



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 2 April 1968



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TOP SECRET - CONTAINS SIGINT AND KENHOLE MATERIAL
The President's Daily Brief
2 April 1968

LATE ITEM

The President's
Speech

A 2 April message to subordinates from a provincial committee to the south of Hanoi is the first reaction we have received from inside North Vietnam. The message, whose over-all tone is rather calm, says the President's speech expresses "an embarrassing defeat for the American pirates." It urges recipients to be cautious and to "take preventive measures for each deceitful plot." Party members are exhorted to "expand each activity," particularly "the mission of communications and transportation aimed at realizing the party's strategy."

TOP SECRET - CONTAINS SIGINT AND KENHOLE MATERIAL

DAILY BRIEF
2 APRIL 1968

1. The President's
Speech

In the flood of public and private comment which is coming in, the following reactions to President Johnson's speech seem noteworthy:

--The Soviets

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avoided commenting on it. They will probably study it for some time. Polish Foreign Minister Rapacki told Ambassador Gronouski that he thought the President "had put his hand on the door-knob but has not pushed the door (to negotiations) open." In general, Soviet and East European press commentary has been cautiously critical of the bombing halt and skeptical of the President's announcement of his noncandidacy.

--A French Foreign Ministry official told our embassy that Couve has urgently ordered an analysis of the speech--to include suggestions on what, if anything, Paris should do to get Hanoi to respond. The official said France probably would not comment publicly until De Gaulle's regular Wednesday cabinet meeting, but he personally considers the speech an "important step" and plans to press his viewpoint with Hanoi's man in Paris.

--Hanoi's ambassador in Prague told a Swedish radio correspondent--in uncertain German--that "negotiations can now start." We doubt that his statement is based on any word from home, however. Otherwise, North Vietnamese representatives, in scattered and sometimes explicitly unofficial reactions, have not budged from Hanoi's previous line. There has been nothing from Hanoi itself.

Outbreaks of Violence in Brazil



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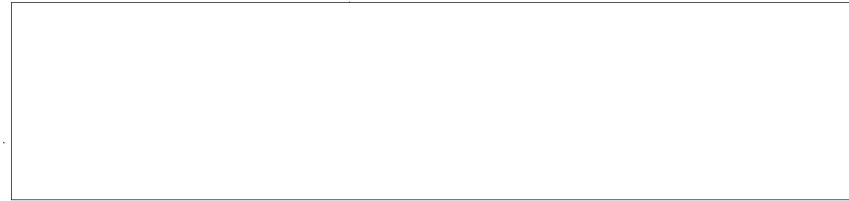
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2. South Vietnam

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3. Brazil

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Armed students and opposition extremists clashed with security forces in several parts of Brazil last night. Two USIS offices were sacked during the demonstrations, and two demonstrators were killed.



Even if there are no demonstrations, tensions may build if the Costa e Silva government yields to military pressure for stronger action against the opposition. Costa e Silva reportedly has already decided to arrest the flamboyant oppositionist, Carlos Lacerda. To do so would give Lacerda a resonant courtroom sounding board for his anti-government diatribes.

4. Poland

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An undeclared power struggle seems to be going on in the upper reaches of the Polish hierarchy. Gomulka is not being attacked directly at the moment. On the other hand, he is more often than not described merely as the spokesman for an unspecified collective "party leadership." To judge from the government's propaganda, those who favor a hard line toward the recent unrest are currently on top. Gomulka apparently is trying to postpone anything which would bring the struggle to a head in hopes that he can get things back in control in the next few months.

5. Czechoslovakia

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Ambassador Beam believes that current trends in Prague are favorable to our interests, and that with low-key help from us and other Western nations, Dubcek has a chance of putting together a successful reform government.

6. Chile

President Frei is now almost completely isolated politically, and his economic and social reform program is about on the rocks.

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[redacted] He has lost the parliamentary support he needs to push his anti-inflationary reforms through a resistant Congress. To get anything at all through Congress, he may now acquiesce in demands for higher taxes on the US-owned copper mines.

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**7. Saudi Arabia -
Yemen**

The Saudis, worried about the Soviet presence in Yemen and fed up with Yemeni royalist bickering, have told the royalists that no more money will be forthcoming unless feuding ends and fighting against the republicans resumes. This is largely a pressure tactic, since the Saudis are too nervous about the Soviets to leave the royalists in the lurch for long.

In any case, the republicans have troubles of their own, and it would not take too much of an effort by the royalists to give the impression that the seesaw in the civil war is tipping back their way.

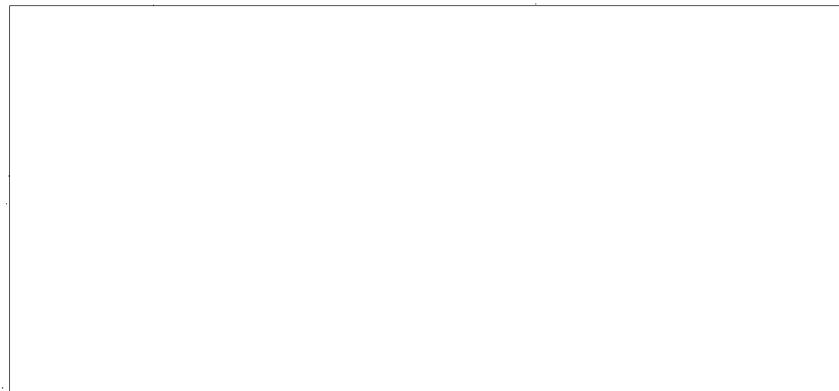
8. Belgium

All three major parties lost some ground in Sunday's elections. The two extremist parties--one French-speaking, the other Dutch-speaking--both gained seats, but they still are too small to be worthwhile coalition partners. So the three big parties probably will come up with yet another coalition. There is little chance that this government will last long, much less heal Belgium's deep communal divisions.

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9. Panama

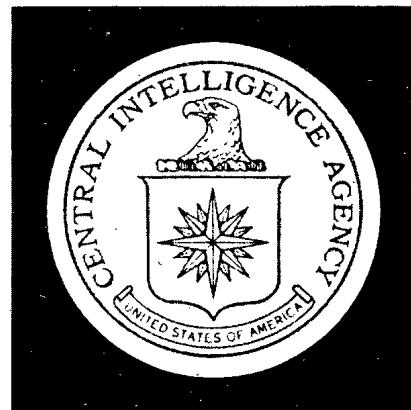
The Supreme Court adjourned yesterday without ruling on the issues surrounding Robles' impeachment. We do not know whether it plans to stall as long as it can, or whether it will rule in the next few days. In any case, Arias and his followers will doubtless try to keep things lively in the streets until the ruling is made. A pro-Arias radio station yesterday made yet another call for a general strike.

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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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16

2 April 1968

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

2 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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[redacted] From commun-
nications intelligence the number of Chinese military
personnel in North Vietnam is calculated at up to
50,000, engaged both in construction and antiaircraft
tasks.

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Heavy Truck Traffic Through Laos: Road watch teams near the Mu Gia Pass reported unusually heavy truck traffic moving into Laos during March. These trucks were probably involved in the logistics back-up for the major North Vietnamese troop infiltration now under way. Between 8 and 23 March an average of 53 trucks a day were coming through the pass (this, compared to 41 a day noted in February). Road watch teams farther south on the infiltration corridor have reported an increased supply flow, too.

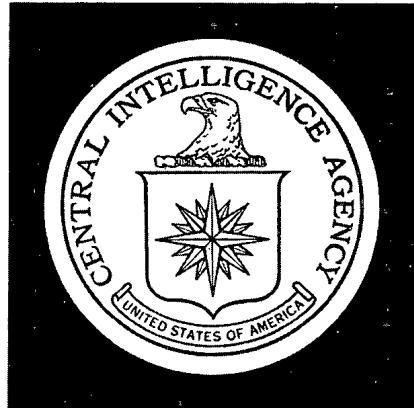
Intercepted messages also point to an intensive logistical effort. There have been references to a "crash program."

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

Hanoi Continues F-111 Commentary: Hanoi's domestic radio on 31 March carried another long commentary taking credit for destroying two F-111 aircraft. The broadcast said the Pentagon "had to admit" the first F-111 was downed by the Northern armed forces and people, and it cited Western press sources as evidence the second one was lost while conducting a combat mission "over" North Vietnam.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 3 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
3 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

South Vietnam's chief of the general staff, General Cao Van Vien, has tendered his resignation, according to a Saigon press report. There is no indication yet whether Vien's resignation will be accepted. He and several of the corps commanders have been threatening to resign for several weeks. They are disgruntled with Thieu's handling of the government.

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Evidence of heavy infiltration into South Vietnam continues to mount. North Vietnamese units above the Demilitarized Zone are disappearing from their regular communications networks, a good indication they are moving south. At least 36 infiltration groups have now been identified. A premium appears to be on speed. Personnel of one North Vietnamese regiment now in the central highlands moved over 500 miles from North to South Vietnam in about a month.

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Ambassador Goldberg notes that reports of air strikes near Thanh Hoa have drawn some unfavorable comments from non-Communist UN delegates.

2. Brazil

Political tension is still high, but student demonstrations have tapered off. Trouble could flare up again tomorrow when a mass will be held for a youth killed by police in Rio. Student leaders are beginning to bicker among themselves, however, and this is limiting their effectiveness to some extent.

3. Jordan-Iran

The Iranians are requesting US reaction to a proposed transfer of American-supplied tanks and artillery to Jordan. Husayn asked the Shah for help on an urgent basis after the Israeli attack last month. Husayn feels he needs the equipment now to fill in until similar hardware arrives under the recent US-Jordanian agreement. The Iranians are not sure yet whether they would sell or loan the equipment, nor are any specific numbers being mentioned.

4. Czechoslovakia

Dubcek continues to shake the old hardliners out of the party tree. Monday, Jiri Hendrych, the once-powerful spokesman for the "neo-Stalinists," admitted his "past mistakes" and resigned his posts on the presidium and the party secretariat. Lesser men are going too.

One of the best indications of the new wind blowing in Czechoslovakia was a Prague domestic broadcast quoting the Czech Washington correspondent on President Johnson's address: "In my view," he said, "it would be unjust and improper to dismiss Johnson's speech as another maneuver.... On the contrary, it would be better for the socialist countries to carry out a deep analysis of the long-term consequences that Johnson's speech can have."

5. Communist China

There is ample evidence that warring members of the Politburo continue to stalk one another. Three senior military officers--one a Lin Piao protégé--were purged last week; this week posters have gone up attacking some of Chou En-lai's followers.

In some provinces outside Peking, the struggle for power is considerably more direct and deadly. Bitter street fighting between contending factions is reported from several cities.

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6. Panama

National Guard Commandant Vallarino is letting it be known that he will not accept any decision by the Supreme Court against Robles. Robles expects a favorable decision today, but Panamanian law provides enough loopholes to let the court delay until mid-April. Meanwhile, there are signs that some of Arias' key backers feel their money is on the wrong horse; there is talk of dumping him for another candidate, perhaps Vallarino himself.

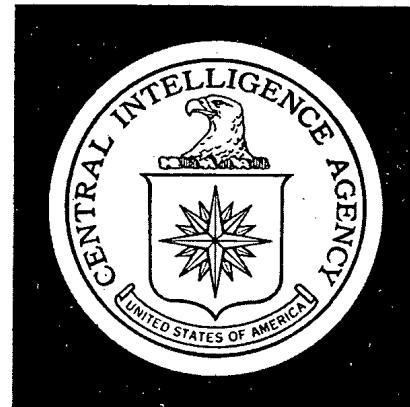
7. Guatemala

The first reports of military coup plotting are coming in the wake of last week's move by President Mendez to shake up the army hierarchy.

So far the threat to Mendez does not appear immediate. Much, however, depends on how far Mendez tries to go in curtailing the extralegal "counter-insurgency" groups who range the countryside under army auspices hunting leftists. If the President tries to eliminate these vigilantes, then the army may well move against him.

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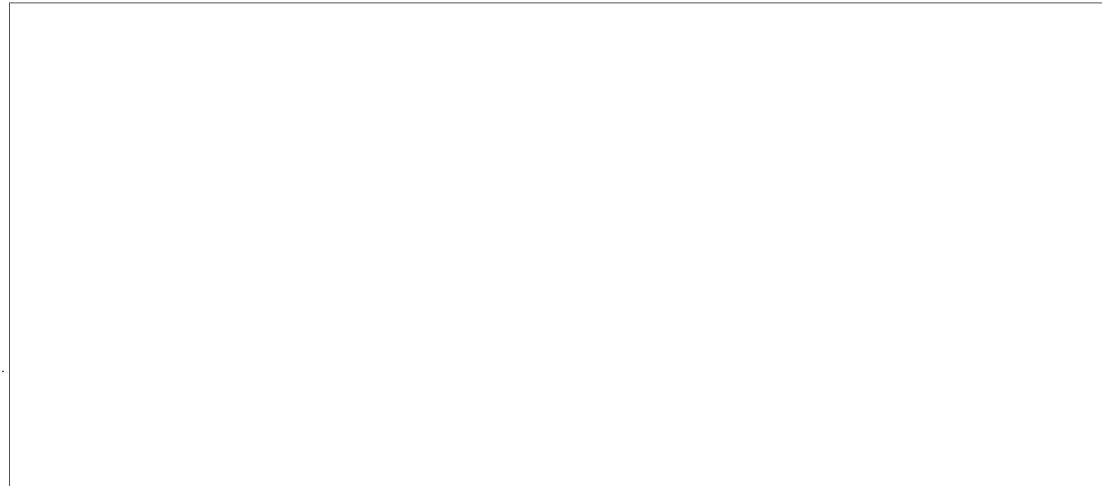
Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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3 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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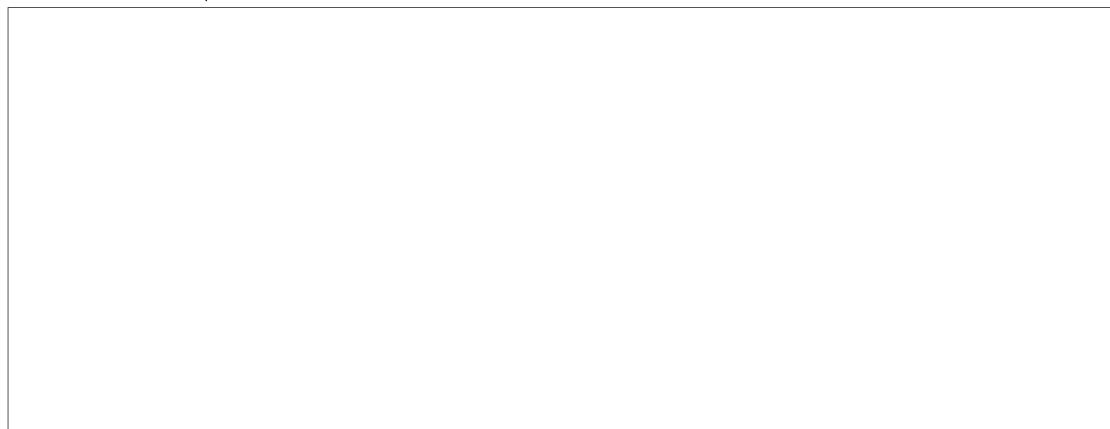
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Foreign Shipping to North Vietnam in February:
Ship arrivals dropped sharply in February after the record high in January. The 92,500 tons of seaborne imports in February (on 29 foreign ships) were less than half the January figure (on 46 ships).

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North Vietnamese exports rose in February, a reflection of renewed coal exports from Cam Pha and Hon Gay.

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Hanoi Delegation Begins African Trip: The North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry delegation headed by Vice Foreign Minister Hoang Van Loi arrived in Algiers on 2 April on the first stop of a tour scheduled to include Egypt, Guinea, Mali, Congo Brazzaville, Tanzania,

-2-

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and Syria--all the countries in Africa and the Middle East where Hanoi currently has diplomatic representatives. The trip is part of Hanoi's current attempt to gain additional support for its position on negotiations. In an airport reception in Algiers, Loi outlined his government's standard position on a settlement of the war but refused to comment on President Johnson's 31 March statement.

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Two North Vietnamese Diplomats in Eastern Europe Have Left Their Posts, Perhaps for Home: US Embassy officers in Bucharest and Sofia reported on 1 April that North Vietnamese ambassadors in these cities are absent. In Rumania, the Polish ambassador reported that his North Vietnamese counterpart left for Hanoi "hurriedly last week" without the usual notification to his diplomatic colleagues. In Bulgaria, the local press reported that Hanoi's ambassador was not in the country. Both of these absences appear to predate President Johnson's 31 March speech.

* * *

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

Hanoi Reacts Cautiously to President's Speech: Hanoi's initial press reactions to President Johnson's 31 March statement are negative and hostile, but the regime has handled the matter cautiously in its radio propaganda.

Both the party and the army newspapers on 2 April carried general denunciations of US policy, but apparently failed to address the President's move directly. The army paper scored US unwillingness to halt the bombing "finally and unconditionally" throughout North Vietnam, according to the Soviet news agency. The party

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paper talked of a "new plot" and a "fraudulent proposal," according to French and Japanese accounts.

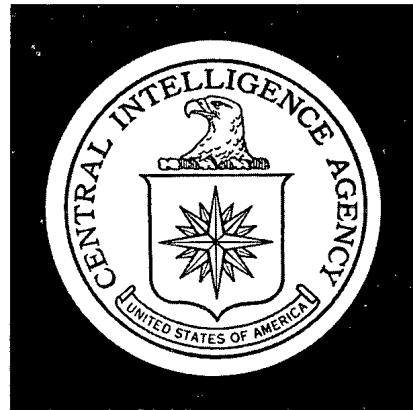
Neither item has been broadcast by Hanoi radio, which seems to have limited itself to quotes of Soviet accounts charging that the bombing halt is not in accordance with North Vietnam's conditions.

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PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF
4 APRIL 1968

LATE ITEM

Vietnam

A Moscow domestic broadcast early today carries the first public Soviet reaction to Hanoi's official statement of yesterday. It said the significance of Hanoi's step, "taken with positive intentions for peace, is difficult to overestimate." Hanoi's move, the statement goes on, "creates real prerequisites for the liquidation of tension in Southeast Asia." Now it is up to the US to respond, Moscow said.

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DAILY BRIEF
4 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

Hanoi has yet to come out with any significant elaboration of its official statement of yesterday. A long editorial in today's party daily covers the same ground in more tortuous detail. The North Vietnamese press attaché in Laos, however, has dropped word that an "important policy statement" would be broadcast on Hanoi radio at 8:00 this morning, Washington time.

Ambassador Sullivan has learned indirectly that Charles Collingwood, now in Hanoi, expects North Vietnam to release additional captured US pilots in the near future.

The Soviets have not yet commented on yesterday's statement by Hanoi. They have been even more cautious than usual these past days to avoid publicly getting out in front of Hanoi on the issues raised in President Johnson's 31 March speech.

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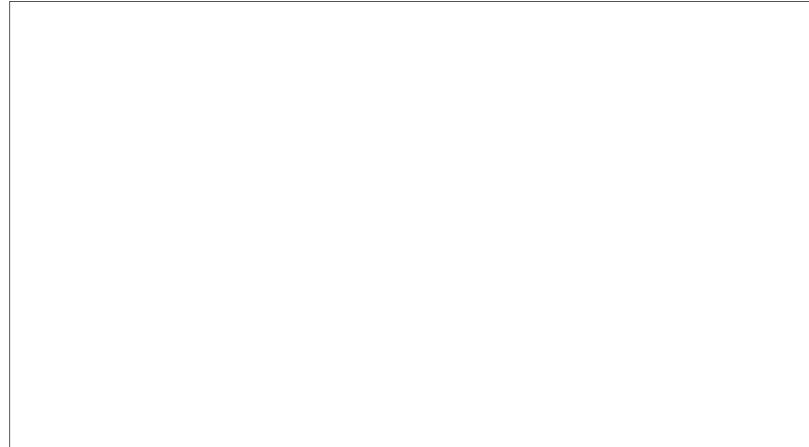
2. East Germany

Student restlessness is beginning to crop up, despite the regime's strenuous efforts to keep the country insulated from recent events in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Student rebels have staged small demonstrations in Magdeburg, and students in East Berlin have openly proclaimed their opposition to government policies.

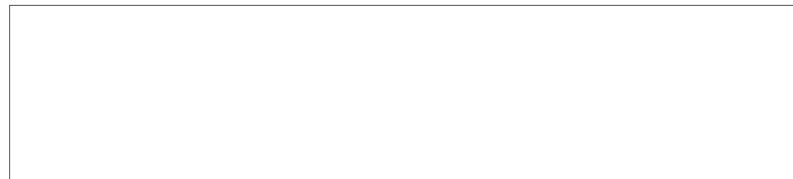
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3. Sino-Soviet
Relations

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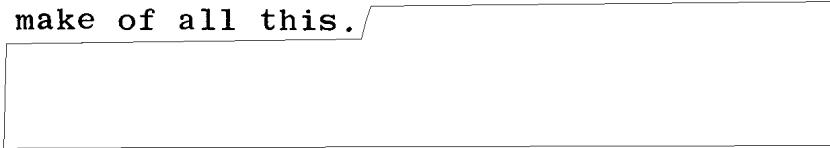
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4. Israel

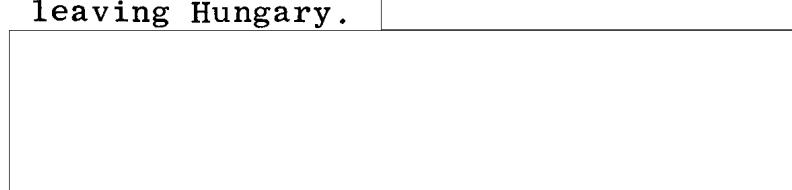
The Israeli military has been unusually active these past two days, and tanks have been seen moving north from Jerusalem. Official statements coming out of Tel Aviv are as belligerent as ever. We are not sure what to make of all this.

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5. Hungary

For the first time, the Vatican newspaper has publicly criticized Cardinal Mindszenty for obstinately remaining in the US Embassy. This looks like an open effort to press him into leaving Hungary.

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6. Poland

The struggle inside the party is spreading and becoming more vicious. The military are now involved; some generals have been disciplined for "ideological subversion." This lends support to rumors that some army commanders were opposed to the harsh tactics used against the rebellious students last month.

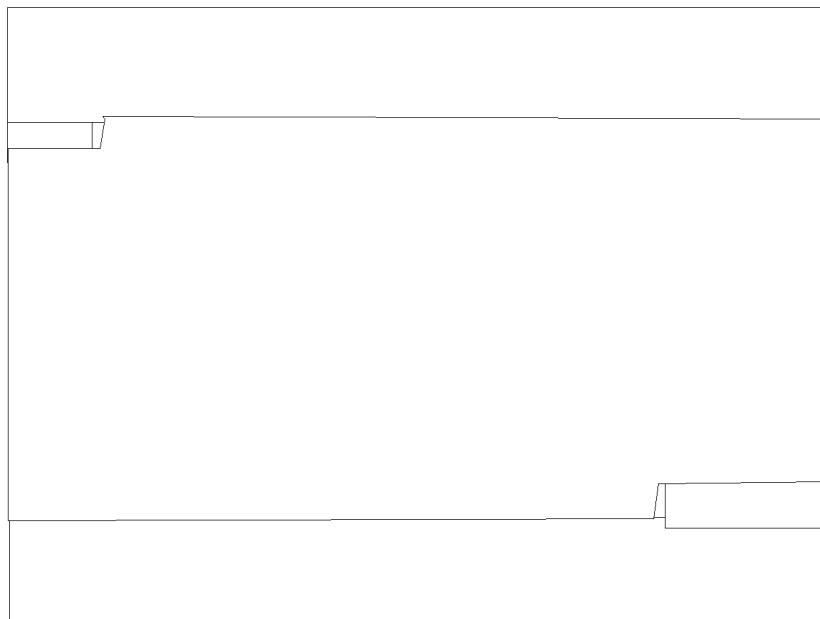
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For the first time, Edward Gierek has been fingered [redacted]

[redacted] as the head of a group in the leadership "dedicated to taking over from Gomulka's old guard." This powerful Politburo member, who has long been regarded as the most likely eventual successor to Gomulka, appears to have allied himself with some of the hardliners.

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7. Panama

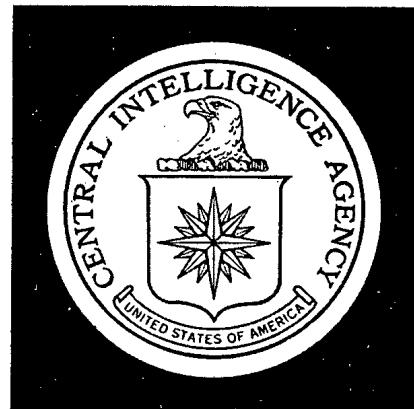


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Top Secret
16

50X1

4 April 1968

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

4 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Released Women Prisoners: In an attempt to wring additional propaganda mileage out of the recent release of two American women by the Viet Cong, Hanoi broadcast yesterday what it claimed were statements by the women critical of US policy in Vietnam. According to the Hanoi statement, the women pointed out that US policy in Vietnam "is wrong" and urged the US Government to "end the bombing immediately and withdraw US troops as soon as possible." The women were also quoted as comparing the war to the American Revolution and as pledging themselves to work for peace once back in the US.

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Mid-East and African Delegation to Hanoi:
Hanoi's continuing efforts to obtain greater support in Africa and the Middle East will include playing host to a delegation from the Cairo based Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization later this month.

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Food Distribution: Hanoi has altered the distribution system in agricultural cooperatives in an effort to divide food more evenly and perhaps to reduce the flow of food into the rural free market. According to North Vietnamese magazine articles, all of the cooperatives were ordered recently to divert most of the extra rations usually paid as incentives to efficient farmers to those members of cooperatives who are unable to feed themselves without government aid. Efficient workers can still get "a little more food" and a few extra privileges, but only after government quotas and minimum rations for everyone are satisfied.

The reduction of incentives will almost certainly hamper agricultural efficiency and production, but the North Vietnamese are apparently more concerned about distribution problems in rural areas and in controlling inflationary pressures in the free market than they are about the possibilities of losing some production.

North Vietnam has experienced a succession of poor rice crops since the spring of 1966, but ration levels--at least in the cities--have been held up by food imports. Last year imports of grain and grain products reached record proportions--about 367,000 tons or 8 percent of the usual 4.5 million-ton rice crop.

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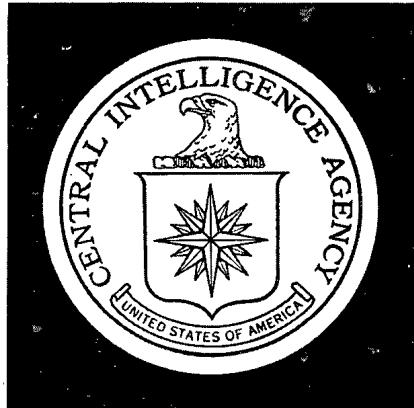
II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report.

-2-

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LATE ITEM

Soviet Union -
North Vietnam

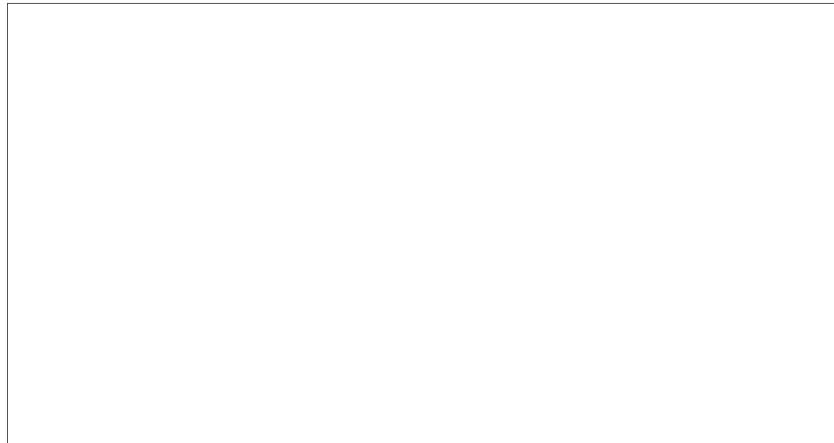
The Soviets published a statement this morning saying that they "fully support the statement of the North Vietnamese Government on 3 April." In a summary which has been broadcast, Moscow says "the further development of events depends on whether the US will take the following step: whether it stops bombings and other acts of war against North Vietnam fully and unconditionally, and whether it takes a positive view of the well-known proposals of the North Vietnamese Government and the Liberation Front on the ways of settling the Vietnam problem." The statement says, "In the opinion of the Soviet Government, these proposals offer a good basis for a lasting settlement in Vietnam."

DAILY BRIEF
5 APRIL 1968

1. North Vietnam

There are no clear indications yet whether Hanoi intends to tailor its military action to prospective diplomatic "contacts" with the US. The relative lull in enemy military activity in South Vietnam continues. There are signs, however, of enemy reconnaissance, repositioning and logistic activity, possibly in preparation for a step-up in the pace of hostilities. Such action is particularly evident in the central highlands and along the central coast of South Vietnam.

2. South Vietnam



3. Panama

The Supreme Court last night nullified Robles' impeachment. This puts a real crimp in Arias' chances for the presidency. Some of the radicals behind Arias may well take to the streets now, but the guard is prepared to handle any new outbreaks of violence.

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4. Jordan

King Husayn is settling for a trip to Cairo, and perhaps Baghdad, in place of the Arab summit meeting he had wanted. Husayn is scheduling a visit to Cairo for Saturday now that it is clear that Saudi King Faysal will not agree to a summit meeting unless Jordan and Egypt concede openly that Jarring has failed.

Husayn now must try to do two things: first, to get Nasir to show some flexibility toward Jarring's proposals; second, to get Nasir to help control the terrorist groups in Jordan. We doubt the King will have much success.

5. Poland

A purge of middle-level officials is now moving along in earnest. Recently ousted functionaries include a deputy minister of foreign trade and the head man of the nuclear energy program. Numerous party and government officials with lower rank have also been sacked.

Most of the victims are Jews who are traditionally the targets of party hardliners. The hardliners will lose no time seating their own choices behind the empty desks.

Reports from Warsaw say the next step--perhaps within the week--will be removals in the upper reaches of the government.

6. Czechoslovakia

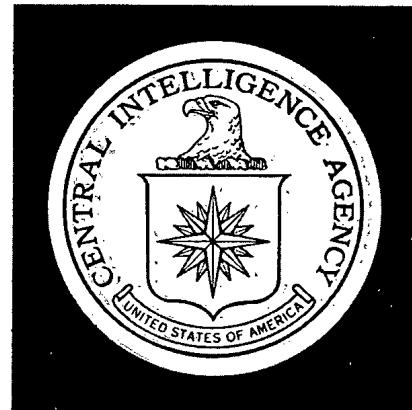
The party central committee has elected a new leadership, and extensive government changes are expected to follow soon. Reformers within the party now have a heavy majority on the policy-making presidium and are well represented on the new secretariat, which executes policy. All the new leaders are presumably committed to party secretary Dubcek's action program.

