

*The President's Daily Brief*

~~Top Secret~~ 1 November 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S  
DAILY BRIEF  
1 NOVEMBER 1968

1. Vietnam  
(As of 5:30 AM  
EST)

As yet there has been no official comment on the bombing halt from North Vietnam or other Communist countries. The North Vietnamese delegation in Paris has scheduled a press conference later today, and this may provide Hanoi's first public reaction.

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Moscow, Warsaw, and Prague all carried brief, factual reports of the President's statement.

Saigon issued a terse announcement that the US had "unilaterally" decided to end the air attacks. Thieu plans an address to the nation on the subject tomorrow.

There have been no reports of major enemy military action in South Vietnam since the President spoke, although rocket attacks were made against Saigon, Hue, and My Tho a few hours before his broadcast. Evidence of offensive preparations was noted before the announcement when "N-Day" messages indicated assaults were planned in the highlands for around 5 November. Yesterday, however, one unit was told N-Day had been delayed.

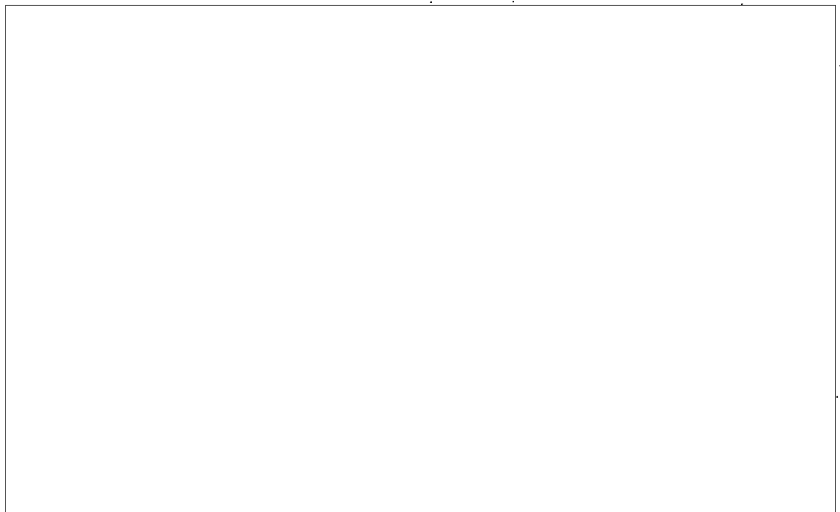
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**2. Israel-Egypt**

Israeli helicopter-borne commandos struck two Nile bridges and a power station just north of Aswan early this morning. The Israelis stated that this was in retaliation for Egyptian artillery attacks across the Suez Canal last Saturday. No Israeli casualties were incurred in the strike 125 miles into Egyptian territory, according to the Israelis.

**3. Israel-Jordan**

Tomorrow is the 51st anniversary of the Balfour Declaration in which Britain recognized Jewish rights to a homeland in Palestine. West Bank Arabs plan a general strike. Given current tensions, the anniversary could well trigger major disturbances.

**4. Communist China**

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**5. Ecuador**

Political enemies are brewing trouble for Velasco. Students in Guayaquil are being encouraged to take to the streets, both slum dwellers and peasants have been urged to move onto privately owned land, and there is a rash of inspired strikes. As expected, Carlos Arosemena is up to his elbows stirring the pot.

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## 6. Poland

The Polish party opens its fifth congress on 11 November, and Gomulka's authority is seriously threatened. For 13 years he has ruled the party through an adroit manipulation of the factions within it. That system has been left in shambles by intellectual turmoil, student demonstrations, and the cumulative grievances of a decade. The real challenge to Gomulka comes from the party's right, itself split into two warring factions.

