



The President's Daily Brief

Top Secret 9 December 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
9 DECEMBER 1967

1. Yemen

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The royalists say they have recovered the body of a Russian pilot from the wreckage of a MIG fighter. The plane, with Yemeni markings, was shot down during an air strike on royalist positions last week. [REDACTED]

The "siege" of Sana continues. There is an exodus of foreigners. Many Soviets have pulled out as has a goodly proportion of the republican leadership.

2. Turkey

There are some disquieting political undercurrents in the wake of the Cyprus crisis. While key political and public opinion leaders are going along with the government, there also is criticism of the decision to settle peacefully. Most Turks, who consider Makarios the devil incarnate, feel the whole scene will have to be played over in the future.

Perhaps the most serious potential threat is from the military. Many officers are bitter over the failure to settle the Cyprus issue once and for all.

3. Czechoslovakia

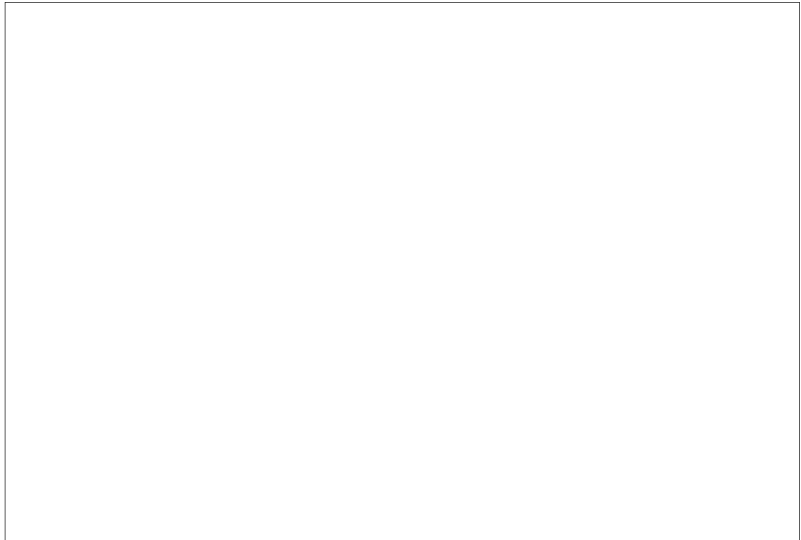
Brezhnev's surprise trip to Prague yesterday is a clear reflection of Moscow's concern over the Czech situation. Plagued with mounting economic, political, and social problems, the Czech party is divided and Novotny's authority has been challenged. Breznev will try to shore him up.

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4. Soviet Union

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5. Cyprus

The first Greek withdrawal took place yesterday morning when about 400 troops were evacuated from Famagusta. Turkish Cypriots are watching and counting.

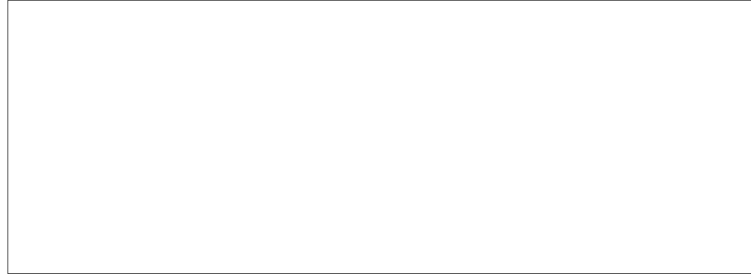
Turkey has made some small moves toward reducing its military alert by pulling troops back from the invasion ports.

6. Arab States

Arab foreign ministers meet in Cairo today to lay the ground for a proposed Arab summit. The wrangling in Cairo will be over whether to hold the summit now or wait until UN special representative Jarring has appeared on the scene.

7. Jordan

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8. Denmark

Krag is in trouble. His political marriage of convenience with the ultra-left is threatened by discord in the coalition over how far to support the prime minister's recent economic moves, including wage freezes. Some of Krag's leftist allies are now threatening to go against him; he has only a two-vote majority in parliament. The US Embassy, Copenhagen, believes the tide is running against Krag and that his future looks dim.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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I. LEE KUAN YEW TALKS WITH PAUL HASLUCK ABOUT
SOUTHEAST ASIA

