press treatment of President Johnson's visit to Central America. In San Salvador, for example, the President came across exceptionally well and was judged "muy simpatico;" the crowd turnout was above everyone's expectations.

The uniformly favorable press coverage in Nicaragua stressed the President's unifying role in strengthening the Central Americans' commitment to the Common Market and to economic and social progress. Somoza told Ambassador Crockett that his private conversation with President Johnson on the plane had left him more enthused and dedicated than ever to these principles.

In Honduras, Ambassador Jova notes that officials from President Lopez on down were euphoric over the visit, and comments that the accomplishments of the short trip exceeded his expectations. Even one initially critical antigovernment newspaper joined in the heavily favorable press coverage.

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6. Brazil -
East Germany

East Germany has offered about 100 diesel-electric locomotives to the Brazilian federal railway in exchange for coffee. This offer is likely to be accepted unless Brazilian trade officials now in the US can arrange suitable financing for US equipment. While the federal government has never bought East German locomotives, the state of Sao Paulo purchased 83 last year.

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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

Copenhagen Visit a Bust: Danish officials say that the visit to Copenhagen earlier this week by Hanoi's ambassador to East Germany was a dull and unenlightening affair. The diplomat was on the usual propaganda junket, hoping to extract a joint communique favorable to Communist positions. His conversations with the Danes were especially sterile and consisted of rehashing of the standard North Vietnamese line. It took some five hours to thrash out an acceptable communique; the final version dropped the propaganda which the North Vietnamese had proposed and substituted a bland statement that the Hanoi official had present his government's views on the war.

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Chinese Receive North Vietnamese Aid Delegation: The North Vietnamese economic delegation headed by Vice Premier Le Thanh Nghi arrived in Peking on 9 July to arrange this year's Sino - North Vietnamese aid agreement. In contrast with 1966 and 1967, the delegation arrived in Peking last instead of first on an itinerary which included East Europe, the Soviet Union and North Korea. Despite this, the North Vietnamese were given a friendly reception at the airport by Chinese Vice Premier Li Hsien-nien and "more than one thousand revolutionary people" armed with cymbals, gongs and portraits of Mao and Ho Chi-minh.

Although other North Vietnamese officials have recently stopped off in Peking, Nghi is the first ranking North Vietnamese visitor to be publicly acknowledged by the Chinese since Hanoi's acceptance of peace talks. A Peking dispatch covering the delegation's arrival consisted largely of banal salutes to Sino - North Vietnamese "fraternal friendship" and avoided the indirect criticism of the Paris talks contained in previous Chinese statements on Vietnam.

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Hanoi on Khe Sanh: Vietnamese Communist propaganda continues to whoop it up over the US deactivation of the base at Khe Sanh. On 9 July, Hanoi Radio's international service in English claimed that Communist forces have "taken complete control" of the central portion of the base and alleged that the Liberation Front's flag is now flying there while a "search for the remnants of the enemy" continues. Yesterday, the radio broadcast a summary of a Nhan Dan article describing the US "defeat" in such extravagant terms that even the most ardent listener must have been skeptical. There is nothing new in any of this, but the Communists are apparently going to use Khe Sanh in a continuous propaganda campaign, making it a symbol of Communist success and US failure.