7. Rumania

Large amounts of Soviet-made armor which the Israelis captured last summer have been bought by Rumania. Moscow has been reluctant to supply hardware to the unreliable Rumanians recently. That Bucharest has found a way around the problem is going to be especially irritating to the Russians.

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Hanoi Comment on Johnson Speech: Hanoi radio's domestic service on 4 April carried a commentary giving for the first time an account of President Johnson's 31 March speech. It covered most of the main points, with some snide interpretative comments added for the benefit of the North Vietnamese populace. The broadcast reported the President's order stopping the bombing of North Vietnam "except in the area north of the demilitarized zone," but it failed to carry that part of the statement justifying the continuation of some bombing operations. It quoted the President's pledge of a full bombing halt in return for prompt and serious talks in which Hanoi would not take advantage of US restraint. The broadcast concluded by noting without direct comment that the President had announced he would not run for re-election.

* * *

More on 4 April Editorial: Further analysis of the editorial in Nhan Dan on 4 April suggests that although it sticks rigidly to basic North Vietnamese positions most of the time, some of the language could be designed to preserve tactical flexibility should this prove desirable in future contacts with the US.

Nhan Dan covers basically the same ground as the 3 April government statement. It elaborates on the point that President Johnson was forced to restrict the bombing because of military "failure" in Vietnam and rising opposition to US policy both at home and abroad. The editorial says the US "remains obstinate," however, and cites continued bombings up to the 20th parallel, reconnaissance flights "in every part of North Vietnam," and the President's statements about sending more US troops and keeping commitments to Saigon as evidence of this attitude.

The issue of reciprocal military restraint is treated more fully than in the 3 April government statement. The editorial does not specifically rule out Communist restraint in the future, although it does complain that despite continued bombing and strengthening of US and South Vietnamese forces, the US keeps asking the Communists to "slacken their fight against aggression." The editorial says that a demand for Communist reciprocity in return for a bombing halt and for setting conditions for a US troop withdrawal is still the "essence" of the US position. This, it says, "has been categorically rejected" by the Vietnamese Communists.

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Liberation Front on US-Hanoi Exchange: The Liberation Front in two separate broadcasts has carried the text of the 3 April Hanoi government statement. On 4 April the Liberation radio broadcast a 15-minute commentary which voiced "full support for the just stand and good will of the North Vietnamese Government" as expressed in its 3 April statement. The commentary criticized President Johnson's 31 March speech, calling it "shamelessly pre-arranged" and a "manifestation of the aggressive and cunning" propaganda of the US imperialists. The commentary termed President Johnson's stand as that of "a stubborn aggressor."

Citing the recent bombing of North Vietnam and spy flights by US planes over North Vietnam, the commentary said that President Johnson's speech was an attempt to conceal the US imperialists' "dark scheme of pursuing their aggression and domination of South Vietnam." It concluded that as long as the US imperialists do not give up their scheme of aggression against South Vietnam, the Vietnamese people will "never put down their weapons" and "will resolutely fight until complete victory."

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North Vietnamese Spokesman in London: A North Vietnamese correspondent in London, Nguyen Van Sao, appeared on a BBC television program on 4 April to claim that Hanoi's stated willingness to talk with

US officials was "just the beginning...to test Mr. Johnson's sincerity." Sao is not a prominent official, and his views may not carry much weight, but he claims that his statements were cleared with Hanoi's Paris office and in addition had been sent back to Hanoi.

In his TV appearance, he was unusually garrulous for a North Vietnamese spokesman. In addition to the usual line about talks starting after an unconditional bombing cessation, Sao volunteered that such talks could be held in a "matter of days" in Paris, Phnom Penh, or Poland. He also said that the talks would be restricted to North Vietnamese and American representatives and would be held at the ambassadorial level.

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Hanoi Plays Up Continuing Air Raids: To bolster its case for an unconditional end to the bombing throughout all of North Vietnam, Hanoi is providing detailed reporting on what it claims are continuing, intensive, and "inhumane" US air raids on the provinces south of the 20th parallel. It has coupled these reports with replays of statements in the Western press criticizing the US for ordering only a partial bombing halt and urging that the cessation include the entire country.

In broadcasts on 3 and 4 April, Hanoi listed a number of areas in the southern provinces which it claimed have received intensive bombings since the President's announcement of the bombing halt. Particular attention was focused on charges that these raids were directed against populated areas. The broadcasts also condemned the use of reconnaissance aircraft over provinces north of the 20th parallel and an alleged bombing of a populated area in a northwestern province near the Laotian border, far above the 20th parallel. Ambassador Sullivan says it is unlikely that US or Laotian planes were operating in this area. He suggests the possibility of a Chinese provocation.

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Liberation Front Office in Sweden: Recent Vietnamese Communist contacts with the Swedish Government have apparently resulted in an agreement to allow the Liberation Front to open an office in Stockholm. According to a 3 April Radio Sweden broadcast, the Front will open an information office in the Swedish capital in the next few months, and its representatives are looking for quarters in the city.

The new office could become a clearing house for Vietnamese Communist propaganda throughout Scandinavia and Western Europe. In addition, it doubtless would minister to the burgeoning Vietnam movement in Sweden. This is the second agreement for establishing a Front press office in Western Europe in recent months. The Front received approval for such an office in France, but it has never been opened.

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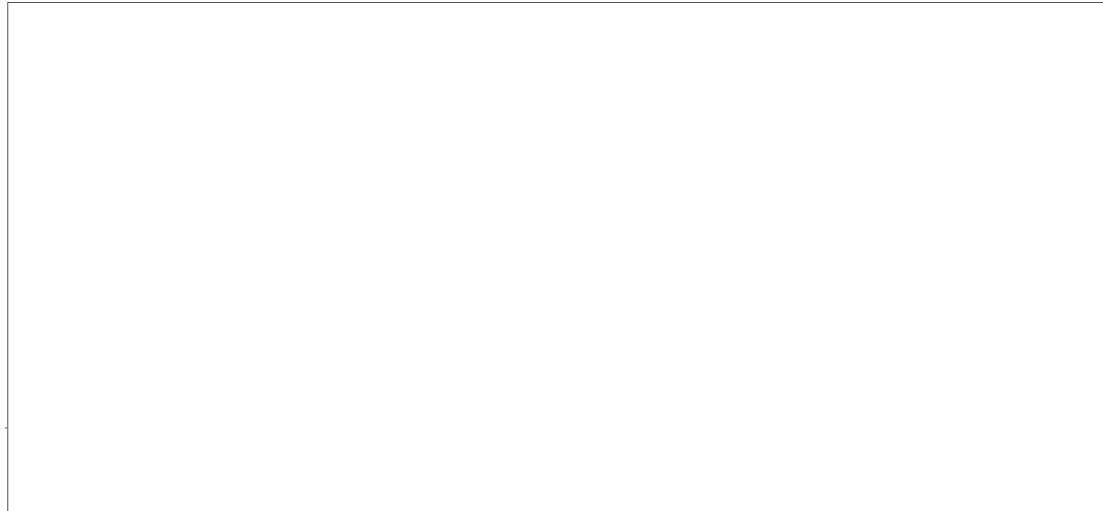
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Bo Uninformed of Hanoi's Intent: Mai Van Bo, the leading North Vietnamese diplomat in the West and a very authoritative spokesman on the negotiations issue, apparently did not anticipate either the nature or the promptness of his government's response to President Johnson.

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According to the US Embassy in Paris, Bo [redacted] told French Foreign Ministry officials that he did not put much stock in President Johnson's speech. He claimed it was made for domestic political reasons, and pointed out that the partial bombing restrictions did not meet Hanoi's requirement for full cessation. He also charged that the US was still sending reconnaissance planes north of the 20th parallel. Bo told the French that these actions would not obtain the desired result and that he personally believed that the North Vietnamese leaders would "not rush into any official reply."

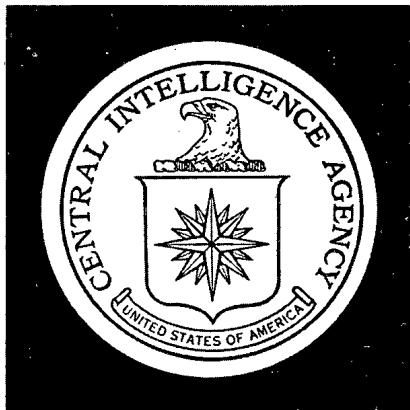
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report.

Top Secret



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 6 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
6 APRIL, 1968

1. Vietnam

While military activity in South Vietnam remains relatively light, we have gotten scattered and very tenuous indications in intercepts that the Communists are modifying their tactics. Specifically:

--At least one artillery unit near the Demilitarized Zone was ordered on 3 April to suspend firing.

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[Redacted box]
These fragments may reflect nothing but local tactical situations, but they may also be related to the current peace proposals.

* * *

In Saigon, meanwhile, [redacted] the prospect of negotiations has brought Thieu and Ky closer together than ever before.

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[Redacted box]
The South Vietnamese are totally unprepared for negotiations, however

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PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF
6 APRIL 1968

Correction to Item 3

Japan

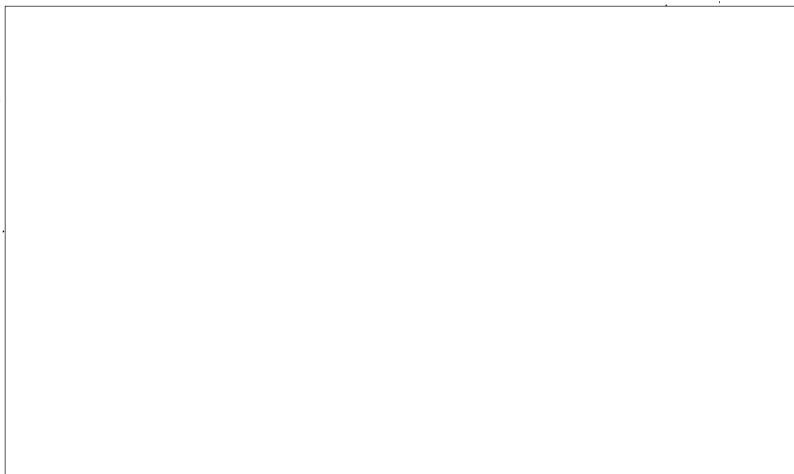
Foreign Minister Miki told Ambassador Johnson today that press reports of the ministerial mission to Washington were erroneous.

Miki says that he and Sato have agreed they will not make any moves on this score until they have had further talks with the ambassador.

2. South Korea

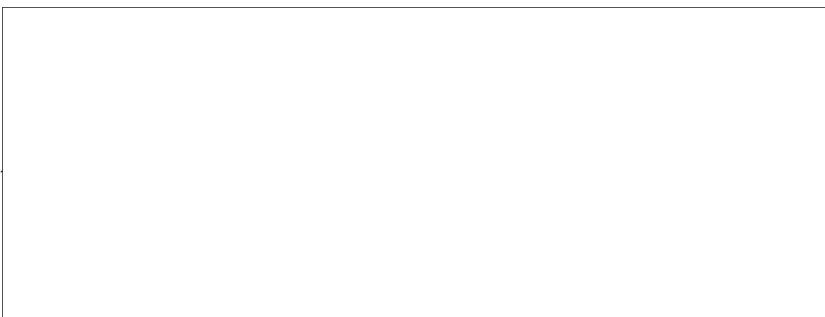
Leaders in both South Korea and Japan are worried that the US may pull back from its involvement in the Far East.

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**3. Japan**

Japanese Prime Minister Sato is also worried--so much so that his government announced today that it would "soon" send a cabinet-level emissary to the US. The Japanese still tend to believe that the President's renunciation of his candidacy must be a confession of responsibility for a mistaken policy in Vietnam, and they feel left out on a limb by the policy shift they see in his 31 March proposal.

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4. Cambodia

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5. Panama

Just before the Supreme Court ruled against Robles, Arias talked [redacted] about signs that his allies in the oligarchy were deserting him. He acknowledged he had been talking with "leftists" and said they seemed to be the only people who might help him "fight the National Guard and if necessary the US which was supporting the Guard." He said he would go into the hills rather than compromise with Robles.

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[redacted] Arias may have been talking for effect but that he sounded sincere. There is supposed to be a demonstration at Arias' party headquarters today.

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6. Czechoslovakia

The new leaders are trying to smoke out Free World capitals on the prospects for economic assistance. They are investigating private as well as governmental sources in the West and are considering renewed active membership in the International Monetary Fund.

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A switch to the West for economic aid could cause problems with Prague's allies. The country would be hurt badly, at least in the short term, if the USSR undertook economic reprisals.

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7. Soviet Union

The Soviets may launch a moon probe today--the first such attempt since an abortive shot in early February.

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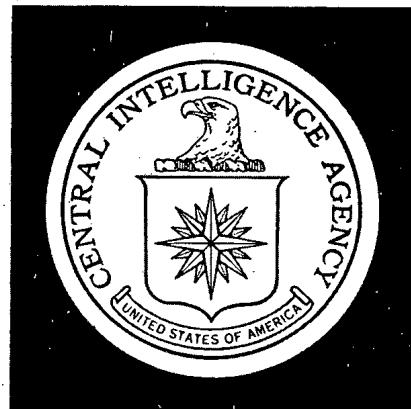
8. Canada

Justice Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau is the favorite as the Liberal Party meets today to select a successor to Prime Minister Pearson. As prime minister, the flamboyant Trudeau would probably change the style but not the substance of Pearson's policies.

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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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16

6 April 1968

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

6 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Peking Warns Hanoi Against Negotiations: Peking's news agency has released a Chinese statement entitled "Johnson Plays New Tricks of Inducing Peace Talks by Partial Suspension of Bombing." Peking is thus reiterating its standard warning against a US "fraud" designed to win in negotiations what cannot be achieved by military means. The Chinese have been setting the stage for the latest statement by repeatedly broadcasting Mao's quotation that "by persevering in protracted war, the Vietnamese people will surely drive the US aggressors out of their country."

* * *

Hanoi Blasts US Again: Hanoi has offered another strong criticism of what it terms the "limited US bombing halt" and has spelled out in some detail what it considers the "other acts of war" being committed by the US against North Vietnam. In a lengthy and authoritative "Commentator" article in the party daily, Nhan Dan, of 5 April, it claimed that despite the partial halt, the US was continuing to attach conditions to its peace offers and was "dead set" about pursuing "its aggressive design." The statement pointed out that despite the limitation of the bombing, the US was intensifying the war in the South as well as mounting record raids against populated areas of the country.

The "Commentator" article also stressed that the US had no right to commit any act against North Vietnam. It demanded that, in addition to an unconditional halt to the bombing throughout the whole of North Vietnam, the US also stop its "other acts of war." These, it claimed, include the use of reconnaissance aircraft and naval patrol craft as well as dropping leaflets and gifts, airdropping commandos or smuggling them from Laotian territory, and using artillery based in South Vietnam to bombard territory north of the Demilitarized Zone.

Hanoi Foreign Ministry Statement Protests US Bombing: The North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has joined the regime's propaganda campaign to pressure the US into a full bombing halt. In a statement broadcast on 5 April, it took the same line as earlier propaganda pronouncements in condemning the "limited" bombing halt and in pointing out that the regions still subject to bombing contain populated areas. The statement also denounced the US for continuing aerial reconnaissance and for sending its "warships" into North Vietnamese coastal waters. The statement closed by reiterating Hanoi's demand that the US stop "permanently and unconditionally" the bombing and all other acts of war in the whole of North Vietnam.

* * *

Liberation Front on Hanoi's Statement of 3 April: In its first original commentary on the new US - North Vietnamese peace dialogue, the Liberation Front ignored the fact that both sides have agreed to meet for "pretalk" talks. The Front had already rebroadcast the full text of Hanoi's response to President Johnson's speech, but it did so without comment. In its new commentary on 4 April, the Front treated the Hanoi statement as a rededication of Communist efforts to win a military victory without any reference to Hanoi's offer to meet with US representatives.

The entire lengthy commentary is a strong condemnation of President Johnson's speech as a trick and as an admission that the US has suffered a military defeat in South Vietnam. It calls the Hanoi reply an "eloquent" answer to the "cunning and deceitful arguments" of the US President and implies that the main thrust of Hanoi's answer was a tough reaffirmation of Ho Chi Minh's call to continue the fighting until Communist objectives have been won.

This kind of approach is not unusual for the Front, which almost always reflects a much harder line on negotiations than Hanoi does. On the other hand, the fact that the complete text of the Hanoi offer was broadcast by the Front indicates that there is no effort on the part of the Front to misrepresent the Hanoi position or to keep the South Vietnamese Communists in the dark about current developments.

It probably does represent an effort on the part of the Front to interpret these developments as making little or no change in accepted Communist positions.

* * *

Hanoi's Propaganda on Fighting in the South: Despite the relative lull in the fighting in South Vietnam, Hanoi's propaganda on 4 and 5 April seemed to take particular pains to make the point that Communist forces are continuing to inflict serious losses on allied units. A broadcast wrapping up events during the last week of March focused on allied "defeats" in the northern provinces. Other statements on 4 and 5 April dwelt on events around Khe Sanh. Despite the fact that fighting has actually been relatively light in the area, both statements described heavy fighting, large numbers of allied casualties, and panic in the ranks of the allied forces.

* * *

Laotian Leader Thinks Hanoi Has Made a Major Retreat: Premier Souvanna told Ambassador Sullivan yesterday that he considers Hanoi's statement of 3 April to be a "major retreat from its previous adamant position about talks." He said that Hanoi has, in effect, finally conceded its willingness to negotiate while bombing continues. This, he admitted, had surprised him. He thinks there were two main reasons for Hanoi's unexpected move: (1) President Johnson had scored a major psychological advantage by withdrawing from the presidential race; and (2) Hanoi is probably really hurting badly and needs peace.

Souvanna said he was sure that "all other Orientals" would interpret Hanoi's move the way he does and see it as a loss of face.

The Laotian leader said he "assumed" that the Soviets had played some role in getting Hanoi to react favorably to the President's 31 March speech.

Finally, Souvanna said he is gratified that Averell Harriman will be the US negotiator because this "assures that Laos will not be forgotten."

Views of Soviet Ambassador in Vientiane: Sullivan also talked yesterday with his Soviet counterpart, who said with apparent sincerity that he was sure Hanoi's response to the President's proposals was unconditional and genuine, rather than a tactical delaying action. He told Sullivan that he thought Hanoi would attach more importance to the make-up of the respective negotiating teams than to a good many substantive questions.

* * *

The Paul Doumer Bridge:

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[redacted] as of late last week the Paul Doumer Bridge was still not being repaired. However, material for getting the bridge back into service was being stockpiled on its approaches.

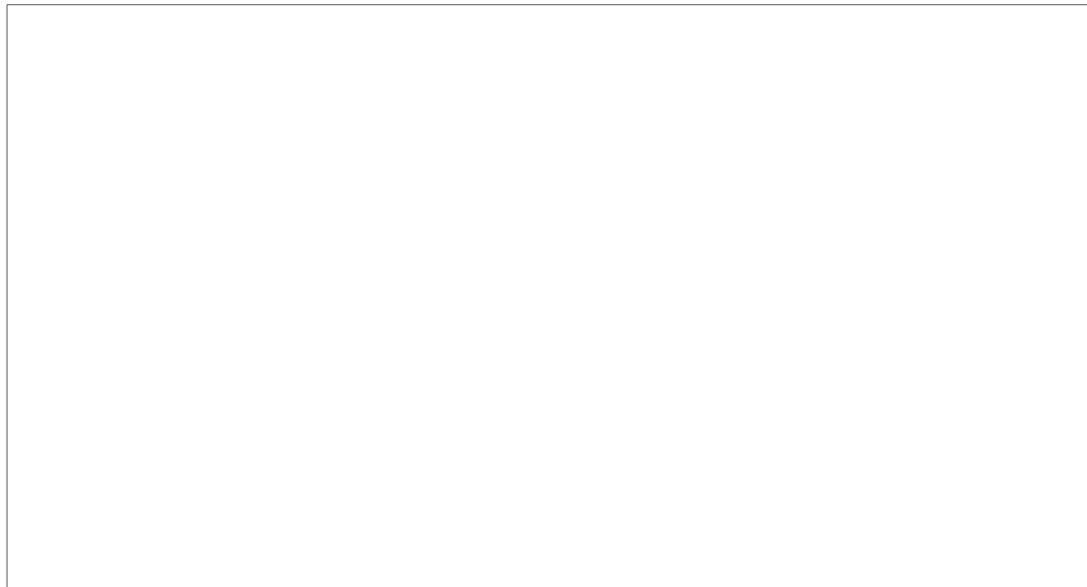
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[redacted] work is to get under way on the bridge soon and that it is expected to be open for rail traffic in a month. Soviet helicopters, he said, are to be used to lift new bridge sections into place.

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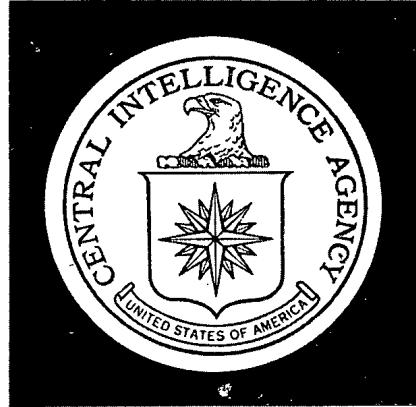
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report at
this time.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 8 April 1968



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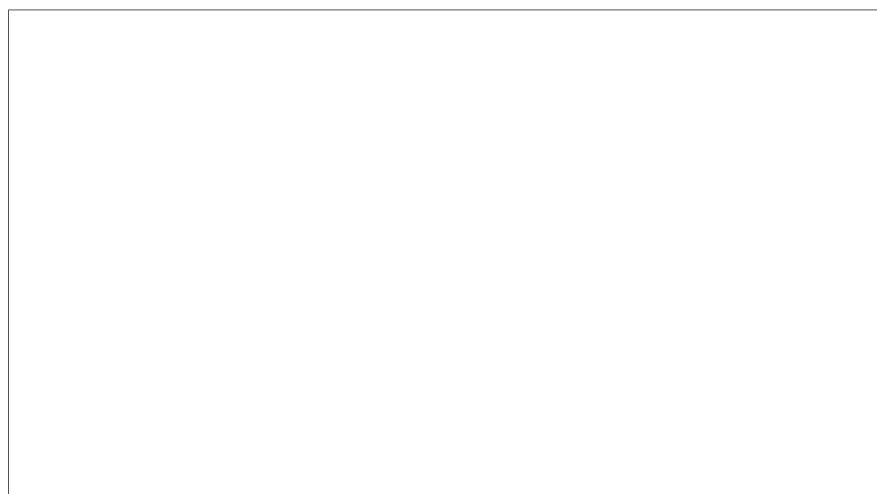
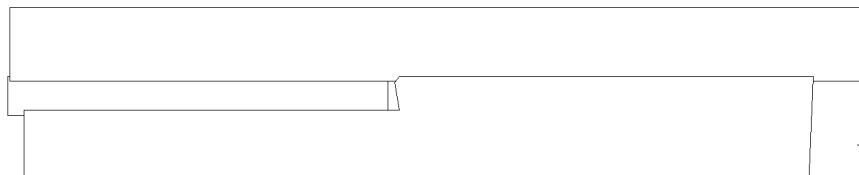
DAILY BRIEF
8 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

Communist forces continue to react cautiously to US operations in the Khe Sanh area. They seem to be offering only limited resistance while trying to determine the scope of the allied drive.

Farther south, the North Vietnamese seem to be taking advantage of the last few weeks of dry weather in the central highlands to move very large quantities of combat supplies into Kon-tum Province.

2. Pakistan



3. Poland

More reports are coming in on high-level government changes expected this week. We do not think Gomulka is on his way out, but the reports do point to a high government post for Edward Gierek, the man who may well take over from Gomulka ultimately.

Gierek, Politburo member with a strong power base in the industrial south, has been speaking more and more like a man who sees a big future for himself.

What looked earlier like a Gierek alliance with the hardliners now seems more like a temporary tactical ploy. He is now making a pitch for support from the party's younger, reform-minded members, and he is omitting the anti-semitic overtones from his speeches.

4. East Germany

The surprising thing about the "referendum" yesterday approving a new constitution was that more than 400,000 people voted against it (out of some 12 million). It took courage to vote no. The authorities were standing by, taking down the names of those who did so.

5. Soviet Union

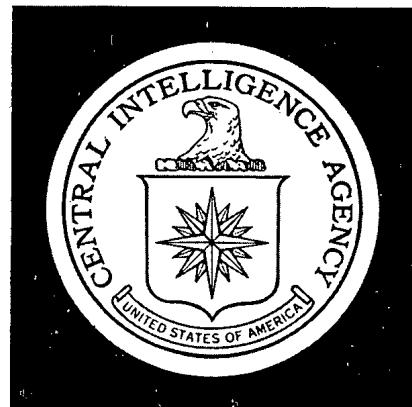
The party's Central Committee is scheduled to meet this Tuesday. We think it will be concerned mainly with domestic affairs.

6. Soviet Union

The lunar probe launched yesterday seems to be operating as planned. It will take about three days to reach the area of the moon. This is the first time in well over a year that a Soviet probe has successfully left earth orbit. Its mission is either to orbit the moon or to land a payload on the surface.

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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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16

8 April 1968

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

8 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Hanoi Publicly Silent on Prospective "Contacts"
with US: The Vietnamese Communists did not issue any significant new public statements or commentary during the weekend concerning their attitude toward prospective "contacts" with a US representative. Communist media have not reported Foreign Minister Trinh's statement to CBS correspondent Charles Collingwood that Hanoi is ready "to make contact" with a US representative in Phnom Penh "or in another place to be mutually agreed upon."

* * *

Sihanouk Willing to Host Vietnam Peace Talks:
On Friday, Sihanouk told [redacted] that he "would be happy" to have Phnom Penh used as the site for initial US - North Vietnamese contacts. He said this in the course of a speculative discussion about various places that might be proposed by Hanoi. He thought Rangoon was another possibility.

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* * *

Hanoi Continues to Condemn Bombings: North Vietnam is issuing daily reminders of continued US bombing in an attempt to keep up the pressure for a full bombing cessation. In a broadcast on 7 April, Hanoi radio charged the US with conducting "repeated and very savage bombing raids" against North Vietnamese territory. The broadcast implied these attacks were in violation of President Johnson's statements of 31 March. According to Hanoi, the President said he was stopping the bombing "except in the area north of the Demilitarized Zone," and that this area included "almost 90 percent" of North Vietnam's population. "In reality," said the broadcast, the US has continued to attack "an important part of the territory and population" of North Vietnam. It cited attacks in all four provinces

south of the 20th parallel, and "even Lai Chau province," in the northwestern part of the country, where the regime claims an attack occurred last week.

North Vietnamese news agency items on 6 and 7 April were blatantly aimed at drumming up international support for Hanoi's case against the US. The agency charged the US with attacks on "many heavily populated areas" and with killing "many people, including old folks and children." The news agency said US attacks in one southern province had increased sharply since the President's speech, and mentioned bombings while "local people were eating dinner" and Catholics were "holding services."

* * *

Hanoi Scores President Johnson's "Stubbornness": In a commentary broadcast to American troops in South Vietnam on 5 April, Hanoi radio noted both President Johnson's restrictions on bombing and his call for negotiations. It called his concern for casualties on both sides "hypocrisy," however, and said these moves were forced on the President by the military situation in Vietnam and rising pressures against US policy both at home and abroad.

The broadcast condemned the President's moves as inadequate and argued that sending additional US troops to Vietnam and continuing bombings "against populated areas hundreds of miles north of the DMZ" amounted to a "US plot." The broadcast repeated the key paragraph from Hanoi's 3 April statement about being ready to contact the US in order to stop the bombing, but ended by telling US forces they should not be in Vietnam and by accusing the President of "stubbornness."

* * *

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Hanoi Claims Action Around Khe Sanh: For the fourth day in a row, Hanoi's international news service on 7 April carried false accounts of "heavy" fighting around Khe Sanh. Claims of "heavy losses" inflicted on US forces by Communist infantry and artillery units in the Khe Sanh area were attributed to Viet Cong press reports. On 7 April the news service claimed that "over 1,400 enemy troops" had been "wiped out" and 16 aircraft shot down in the period 3-6 April. This account, like three earlier ones, is virtually all fiction. Except for one sharp clash on 5 April, Communist forces offered little resistance to allied operations around Khe Sanh during this period, and artillery attacks on the base were relatively light.

* * *

Japanese Correspondent's Report: A Japanese correspondent just back from Hanoi wrote in the 7 April Asahi that he was surprised to find almost no signs of air attacks on Hanoi. He said he expected to see destruction similar to that in Japan during World War II, but the only definite mark of bomb damage he observed was the Paul Doumer Bridge.

In Haiphong, however, he reports the picture was much different, with schools, hospitals, and churches in ruins. Even there, though, he said supplies of food and other daily necessities seemed ample and trucks rolled through the bombed-out areas regularly.

* * *

Traveling Diplomat: Hanoi's vice minister of foreign affairs, Hoang Van Loi, is continuing his junket through Africa. On Saturday he arrived in Guinea; from there he will visit Mali, Congo (Brazzaville), Tanzania, Egypt, and Syria.

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

Hanoi on King Assassination: Hanoi radio's domestic service on 6 April broadcast a commentary on Martin Luther King's murder. This had prompted a "resurgence of the Negro movement" in the US, it said, and then reviewed reports of disorders in US cities. President Johnson, it claimed, "ordered a national funeral for King" in order to "appease the struggle." The commentary charges that King had been "jailed 15 times by President Johnson for his civil rights struggle," and that last year the President used arms to "suppress" Negroes. The broadcast only weakly links the disorders to Vietnam, by saying that while the US is "having headaches with the Vietnam issue," the Negroes' "struggle" is another blow at the administration.

A more vicious line directly connecting the assassination and the war was taken in the party daily, Nhan Dan, on 7 April. North Vietnam, it said, "demanded" that the US stop "all acts of suppression" against black people. The outbreak of new violence in US cities is hailed as a "second front" against "US imperialism right in the heart of the United States." Vietnam is described as the "center and front line" of the "first front" against the US. The paper concludes by quoting words used by Premier Pham Van Dong during Stokely Carmichael's visit last summer praising the "struggle" of American Negroes against the US "common enemy."