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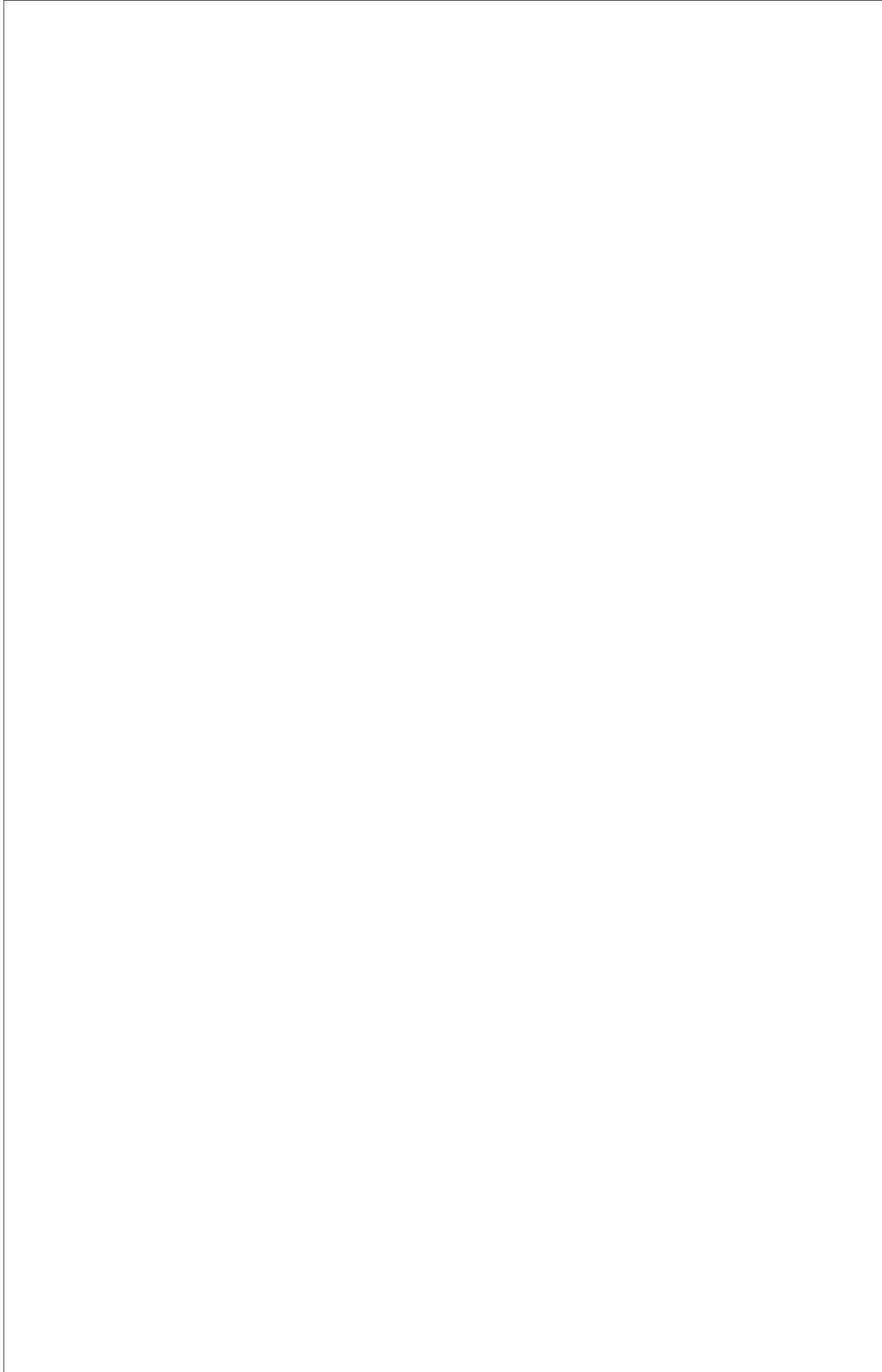
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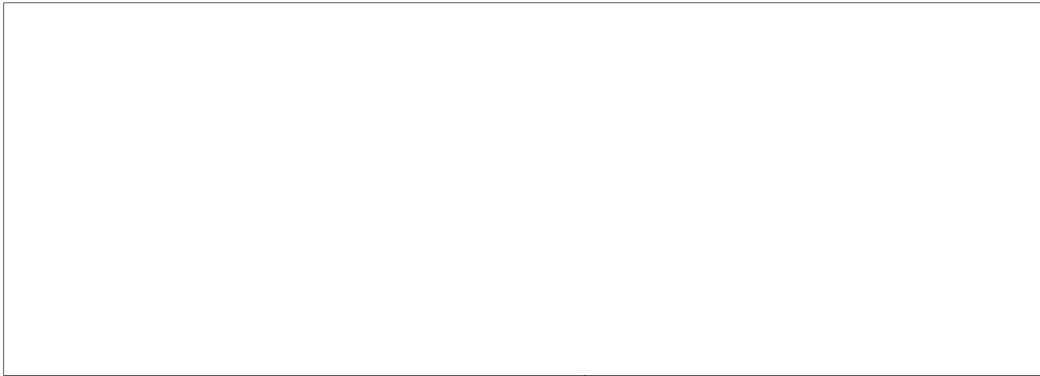
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Crop Claims: A Hanoi broadcast yesterday claims that collective farmers everywhere in North Vietnam are bringing in a "fairly good winter rice harvest." Statistics for yield in various localities are given, but no figure for the national harvest as a whole.