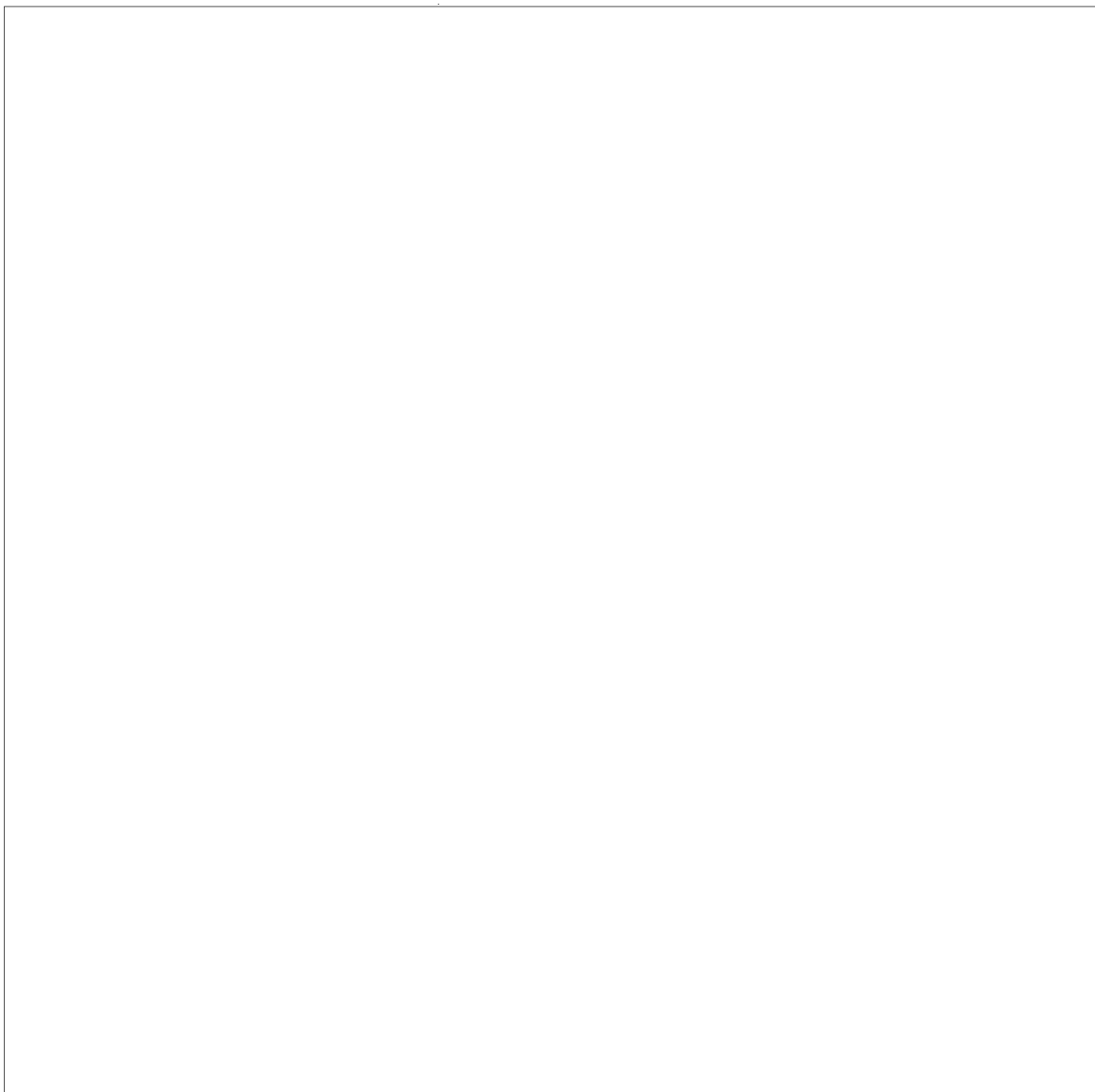
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New Diplomatic Ties: Hanoi Radio announced on 10 July that Iraq and North Vietnam have agreed to establish diplomatic relations.

Hanoi already has diplomatic ties with three other Arab states--Egypt, Syria, and Yemen. It seems likely that the North Vietnamese

ambassador who resides in Cairo and serves all three of these countries will be accredited to Baghdad as well.

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

Americans in Paris: A delegation of Americans described as "draft resisters and deserters" called

on the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris on 6 July and delivered a statement expressing the "American people's opposition to the US war in Vietnam," according to Hanoi Radio. The broadcast said the statement bore the signatures of 550 American members of peace movements in France.

The statement supported Hanoi's demand for a complete bombing halt and expressed the group's dedication to the victory of the Vietnamese people, "which will be the victory of the American people as well." Writing in the delegation's guestbook, two American visitors praised the courage and heroism of the Vietnamese people, the broadcast said.

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