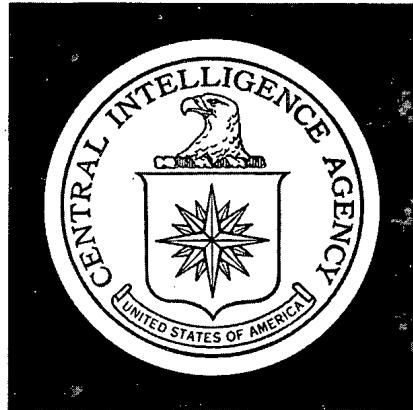
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North Vietnamese Radio Notes US Support: Hanoi radio in English on Saturday said that "progressive American opinion" welcomes the North Vietnamese statement of 3 April. It said many prominent personalities are "calling on the American public to

increase its struggle to urge that the US Government stop the war." The American "personalities" mentioned in the broadcast included "Dellinger, editor of the Review Liberation; the Reverend Berningan, well-known peace militant"; the Reverend Coffin; and Joan Baez.

The broadcast also claimed that some 90 American youths in New York last week demonstrated against conscription for Vietnam and decided to return their draft cards. "They called on the American people to redouble their pressure on the government to end its aggression."

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 9 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
9 APRIL 1968

1. North Vietnam

[Redacted]

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Intercepts reveal the movement of some 18 additional "groups," about 10,000 men, along the infiltration corridor within North Vietnam during the first week of April. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

2. South Vietnam

The North Vietnamese are evidently preparing for a major military campaign in Kontum Province. Intercepts and aerial reconnaissance point to a high level of logistical activity in this area. Intercepts also disclose that the Communists intend to use 105-mm. howitzers in southwestern Kontum.

3. Israel-Jordan

The border situation has been quiet since yesterday morning when the Israelis crossed into Jordan, allegedly in "hot pursuit" of Arab terrorists.

The Israelis used troop-carrying helicopters in the operation, which lasted less than two hours. The Israelis claim they killed a number of saboteurs and destroyed a house at a commando base six miles inside Jordan; they listed no casualties of their own.

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4. South Korea

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5. Cyprus

The word from Nicosia is that the question of venue is the only remaining snag in plans for talks between representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities. There is considerable hope that the two sides will agree on a compromise--initial talks in Geneva and subsequent sessions on Cyprus. Some officials are mentioning 17 April as the likely starting date.

6. Canada

We do not expect Pierre Trudeau to make any quick changes in Canadian policy. He holds few of Pearson's foreign and domestic policies sacrosanct, but he will probably be cautious and deliberate in making changes.

Trudeau has promised a thorough review of Canada's defense ties, in part because he admits a lack of familiarity with them. Some further cuts in Canadian force contributions to NATO and UN peace-keeping operations could result from such a review, but a change in basic policy is much less likely.

Domestic problems, particularly the conciliation of Quebec, will be the first order of business.

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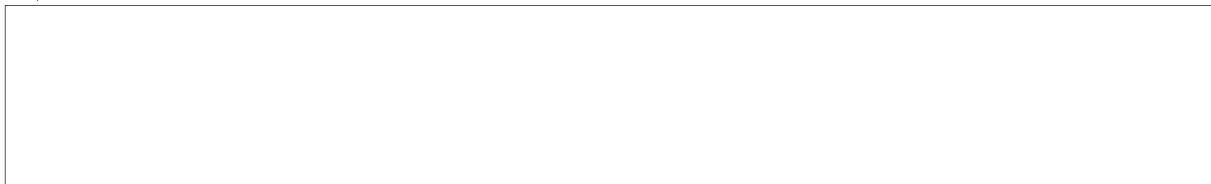
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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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Top Secret

16

9 April 1968

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

9 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Trinh/Collingwood Interview: Hanoi has published its version of Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh's interview with CBS newscaster Charles Collingwood.

According to Hanoi, the foreign minister was questioned about the Tet offensive, President Johnson's offer to limit the bombing of North Vietnam, the possibilities for talks between Hanoi and Washington, and the future of South Vietnam. He replied that the Tet offensive had convinced the "Pentagon" that military victory in Vietnam was not possible; he added that the President's restriction of the bombing met neither the demands of Hanoi nor those of world opinion. He said the US must "prove by words and deeds that it really wants serious contacts and talks." To do so it must unconditionally stop the bombing "and all other acts of war over all the territory of North Vietnam."

On the issue of reciprocity, Trinh said that the US demand for North Vietnamese "restraint" was "pure nonsense." Like North Vietnamese propaganda since the regime's 3 April statement, Trinh did not specifically rule out reciprocity, but he said this US condition was nothing but a "trick."

As Collingwood reported earlier, Trinh suggested "contacts" in Phnom Penh at the ambassadorial level.

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Trinh voiced confidence that the Saigon government would collapse without US support, and said that the program of the Liberation Front spelled out the Communist notion of a coalition government. He closed the interview with a message to the American people asking for their support in "thwarting the unjust policy of the Washington warmongers."

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Other Comment: Other Hanoi radio commentary on the proposed "contacts for talks" has not been extensive. It continues to spend most of its time cataloguing US violations of President Johnson's announced bombing restriction. The leading non-Communist front in North Vietnam--the Fatherland Front--issued a statement of support on 7 April which added little to charges already catalogued. The statement said that the US plans to continue "reconnaissance and provocative acts" over two coastal provinces just north of the 20th parallel and that US warships were continuing the shelling of "a number of coastal villages." It pointed to announced US troop build-ups in South Vietnam and US refusal to meet "completely the legitimate demands of the Vietnamese people," and concluded with a pledge of determination to fight till final victory.

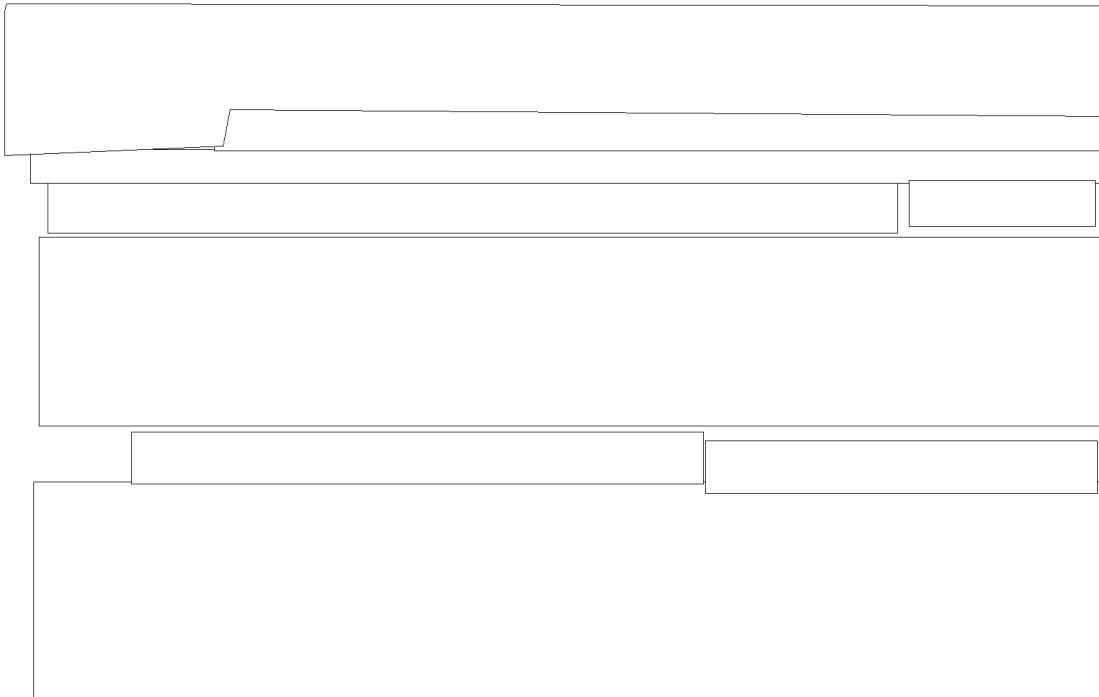
Liberation radio commentary continues to play President Johnson's offer as an admission of defeat on the part of the US. The President's decision not to run for re-election is interpreted in the same way; it is called a "dangerous card played by Johnson in the hope that the American people will ask him to change his mind." The President is called an "old fox" and his 31 March offer a "perfidious plot." The "only path to peace," says Liberation radio, must include an unconditional end to the bombings and the withdrawal of all US troops from the South.

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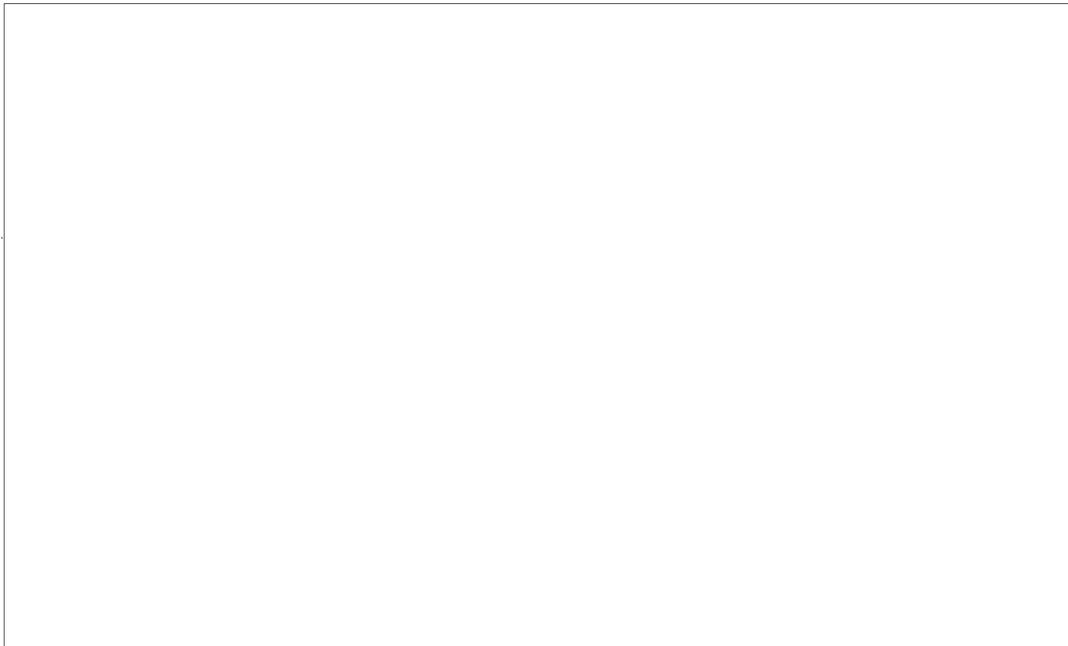
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More Americans to Hanoi: Five representatives of American antiwar groups who were scheduled to go to Hanoi late this month are now slated to make the trip on 10 May. [redacted]

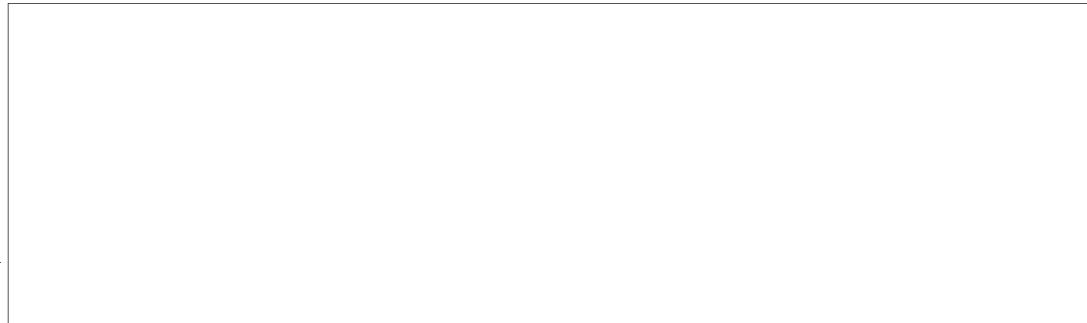
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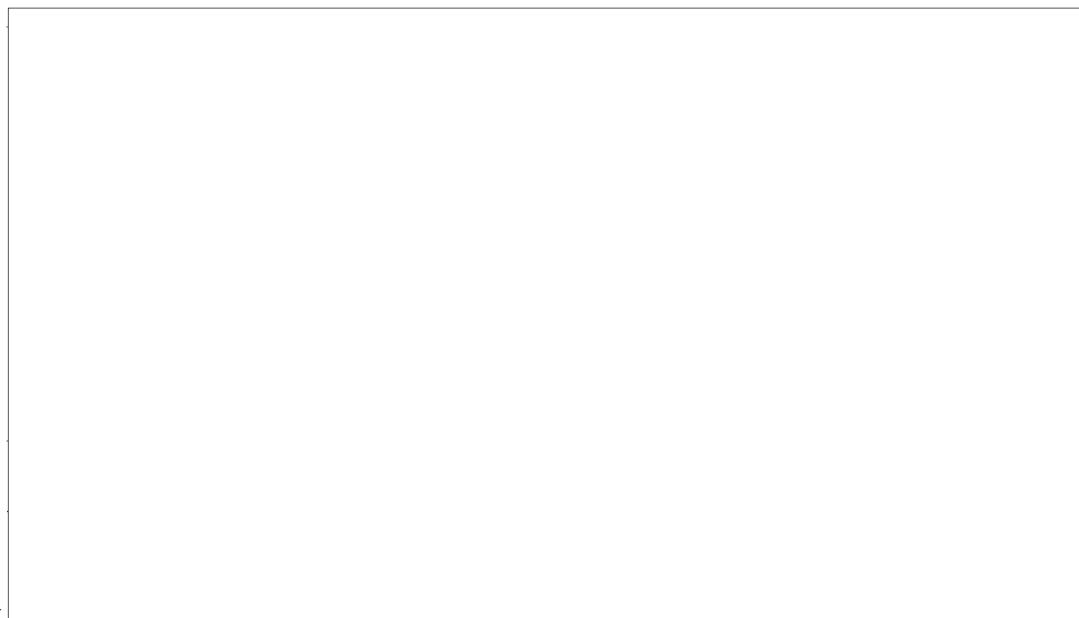
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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 10 April 1968

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DAILY BRIEF
10 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

Allied forces fanning out from Khe Sanh are still reporting only light to moderate contact with the North Vietnamese in the area. Prisoners report that the enemy is suffering from low morale, insufficient food supplies, and heavy casualties caused by B-52 strikes.

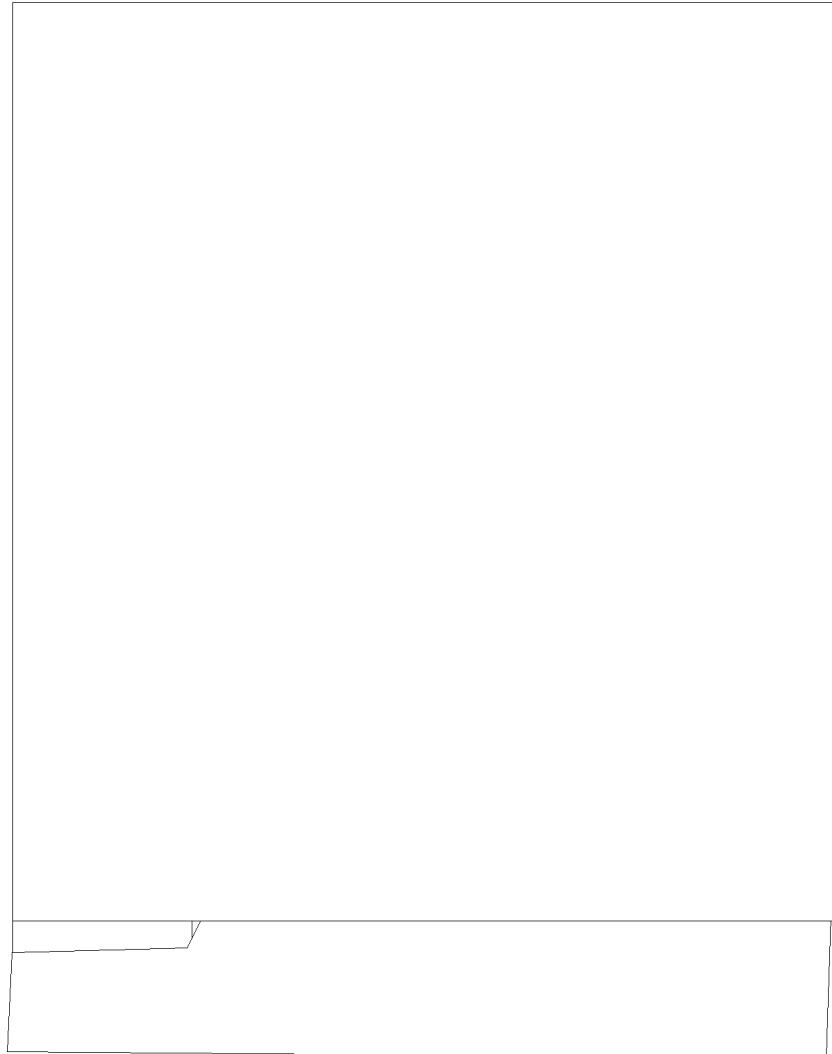
Elsewhere, allied spoiling operations have gotten under way in the Saigon area and on the coast near the Demilitarized Zone.

2. Middle East

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3. Jarring Mission

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4. Israel-Jordan

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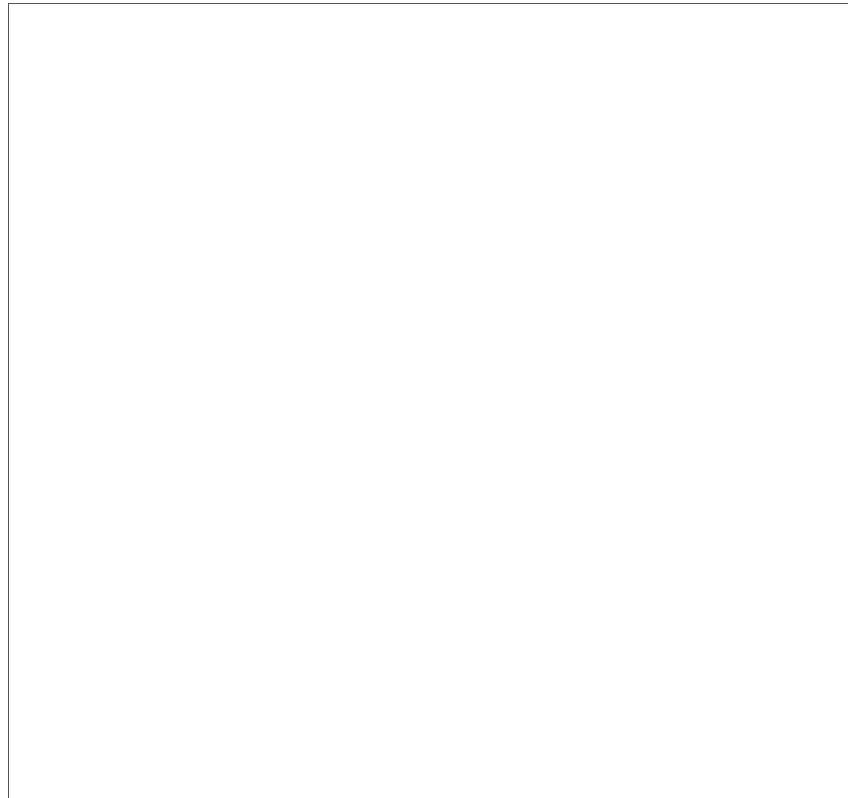
[redacted] there is no sign that things are simmering down. The Israelis are saying publicly that the "hot pursuit" action of two days ago is now the approved tactic for dealing with terrorists. We may therefore see more short, quick border crossings in the future.

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5. South Korea



6. Philippines

President Marcos, yielding to domestic pressure, is apparently now willing to replace part of the Filipino military engineer contingent in Vietnam with medical personnel. This is in spite of word from Saigon that it needs the engineers more.

Marcos feels he cannot push too hard for retention of the engineers since he has just weathered one political storm: the recent disclosure of Philippine plotting to stir up trouble in Malaysian Borneo. Besides, many Filipinos, including Marcos himself, have said they think the need for a Philippine presence in Vietnam has been lessened by President Johnson's 31 March speech.

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7. USSR-Iran

Although Kosygin's visit to Tehran did not produce anything startling, he made some modest headway in increasing the USSR's respectability in Iran.

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8. USSR

Satellite photography in late March disclosed a missile on a launcher at each of the three completed anti-missile complexes around Moscow. It appears that construction of the complex as a whole is on schedule and will be finished by 1970 or 1971.

9. Ethiopia

Security forces are on the alert for a student riot at the university in Addis Ababa today. The students have long been vociferously critical of Haile Selassie's government, and they are strongly anti-US as well.

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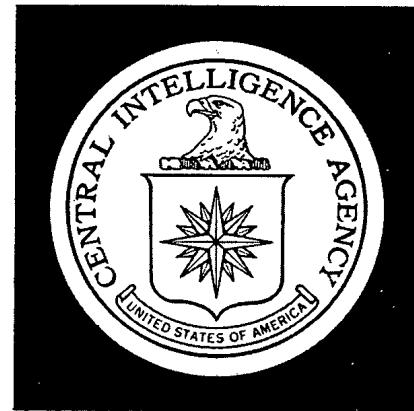
There were disturbances with heavy anti-American overtones just last week.

Faced with the unpalatable alternatives of giving in to the students or cracking down on them, Haile Selassie would almost certainly choose the latter.

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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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10 April 1968

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

10 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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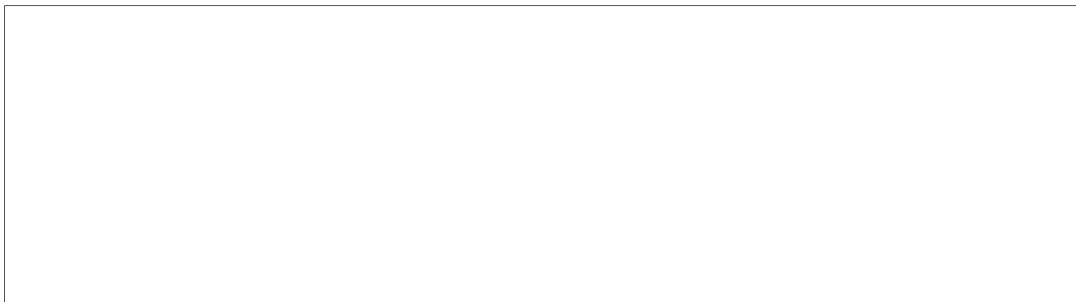
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Tough Line for Vietnamese Audience: Hanoi broadcast an extremely hard editorial on 8 April. The broadcast was for Vietnamese consumption and was taken from a commentary in the Army daily the day before which claimed President Johnson's speech of 31 March was tantamount to an admission of military defeat in South Vietnam.

The bombing limitation was forced on the President by world opinion, the commentary said. It claimed the Tet offensive and General Westmoreland's reassignment as "evidence" the US was near military collapse.

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The commentary also emphasized the fact that Hanoi's terms for a settlement of the war were unchanged--the four points of the North Vietnamese and the political platform of the Liberation Front--and warned that the fighting would continue until these objectives were obtained. It predicted an extremely bitter round of fighting in the future as the war entered a new stage.

This is the harshest Hanoi statement on the war since its offer on 3 April to begin "pretalk talks" with the US. It is almost certainly designed to convince the South Vietnamese Communists that Hanoi is not about to abandon them in the course of contacts with the US. It will also help to steel the people of the North for continuing heavy burdens.

* * *

More on Bombing: Hanoi propaganda is continuing to portray US bombings in the area south of the 20th parallel as particularly intensive and inhumane. On 8 April, in an international English language broadcast, Hanoi claimed a raid on a Catholic hamlet on 4 April had killed or injured many people, including a 60-year-old woman and a day-old child.

Broadcasts such as this are part of the effort to demonstrate that the US is still harboring "aggressive designs" and not really curbing its military activity. Hanoi evidently believes such commentary places additional pressure on the US for a full end to the bombing.

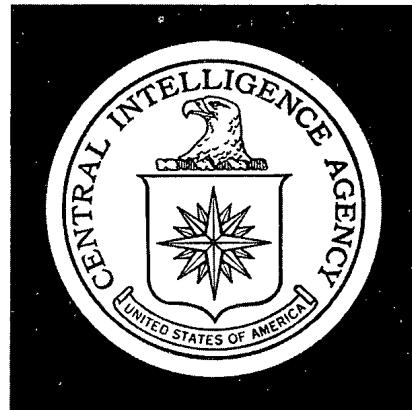
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Pham Van Dong Gives Interviews: Premier Pham Van Dong has given a series of interviews to non-Communist correspondents recently in an effort to reach large Free World audiences. The texts of these

interviews are not yet available, but, in addition to Charles Collingwood, Japanese, Latin American, and French journalists all claim to have interviewed the Premier in the past few days. On 8 April Hanoi broadcast a part of the conversations with Collingwood, but only that part which appealed to the American people to support a US troop withdrawal from Vietnam. With that exception, Hanoi has not yet broadcast any of these interviews, presumably to give the correspondents a chance to get their stories filed first.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 11 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
11 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

There still is a good deal of apprehension about US - North Vietnamese talks. Prominent men both in and out of the government are [redacted] expressing concern that the US will not adequately protect Saigon's interests.

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South Vietnamese leaders are making a special effort to allay suspicion.

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On the military front, Communist forces are generally staying clear of large-scale actions,

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2. Cuba

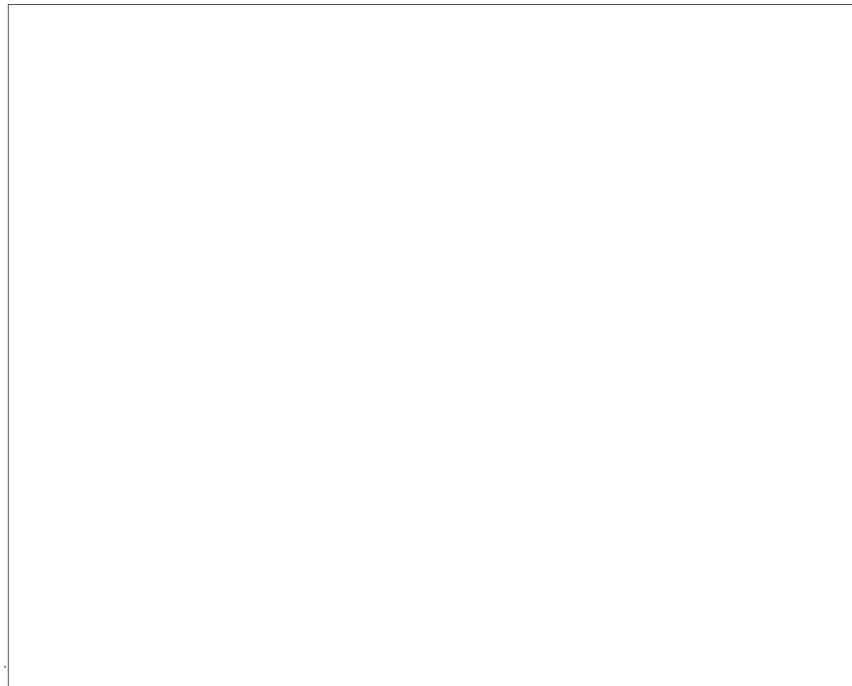
Tuesday night Castro made a major change in his thesis on revolution which may be aimed at repairing some of his damaged bridges to the Soviet Union.

In contrast to his adamant stand that a rural guerrilla war is the ultimate road to victory, Fidel praised the role of the urban population in the Cuban revolution. This puts Castro more in line with the doctrinaire Communists who insist revolution must be spawned in the cities. It may also encourage urban terrorists in Guatemala and Venezuela.

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3. Singapore

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4. Panama

Arias has now injected the canal treaties into the presidential campaign. He made a speech Monday night calling on his backers to show their rejection of the treaties by voting his ticket on 12 May. Arias [redacted] would push for further negotiations if elected. He undoubtedly hopes this emotional issue will whip up the popular enthusiasm he was unable to generate during the recent impeachment crisis.

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5. Iran

The Shah is pressing for a clear understanding on whether the US will supply his military needs over the next five years. This subject was raised again with Ambassador Meyer on Monday. If the problem is not resolved in the interim, the Shah is sure to raise the issue when he visits Washington in June.

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6. Poland

There are some tenuous signs Gomulka may be losing ground in the factional struggle, but no clear winners are in sight yet. [redacted] Warsaw [redacted] atmosphere as that of a witch hunt with the average Pole unable to see, understand, or influence what is going on.

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7. Soviet Union

The Central Committee wound up its two-day session yesterday with a statement reflecting Moscow's growing concern that events in Eastern Europe will encourage domestic dissent. The statement [redacted] blamed the West for "undermining socialist society" and disrupting Communist unity.

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Little was said about such domestic matters as agriculture. Evidently these were overtaken by the more pressing problems of divisiveness and liberalization in Eastern Europe.

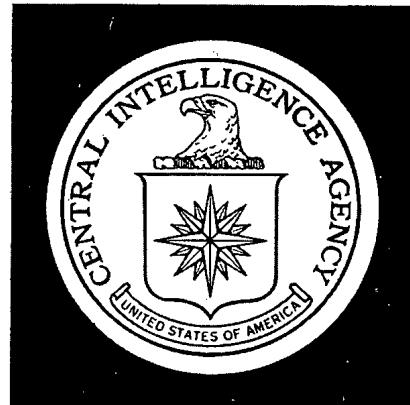
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Luna 14, launched Sunday, apparently did go into orbit around the moon yesterday. Its principal mission probably is to send back photographs of prospective landing sites for a manned lunar program.

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16

11 April 1968

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

11 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Internal Security in North Vietnam: Hanoi's recent publication of a new decree against "counter-revolutionaries" may have been primarily a measure to tighten the regime's control apparatus in preparation for a new and crucial period of the war.

