

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 26 July 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
26 JULY 1968

1. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

Prague has made a few conciliatory gestures, notably the removal of the general who headed the central committee's military-security department. This was the official who aroused Soviet ire by calling for revisions in the Warsaw Pact organization. At the same time the Czechs have reaffirmed their determination to carry out their reform program.

Soviet troops have begun moving southward in East Germany. This deployment may be part of a previously scheduled exercise, but it is doubtless also intended to add to the pressure on Czechoslovakia. Soviet propaganda has become a bit more intense in its criticism of the Czech leadership.

2. Communist China

[REDACTED] Peking has given the army a mandate to restore order throughout China. We know that the military has in fact been intervening forcefully against unruly Red Guards in South China. Moreover, propaganda out of Peking has just recently begun to emphasize the army's role and to attack Red Guard "anarchism." In the past these themes appeared when the government turned to the army to get things back under some sort of control.

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3. Soviet Union

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4. Egypt -
Soviet Union

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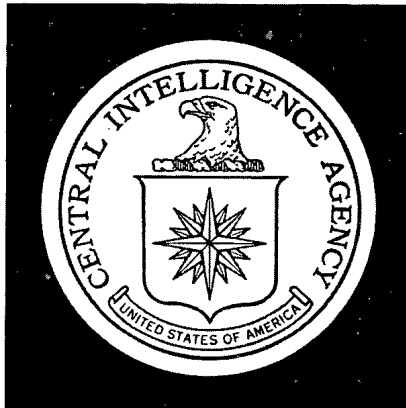
5. Soviet Union -
Middle East

The pilgrimage of Arab military men to Moscow continues. A Syrian military delegation arrived there on Tuesday, and an Iraqi delegation is scheduled to follow before the end of this month. These visits come in the wake of the Soviets' recent exchanges with the Egyptians and Defense Minister Grechko's trip last week to Algiers.

All this will probably produce a new batch of arms agreements. The Soviets are not likely to agree to deliver equipment more sophisticated than the types that are on order now. We would expect the agreements to reflect Moscow's active participation in the enlarged training programs most Arab countries have undertaken.

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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

26 July 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Hanoi and the Liberation Front: In a long radio broadcast on 24 July praising the National Liberation Front, Hanoi again failed to assert that a political settlement must be "in accordance" with the Front's program. This point, once a fundamental feature of the North's position, was dropped formally in a 17 July Foreign Ministry memorandum. Its omission in this account is further evidence that this was a deliberate change in the Communist position, despite efforts by some North Vietnamese spokesmen to obscure the issue.

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More on the Honolulu Conference: With an air of bored resignation, a Liberation Radio commentary on 24 June described the Honolulu communiqué as a tired rehash of previous pronouncements. Continuing the theme of earlier Communist comment, it called the talks a desperate but futile US effort to refurbish the image of "country-seller" Thieu and to boost the sagging morale of the "disintegrating puppet forces." The commentary contained the standard denunciation of reciprocity as an "absurd" demand, and warned that nothing can halt the "stormy advance" of the Vietnamese people.

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North Vietnamese Light Industry Claims: North Vietnam's Ministry of Light Industry reports that as of the end of June, the ministry had achieved 57 percent of its planned gross output for all of 1968, and factories run by the ministry had increased their output by 4.4 percent compared with the same period last year. The same article reported gross output in light industry is scheduled to increase by 26 percent in 1968 over 1967.

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

Comment on New Anti-Vietnam Book: In an item transmitted to its Hanoi office, the Liberation Press Agency described the recent book by a US Marine officer [redacted] as a courageous exposé of US policy in Vietnam, which strips away official US "concealment" and "distortion" of its aggressive designs.

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The article said that the book, titled The Betrayal, is making the "old-line authorities nervous and worried," and reported that the US Navy, after investigating the book for possible security leaks, has ordered the officer to stand trial by court martial.

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