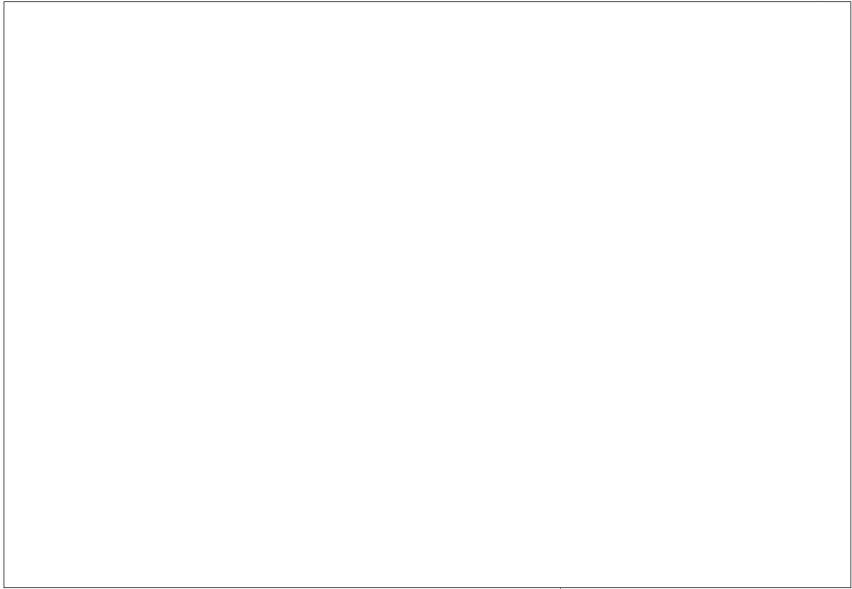
After the congress, we believe Gomulka will still be party first secretary, but his will no longer be the dominant voice. The party--and the country--will be run by a combination of elements ranging from anti-Semitic hardliners to rigid technocrats--without a Dubcek amongst them. They will continue contending for power among themselves.

## 7. Berlin

East Germany is threatening to block West German access to Berlin when Kiesinger's Christian Democratic Party meets in the city on Monday. The threat was made in an official statement yesterday. The East Germans could cut land access, but not travel by air--which is how most West Germans would go. The Christian Democrats are not likely to cave in before East German pressures.

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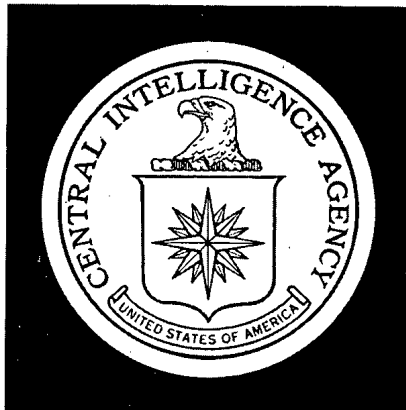
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*FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY*

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
  
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S  
Political Attitudes



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1 November 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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Restoration of Production: The North Vietnam-ese regime is increasingly directing its attention to problems of restoration of production. A new regulation on economic management designed to restore the authority of local governments was issued in late October. Local authority has been largely by-passed during the last three years by party and military officials who took over all aspects of local administration to enforce wartime priorities. Since the reduction in US bombing, however, several politburo members have called on local party officials to relax their tight control and restore the position and authority of local governmental organizations.

The Council of Ministers' directive strengthens the authority of these local units beyond the position they held in the North Vietnamese administrative set-up in the first half of the 1960's, at least in the field of economic management. The North Vietnamese appear to have borrowed heavily from the approach to industrialization adopted by the Chinese Communists in

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the mid-1950's. National control is confined to important communications and marketing systems and to industrial installations which are either large-scale heavy industry producers or those which require sizable investment. Provincial and regional governments are expected to run agriculture, light industry, and some small-scale heavy industry.

The new management system implies that the regime intends to adopt the kind of decentralized program which has been advocated in earlier theoretical discussions of postwar economic development. Some spokesmen, for example, have argued that the forced evacuation of plants during the bombing could be used in a postwar period as a base for developing a decentralized industrialization program.

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Explosives Moving South: Movement of a record 2,200 tons of "explosives" and TNT was noted in North Vietnamese rear service messages between 16 and 21 October. [REDACTED]

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The messages did not identify the types of explosives by tonnage, and it is not clear how these large shipments will be used. The dry season has just begun in the Laotian panhandle and the Communists are making extensive road repairs and improvements, partly by blasting. Explosives are also used to cope with bomb damage to Mu Gia Pass and Route 912--the two major North Vietnamese supply routes into the panhandle. It is likely, however, that a large part of the total 1,600 tons destined for Laos will ultimately be sent to South Vietnam, possibly in part for local production of Communist munitions.

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

Antiwar Protests: Citing various Western news agencies and US newspapers as sources, Hanoi reported several incidents of antiwar protest in the United States during a 30 October English language international broadcast.

The North Vietnamese reported on an antiwar rally held in Atlanta on 27 October and an address delivered there by retired US Army General Hester which condemned US policy. The broadcast mentioned antiwar and anti-draft demonstrations held at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, and in Milwaukee. A Reuters dispatch about 105 US troops who have refused to go to Vietnam also was cited.

The broadcast included a brief summary of an article by John Knight in the Miami Herald which termed US involvement in Vietnam a mistake.

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