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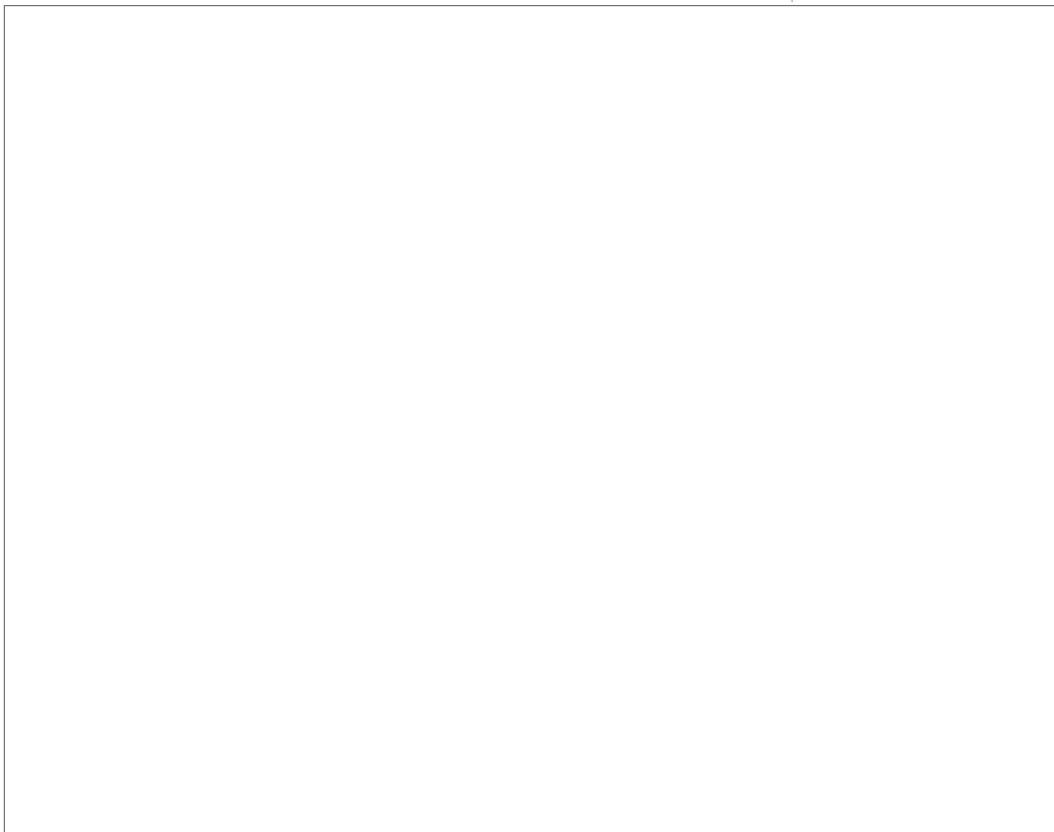
The decree doubtless was a warning to unreliable elements of the population. It may indicate greater concern over both internal security because of the war and over allied sabotage and intelligence operations. It seems likely, however, that the decree was but one of a series of steps the regime took last fall in preparation for the new and large-scale military effort it was then mounting in support of Communist forces in South Vietnam. Some of this concern may stem from the decision to commit substantial additional portions of North Vietnamese armed forces to the conflict and thus reduce those available for security in the North.

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Hanoi Prices:**/ prices in the North Vietnamese capital:**

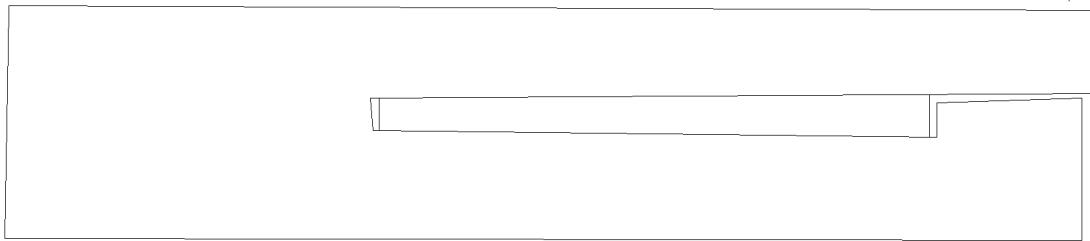
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--The official rice price is equivalent to about five cents a pound, but rice bought on the black market costs roughly three times as much.

--The "rice" ration is actually half rice and half flour, with the monthly ration based on the individual's job. Most of the rice in Hanoi comes from Communist China.

--Chicken and beef are expensive, running about \$1.50 a pound.

--The official exchange rate is 3.53 dong to \$1.00 US. On the black market, however, the rate is 5 or 6 dong to the dollar.



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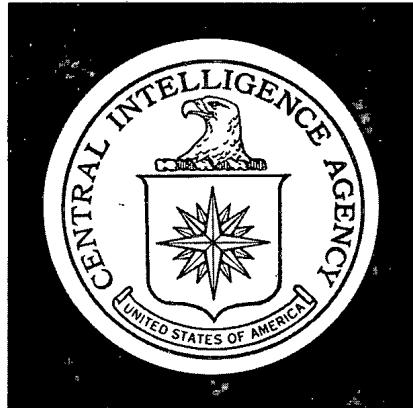
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Liberation Front Sends Condolences on Dr. King's Death: Nguyen Huu Tho, chairman of the Liberation Front, has sent a message to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference offering his condolences on the assassination of Martin Luther King. In a broadcast by Hanoi on 9 April, Tho claimed that King had been murdered by "racists" in the US, and alleged that the tragic death of Dr. King pointed up the "bloody suppression of the legitimate struggle of the black Americans" by the Johnson administration. Tho also noted in his message that the US had been making it a practice for many years now to send "black forces" to Vietnam to oppose the "just struggle of the South Vietnamese people."

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 12 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
12 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

More signs are appearing that Communist main force units in several parts of the country are pulling back from areas that had until recently been of high tactical interest. In the Khe Sanh area, small-scale enemy rear guard actions seem designed to cover withdrawal of major North Vietnamese combat units.

Communications intelligence also points to withdrawals farther south in I Corps.

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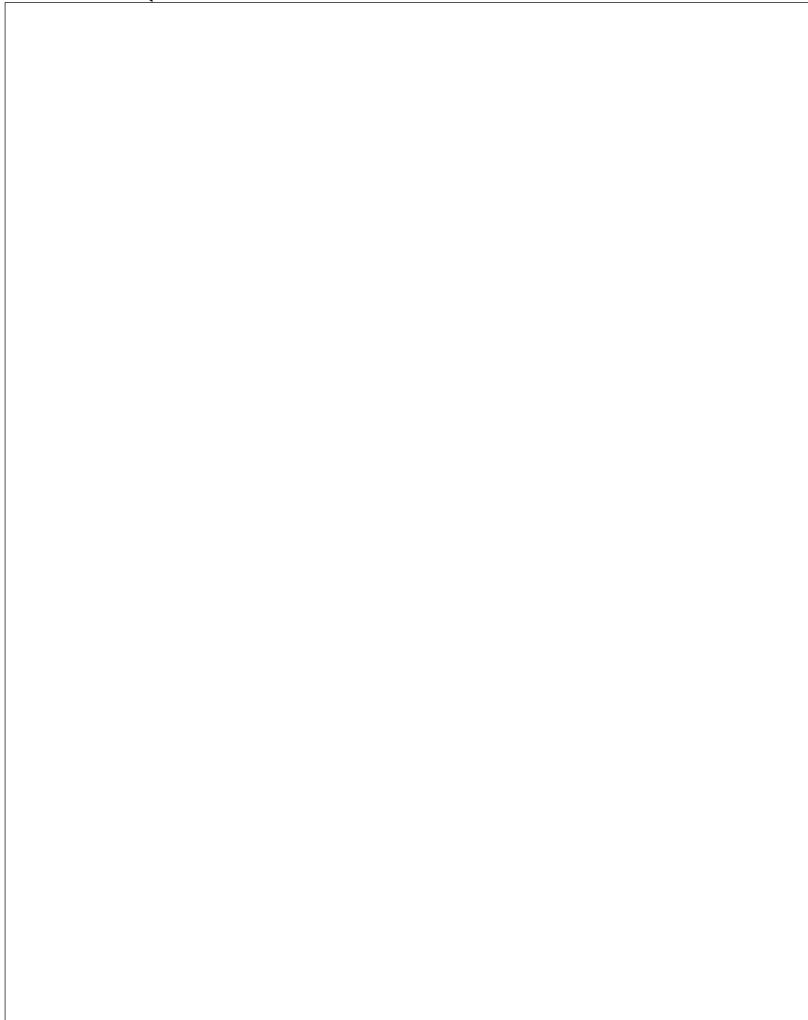
It is too soon to know whether these movements are aimed at creating the impression of Communist military restraint. They could be responses to pressure from allied operations or, in some cases, simply to a need for resupplying and reinforcing the units involved.

2. France-Israel

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3. Egypt-Jordan

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4. West Berlin

The shooting of a militant student leader yesterday will further inflame the city's leftist students. They had already been organizing anti-US demonstrations for Easter weekend. If these come off as planned, the situation could become ugly.

5. Poland

Gomulka may have won the first round in the struggle against the hard-liners around Interior Minister Moczar. This is our tentative assessment of the government changes announced yesterday. The turmoil inside the party is still far from being under control, however, and Gomulka has yet to respond to the demands of the younger, reform-minded elements in the party.

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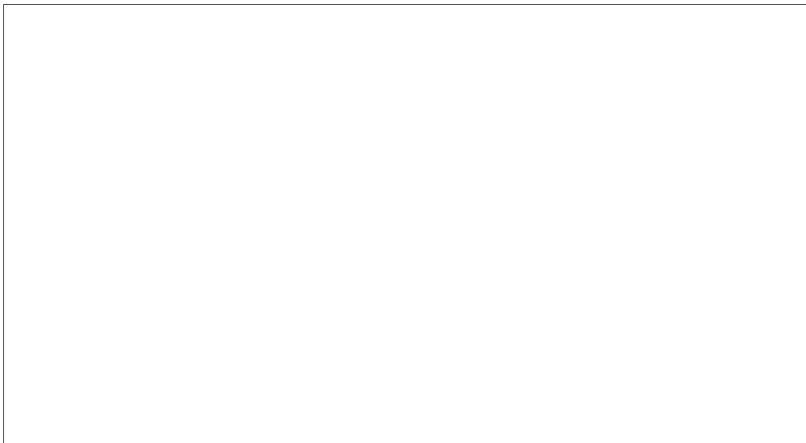
6. Turkey

High government officials are urging postponement of the US naval visits scheduled for later this month. They are afraid the visits may be marred by demonstrations set off by the growing leftist campaign against Turkey's participation in NATO.

7. Rhodesia

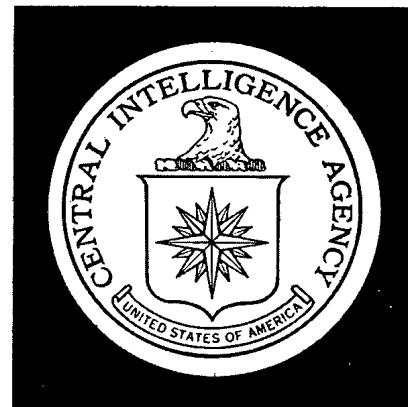
Ian Smith's special commission has come up with a new draft of constitutional proposals. This is the worst yet from the British point of view. If this document is adopted, it will be generations before the country's blacks could legally obtain even political parity with the whites.

8. Netherlands

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Political Attitudes



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16

12 April 1968

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

12 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Hanoi Criticises US Refusal of Phnom Penh as Site for "Contacts": The US was accused of "finding illegitimate pretexts" for refusing to meet in the Cambodian capital. The blast was transmitted early today on Hanoi radio's international service in English. The broadcast claimed to be a translation of a commentary in today's issue of the party daily, Nhan Dan.

The commentary reviewed Hanoi's 3 April statement agreeing to "contacts" with the US and claimed that this had met with "approval and support from broad public opinion in the world and even in the US." The commentary then recalled Trinh's interview with Charles Collingwood when Phnom Penh, "or another place mutually to be agreed upon," was suggested. The commentary noted that Collingwood had been told that "in the course of this contact, the American side will specify the date when the unconditional cessation of the US bombing raids...will become effective, then the two sides will reach agreement on the procedure of the formal talks."

The commentary then went on at length to describe Sihanouk's initial approval of Phnom Penh as the site for "contacts" and his subsequent criticism of the US for turning it down. Sihanouk was quoted

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as "demanding" that the US halt the bombing of North Vietnam and accept "a dialogue" with the National Liberation Front which, Sihanouk said, "the Americans should recognize as the only authentic representative of the South Vietnamese people."

The commentary concluded by stating that President Johnson had more than once declared that the US would go anywhere and at any time to meet North Vietnamese representatives. The US refusal to meet in Phnom Penh, it claimed, "shows that its acts do not match its words."

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First Quarter Shipping Report: A preliminary review of shipping to North Vietnam during the first quarter of 1968 shows an 18 percent increase in cargo deliveries over the same period last year. The

increase can be accounted for by the continuing rise in food and petroleum products.

Soviet deliveries to North Vietnam declined slightly in the first quarter compared to the corresponding period last year. Although food and petroleum deliveries out of Soviet Far Eastern ports increased, deliveries of fertilizer and miscellaneous cargoes normally shipped out of Black Sea ports decreased sharply. The decrease in shipping from Black Sea ports may be due largely to the closure of the Suez Canal.

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Cargo deliveries to North Vietnam aboard East European ships doubled over the same period in 1967. It is likely that much of this increase reflects agreements reached between the East European countries and Hanoi in the fall of 1967 for increased economic aid.

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Deliveries of cargo from Communist China rose significantly. However, the tonnage carried by Chinese ships dropped, while that carried by Chinese-chartered Free World ships increased. As a result, total deliveries by Free World ships to North Vietnam were considerably higher in the first quarter of 1968 than in the first quarter of 1967. Most of these originated in Communist China. Cargoes from China consisted mainly of food, petroleum, and miscellaneous cargoes.

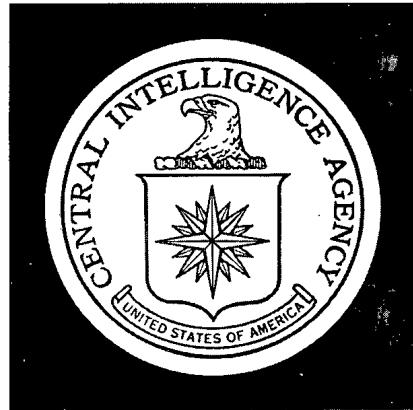
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The upward trend in deliveries is expected to continue throughout 1968, and it is likely that an increasing portion of deliveries will be carried aboard Soviet ships. It is unlikely, however, that the rate of increase noted during the first quarter will be maintained because of limitations on the discharge capacity of the port of Haiphong.

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

Hanoi on US Riots: North Vietnam has praised the outbreak of riots in many cities in the wake of Dr. King's death as a struggle against the racist system in the US. In a lengthy editorial in the party daily Nhan Dan broadcast on 11 April, Hanoi claimed that the "revolt" of the black people in the US demonstrated the "loathsome nature of the US capitalist regime." The editorial pointed out that American Negroes now realize that freedom can not be begged for, but that it must be achieved through revolutionary violence. It said that the US is conducting a war against the Negro race and is sending great numbers of Negroes to die in Vietnam. Vietnam, the paper continued, is the first front in the resistance to US imperialism. The second front is right in the US and is composed of the black people's struggle, the American people's protest movement against "the US aggressive war in Vietnam," and the working class struggle against oppression and exploitation.

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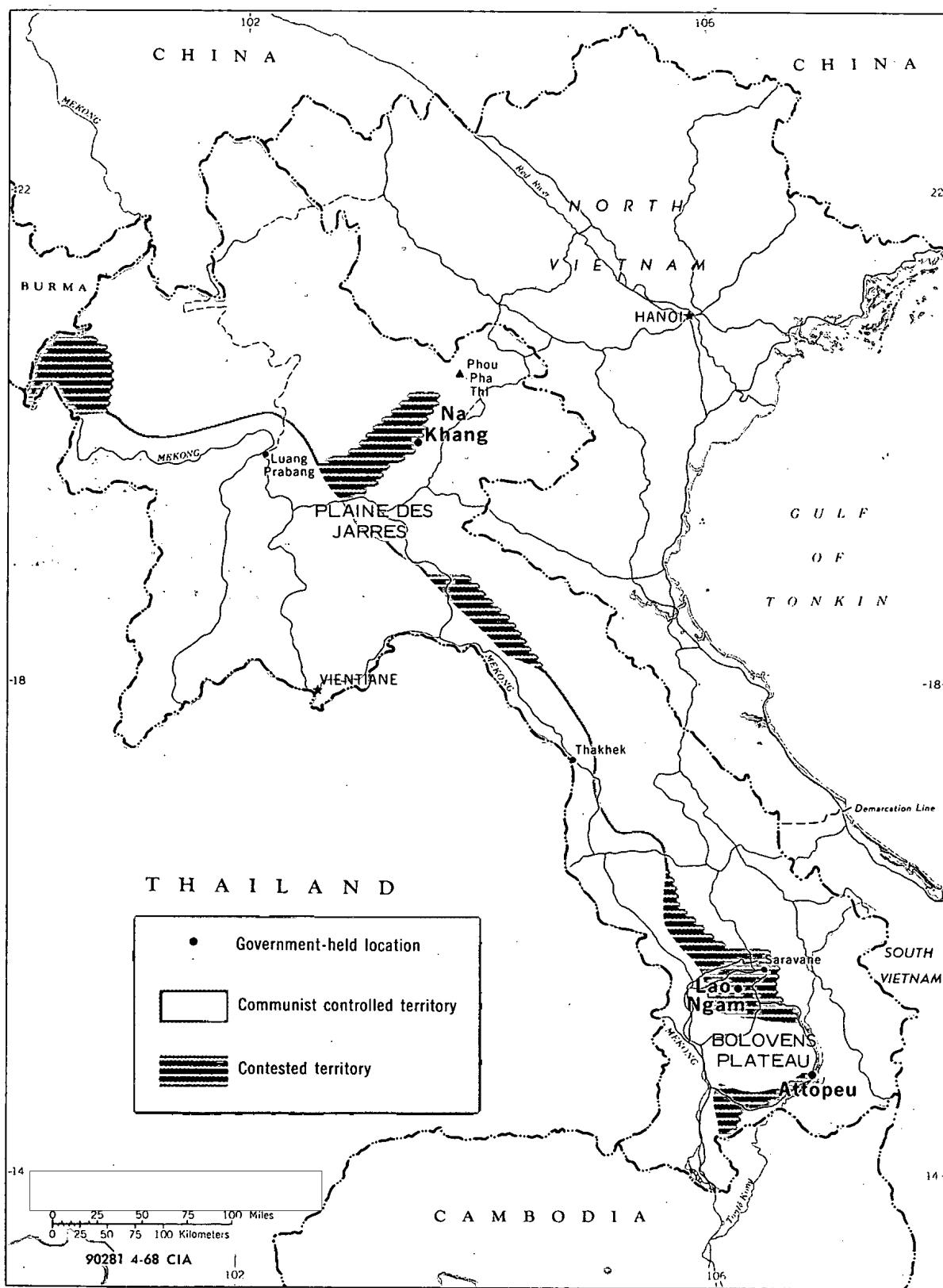


The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 13 April 1968



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LAOS

LATE ITEM

West Germany

The wire services report serious clashes in six major West German cities and West Berlin early today between police and the followers of the leftist student leader shot in Berlin on Thursday. More violence is expected throughout the weekend.

DAILY BRIEF
13 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

There are signs of increasing alarm in militantly anti-Communist Catholic circles at the prospect of US - North Vietnamese talks, which they fear may portend a Communist take-over. Several Catholic communities near Saigon are talking of protest demonstrations, but their leaders claim that no early action is planned. Other Catholic leaders are talking of reconstituting the Can Lao party, the political instrument of the Diem regime, which is anathema to the Buddhists.

2. Laos

Communist forces yesterday launched their first ground assault against government positions at Attopeu since late February. At last report, Attopeu was still in government hands. This may have been little more than a probe.

There is a great deal of speculation inside the government, however, that the Communists will celebrate the Laotian New Year--today through Monday--with an offensive in the Bolovens Plateau area. There have been signs that North Vietnamese troops are preparing for a new push at government positions on the eastern rim of the Bolovens and at the town of Lao Ngam.

The situation in northern Laos remains quiet.

3. Austria

Chancellor Klaus' visit to the US--and especially his meeting with the President--has been given unusually heavy and positive coverage by the Austrian press, TV, and radio.

4. West Berlin

Rioting, triggered by the shooting of the student leader Rudi Dutschke, took on an anti-American character yesterday. Crowds estimated at 6,000-10,000 clashed with police in the downtown area. "De-Americanization" of the radio station in the American sector (RIAS) was one of the more prominent "demands" of the demonstrators. The crowds also chanted slogans condemning US policy in Vietnam.

Dutschke's assailant is said to be a would-be Nazi. The police quote him as saying he was "influenced by the murder of Martin Luther King."

5. Nonproliferation Treaty

Sentiment for delay on the nonproliferation treaty is gaining at the UN. A majority of the Latin American delegations are said to favor postponing any UN action. The French-speaking African delegations are thinking along the same lines.

Continuation of this trend could imperil the treaty's chances at the General Assembly session resuming on the 24th.

6. France

Several American journalists in Paris--including representatives of the Washington Post and Time--have told the embassy that they have had word from the Quai and the Elysee Palace that Vietnam developments have opened the possibility for a breakthrough in US-French relations. These newsmen say they see a number of signs that the French Government is beginning to adjust its anti-American image, at least in the public domain. This adjustment, they believe, is likely to increase with the arrival of Ambassador Shriver.

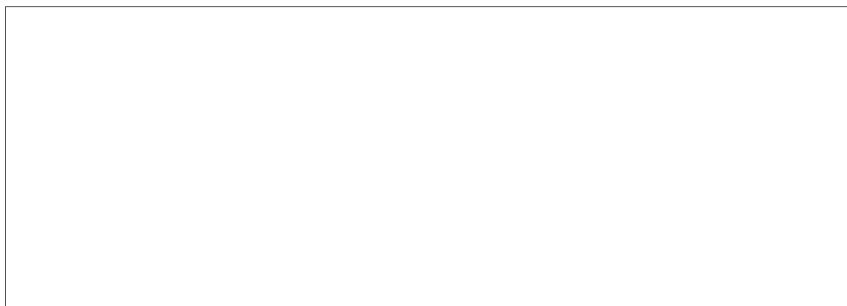
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7. Chile

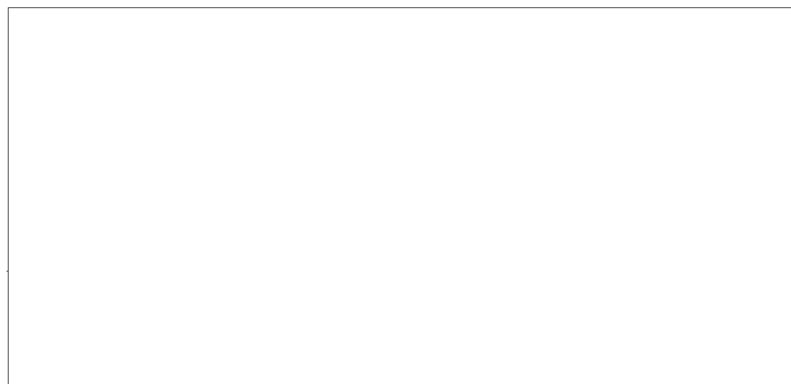
President Frei now has a rather good chance of getting Senate approval for a trip to the US. (The Senate vetoed such a visit in January 1967.) Frei has long hoped to make the trip; he has recently accepted an invitation to go to the Soviet Union.

8. Panama

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**9. Pakistan**

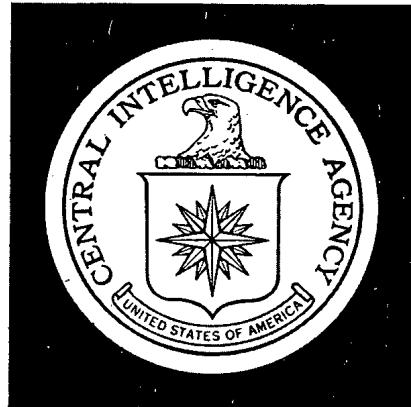
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16

13 April 1968

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

13 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Pham Van Dong Interview: In an interview with a Japanese novelist on 4 April, the North Vietnamese premier said his country's 3 April statement "had successfully foiled the US attempt to gain propaganda advantage" in the peace talk dialogue. He also suggested that it might have prevented a US escalation of the war. This interview has not been published by Hanoi, but it has been run in several versions in the Japanese press.

The premier, according to his Japanese interviewer, was very outspoken on the issue of reciprocity. He said Hanoi stood pat on its conditions for talks and for a settlement, and that the US must abandon the San Antonio formula.

On a settlement of the war, he said Hanoi still insisted on withdrawal of US troops from the South and permanent and unconditional cessation of the war against the North. "We will not recognize any compromise of these points," Pham Van Dong is quoted as saying. There is no reference here to the role of the Liberation Front, but it could be an omission on the part of the Japanese interviewer rather than the North Vietnamese premier.

Most of the interview is a plausible expansion of known views. Until--and unless--Hanoi publishes its version, however, the interview probably should be taken in terms of the tone the premier was trying to convey rather than as a final position statement.

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North Vietnamese Hospital in Cambodia:

[redacted] a rather extensive North Vietnamese hospital complex in Cambodia. [redacted]

[redacted] the hospital was for casualties from Communist forces in the central highlands.

The complex consisted of a 3,000-bed hospital and four smaller hospitals. Two of these latter were mobile units operating with the troops. All five hospitals had surgical capability, but serious cases were sent from the mobile units back to the main hospital in Cambodia. [redacted]

[redacted] one mobile unit received 173 casualties in three hours.

The main hospital was reasonably well equipped. It had an ear, eye, nose and throat department as well as X-ray and pharmaceutical sections. All drugs and equipment [redacted] come from North Vietnam.

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May Day Gifts: The Soviets have announced a ship will soon sail from Vladivostok for Haiphong with 10,000 May Day gift parcels.

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Repairs to Installations: Photography of 16 March showed extensive repair work on one of Haiphong's two power plants and the cement plant. No repair work had been done on either since they were hit in April 1967. [redacted]

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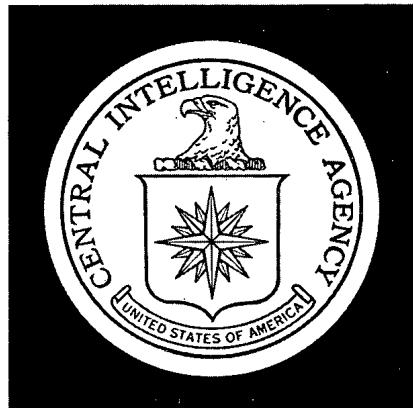
Hanoi on US Military Changes in Vietnam: Hanoi continues to disparage US leadership and to single out US military commanders for their alleged "failure" in Vietnam. In a 12 April broadcast to South Vietnam, Hanoi reported the recent changes in US commands in South Vietnam and in the Pacific area. It claimed that these decisions resulted from a series of high-level Washington conferences following the "discharge of Westmoreland" and pointed out that they will not improve the "ever worsening" US position in Vietnam.

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

There is nothing of significance to report.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 15 April 1968



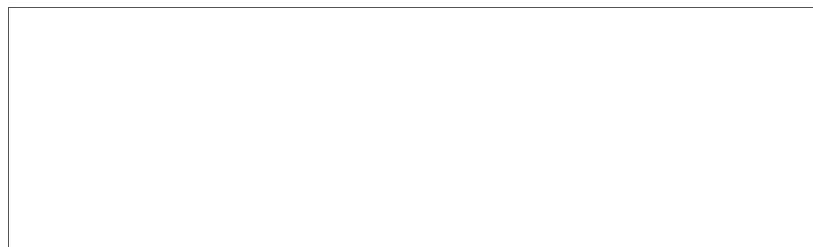
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DAILY BRIEF
15 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

There are further indications that Thieu is getting ready to dump Prime Minister Loc and replace him with Tran Van Huong. Huong is a widely respected Southerner and a former presidential candidate.

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The relative lull in fighting continues. Communist main-force units are avoiding engagements and appear to be concentrating on resupply, redeployment, and reorganization.

2. West Germany

Police in large West German cities are braced for trouble this morning as radicals try to convert annual student peace marches into riots. There are some signs, however, that student enthusiasm is flagging.

West Berlin Communists are openly egging on the students in that city, and the East Germans have announced that West German officials will not be allowed to transit East Germany en route to Berlin. This ban is not likely to have much effect as most such officials fly.

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3. Korea

North Korean raiders may stage more ambushes over the next few days in hopes of providing discordant background noise for the Honolulu meeting. Two American and two South Korean soldiers were killed yesterday when ambushed near Panmunjom.

4. Gold Market

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Communist transactions on Western gold markets between the pound's devaluation in November and the temporary closing of the London market in March. While Communist countries bought at least \$200 million in bullion, this represents only seven percent of total transactions.

Major Communist purchasers were East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and China. Motivation appears to be the same as for other buyers--flight from the pound and expectation of a rise in price. The Soviets did not enter the markets either to buy or sell.

5. Soviet Union

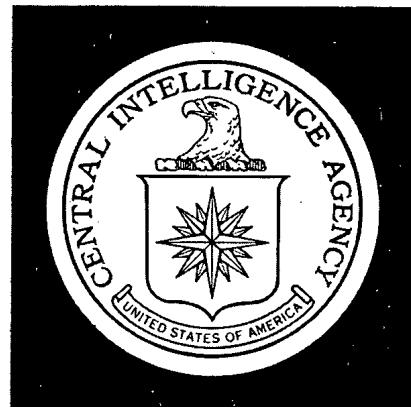
Yesterday the Soviets put their sixth Soyuz-type space capsule into earth orbit. All have been unmanned except for the ill-fated flight of Komarov in Soyuz 1. If the present flight is successful, a manned flight could occur within the next few weeks.

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50X1

16

15 April 1968

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

15 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Guinea Offers Site: The Guinean foreign minister has offered Conakry or any other town in Guinea as a site for talks. The offer was made to Ambassador McIlvaine on Saturday evening.

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French Correspondent on Talks: The French press agency man in Hanoi has been used before when the North Vietnamese want to float a story without giving it official attribution. This may be the case with a story he filed Sunday commenting that "observers believe Hanoi will adopt a firmer attitude and set a deadline for selection of a place for the first meeting."

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Peking Commentary: Peking's views on preliminary talks between the US and North Vietnamese were conveyed in a People's Daily commentary today attacking the President's 31 March proposals. "Peace talks," say the Chinese, "are nothing but a strategem for the US aggressors to gain a respite and a smoke screen to cover up their scheme of intensifying the war." In case Hanoi missed that message, the commentary--with appropriate Mao quotes--concludes with the statement that only by defeating the US "on the battlefield" can the Vietnamese attain national liberation and reunification.

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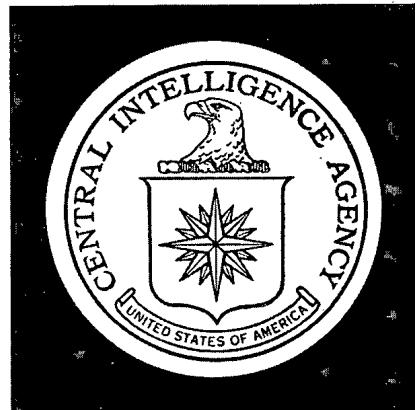
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report.

