

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 12 July 1968

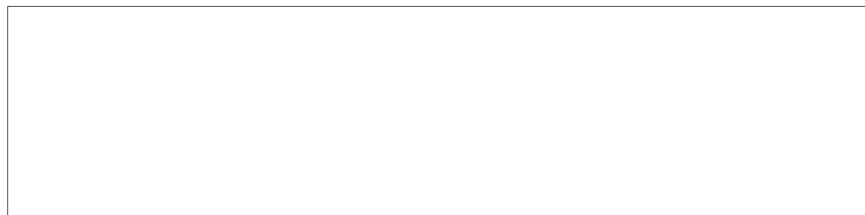


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**THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
12 JULY 1968**

1. Czechoslovakia

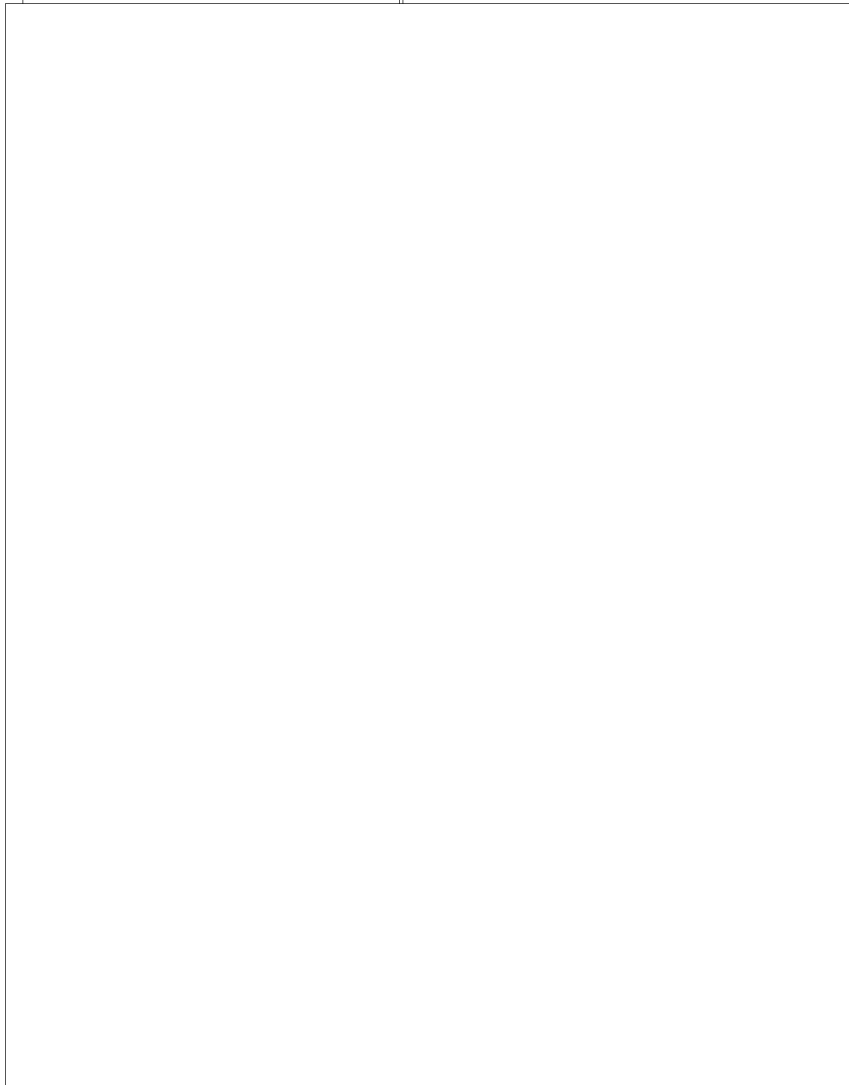


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2. Soviet Union

Satellite photography shows that 15 to 20 of the Soviets' 57 SA-5 surface-to-air missile complexes are now operational. The SA-5 is capable of intercepting high-speed aircraft flying as far away as 75 miles and as high as 100,000 feet.

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3. Sweden - Soviet Union

Swedish officials are playing Kosygin's visit (yesterday through Saturday) in low key. They expect nothing much to happen. Embassy Stockholm says it is unable to pinpoint any specific reason for the trip, but notes that the Russians probably consider they are doing well in Sweden and that a successful, uncontroversial visit will underline Soviet respect for Sweden's "neutrality."

4. India-Pakistan

New Dehli is badly disturbed by the news that the Soviet Union is willing to sell arms to Pakistan. The Indians have already made a formal protest

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It is not clear what kind of equipment the Soviets are prepared to sell. Kosygin is quoted as saying that the arms will be defensive, but acknowledged that the Pakistanis looked over some aircraft and equipment for a motorized brigade during their recent shopping trip to Moscow. Kosygin expects the arrangements to be buttoned up before the end of the year.

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5. Central America

Some summit meeting developments are beginning to draw counterfire in Central America.

The Salvadoran-Honduran prisoner exchange, for instance, is drawing political fire in El Salvador. The major opposition party is demanding that the amnesty decree, which released prisoners taken in last year's border clash, be declared unconstitutional. The same people are also opposing a new tariff surcharge that had received a ringing endorsement at the summit. They could block congressional ratification.

In Costa Rica, opposition deputies have protested what they consider insulting treatment during President Johnson's visit, attacking US security forces for their alleged infringement of the national sovereignty. They have introduced a motion to investigate the Costa Rican security agency, and university students have begun to campaign for its elimination. In a recent press conference, President Trejos remarked sceptically that it remains to be seen whether problems of economic integration can be overcome.