The modesty of the "fairly good" claim tends to support estimates that the late 1967 rice crop was below average, afflicting North Vietnam with the fourth below-average crop in succession. Imports of food are continuing at the level established early this year and will total more than 400,000 tons or three times the level of 1964, the last pre-bombing year.

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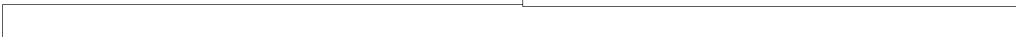
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Conditions in Hanoi:



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the population of Hanoi was "quite composed." North Vietnamese whom he met told him, without showing fear, that "Hanoi is not a safe place." Prices of staples, meats, and school supplies were lower than



1966, and department stores were well stocked with necessities. The purchase of clothing was controlled under a coupon system, but flimsy cloth could be bought cheaply on the open market.

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foreign businessmen were well treated by their North Vietnamese hosts.



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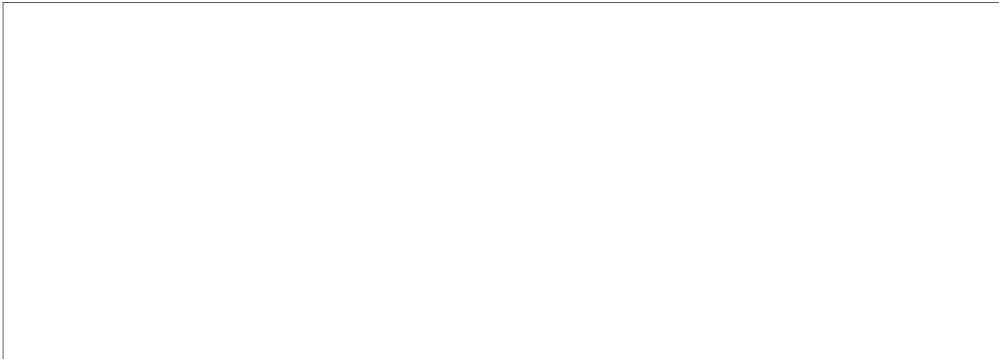
Travel to Hanoi: The World Federation of United Nations Associations, which recently proposed a new scheme for achieving a settlement of the Vietnam war, is attempting to get a visa for its head, Ales Bebler of Yugoslavia, to travel to Hanoi.



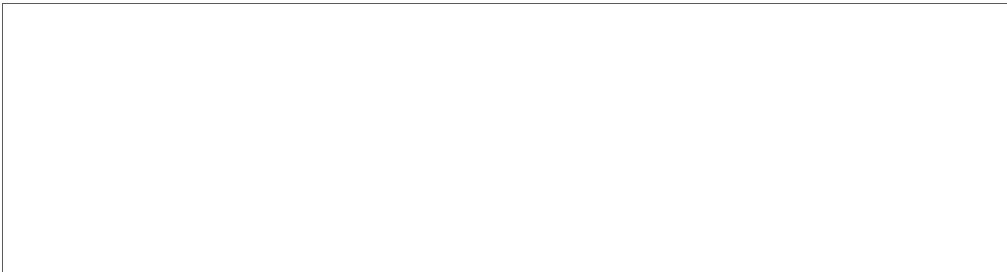
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Hanoi Quotes Pravda on Security Council Session: A broadcast in Vietnamese to South Vietnam on 6 December quotes a recent Pravda commentary on Ambassador Goldberg's statement regarding the US desire to have the Security Council discuss the Vietnamese problem. The broadcast quotes Pravda to the effect that this move "is merely a new deceitful trick aimed at covering up the US imperialists' aggressive acts and at preparing for escalation and enlarging the war." Hanoi provided no commentary of its own on the issue.

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

Liberation Front on McNamara Resignation: A Front broadcast in Vietnamese on 3 December claimed that by "kicking out" McNamara, by "holding him responsible for all mistakes and shortcomings, and by blaming him for his incompetence, Johnson and his clique have admitted defeat in the war." The broadcast continued that McNamara's departure also reflected "the serious stalemate and collapse" of the flexible response strategy of the US.

The resignation of the Secretary has not, according to the Front, removed the Washington leaders' problem of finding "a way out of South Vietnam." This problem, the broadcast asserted, is "driving Johnson and his clique crazy." The statement also pointed to the "serious internal rift" that has developed among the US leaders because of repeated failures in the war. It reported that some factions urge that the US should "escalate the war to its last rung by attacking North Vietnam, China, Laos, and Cambodia." Others, the broadcast said, suggest that US troops be withdrawn to key defensive positions and that "puppet" troops be used to replace them on the frontline to "serve as cannonfodder." Still other factions advocate pursuing the present "stalemated policy Johnson is following."

The broadcast concluded by stating that the "only correct way out for the US is to withdraw troops from South Vietnam and restore independence to the Vietnamese people, leaving them to settle their own affairs."

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