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The President's Daily Brief

Top Secret 16 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
16 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

The Vietnamese Communists are reviving the claim that they exercise administrative control over large areas of South Vietnam. A recent Viet Cong broadcast, for example, boasts that 1.6 million more people and 600 more hamlets and villages have come under their control since Tet. The "revolutionary administrations" set up in "liberated areas" will eventually merge to rule the entire country, the broadcast asserted.

This was a prominent propaganda theme right after Tet, but has been rare since mid-March. Its revival now is presumably related to the prospect of US - North Vietnamese talks.

2. South Vietnam

Ky has all but withdrawn his support from Prime Minister Loc [redacted] This will make it much easier for President Thieu to replace Loc with a more effective man.

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3. Soviet Union

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4. Canada

Unless something gives soon, Ottawa will be under strong pressure to break diplomatic relations with Paris early next week. The Province of Quebec, after a "reminder" from Paris, intends to send a delegation there on Monday for a conference of education ministers of various French-speaking nations.

Both Pearson and Trudeau had publicly threatened that if France bypasses Ottawa and deals directly with Quebec on this matter, relations will be broken. The Canadian press is not letting them forget this commitment. Neither Ottawa nor Paris wants a break, but neither can seem to get off the hook.

Trudeau, who takes over next week, feels even more strongly than Pearson that something must be done to keep Quebec from whittling away at Ottawa's prerogatives.

5. West Germany

Leftist youths continued their violent demonstrations yesterday for the fifth straight day. At least half a dozen cities were affected. There are signs that the demonstrators intend to keep it up through May Day.

Kiesinger is worried, and he has warned that continued violence will be met "decisively." According to US press reports, he is considering the use of federal troops.

6. Rumania

Bucharest's acceptance of a US invitation to send a high-level scientific delegation to Washington early next month is another sign of its strong desire to expand relations with the West. The delegation is to be headed by Alexandru Birladeanu, a deputy premier whose special job is the direction of scientific research.

7. France

The French are resisting Soviet efforts further to expand Franco-Soviet space cooperation. A full review of the matter is now under way in Paris.

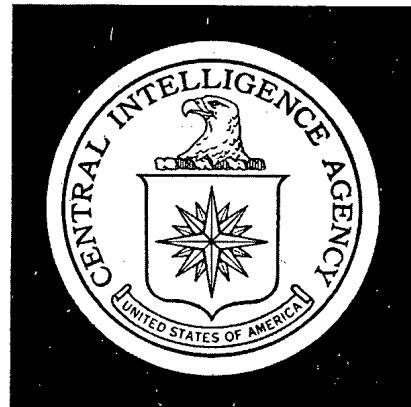
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Paris has explained that its commitment to the International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium bars closer co-operation with the Soviets.

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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

Top Secret
16

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16 April 1968

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

16 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Current Propaganda Line: Hanoi radio continues to portray the Viet Cong on the offensive in South Vietnam. An army daily commentary on 15 April described the fighting around Khe Sanh as intense--with the US Marines still under siege and Operation PEGASUS able to make only a few miles a day because of "heavy" Communist opposition. The commentary admitted in a backhanded way that the siege of Khe Sanh had been lifted, but claimed the US lost more than five battalions.

The new allied operation north of Saigon, said the newspaper, was getting on no better than its predecessor and was being frustrated by local Communist guerrillas at all turns. Communist forces were credited with recent "brilliant successes" in artillery attacks, in ambushes, and in "lightning operations deep into enemy territory."

On the peace front, Premier Pham Van Dong continues to reach out for Western audiences by making himself available to a growing number of non-Communist foreign correspondents. In an appearance on French television on 12 April, he was extremely confident, according to Western news accounts. He condemned the US for not stopping the bombing completely and told his French listeners that the North Vietnamese were dealing from strength on all sides--economically, militarily, and politically.

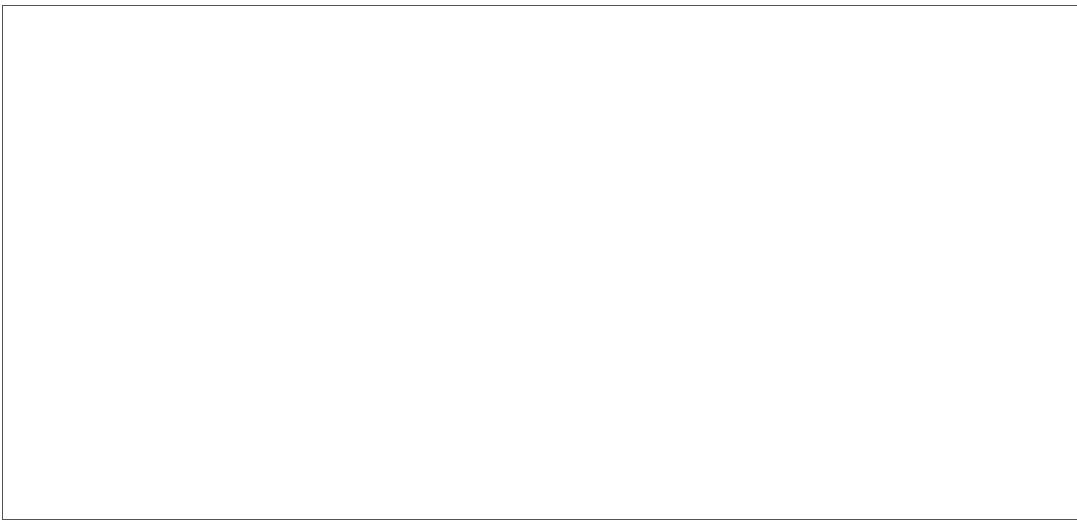
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More from Hanoi on US "Stubbornness": Hanoi radio's international service broadcast an English translation today of another Nhan Dan article criticizing the US for "refusing to agree to the sites suggested by North Vietnam for preliminary contacts between the two sides." The broadcast asserted that the US has been "widely criticized both at home and abroad because it has failed to match its deeds with words (sic)." It then went on to claim that the

"deliberate delay" by the US in agreeing to a site, accompanied by the continuing "aggressive acts in both zones of Vietnam," prove that the US really does not want to move toward peace."

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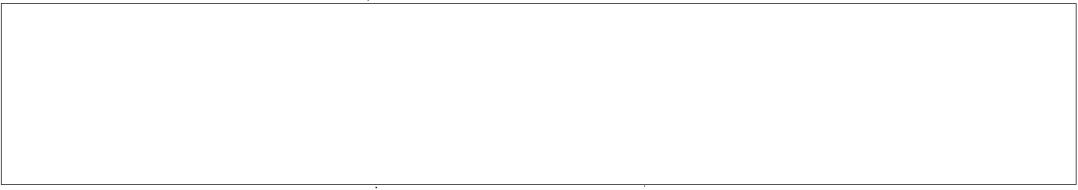
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More on Self-Defense and Militia Forces: A recent editorial in the party daily Nhan Dan stresses the role of North Vietnam's self-defense and militia forces in the "new stage" and because of the "new situation." The editorial says the size of local security forces has grown "rapidly" in recent years, but also notes that they have shown "definite weak points and shortcomings." The self-defense and militia forces are once again urged to increase their "combat strength" in order to carry out the role of "protecting the rear and serving the front."

Such exhortations in Hanoi's propaganda are routine, but it is likely all the same that a special effort is under way to tighten security and to make certain that all military and paramilitary organizations are geared up to support the war.

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Hanoi on US Air Attacks: Hanoi continues to report routinely on alleged "violations" of North Vietnamese airspace by US aircraft and to complain about bombings in the southernmost provinces of the country. Broadcasts pointedly complain of violations "at the 21st and 22nd parallels," and near Hanoi, presumably referring to US reconnaissance flights.

* * *

American Group to Meet North Vietnamese: A mixed bag of Negro radicals, civil rights workers, and war critics were scheduled to leave New York Saturday for Stockholm. The delegation is sponsored by the American Communist Party and is to meet with North Vietnamese representatives. The purpose of the meeting is unknown.

* * *

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

Hanoi's Propaganda Treatment of the US Elections: Hanoi's propaganda media normally devote a very small percentage of their output to the US domestic debate and US dissension over the conduct of the war in Vietnam, and only a small portion of this propaganda in recent months has been addressed specifically to the US presidential election campaign. This low-volume pattern did not change with the acceleration of campaigning by the candidates and the beginning of the party primaries. The New Hampshire primary prompted a single Nhan Dan article and the Wisconsin primary was totally ignored.

An examination of Nhan Dan for March turned up only two articles on the presidential elections: an unsigned article on the 15th dealt with the results of the New Hampshire primary, and an article on the 20th commented on Senator Kennedy's announcement that he was entering the presidential race. Nhan Dan publishes a daily column reviewing world press comment on various subjects, but on only three occasions during March were there references to the US elections or the candidates. On 5 March, this column noted a UPI report of a statement by Senator Kennedy on the situation in South Vietnam. On the 17th, it cited US and British press comment on the New Hampshire primary, and on the 26th it briefly mentioned the challenge to the President by Senators Kennedy and McCarthy.

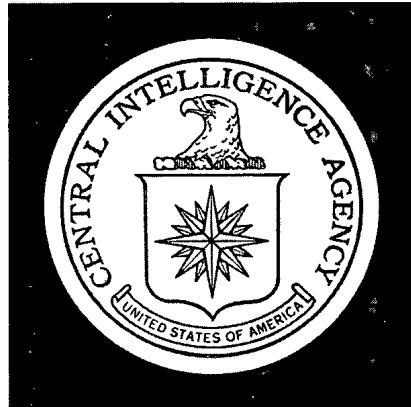
There was also scant attention to the elections during March in monitored Hanoi radio broadcasts. The two Nhan Dan articles cited above were broadcast; otherwise, the North Vietnamese radio audiences heard only a scattering of news reports on US dissent over the war.

The Vietnam News Agency (VNA) carried no commentaries on the election in its English language transmissions during the month, although there were a few references to critical remarks by Kennedy and McCarthy in news items. The Nhan Dan article on 15 March about the New Hampshire primary was, however, carried in VNA's Vietnamese language transmission.

The small amount of attention to the elections is consistent with Hanoi's general practice of devoting only a meager portion of its output to US domestic developments. Hanoi's propaganda on the week of protest in Washington last October was typical of its treatment of internal US developments. This highly exploitable event occasioned seven commentaries in a single week, but even that was relatively minor attention when compared with treatment of an event such as the South Vietnamese elections in September 1967, which occupied as much as half of Hanoi's broadcast time.

(Hanoi's view of the US position in Vietnam is not limited to election problems alone. The North Vietnamese also emphasize other problems for the US: antiwar sentiment and opposition, racial disorders, economic problems, military manpower squeeze, and international complications for US policy.)

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 17 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
17 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

Tran Van Huong, President Thieu's choice to succeed Prime Minister Loc, is apparently still undecided about the offer.

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2. Korea

Our analysts believe that Pyongyang may be planning a substantial increase in its guerrilla activity against the South. Unlike last year, when the bulk of the North's agent activity was in espionage and the establishment of guerrilla bases, the Communists may now focus on ambitious terrorist incidents similar to the raid on the presidential residence in January.

Prior to the ambush of US personnel near the Demilitarized Zone on Sunday, the situation in that area had been relatively quiet since the January raid. The recent ambush was deliberately planned; it was not a chance encounter between infiltrating agents and security patrols. This suggests that Pyongyang now sees less need for caution and that, with the improvement in weather, the level of guerrilla operations will probably rise.

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3. Thailand

Prime Minister Thanom has told Ambassador Unger he is worried that the US will pull out of Vietnam and Southeast Asia sooner than expected and under circumstances which will leave Thailand in a "precarious position." Thanom is particularly worried about Thailand's "profound commitment" in letting the US use Thai airbases. He is apparently convinced that even if there is a successful conclusion to the war, Thailand will soon bear the brunt of Chinese and North Vietnamese aggression.

Thanom implied that he is not being cut in on Washington's position regarding negotiations and on plans for the ground war over the next few months. He hopes to discuss these matters with President Johnson when he visits Washington next month.

4. West Berlin

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5. West Germany

The students took a breather last night--West German cities were quiet. The prediction is that the demonstrations will probably start up again tonight.

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6. Egypt

Nasir says that his domestic problems rule out any real negotiations with Israel.

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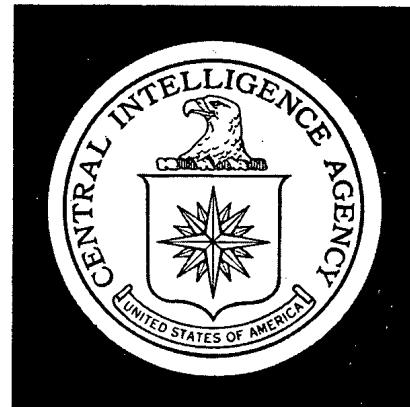
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Equally important in the back of Nasir's mind is the fact that Saudi Arabia will cut off its Egyptian subsidies if Nasir agrees to negotiate.

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16
17 April 1968

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

17 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

New Appointments in Hanoi: Hanoi announced two government appointments on 15 April, and one of them may reflect preparations for possible talks. This was the naming of a former foreign minister, Xuan Thuy, as "minister in the North Vietnamese Government" without a specific portfolio. Xuan Thuy served as foreign minister from 1963 to April 1965, when Hanoi announced that he was being replaced because of his health. He was then out of public view for more than a year. He re-emerged as host for foreign delegations visiting Hanoi. In some cases he has been a member of the official North Vietnamese delegation participating in talks with these foreigners.

Xuan Thuy is a member of the second echelon of the North Vietnamese Communist Party--a full Central Committeeman. He is well traveled for a North Vietnamese, having served as deputy head of the North Vietnamese delegation to the Geneva Conference on Laos in 1962. He would be a good candidate for Hanoi's delegation in talks with the US, but probably only after they became substantive discussions. Hanoi has made clear that the initial "contact" is to be at the ambassadorial level. Xuan Thuy's new government rank suggests he would not be used for this preliminary mission.

The second government appointment announced by Hanoi on 15 April does not appear to be related to the peace talk dialogue. Tran Quang Huy is a party propaganda expert, whose foreign affairs experience seems limited to relations with other Communist parties. His new government job involves direction of domestic "culture and education" programs. It appears to be a routine appointment to a previously vacant post.

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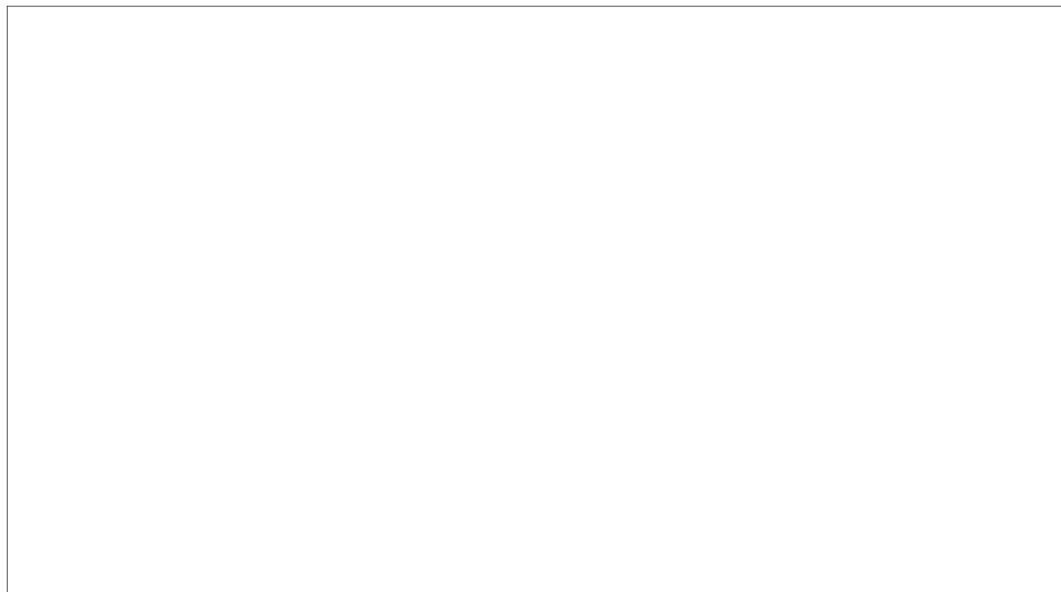
Extra International Control Commission Flights:
Hanoi may have asked the International Control Commission if commission aircraft could be made available for special flights, presumably to transport a North Vietnamese delegation to preliminary peace talks. The commission's assistant secretary general for administration in Saigon approached the US Embassy on 15 April to ask how much advance notice would be required to schedule extra flights from Hanoi to Vientiane, "in case Hanoi might want to use the ICC aircraft to transport their delegation to Vientiane." He pointed out that Hanoi might want more prompt service than was provided by the commission's six regular flights per month. Although he did not indicate that his request was prompted by any query from Hanoi, the US Embassy is inclined to believe that it might have been. The delegation could conceivably proceed from Vientiane to other locations by commercial transport.

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

Liberation Front Letter: An official of the Liberation Front has addressed a special letter to "US writers, artists, and cultural workers" on the occasion of a proposed 10-day "antiwar struggle" in the US. The letter was broadcast over Liberation radio on 15 April. It thanked the people of the US for their opposition to the war and to official US policy on Vietnam, and called President Johnson's limitation of the bombing a "tricky peace" effort designed to hide a new escalation of the war. The Vietnamese people always make a clear distinction between the American people as a whole and the war planners in the Pentagon and the White House, said the letter, and the Liberation Front hoped the people would continue to support Communist terms for a political settlement of the war.

* * *

Propaganda: Hanoi propaganda is losing no opportunity to score the US for "lack of good faith" and "delaying tactics" in the selection of a site for preliminary talks. This line is being put out daily for the benefit of both domestic and foreign audiences. North Vietnamese propagandists are reaching back into the US press for early quotes

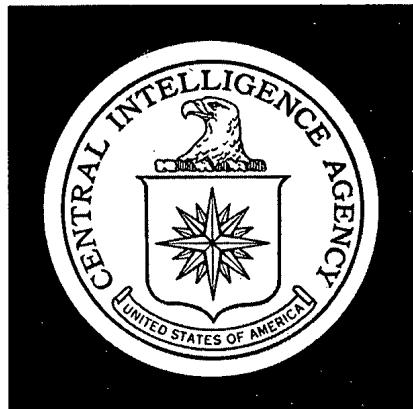
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on US willingness to meet with Hanoi and are relying primarily on non-Vietnamese criticism of the President to reinforce their case.

A commentary on 15 April cited Senator McCarthy and the influential Japanese newspaper Manichi as typical of the widespread criticism of the US refusal to accept Phnom Penh and Warsaw. In a Nhan Dan editorial of the 16th, Hanoi claimed that neither of these cities represented any real difficulty for the US, since both the Cambodian and the Polish governments had assured the US that "favorable conditions would be created."

Domestic commentary highlights the assertion that in addition to delaying on the issue of a site, the US is "strengthening the war in the South" and launching big military operations. A North Vietnamese daily editorial on 15 April told the people that now was the time for extra efforts. The "new situation" called for taking advantage of every opportunity, according to the editorial; it opened up "bright prospects" but required "every minute and every breath to develop militant strength."

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 18 April 1968



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23

LATE ITEM

Sierra Leone

One Sergeant-Major Amadu Rogers, speaking over the national radio this morning, announced that all senior army and police officers were under arrest and that Sierra Leone was now being run by the "Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement."

DAILY BRIEF
18 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

The South Vietnamese apparently have been thinking out loud for several days about proposing an allied summit conference before bilateral talks between Washington and Hanoi get too far along. In the past ten days, Foreign Minister Do has tried the idea on the ambassadors from most of the countries with troops in South Vietnam.

If his talk with the Australian ambassador is any example, Do's pitch was a fairly strong one, although he made it clear that he was just thinking about the proposal at the moment. For instance, when the Australian tried to introduce a note of caution about the crowded schedules of government leaders, Do said "We could all go there" if President Johnson found it hard to leave Washington.

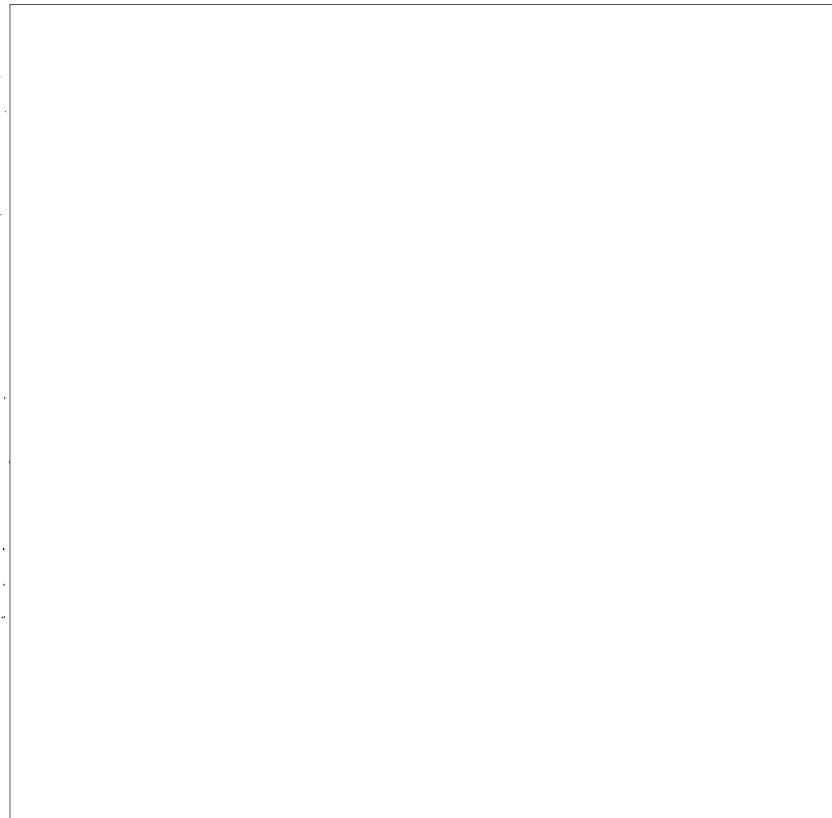
The South Vietnamese tell us that the Thais and South Koreans are receptive to the idea of a summit. The New Zealanders, on the other hand, think the important thing is to get US - North Vietnamese talks under way.

* * *

Increased Communist pressure against Khe Sanh continued yesterday. Elsewhere in South Vietnam there was little significant contact with Communist forces.

2. South Vietnam

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3. Cambodia

Phnom Penh, having just barely gotten dissidence in western Cambodia under control, now faces a determined rebellion by tribal guerrillas in the north-east near the South Vietnamese border. The tribesmen are using relatively sophisticated tactics and automatic weapons. This leads us to suspect that they are getting some help from the Vietnamese Communists, who have long used the area as a sanctuary and thus have reasons of their own for blunting the government's current drive to expand its presence there.

4. Yugoslavia

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[redacted] a plot is afoot to remove Tito from power. [redacted]
[redacted] a group of party and government officials--principally Serbs--want to kick Tito upstairs. [redacted]

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[redacted] behind it lies a great deal of unhappiness over Tito's economic and foreign policies.

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5. Chile

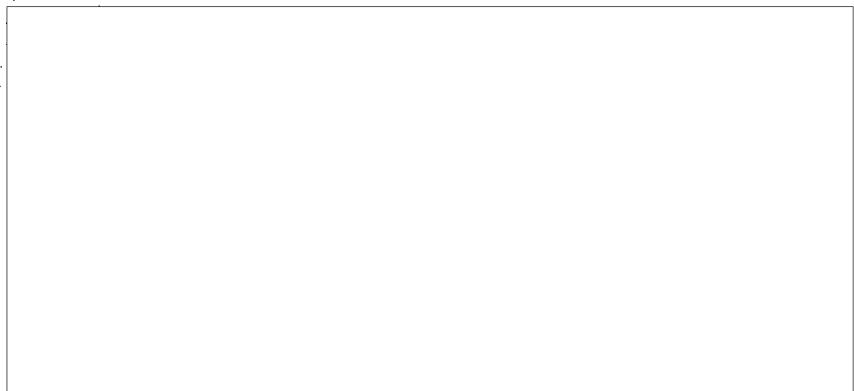
Leftists in President Frei's own party are thinking of adding themselves to the many parties in the legislature currently wooing the Communists. They allegedly feel that Chile needs radical change, including nationalization of the US copper mines, and they think a broad movement which would include the Communists is the best way to get it.

The Communists' attractiveness to the other parties lies in their large and well organized delegation in the legislature. They would doubtless, however, extract major concessions before agreeing to join a leftist coalition.

Frei, of course, recently set the precedent himself by making a one-time deal with the Communists to get an important bill passed. In return the Communists demanded and got the removal of a key provision of his economic reform program. This deal apparently is coming home to haunt him.

6. South Korea

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**7. Sierra Leone**

The army rank-and-file, disgruntled at not being cut into the proceeds from the military regime's corruption, mutinied early today in the capital. Rumor has it that most of the junta has been either arrested or shot. Leaders of the mutiny are supposed to make a statement soon. All US citizens are safe.

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

18 April 1968

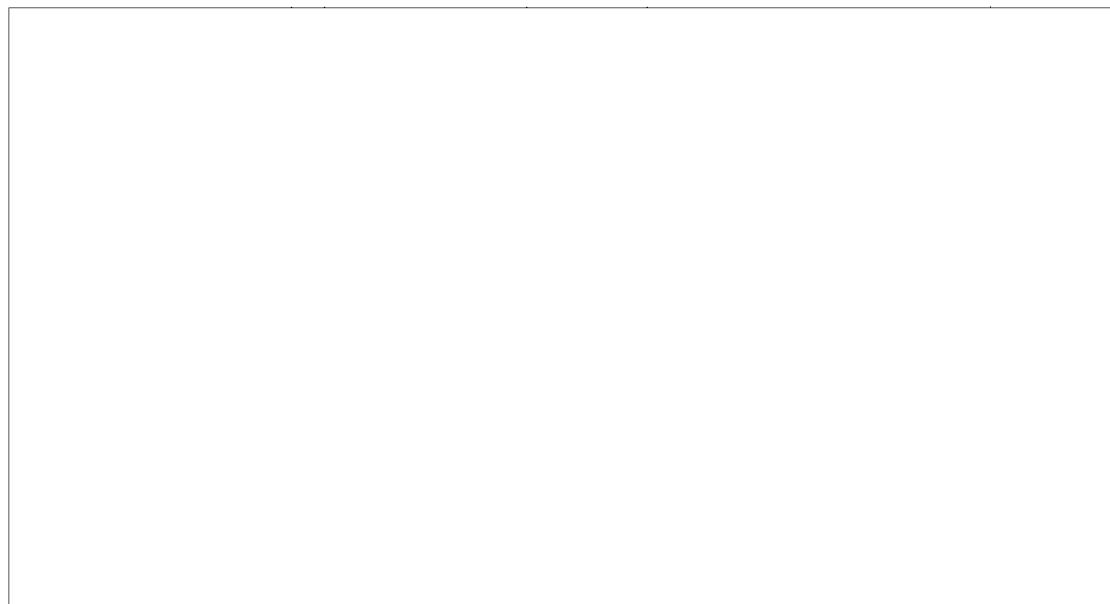
I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

North Vietnamese Imply Warsaw or Nothing: The North Vietnamese are hinting broadly that they intend to insist on Warsaw as a site for initial contacts with the United States. They have not specifically ruled out acceptance of another city, but Hanoi's most recent propaganda carries an implicit threat to forgo the contact if the US continues to reject the North Vietnamese proposals.

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Yesterday a Nhan Dan article kept up the barrage of North Vietnamese commentary accusing the US of deliberately delaying preliminary contacts. Like other recent propaganda, the article reviewed the bidding of the past two weeks and quoted liberally from President Johnson's 31 March speech and other statements about US willingness to meet with North Vietnamese representatives. Recent US actions, said the article, make it "amply clear" that the United States is "not ready to go anywhere, at any time," and that the US is "deliberately trying to delay the contacts." Phnom Penh or Warsaw, said Nhan Dan, provide a "very suitable venue" for the contacts. It warned that "if the United States keeps rejecting either of these places, it only unmasks its hypocrisy and must bear the full responsibility."

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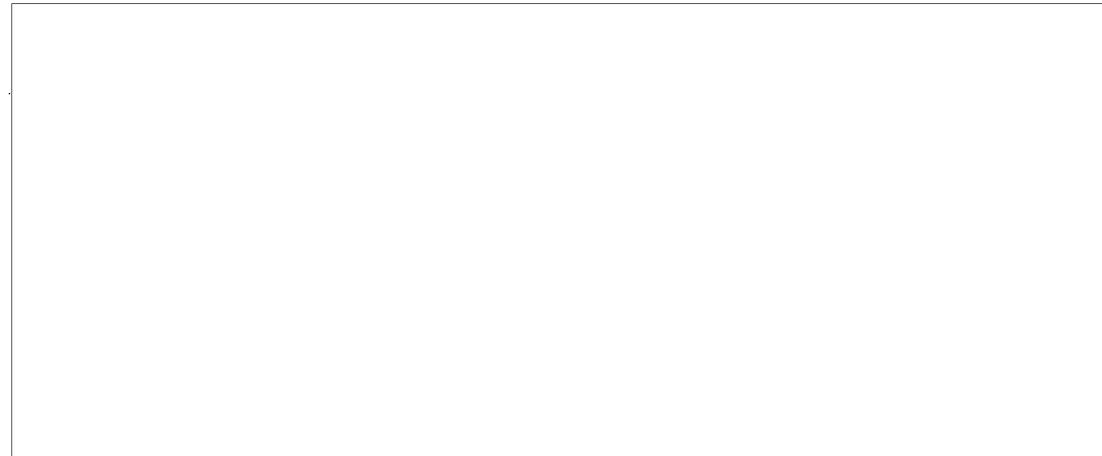
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Observations in Hanoi:

[redacted] morale seems high in the North Vietnamese capital, but there is an undercurrent of war weariness and fear of the authorities. [redacted]
[redacted] many North Vietnamese are afraid to be seen talking with foreigners.

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Social activity is restricted to the evening hours when Hanoi-ites stroll in the parks or go to the movies. These are the usual tractor-driver-meets-girl-worker type films produced in the bloc. There is no curfew in Hanoi.

[redacted] the Hanoi cathedral is often filled to standing room. Mass is said by a Caucasian priest.

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More Hanoi Commentary on General Abrams: Hanoi propaganda media are continuing to portray the appointment of General Abrams as a clear sign of the failure of American objectives in Vietnam. An article in the Hanoi army daily, broadcast in English on 16 April, claimed that Abrams' appointment will only "worsen the situation of the US aggressors." The broadcast noted that Abrams has been charged with beefing up the South Vietnamese forces, but insisted he would not be able to shift the brunt of the fighting onto the "puppet army." The paper discounted the possibility that the South Vietnamese forces would ever become an effective fighting force, even if equipped with more modern weapons.