6. Philippines

The Senate deadlock over the \$9 million appropriation for the Philippine contingent in Vietnam seems to have been broken. Although opponents of Marcos in the Senate may come up with restrictive amendments to the bill, prospects are now rather good that the 1,800-man non-combatant force will be continued.

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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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12 July 1968

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

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

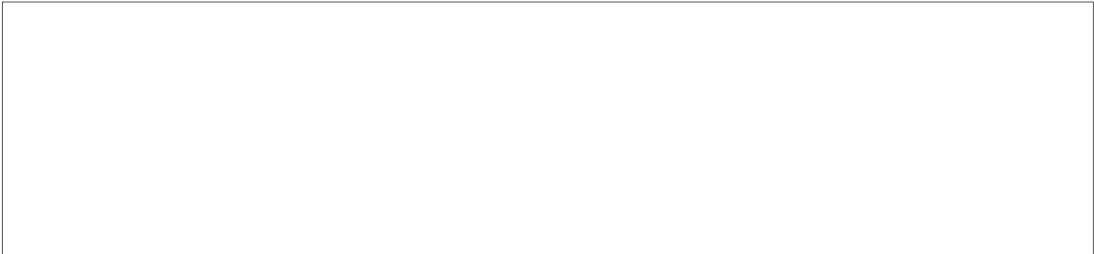
Vice Premier in Peking: Both the Chinese and the North Vietnamese are using Vice Premier Le Thanh Nghi's stop in Peking to play down their differences and emphasize Sino-Vietnamese unity. At a banquet on 10 July Nghi responded to his hosts' greetings with a speech which singled out Mao and the Cultural Revolution for special praise. In the past, Hanoi has not disguised its distaste for the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and Chinese adulation of Mao.

Chinese Vice Premier Li Hsien-nien, in his remarks, again warned of US "negotiation plots" and quoted two-year-old speeches of Ho Chi Minh promising to persist in "protracted war" until complete victory is won--a form of oblique criticism which has become commonplace in Chinese propaganda. Li pledged, however, that "any attempt to alienate China and Vietnam" would fail and promised more effective support. This relatively conciliatory language suggests that Peking, deeply concerned with the eventual outcome of the Paris talks, is trying to preserve as much influence in Hanoi as possible.

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More on Internal Security: Last week the Daily Report mentioned a captured notebook which contained comments on the security situation in North Vietnam. A more complete translation gives the following additional information, presumably disclosed at a security conference in North Vietnam last fall. Some 1,500 teenage pickpockets were operating in Hanoi, most of them children of party members. The children reportedly commit 30 to 40 percent as many crimes as professional criminals. As many as 50 criminals have been arrested in a single night in Hanoi, and prostitutes apparently abound. Ten of these ladies of the night were said to frequent European embassies, including those of Hanoi's Communist allies. The notes also assert that corruption is the gravest social problem in North Vietnam and state that the "majority of cadre are grafters."

These rare glimpses of North Vietnam's dirty laundry help to balance the usual accounts, often from sympathetic foreigners, which portray North Vietnam as a nation of efficient and selfless patriots. In assessing the accuracy of these notes, however, the US Embassy in Saigon aptly comments that Hanoi's penchant for exaggerating its successes may be matched by similar exaggeration of deficiencies when the purpose is to exhort the rank and file to do a better job.

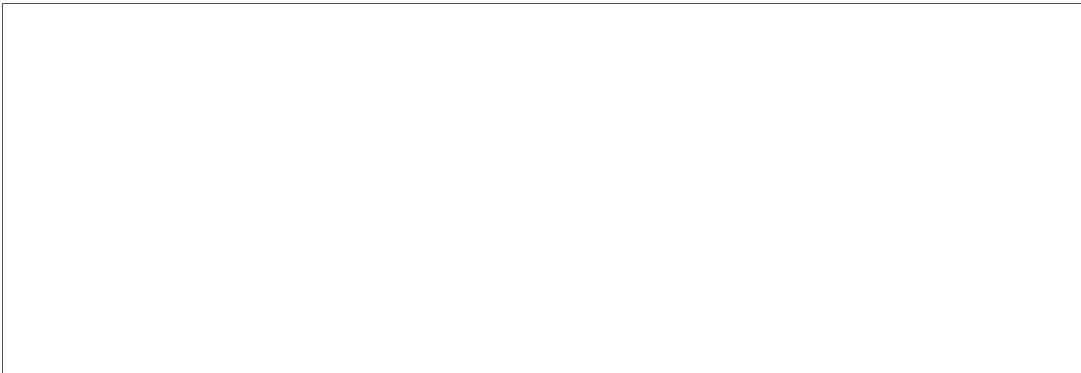
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Hanoi Urges Preparations for Floods: A Hanoi domestic broadcast on 4 July stated that North Vietnam was currently in a season of heavy rainfall and needed to pay more attention to preventing and checking typhoon and flood damage and to protecting dams and dikes against "enemy strafing." Many villages reportedly had not yet organized antiflood

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and antityphoon units and many agricultural cooperatives had not yet made the "necessary preparations." Responsible cadres at the provincial and district levels were urged to take "adequate control" over this task.

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The Late Show: The North Vietnamese ambassador to Cairo made a surprise appearance on Zambian TV the other night. He apparently is in Lusaka on the usual propaganda mission and was given this chance to condemn US policies in Vietnam. The US ambassador raised the visit with a local foreign ministry official, who parried a query about the TV show by saying he does not have a set.

The North Vietnamese diplomat apparently had been pressing for such a visit. He was undeterred by the fact that the President and foreign minister were away and said he would talk to anyone. In stressing that Zambia's nonaligned policy remained intact, the foreign ministry official offered our ambassador equal TV time.

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

There is nothing significant to report today.

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