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

Hanoi Applauds Antiwar Activity in US: In a 15 April message

the Vietnam Federation of Trade Unions hailed those in the US who were opposing the draft, the dispatch of American troops to Vietnam, and those who are demanding that the US "end immediately and unconditionally the bombings and war acts." The message also thanked the "progressive Americans" for their "precious support" of the Vietnamese people.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 19 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
19 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

Ky is not in favor of replacing Prime Minister Loc with Tran Van Huong.

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[redacted] Ky described Huong as "too old, stubborn, and opinionated."

Ky's idea of a prime minister is a man who would leave running the country to Ky and Thieu. The vice president remarked that unity within the government would be threatened should a man of independent thought be named prime minister.

* * *

No large military actions have been reported overnight. Substantial North Vietnamese forces are concentrated near Hue - Phu Bai, but elsewhere major enemy units are moving away from combat areas to regroup and resupply. We continue to note signs of heavy infiltration.

2. Panama

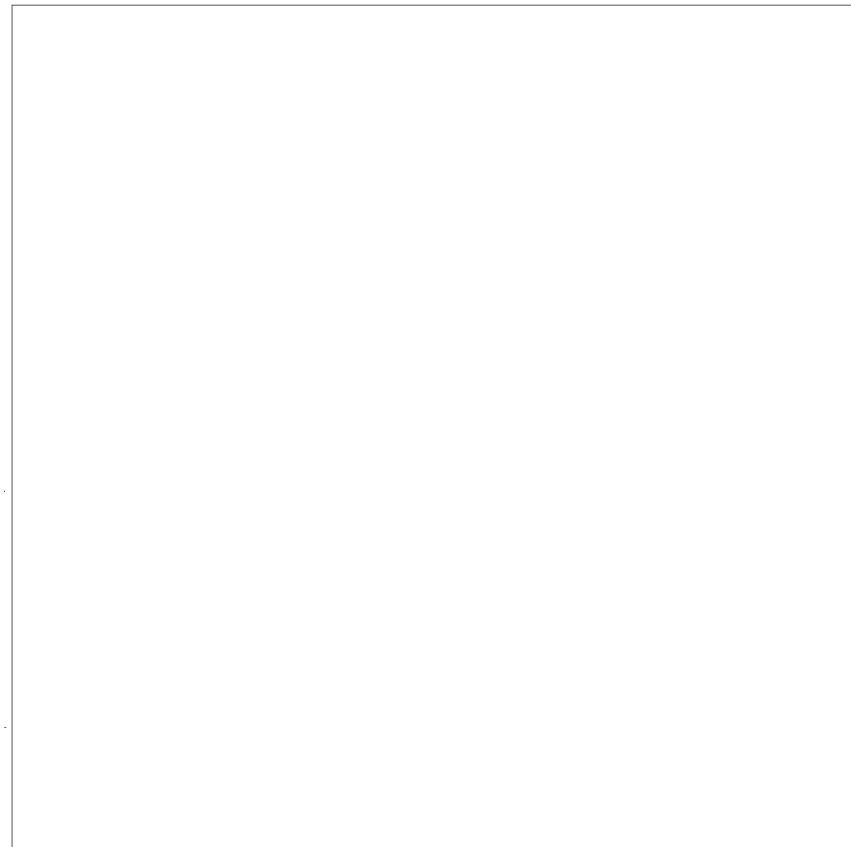
Robles has let it be known that he is not interested in having observers from the OAS watching the elections on 12 May. There are two reasons for his stand. First, the idea of importing observers was broached by Arias; second, the government plans some strong-arming to back up its presidential candidate, Samudio.

Meanwhile, both candidates continue barnstorming through the countryside with Arias drawing big crowds. This display of popularity will spur on the government in its determination to contrive a win for Samudio.

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3. Soviet Union

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4. Israel

Eshkol is under pressure to annex the occupied territories permanently and openly, "peace or no peace." Extremists in Eshkol's own Israel Labor Party took this line at a recent meeting of the party secretariat. Eshkol should be able to keep these hawks on the roost for the time being, but the sentiment they represent is gaining ground in Israel.

5. Nigeria

The civil war moves into its tenth month with no clear prospects for a solution either on the battlefield or at the conference table.

6. Czechoslovakia

We have now had an opportunity to examine the full text of the "action program" approved by the Czech Central Committee last week. This document is a landmark for a Communist Party, lifting the party's deadening hand from the process of government.

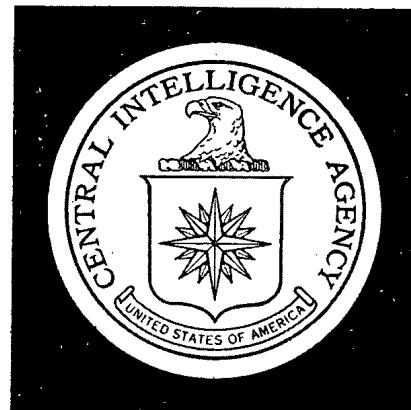
The program emphasizes a careful approach to change, but it is a charter pledging the party to work with the people rather than rule them automatically. It guarantees personal rights, including freedom of assembly, speech, and religion. It recommends that the National Assembly stop being a rubber stamp congress and "really decide on laws and important political questions."

The program shows many compromises between the conservatives and progressives and to that extent reflects Dubcek's own middle-of-the-road course.

The Soviets are far from enthusiastic about the Czech program and the change it implies. The Moscow press, for instance, has published only the least offensive portions of the program, pointedly omitting the more contentious features. Moscow, nevertheless, is probably reconciled to important changes in Czechoslovakia--and Dubcek presumably knows the limits of Moscow's toleration.

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- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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16

19 April 1968

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

19 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

More Propaganda: As Hanoi propaganda continues to bear down on the issue of the US accepting either Warsaw or Phnom Penh, the Communists are also beginning to play the theme that the site for initial talks does not have to be used for the subsequent substantive talks.

The message is apparently being pushed by the North Vietnamese through the Poles and the French. On 17 February, a Polish deputy foreign minister called in the ambassadors of several Free World countries to urge concerted pressure on the US to accept Warsaw as a site for preliminary talks. [redacted]

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Soviets Reinforcing Hanoi's Position: Speaking in Rawalpindi on 17 April, Soviet Premier Kosygin tried to interject a note of urgency into the demand that the US immediately enter into talks with Hanoi. Kosygin, on a state visit to Pakistan, is reported by Tass to have stated that "a highly crucial moment" has now come for the US to act. The Soviet premier also reiterated that the complete cessation of bombing and all acts of war against North Vietnam is "the first necessary step" toward a political settlement and the "minimum demand" to be met.

The tenor of Kosygin's comments is in line with North Vietnam's own propaganda. Soviet media since 3 April have done their best to put pressure on the US to move to the negotiating table as rapidly as possible. At the same time, the Soviets continue to state their fullest possible support for all of Hanoi's moves.

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Notes from Hanoi: [redacted]

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[redacted] impressions of the situation in Hanoi:

--The feeling in the diplomatic corps is that Hanoi's rapid response to President Johnson's 31 March offer was because North Vietnamese leaders had been about to spring their own peace initiative.

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--[redacted] had heard nothing--not even rumors--that the Chinese had approached North Vietnam on the issue of contacts with the US.

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--Hanoi's complaints about continued US bombing at and below the 20th parallel were "routine" and not taken particularly seriously by Hanoi under present circumstances.

--Anti-US propaganda has continued at about the same volume as before, but is now "back page" news; prominence is now given to world press opinion on the desirability of talks.

--[redacted] Hanoi portrayed the US offer of 31 March as a "political victory" for the North Vietnamese, rather than the result of a military victory.

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--Only one bombing alert has been heard in Hanoi since 3 April. Children, especially those of preschool age, are now more in evidence in Hanoi.

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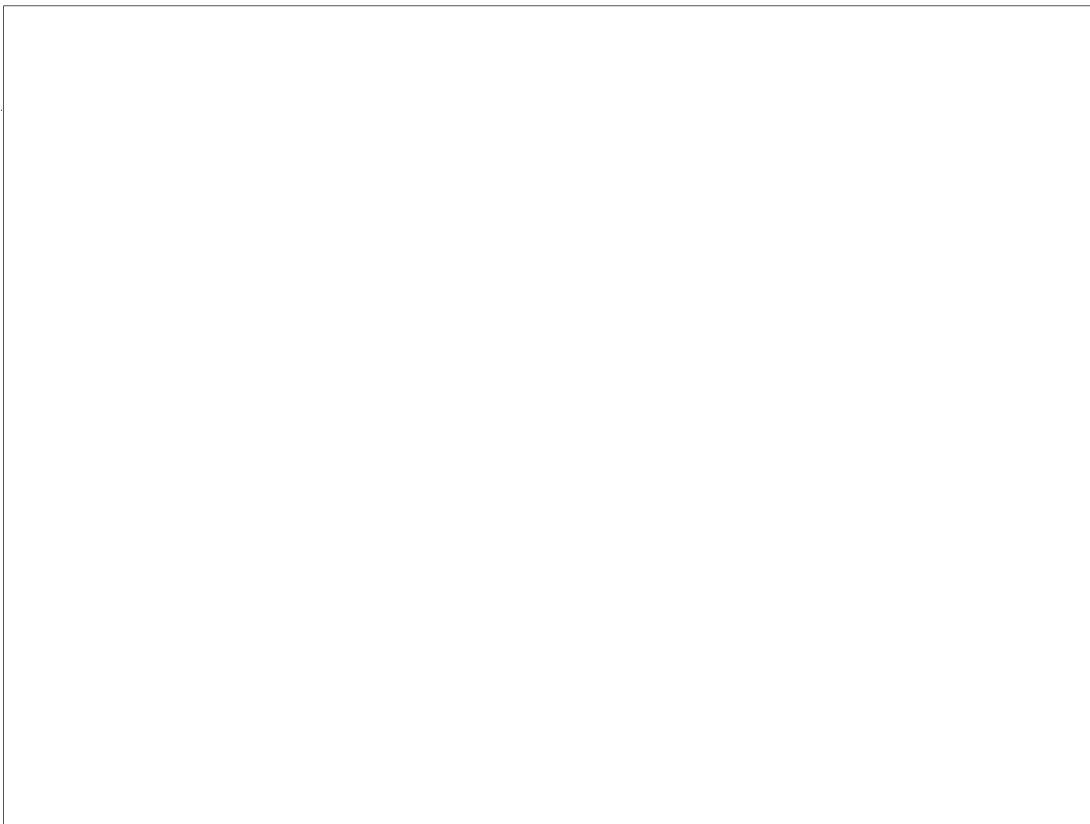
Soviet Seaborne Shipments to North Vietnam;
Plans for 1968: The Soviet Union has announced plans to increase seaborne shipments to North Vietnam by 20 percent in 1968. The implied growth in North Vietnamese imports from the Soviet Union above the 1967 level is about 125,000 tons--less than the increases of 137,000 in 1966 and 141,000 in 1967. About 30 additional ship arrivals would be needed to carry the increase in tonnage planned for 1968.

In the first quarter of 1968, imports from the Soviet Union ran 30 percent higher than the monthly average in 1967. All of this increase consisted of petroleum and foodstuffs; these commodities probably account for most of the planned growth for the year.

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

Hanoi Quotes Critics: Senators Fulbright and McCarthy get prominent mention in today's propaganda. This morning Hanoi broadcast in English a Nhan Dan article about the US lack of good will in arranging a place to talk. The point was buttressed by quotes from the two senators. Senator Fulbright is quoted saying, "I see nothing at all wrong in going to Phnom Penh." Senator McCarthy is reported criticizing the President and calling for a new Secretary of State.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 20 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
20 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

Signs are increasing that the Communists are using the current military lull to prepare for a new round of offensive actions. One [redacted] source says that the aim of a planned new "general offensive against the towns and cities" will be to enhance the Communist bargaining position during expected peace talks. Another forecasts a "second general attack" if US - North Vietnamese talks are "not successful."

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2. South Korea

Leading Seoul newspapers are enthusiastically hailing the Honolulu communique as a reaffirmation of US commitments in Asia.

3. Soviet Union

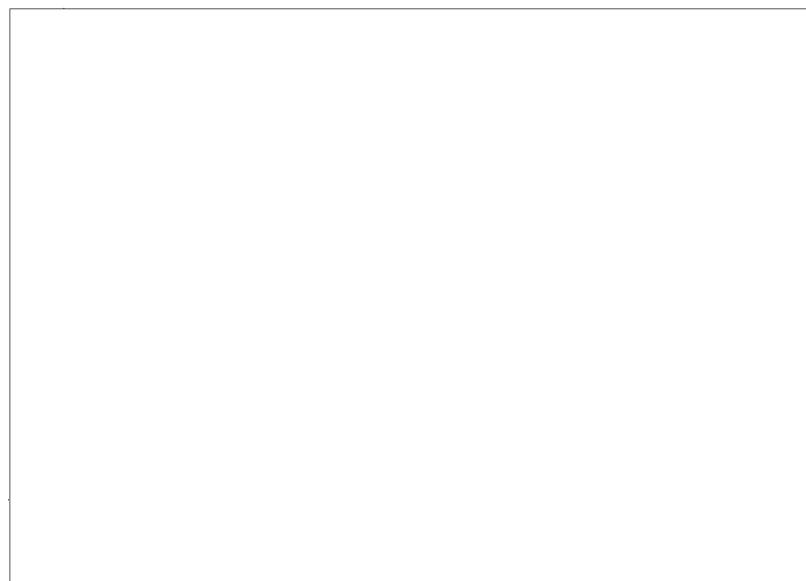
Kosygin will stop briefly in India tomorrow on his way home from his three-day visit to Pakistan. The surprise Indian announcement this morning says only that the Soviet leader will discuss the Vietnam situation with Mrs. Gandhi. This looks like a move to line up New Delhi behind Moscow's campaign to pressure the US into prompt talks with Hanoi.

Kosygin will doubtless also want to reassure Mrs. Gandhi that his foray into Pakistan in no way diminishes Soviet support for India.

4. West Germany

The authorities expect a new round of student demonstrations this weekend in West Berlin and perhaps in various West German cities. They are sticking to their firm stand and are confident that local police forces will be able to cope.

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**5. Czechoslovakia**

Prague is now publicly airing its complaints about the ineffectiveness of Eastern Europe's Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. In a published interview on Wednesday, the foreign trade minister bluntly declared that CEMA's results have been minimal and that he is not optimistic about its future. He went on to plug for more independence for Czechoslovakia in international economic relations and greater participation in the "world economy."

Most other members are unhappy with CEMA, though they continue to stay in line with Moscow's standard position that Communist economic relationships should develop within the CEMA framework.

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6. Common Market

The Dutch, concerned about the continuing impasse over British membership in the Community, are thinking about proposing a bilateral treaty with Britain. The objective would be to stimulate the other members, particularly the Italians, to act against the hammerlock which the French have on the Community's future development.

The Dutch risk being accused of setting the stage for a new crisis in the Community, but they feel strongly that prolongation of the present stalemate is really the greatest danger facing European unity.

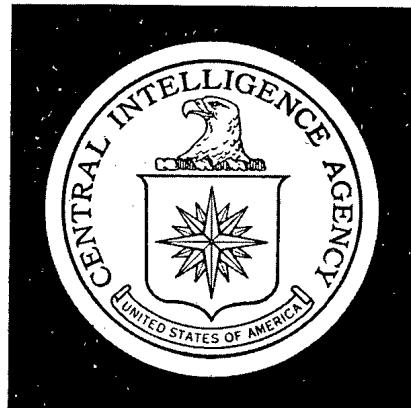
7. Haiti

The streets of the capital have been almost deserted at night for the past week. The reason: rumors that roving gangs are picking up unwary pedestrians

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20 April 1968

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

20 April 1968

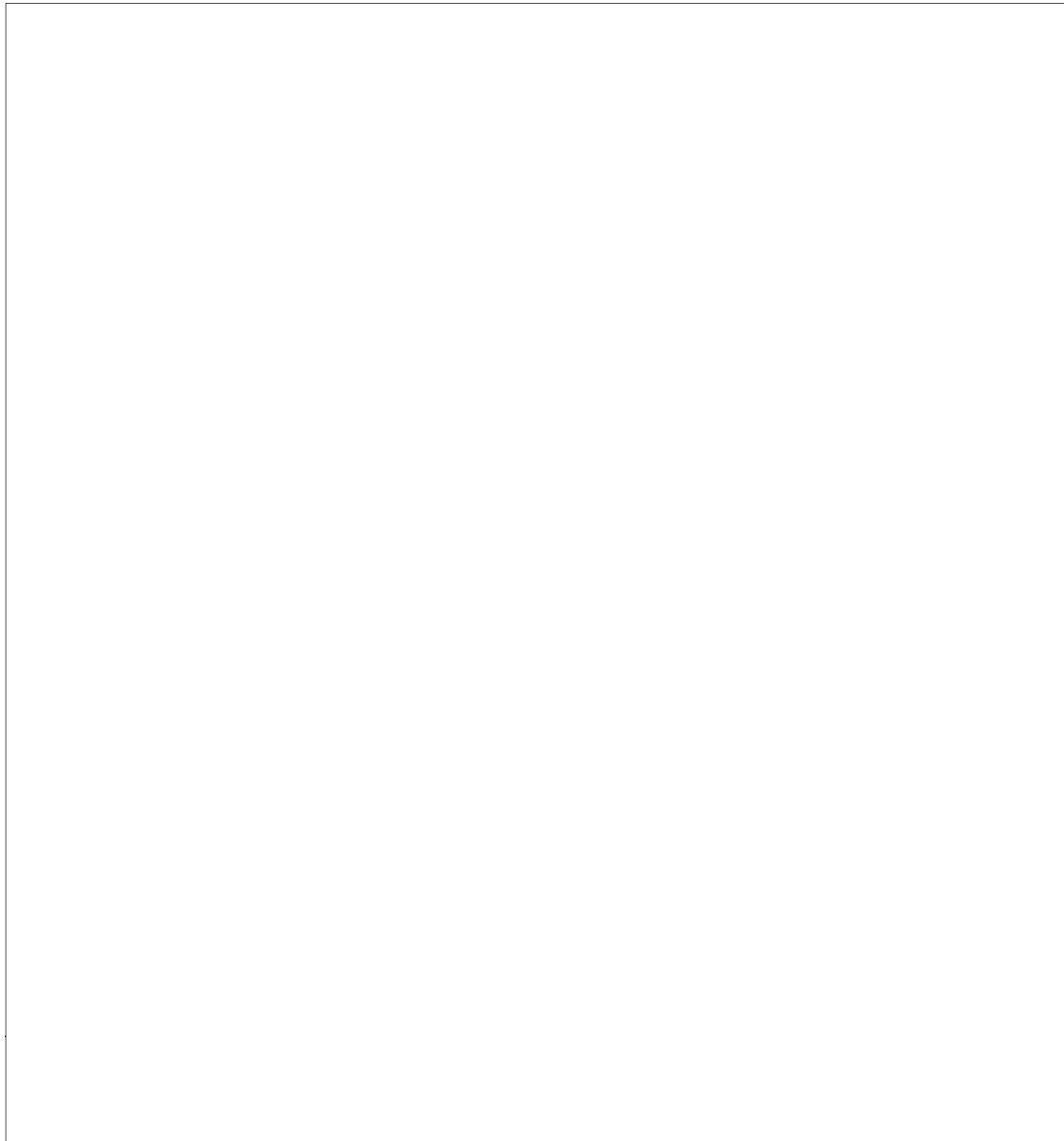
I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Hanoi Reaction to Rusk Offer: Hanoi promptly rejected the US offer of ten new sites for preliminary talks. The authoritative Foreign Ministry statement yesterday repeated the demand that the US choose Phnom Penh or Warsaw. In addition, the statement charged that the US had added new conditions to its terms for preliminary contacts. Hanoi took particular exception to an alleged US stipulation that the site of the initial talks be one that permitted attendance by representatives from Saigon. The North Vietnamese asserted that originally only the US and North Vietnam had to have representation in the city selected. Hanoi insisted that the US stop delaying on the issue of a site. It repeated an earlier implied threat to forgo the proposed contacts. All Hanoi commentary on 19 April focused on this issue.

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The North Vietnamese Line Abroad: North Vietnamese representatives abroad also continue to indicate that Hanoi is sticking on Warsaw or Phnom Penh as a site for preliminary talks.

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

There is nothing of significance to report.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 22 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
22 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

As the relative lull in the ground war continues, we have a few more signs that the Communists may be gearing up for an offensive soon in the Saigon area.

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[redacted] We also have tenuous suggestions in intercepts [redacted] however, that this time the speculation may be more firmly based.

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2. North Korea -
South Korea

There were numerous brushes between North Korean infiltrators and US Army patrols in the Demilitarized Zone over the weekend. One US soldier was killed and four were wounded, and three North Koreans are known to have been killed.

3. Panama

[redacted]

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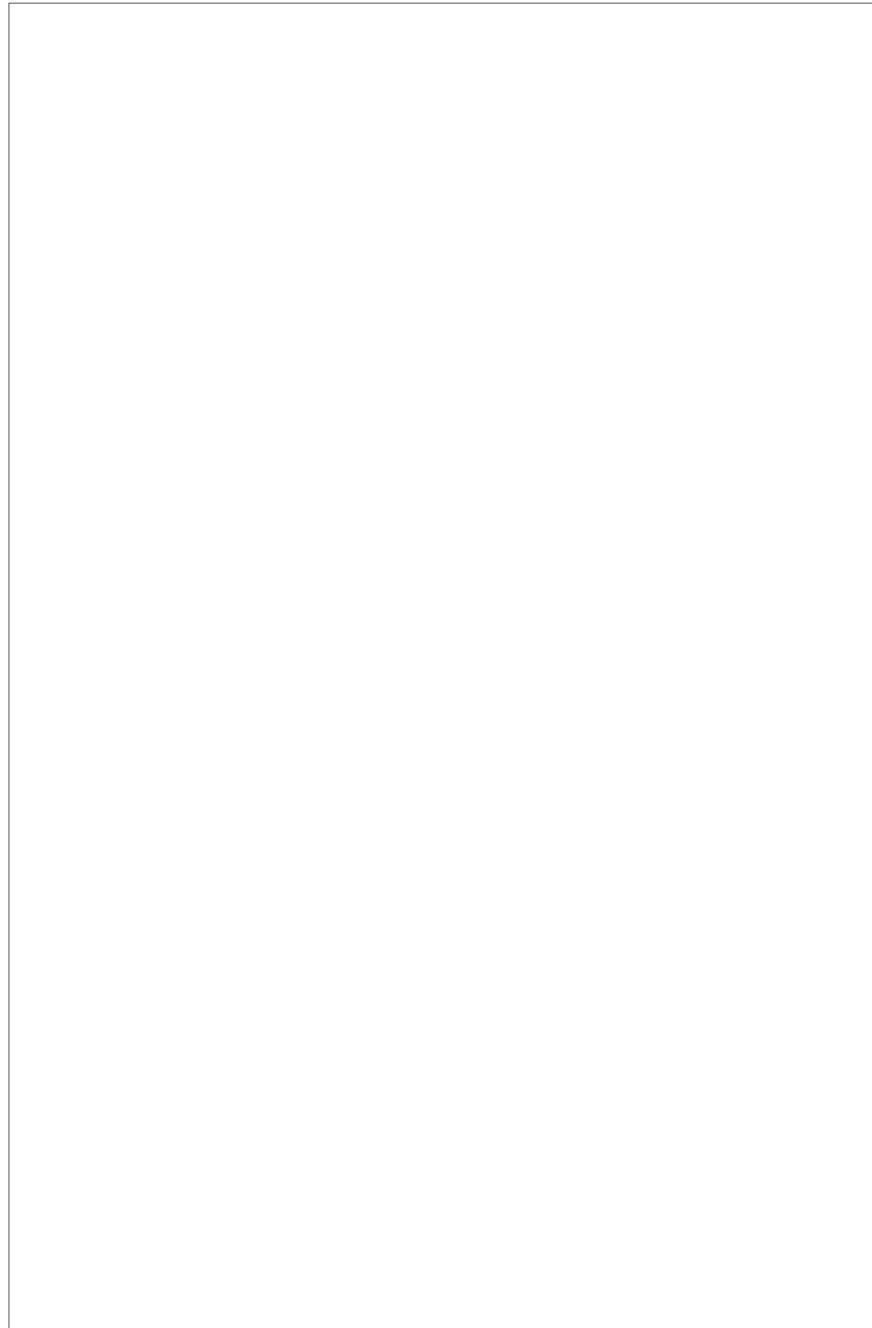
4. Soviet Union

The Soviets recovered Cosmos 212 and 213 on 19 and 20 April. These were the two unmanned satellites which were joined and then separated in orbit on 15 April. Both capsules were in orbit for about five days--a new record for the Soyuz man-in-space capsule. We suspect that the Soviets were quite pleased with this mission.

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5. South Vietnam.

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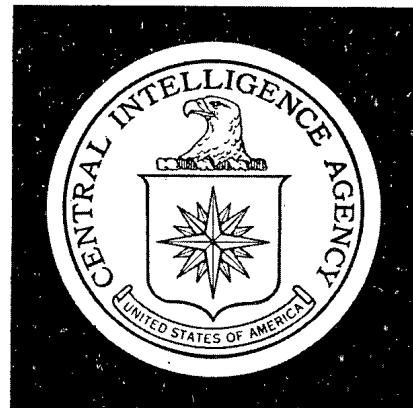
6. Iran-Jordan

The Iranians are pressing for a response from the US to their proposed transfer of military equipment to Jordan. They made the original proposal in early April in answer to a plea from Husayn. On Saturday they asked Ambassador Meyer in Tehran for a reply, and they said they would bring the question up in Washington as well.

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22 April 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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22 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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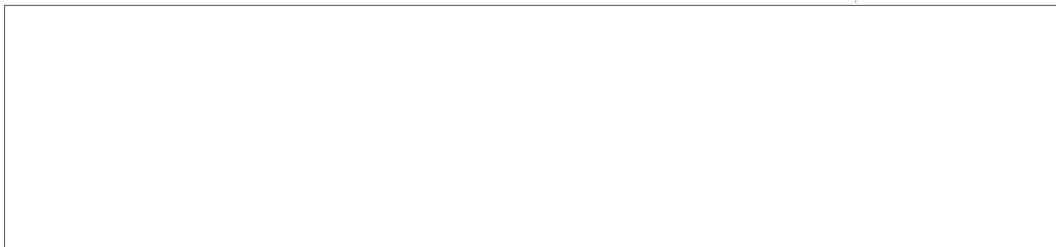
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Cairo Too: The Egyptian ambassador to India has recommended Cairo as a site for talks. In talking to a US official in New Delhi Friday, the ambassador admitted that Washington's first reaction might be "somewhat negative." He thought, nevertheless, it would be a good idea because US-Egyptian discussions could be held on the side. It was not clear whether the ambassador was speaking officially or off the top of his head.

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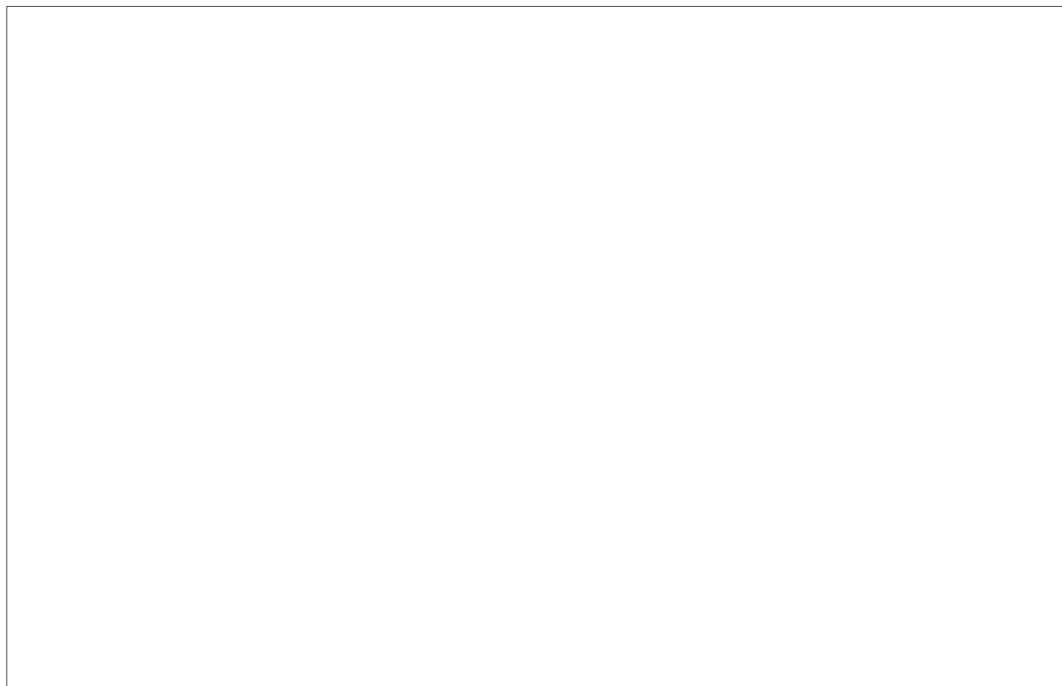
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Propaganda Commentary: Hanoi's press and radio continue to denounce the US over the issue of talks venue. Nhan Dan ran another editorial yesterday. This was broadcast in English by Hanoi's international service. The editorial said little that has not been said before. The theme was American intransigence and deceit; North Vietnamese honesty and sincerity. The editorial concluded by calling on Washington to accept Warsaw.

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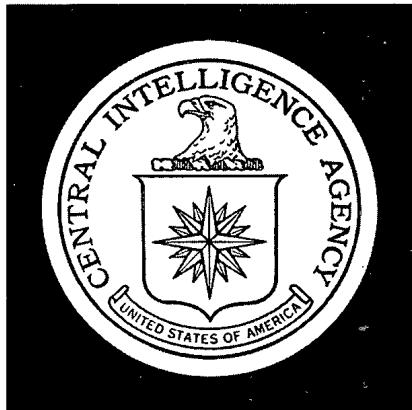
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi on US Elections: Only a small portion of North Vietnam's total propaganda output is being

devoted to the 1968 campaign. When Hanoi does take note, it usually picks up some comment critical of the US position. Over the past week Senator McCarthy has been quoted three times--all on remarks about talks venue--but only once was he identified as a presidential hopeful.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 23 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
23 APRIL 1968

1. Vietnam

There continue to be a good many ripples from the prospect of peace talks. Saigon and Seoul are drawing closer together. Thieu hopes to visit South Korea after his US trip, and the South Koreans have offered Saigon the service of an experienced adviser for any peace discussions. In Vientiane, Souvanna Phouma has told Ambassador Sullivan that he thinks the subject of Laos should be raised early in US - North Vietnamese negotiations.

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Some of the North Vietnamese units in I Corps appear to be returning to their regular operating areas. [redacted]

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2. Soviet Union

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3. Iran

A showdown between Iran and the Western oil consortium has been averted through a scheme Ambassador Meyer describes as an "adroit placement of mirrors." Under this arrangement, oil revenues will be calculated on the Iranian calendar year beginning 20 March. This ignores the first quarter of 1968 when production was low and makes it appear that Iranian demands are being met.

This gimmick, however, only gets the consortium off the hook until haggling starts again this fall over next year's revenues.

4. Jerusalem

The Israelis seem determined to celebrate their Independence Day with a military parade in occupied Jerusalem on 2 May. Arabs in Jerusalem see this as another example of Israel grinding in the conqueror's heel. If the Israelis go ahead with their plans, there will be a risk of terrorist bombings or other violence.

5. Congo

April 23, 1968

Two DC-6s are now in Rwanda, and, with any luck at all, the mercenaries should be on their way out of Africa tomorrow.

6. Dominican Republic

Dominican leftists are planning demonstrations on 28 April to mark the third anniversary of the US landings. Although security forces seem capable of preventing serious disorder, there could be some trouble.

7. Soviet Union

The Soviet military presence in the Middle East has more and more the look of permanency. The evidence is examined in today's Annex.

8. Poland

The purge of Jewish party members is still in full swing. These purges are ostensibly aimed only at "Zionists"--Jews "disloyal" to Poland. More broadly, however, the issue is being used by young, impatient party elements to oust supporters of Gomulka's stagnant leadership and hasten the take-over of a new "Polish" generation.

The Nazi pogroms in Poland caused the death of three million Jews. Only some 30,000 remained at the end of World War II. But the high proportion of Jews within the Communist leadership during most of the postwar period has tended to perpetuate latent anti-Semitism among the people, even though most of the Jews in Gomulka's regime are moderates rather than Stalinists.

Anti-Semitism has always been prevalent in Poland, and a handy political smokescreen. Most Poles today probably regard the present campaign as part of a process to loosen the grip of Gomulka's old guard--which they regard as desirable--rather than as persecution of the Jews. They often remark that it is simply a matter of "one Communist trying to get another."

9. West Berlin

The US Mission has been informed that Senator Robert Kennedy has declined the invitation to speak in Berlin on May Day. He said the Indiana primary compelled him to remain in the US.

10. Libya

Libyan Prime Minister Bakkush came home from a recent visit to Paris with agreements providing for French assistance in a wide range of fields, including oil exploitation, education, and communications. The French presence in Libya will be considerably expanded. The French also offered arms, but Bakkush made no commitment on that subject. Ambassador Newsom believes the French are moving with an eye toward eventually replacing US influence in the country.

ANNEX

Soviet Military Presence in the Middle East

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We estimate that the number of Soviet military personnel in Egypt has now risen to as high as 2,000. There may be as many as 1,000 in Syria. These advisers have evidently been placed in the Egyptian and Syrian armies down to the battalion level.

The Soviet Navy is also playing an increasing role in the area. The forty-plus Soviet ships now in the eastern Mediterranean comprise the most heavily armed force Moscow has ever sent there. Soviet vessels clearly intend to use Egyptian and Syrian ports for resupply and limited maintenance.

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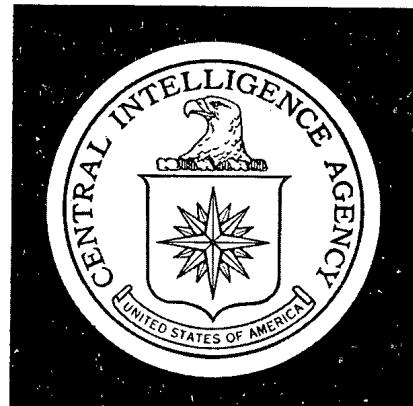
Defense Minister Grechko toured the Iraqi naval base on the gulf last month. The Iraqis are said to have been pressing for Soviet naval assistance to help them get a bigger voice in gulf affairs after British withdrawal in 1971.

Grechko was also in Egypt and Syria last month and other high Soviet officers have been making frequent visits. Another Soviet gesture was the first goodwill flight of Soviet bombers to Syria earlier this month.

Moscow's principal purpose in all this, of course, is to demonstrate its resolve to rebuild the Arab military forces. While Soviet assistance would almost certainly stop short of open participation in a new outbreak of hostilities with Israel, Moscow clearly expects political dividends from its military aid commitments. Moscow sees a long future for its military presence in the area.

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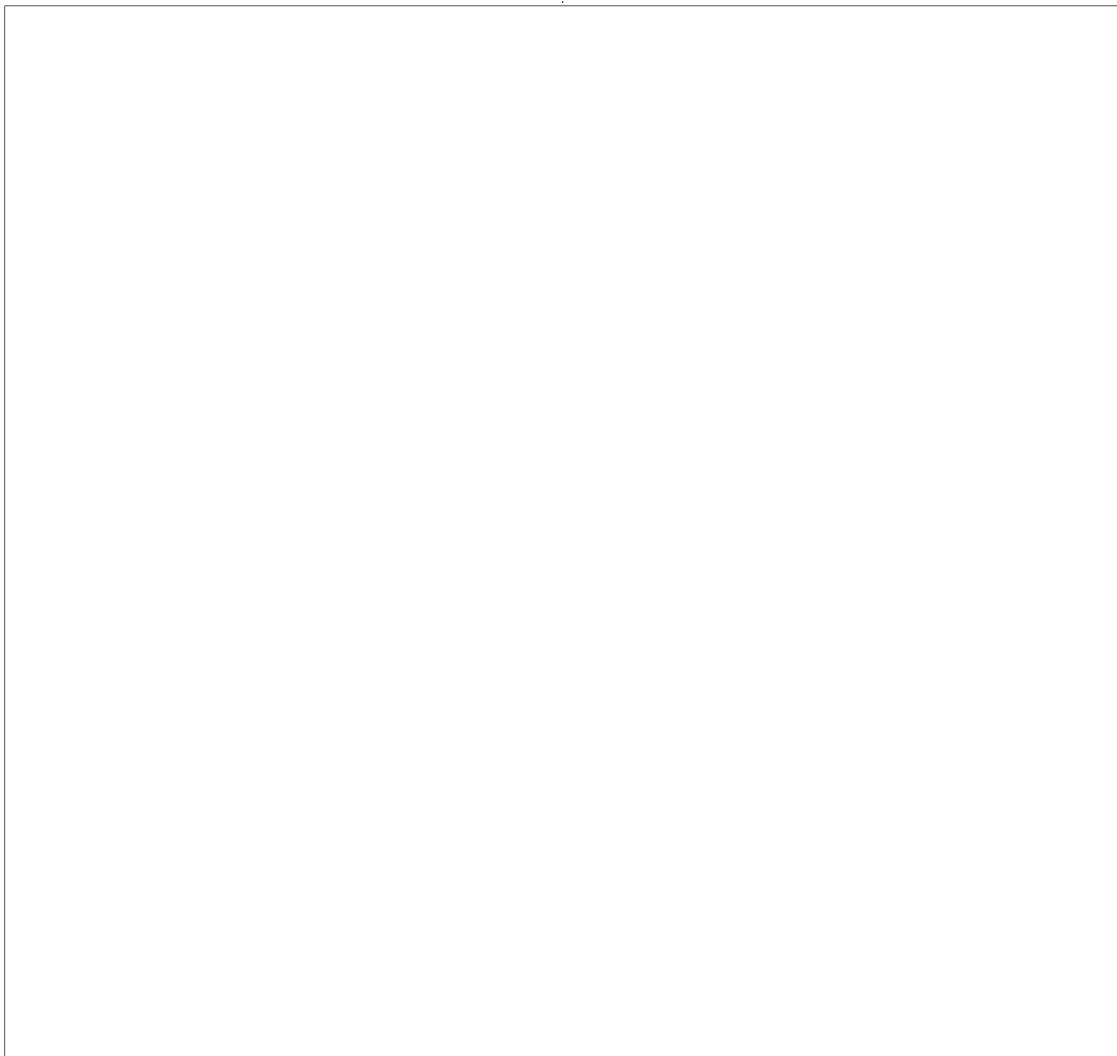
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23 April 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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23 April 1968

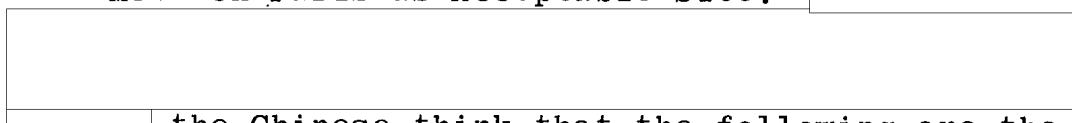
I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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More on Paris as Acceptable Site:

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[redacted] the Chinese think that the following are the

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main reasons these North Vietnamese favor Paris:

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--The French press "will give very favorable coverage" to the North Vietnamese position.

--Hanoi's representatives in Paris feel they are sufficiently equipped to support whomever North Vietnam sends to deal with the Americans.

--Communications with Hanoi are adequate.

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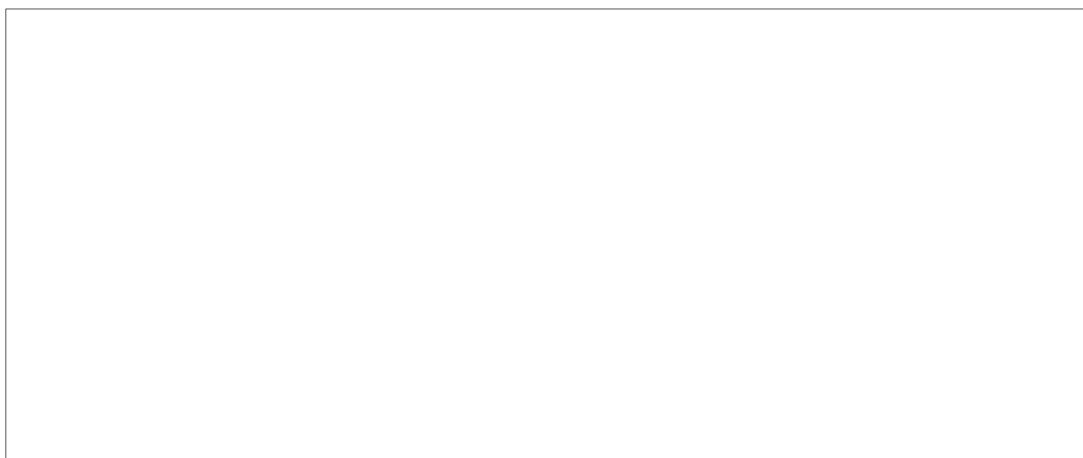
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More Chinese Transportation Experts on the Way:
A recent intercept shows that 15 highway specialists,
six railroad experts, and four factory specialists
are being sent to North Vietnam.

* * *

Hanoi Bridges: Both sides of the center portion
of the Paul Doumer Bridge were lighted and be-
ing repaired last Tuesday night, according to the
Western traveler who frequently visits Hanoi. He
also reported seeing vehicles crossing the Canal
des Rapides Bridge without blackout lights. All
bridges in the Hanoi area were fully illuminated.

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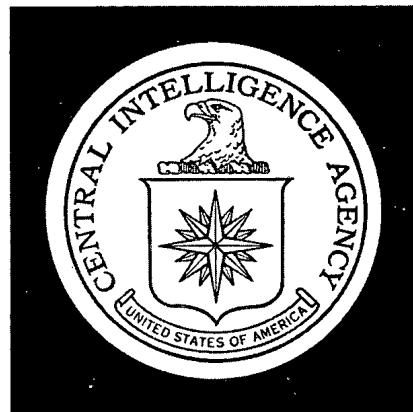
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 24 April 1968



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DAILY BRIEF
24 APRIL 1968

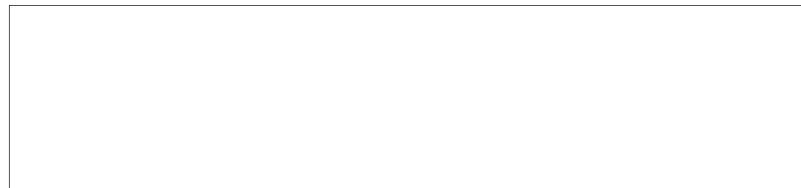
1. Vietnam

The Viet Cong radio announced yesterday that a national "congress" was held near Saigon last weekend by the Vietnam Alliance of National, Democratic, and Peace Forces. The meeting, allegedly attended by many notables from South Vietnamese cities, was said to have elected a central committee and adopted a program.

This is an obvious move to set the stage for a political settlement on Communist terms. The Communists had earlier explained that the local "alliances," which they say have been set up in various "liberated" areas since Tet, would form a national grouping. That, in turn, would ultimately join in a coalition with the National Liberation Front to replace the Thieu-Ky government.

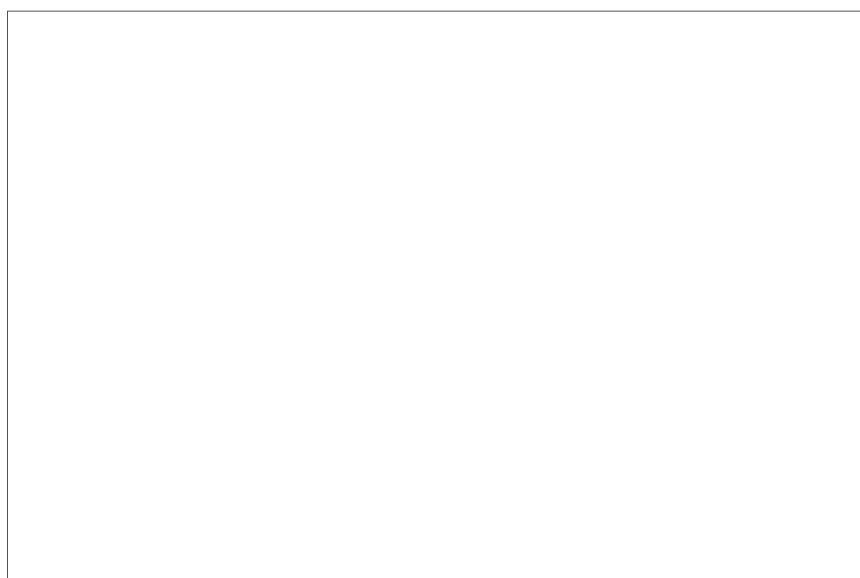
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2. Soviet Union



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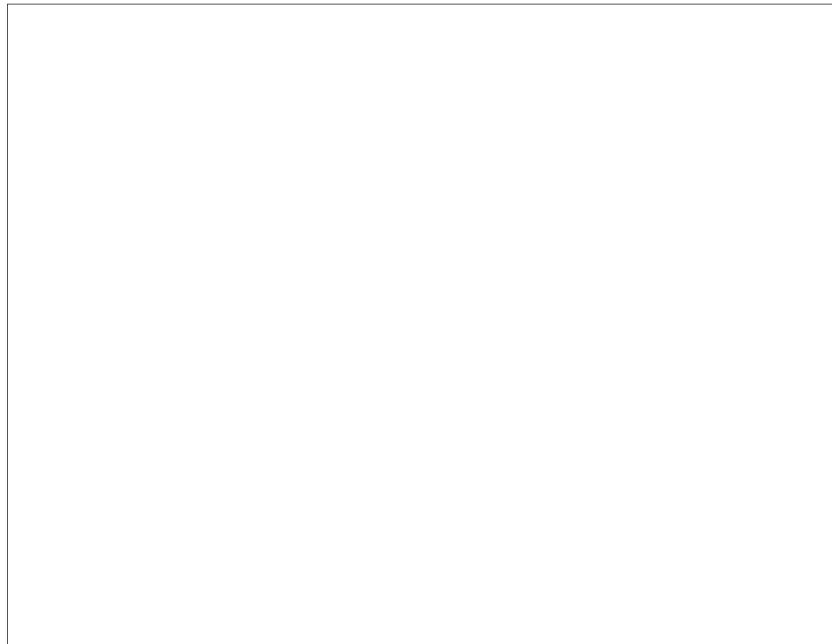
3. North Korea



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4. South Korea

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5. Indonesia

Suharto, beset by domestic opposition, has altered plans for the price increases required under the anti-inflation program. Moslem radicals are threatening nationwide demonstrations if there are sharp price increases. Rather than risk bloodshed, Suharto has ordered a two-phase increase with the first step to be announced 28 April.

The second increase would come in June--but only if Suharto has enough pledges of foreign economic help to persuade the public that the recovery program would continue.

6. Communist Conference

Some 70 party delegations convene today in Budapest to begin work on the agenda for the full-scale international conference late this year. Signs are that the Rumanians and Yugoslavs will be among the missing. The Czechs are reluctant, but at this delicate juncture in their relations with Moscow, they probably feel they have no real alternative but to go.

7. Czechoslovakia

An economist close to Deputy Premier Sik went out of his way on Monday to inquire "personally" whether the US might grant Czechoslovakia a loan. He told a US Embassy officer that the loan could be used to acquire Western consumer goods. He added that the reformers now in control badly need some kind of highly visible economic success in order to keep the "conservatives" at bay.

The economist said his meeting with the embassy officer had been cleared with Sik, but that his question about a loan was his own.

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50X1**8. Cuba**

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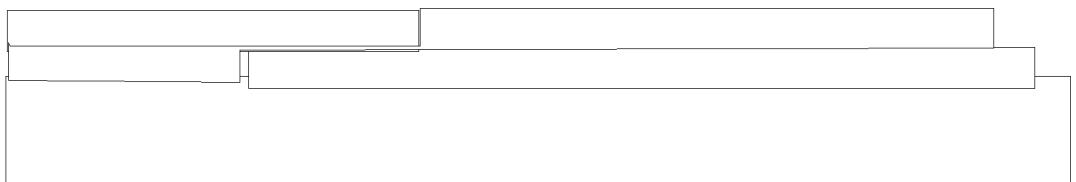
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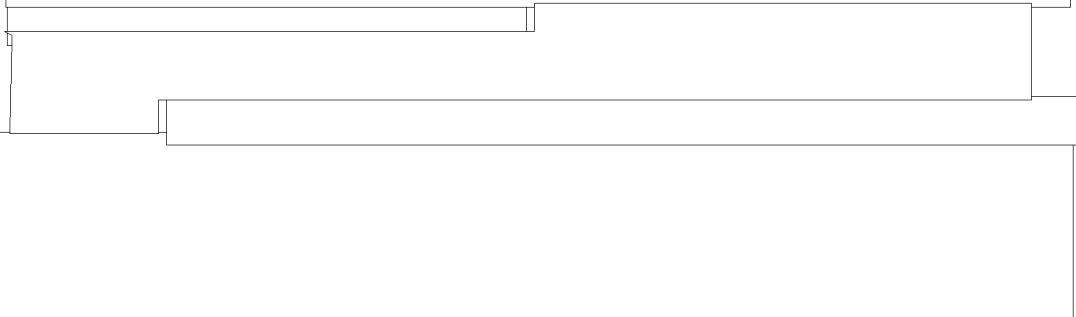
April 24, 1968



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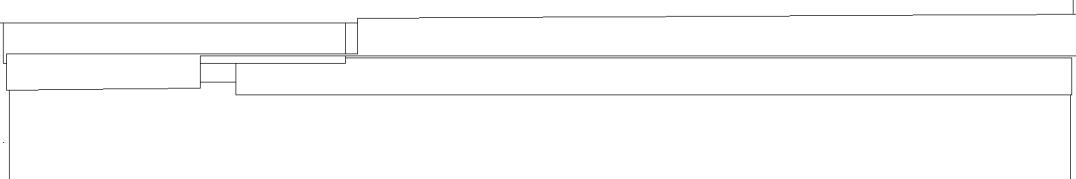


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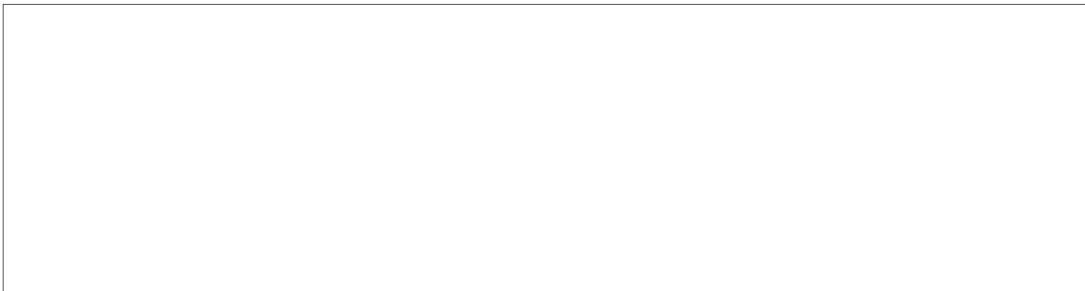


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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

24 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Hanoi Propaganda: North Vietnamese media continue to make propaganda hay over the site issue. Hanoi has offered nothing new in its treatment during the past several days; Phnom Penh or Warsaw are offered on a take-it-or-leave-it basis.

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A Nhan Dan article broadcast yesterday rebuts Secretary Clifford's weekend statements with a charge that they were intended to fend off world criticism of the US. US arguments, it said, are "unsound and ill-meant," and "cannot hold water." The paper quotes Western press stories critical of US policy and claims that in the midst of this "propaganda ploy," the US is stepping up its attacks on North Vietnam as well as the pace of the war in the South. It takes note of Representative Mendel Rivers' "threat" on 20 April that the US will use greater military force if the North does not accept US conditions for talks. The article closes with a familiar line that the world is demanding that the US "prove its good will, if any," by agreeing to either Phnom Penh or Warsaw for contacts with Hanoi.

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North Vietnamese in Mexico: The long-planned visit to Mexico by Hanoi's ambassador in Cuba began yesterday. On arriving at the Mexico City airport, the North Vietnamese told newsmen that his visit is "a friendly one, to explain my government's viewpoints." He is scheduled to meet today with Foreign Minister Carrillo Flores, and presumably will see President Diaz Ordaz later on. He will be in Mexico until Friday.

Mexican newsmen have been quick to speculate that Hanoi intends to propose Mexico City as the site for US - North Vietnamese contacts.

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A New Viet Cong Appeal to the South: The Viet Cong radio on 20 April broadcast a Communist version of a "Chieu Hoi" appeal. It was an elaboration of previous Communist efforts to encourage defections among civilian workers of the Saigon government and South Vietnamese troops. This time, however, the Communists tried to create a sense of urgency by characterizing the present situation as "decisive" and "historic." The appeal strongly implied an anticipated increase in the tempo of military activity by using such language as "seething and fierce," and "constant offensive and comprehensive uprising" to describe the current period.

The appeal was directed specifically at South Vietnamese officers, troops, and policemen. It offered special citations and awards to anyone who cooperates with the "revolutionary armed forces" in destroying outposts, warehouses, airfields, wharves, or prisons.

The appeal seems to be saying that South Vietnamese officials will have plenty of opportunity to cooperate with the Communists in the coming weeks. It says that "during attacks on cities and provincial and district capitals by revolutionary forces," those who cooperate "will be noted for their achievements."

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Haiphong Rail and Highway Bridge: Photography of 19 April shows that Haiphong's only rail and highway bridge is apparently serviceable again. It was last attacked in March.

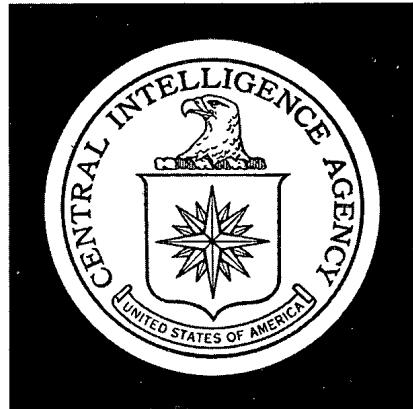
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Thai Nguyen Thermal Power Plant: Photography of 18 April shows that the Thai Nguyen Thermal Power Plant--last bombed in August 1967--is probably operational. Smoke is seen coming from a flue leading to the generator hall, and coal piles near the generator hall show use. It is believed that the plant is partially operational and that its reconstruction is likely to continue.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 25 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
25 APRIL 1968

1. North Vietnam

Recent aerial photography shows an unusual type of surface-to-air missile radar near Hanoi. Satellite photography of China confirms that this particular radar is produced by the Chinese.

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2. Communist China

Recent satellite photography of China's ICBM launch complex at Shuang-Cheng-Tzu shows that a major modification program is under way there. A new control bunker and launch pad are apparently being built. Also, the existing launch pad is being modified and will not be usable for several months.

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3. Soviet Union

[redacted] last night after a standdown of almost six months.

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4. Sino-Soviet Relations

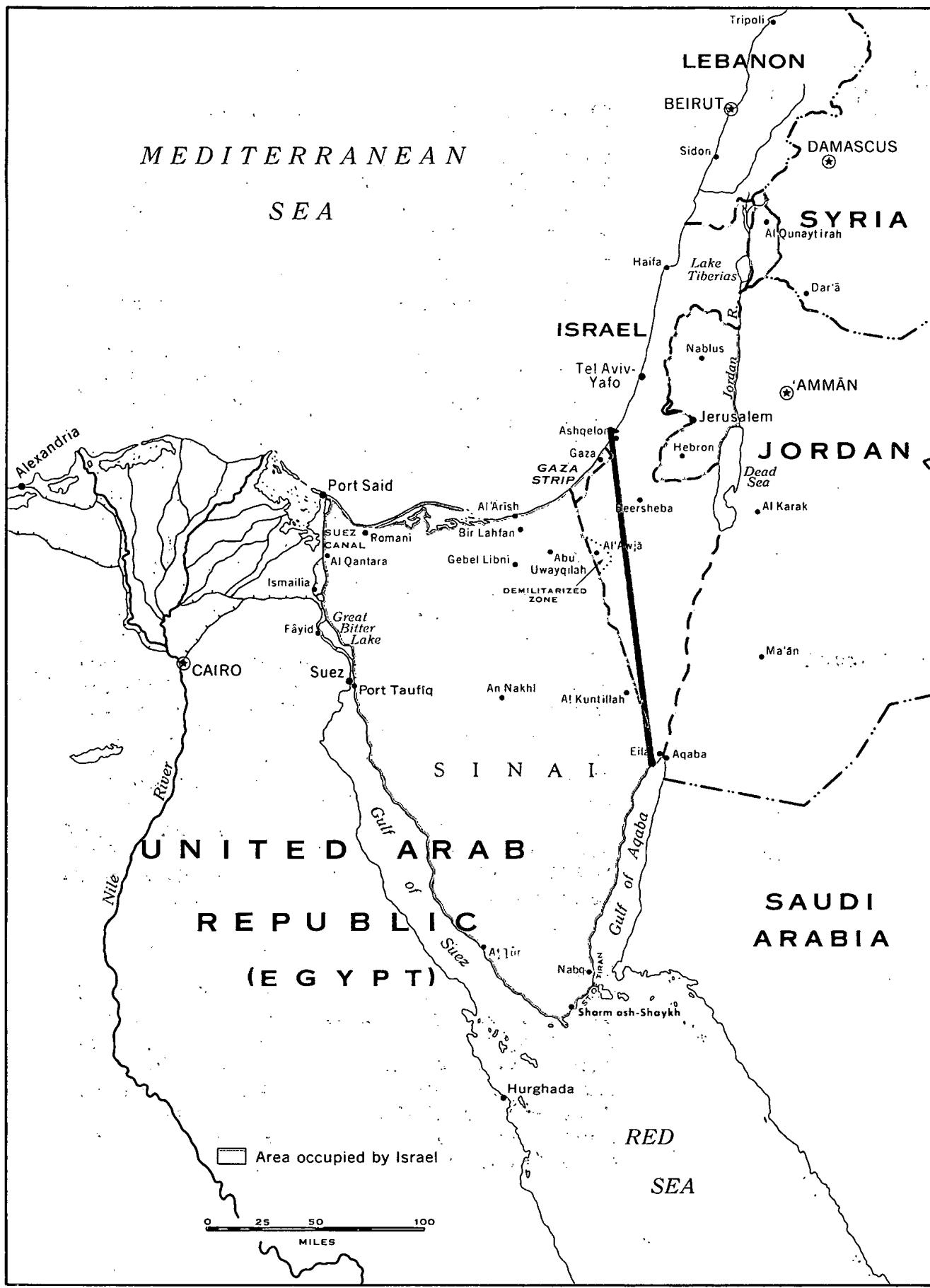
Timed to appear with the opening of the preparatory meeting in Budapest to plan a world Communist conference, the Russians have come out in their party journal Kommunist with a harsh polemic against the Chinese. The Soviet line here is that the very existence of Communism in China is in jeopardy, that this is a problem for all Communists, and that it should be on the agenda of the Communist summit meeting in November.

The article is intended to have a special meaning for Eastern Europe. For the Czechs, in particular, Moscow is saying that nationalism (the non-Russian variety) is a perversion and this can lead to the destruction of Communism. The message for Dubcek and company is: this far, but no farther.

In general, however, there is a considerable lack of realism in the piece--a sense of longing for the iron discipline of the Stalinist era and the return of "proletarian internationalism." The Soviets know full well that it is too late for this, but they want to start the Budapest meeting in the old orthodox style.

5. Cambodia

Sihanouk, in a special address to the nation on Monday, accused the Communists of fomenting the tribal rebellion in northeast Cambodia. He claimed to have considerable "evidence" of Pathet Lao and Vietnamese Communist presence among the tribal dissidents and said that a number of Communist agents have been captured. Sihanouk may be exaggerating somewhat about the threat in the northeast, but he has long considered this area a prime target for Vietnamese expansionism.



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6. Laos

We have reports that the Communists may be planning a coordinated terrorist campaign against major Lao towns in the near future. It is possible that these reports have been generated by the Communists to play on the jittery nerves of the Lao leadership. Similar rumors of a widespread offensive to celebrate the Laotian New Year two weeks ago did not materialize.

The Communists, however, almost certainly have the capability to conduct such raids at a time and place of their own choosing. Furthermore, there has been an increase in Pathet Lao terrorism this year. Over the past week, for example, they have destroyed the quarters of US attaché and AID officials in two towns in southern Laos. There were no US casualties in either incident.

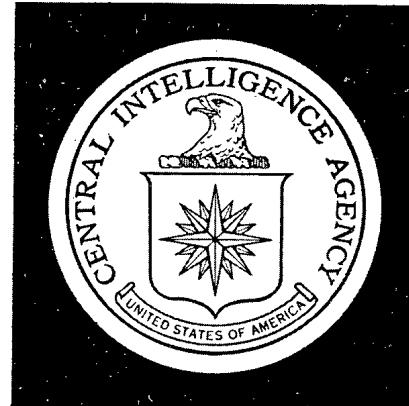
7. Israel

Israel is about set to start work on a 42-inch oil pipeline by-passing the Suez Canal and running from Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba to Ashkelon on the Mediterranean. Completion of the first stage of construction--planned for next year--will provide an annual capacity of about 20 million tons. Completion of the second stage (by about 1975) will bring capacity to 50-60 million tons a year.

Iran is the only likely source of substantial quantities of petroleum for the pipeline. This petroleum will probably go mainly to Eastern Europe. A fleet of supertankers will unload at the deep-water facilities at Eilat; smaller tankers will load at Ashkelon. This will probably be a less costly route than oil carried via the cape or even through the canal.

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16

25 April 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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25 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

North Vietnamese to Japan: North Vietnamese delegates have been admitted to a meeting of a Japanese leftist group for the first time in three years. The delegates will attend the 10th general session of the Japan-Vietnam Friendship Association in Kobe on 28 and 29 April.

On several occasions in the past, Hanoi delegates to similar meetings have been denied entry permits by the Japanese Government. This time, however, Tokyo said that "new developments" in the international situation would make it inappropriate to refuse entry. The three Vietnamese are not high-ranking personalities but propaganda types who will try to promote anti-Americanism and make a pitch for Japanese support of Hanoi.

Now that the ice has been broken, additional visits by North Vietnamese seeking to promote better Hanoi-Tokyo relations can be expected. The Japanese Government says that applications in the future will be considered on a "case-by-case basis."

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Low-Pressure Hanoi Propaganda: Hanoi is trying a new propaganda approach to American audiences. Radio Hanoi on 24 April broadcast the first of a series of talks to the American people by a folksy North Vietnamese lawyer named Tran Cong Tuong. Tuong identifies himself as a member of the Vietnamese Communist delegation to the 1954 Geneva conference on Vietnam. More recently he has traveled extensively to Free World propaganda forums, such as the various "war crimes trials," to drum up popular support for North Vietnam. The broadcast of 24 April was beamed in English to Havana, probably for transmission over Cuban short-wave radio facilities.

In his broadcast Tuong appeals directly to the American people to imagine themselves in the position of the North Vietnamese with foreign planes and warships coming from another continent thousands of miles away to "kill their mothers and children." The broadcast is replete with references to "justice, freedom, legitimate demands for self-defense and peace," and the technique is a sort of informal fireside-chat approach. It is obviously tailored to American audiences and designed to be more effective than Hanoi's usual propaganda tirades.

* * *

Hanoi Takes Credit for the F-111A: Hanoi claims to have brought down the US F-111A in its Southern Quang Binh Province on 21 April. A Hanoi radio broadcast of the 24th says this is the third F-111A which North Vietnamese air defenses have brought down.

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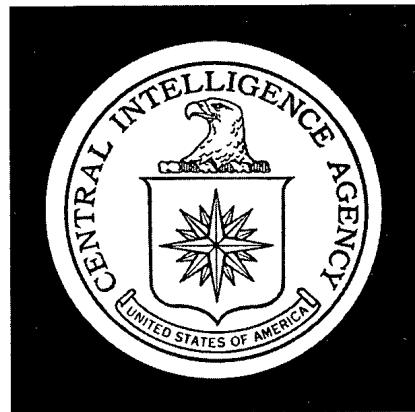
II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi Quotes US Senators: A radio Hanoi transmission in English to Havana relayed some recent statements on the war by Senators Robert Kennedy, Mansfield, and McCarthy. The broadcast noted a Reuters report of a Kennedy statement in Los Angeles in which the Senator allegedly said the US should keep its promise "to go anywhere any time to negotiate peace in Vietnam." Senator Mansfield was quoted as favoring a coalition government in Saigon and a US withdrawal from Vietnam as soon as possible.

A statement by Senator McCarthy charging that Secretary Rusk was "hamstringing" attempts to start peace talks was also cited. The broadcast did not mention Senator McCarthy's assertion that the Secretary should be replaced.

In keeping with its usual practice, Hanoi made no editorial comment of its own. Nor did it make any particular point of the fact that two of the Senators it quoted were presidential candidates.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 26 April 1968



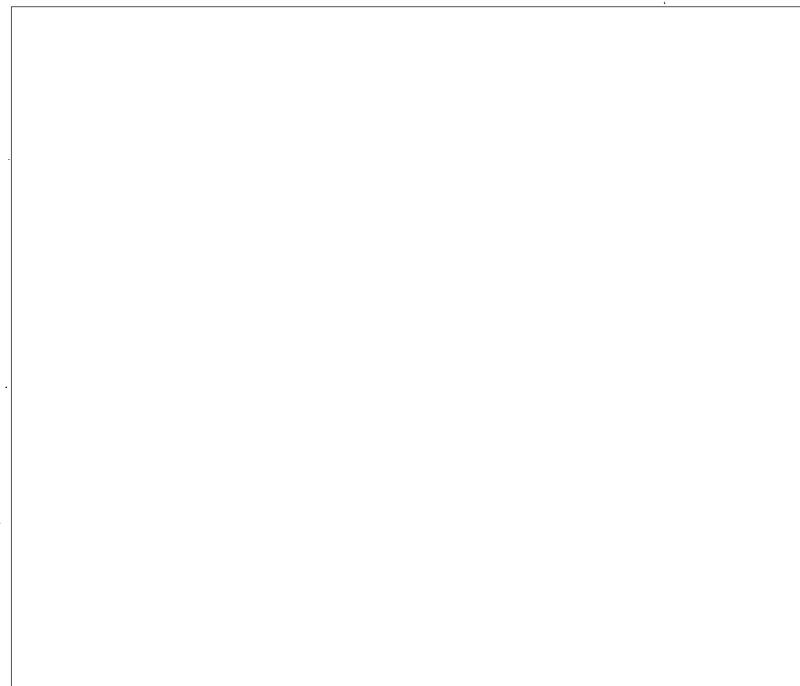
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23

DAILY BRIEF
26 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

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The most critical spot at the moment is the area around Hue

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"N-day" terminology has appeared at least once in intercepts from this region.

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2. South Korea

The South Koreans are delaying a decision on the dispatch of 6,000 more troops to Vietnam. They say they are waiting until they can judge the extent of infiltration from the north this summer.

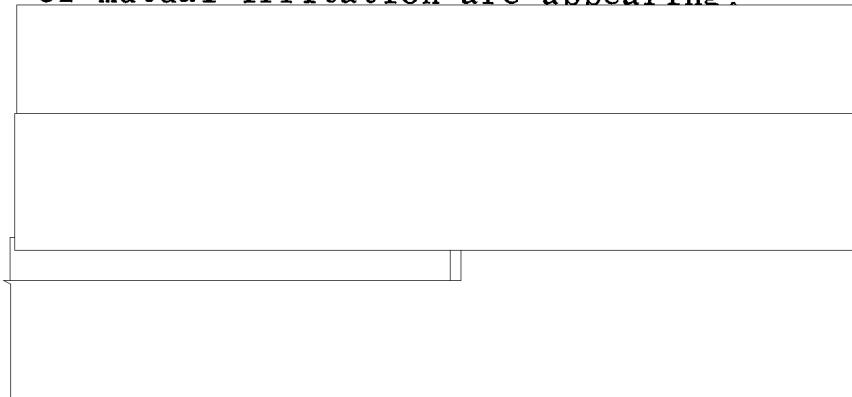
There are other considerations, however. First, Pak probably wants to register his concern over the recent US initiatives in Vietnam. More important, he probably hopes the delay will get him more US military aid and a stronger US commitment to help resist a North Korean attack.

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3. Czechoslovakia-Soviet Union

Relations had seemed to be settling down in recent weeks, but now new signs of mutual irritation are appearing.

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This friction has been punctuated by a courtly but surprisingly explicit debate between the media of the two countries.

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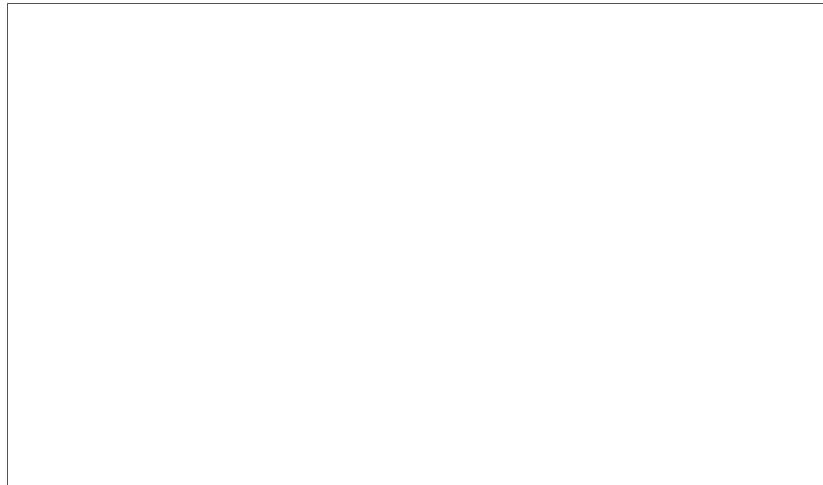
Some of the things General Sejna has told us about the earlier rounds in this spat suggest that the Soviets have been heavy-footed throughout. He says that during the Czech power struggle late last year, they guessed wrong more than once. At first they held aloof because they thought the dispute was between conservative factions. When Dubcek's "radical" outlook became apparent, it was the same Ambassador Chernonenko who weighed in heavily on Novotny's side while keeping lines of communication open to Dubcek.

After Dubcek's victory in December, the Soviets adapted quickly. They urged Novotny to yield gracefully in order not to drive Dubcek into the arms of the doctrinaire liberals. Sejna thinks Moscow is now concentrating on efforts to influence Dubcek, but we suspect the Soviets are keeping in touch with the conservatives as well.

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4. Soviet Union

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5. Poland

The students say there will be demonstrations in all major university cities beginning on Monday

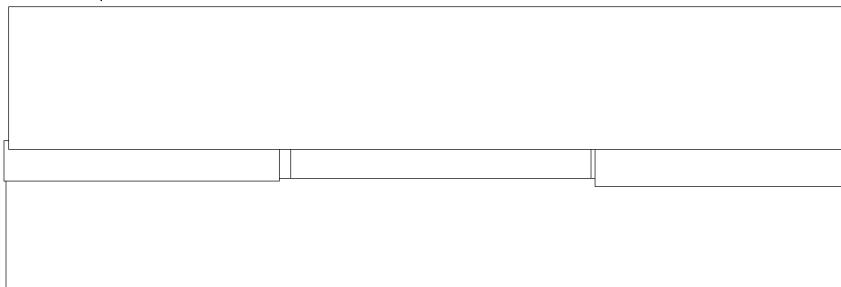
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[redacted] to continue through the May Day celebrations next Wednesday. The students hope that by emphasizing economic issues, they can get more support than they had last time from the workers.

The government has already rounded up some student leaders and is keeping others on the run. It is likely to handle any demonstrations that do come off in the same hard-nose way. The students' militancy may in fact be giving party hardliners a chance to better their position at the expense of those who favor a more lenient policy.

6. Syria -
Soviet Union

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7. Israel -
Arab States

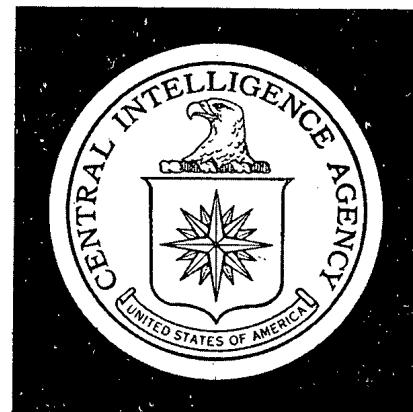
The Israelis are digging their heels in on the diplomatic front. They infuriated U Thant by flatly rejecting his letter requesting a cancellation of their parade in Jerusalem. Thant is thinking of adding his complaint to that of the Jordanians in the Security Council.

An Israeli spokesman told a US Embassy officer in Tel Aviv that the Israelis had gone about as far as they were willing to go in their position on the Jarring mission. This position, of course, leaves a big gap between them and the Arabs.

The spokesman put on a show of fatalism over future Arab-Israeli relations. He said that public opinion inside Israel is hardening and that the Israelis would be willing to hold to their essential bargaining positions for 20 years if necessary.

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

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16
26 April 1968

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

26 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Bridge Repairs: The completion of a rail bypass bridge south of the Doumer railroad/highway bridge over the Red River at Hanoi may permit through rail traffic into and south of the North Vietnamese capital for the first time since mid-December 1967. Since that time, the North Vietnamese have been forced to rely on ferries to move rail cars across the river or tranship cargo by truck or watercraft.

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Hanoi Civil Defense: People in Hanoi are still digging in for new US air attacks [redacted]

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[redacted] more

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antiaircraft artillery was being brought into the city and new trenches being dug. Soon after the bombing restriction, there were press reports that civil defense preparations were being pushed forward.

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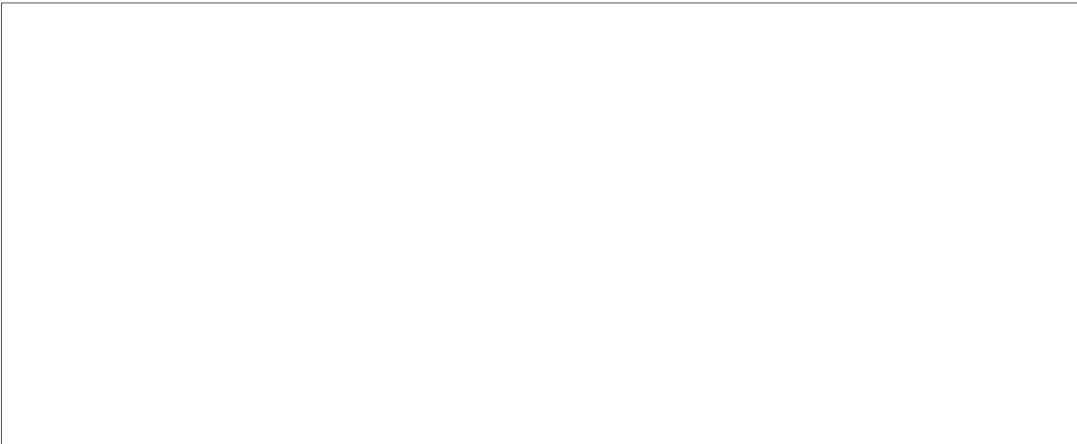
North Vietnamese Propaganda on Site Selection:
Yesterday Hanoi radio's daily offering on the talk site issue was a rather limp piece from the party newspaper rehashing the same arguments put forward for the past two weeks. The broadcast breaks no new ground but seems milder than earlier ones, as if Hanoi were temporarily marking time in its propaganda treatment of this subject.

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Cyprus Holds Up Ship Registration: The Cyprus Government is refusing to register a ship engaged in trade with North Vietnam. The owners of the ship, the Yvonne, are trying to get the decision overruled in the courts.

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

There is nothing of significance to report.

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~~Top Secret~~ 27 April 1968



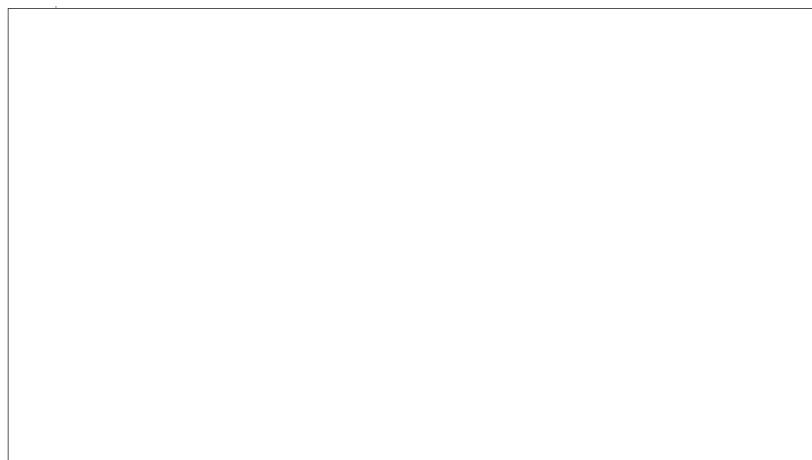
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23

DAILY BRIEF
27 APRIL 1968

1. Korea

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By and large, the posture of North Korea's armed forces remains normal. Much of the latest war talk probably stems from the period of the Pueblo's capture when the North Koreans themselves were not sure what was coming next.

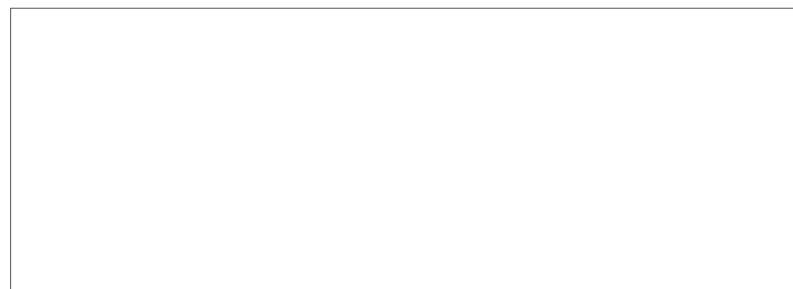
Pyongyang propaganda continues to whip up anti-American sentiment, nevertheless. A good deal of this is for domestic consumption, but there also are efforts to impress the outside world with North Korea's resolve. One instance was the announcement on Thursday that the North Korean defense budget will be increased by one-third. Limited information on the North Korean economy makes it difficult to say just what impact--if any--this might have on defense capability.

As we have noted, Pyongyang probably does plan to step up small raids south of the Demilitarized Zone. Early this morning the North Koreans ambushed an American patrol just south of the DMZ. One soldier was killed and three wounded.

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2. Soviet Union

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3. Jordan

Husayn's latest swing through the Arab states was financially profitable, but not much was accomplished politically.

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[redacted] Husayn failed, however, to get agreement on holding an Arab summit and has finally given up the idea.

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4. Cyprus

UN Undersecretary Rolz-Bonnett visits Cyprus this weekend in hopes of breaking the deadlock over where Greek and Turkish Cypriots should meet to talk about bettering their relations. Makarios insists the talks be held on the island; Turkish Cypriot Vice President Kucuk wants them held abroad.

5. Poland

The party's anti-Semitic campaign is stirring fear of persecution among Poland's Jews, and many are leaving the country. The Dutch Embassy, which handles Israel's interests in Poland, is processing about 100 exit applications a month. Other Western embassies, including the US, also are noting an increase in applicants. Gomulka has offered publicly to let Jews leave on the understanding that they will not be allowed to return.

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6. Berlin

Yesterday the East Germans refused to let West Berlin's Mayor Schuetz travel by road through their territory. This is an escalation of Communist harassment, but there is no indication that the Russians want a major crisis now.

The East Germans are trying their "salami tactics" again in an effort gradually to restrict West German ties with Berlin. For their part, the Soviets probably will go along until it looks like real trouble is in the offing.

7. Cuba

Castro is trying hard to pump new life into his domestic revolution. In four major speeches over the past five weeks, he has shown himself preoccupied with the lack of response to his calls for greater sacrifice and productivity. Among the things Fidel has ordained in his effort to get things moving is a bigger role for the armed forces in the Cuban economy. The military will now organize and control agricultural brigades.

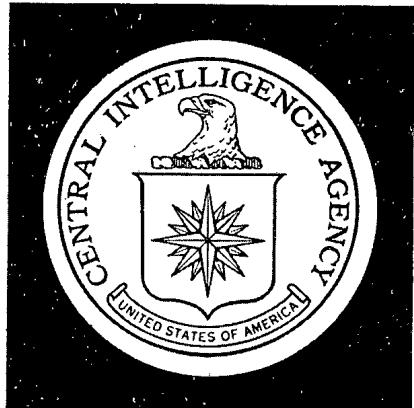
All this is going to create even more discontent, but, so long as the army remains loyal to Castro, discontent is not likely to be translated into action.

8. Soviet Union

During the first quarter of 1968, industrial output for civilian purposes has not matched the growth pattern for the same quarter set over the past three years. Reading between the lines of Soviet statistics, it appears the production of military hardware has gone up slightly.

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- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of US Political Attitudes



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18

27 April 1968

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

27 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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The Chinese On Negotiations: There are signs that Peking is accommodating itself to North Vietnam's acceptance of negotiations and is preparing a position on a Vietnam settlement.

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[redacted] high Chinese officials have consistently opposed a negotiated end to the Vietnam war, but at the same time have indicated that the decision to enter into negotiations would be up to Hanoi.

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In its propaganda treatment of Vietnam, Peking has maintained its hard line on negotiations, branding them as "frauds" engineered by the US and "Soviet revisionists." The Chinese, however, have maintained considerable flexibility on the subject by refusing to criticize publicly or comment on Hanoi's stated willingness to begin preliminary negotiations.

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Hanoi Keeping an "Indications" Book: Hanoi has published a catalog of "war crimes" committed by the US since the limitation of the bombing. The North

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Vietnamese "War Crimes Commission" published the list yesterday claiming that the US had significantly increased the pace of the bombing in the four southern provinces of North Vietnam as a military response to the "general offensive and general uprising" of the South Vietnamese people.

A running account of the number of air attacks on populated areas was given for each of the four provinces, and each example was illustrated by lists of schools, hospitals, and churches destroyed, as well as civilians killed. The list included two claims of bombing north of the 20th parallel.

The War Crimes Commission is also keeping a book on the level of artillery fire across the DMZ into the Vinh Linh Zone. In the first two weeks of April, said the statement, firing was twice the monthly average for March. All of it was directed at vegetable gardens and civilian homes, according to the commission. The communiqué also protested continued offshore bombardment of the southern provinces and reconnaissance overflights throughout the country.

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More on the New Communist "Alliance" in the South: The Communists are continuing to pump up their new national alliance. On 25 April, Liberation Radio broadcast a "statement" of objectives which expanded on the "communiqué" of the day before. It outlined in greater detail the domestic and foreign policy goals of the alliance, which look more and more like those of the Liberation Front every day.

One of the alliance's domestic policies is to establish "contact" with the Liberation Front and to cooperate with it. The Front is described as a "great patriotic force" which cannot be excluded from the settlement of all the problems of South Vietnam. The alliance also offers to discuss an end to the war with the US.

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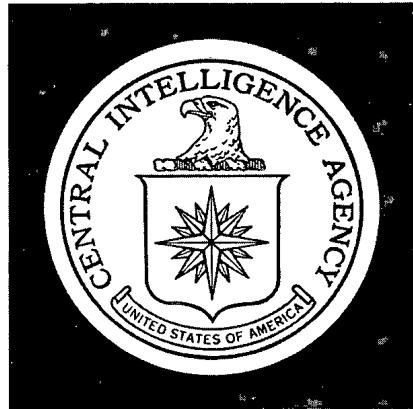
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi Radio Cites US Critics: Hanoi radio on 24 April highlighted statements from prominent congressional leaders critical of the administration's

attitude toward the selection of a site for preliminary contacts with North Vietnam. The radio commentary cited Senator Kennedy's speeches in Los Angeles and Oregon, criticizing the President for not going "anywhere any time," Senator Mansfield's 18 April statement on US troop withdrawal, and Senator McCarthy's criticism of Secretary Rusk on 21 April.

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 29 April 1968



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23

DAILY BRIEF
29 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

Reports persist, particularly in the northern provinces, that the Communists are making preparations for a major offensive during May and June. A prisoner captured last week in southern I Corps claimed that another regiment was being formed there by the consolidation of local force battalions. Similar mergers were noted in this area prior to Tet.

2. Israel-Jordan

Abba Eban still believes there is a slim possibility that Jordan will agree to move unilaterally toward negotiations. [redacted]

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Eban's hopes, we think, are exaggerated. The political dangers for Husayn if he did agree to negotiate will probably persuade him to decline.

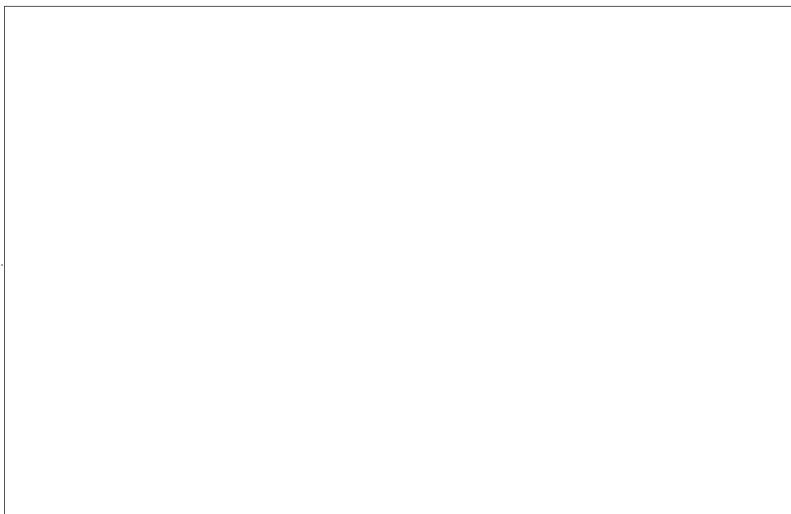
Eban undoubtedly realizes that time is running out for him and the other Israeli moderates who are anxious for some sort of diplomatic settlement with the Arabs. The Israeli "hawks" under Moshe Dayan are becoming more and more restive in the absence of any movement on the diplomatic front.

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3. Thailand

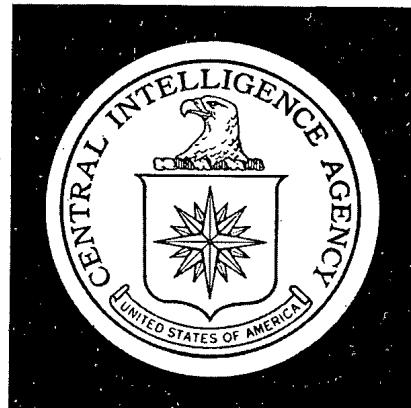
Insurgents recently overran a border security post in the north, killed 15 government defenders, and captured weapons and communications equipment. This is the most successful attack the Communist insurgents have mounted in Thailand to date.

4. France



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- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of US Political Attitudes



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16

29 April 1968

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

29 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Hanoi on Site for Contacts: North Vietnam is continuing to press [redacted] for Warsaw as the venue for contacts with the US. It has consistently avoided committing itself irrevocably to the Polish capital, however.

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North Vietnamese officials abroad are pressing Hanoi's contention that Warsaw is the suitable place for the initial contact. Phung Man Cung, first secretary of Hanoi's embassy in Budapest, in a 26 April interview in Vienna claimed that Hanoi was still waiting for a US response to its Warsaw proposal. He pointed out that the US has had frequent talks with

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the Chinese Communists in Warsaw. But, he implied, Hanoi could out-wait the US on the site issue by saying, "We have time, much time."

Hanoi's propaganda also continues to push for Warsaw. Its broadcasts on 27 and 28 April took the line that well-known American public figures, including Senators Morse, McCarthy, and Young, have declared that the Polish capital is a suitable place and that the US has no valid reason to reject it. The broadcasts ridiculed President Johnson's statements about the US willingness to talk anywhere and about American desires to move immediately toward peace.

* * *

Hanoi's Spokesmen in Paris Under Wraps: Unlike most of Hanoi's spokesmen abroad, the members of the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris are being particularly cautious these days in their relations with the press. This apparently is a reaction to recent revelations in the French papers, sourced to Hanoi's delegation, about contacts between Washington and Hanoi.

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Communists Continue to Inflate Claims of Military Success: The Vietnamese Communists have capped several weeks of almost totally unreal propaganda commentary on the war with one of their most exaggerated claims of military success in South Vietnam to date. In a communique of the Liberation Armed Forces

which was broadcast by Hanoi on 26 April, they boasted that during the past 75 days more than 200,000 enemy have been killed, wounded, or captured and that 2,500 aircraft have been destroyed. All this, they allege, has seriously shaken the military, political, and economic foundations of the US and "its puppets." The communique cautioned, however, that despite the favorable military situation, many more difficulties and hardships lie ahead before victory will be achieved.

These claims may in part be an effort to shore up popular morale during a period when the prospect of negotiations with the US may be causing some doubts.

* * *

Liberation Front Endorses "National Alliance": The Communists are continuing to stress the importance of the newly formed "National Alliance." They claim that it, in concert with the Liberation Front, represents a broad united front which will defeat the US and the "Vietnamese puppets." In statements on 26 and 27 April, the Front endorsed the new alliance and pledged to cooperate with it. It also promised to support the alliance's political program--a program almost identical with its own.

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Consolidation of European Medical Assistance for Hanoi: Medical associations in several West European countries have formed a secretariat, headquartered in Paris, to coordinate and consolidate their assistance to North Vietnam.

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Ho Votes: In his first appearance since the first of the year, 77-year-old Ho Chi Minh cast his vote in a local election at a polling place in Hanoi on 28 April, according to a Hanoi broadcast. The announcement stated that Ho "nimblely stepped into the room and cast his ballot."

Ho's appearances have become a rare occurrence in recent years. In 1967 he was out of view from March to late August except for an appearance at a similar election in late April. He also made a number of appearances in late December and early January, probably to counter intense rumors at that time that he was seriously ill.

[redacted] his age alone would dictate his slowing down and making fewer appearances.

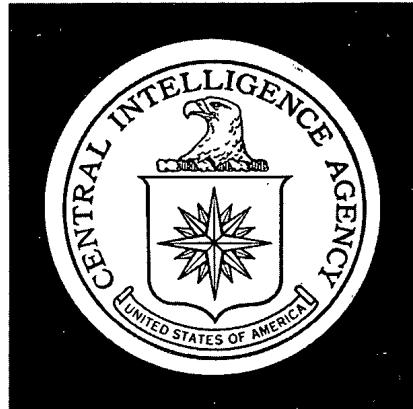
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Liberation Front Group Appeals for US Support: The student union of the Liberation Front has sent a message to American youth and students appealing to them to "step up their antiwar activities and to demand that the US stop sending more soldiers to Vietnam." The message, broadcast by Hanoi's international service on 27 April, hailed the participation of American youth in the current ten days of protest against US policy in Vietnam. It paid high tribute to the "valiant, just struggle of the American people for their legitimate rights."

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The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 30 April 1968



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23

THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
30 APRIL 1968

1. South Vietnam

There are signs of continuing Communist battle preparations over much of South Vietnam, but these preparations still appear incomplete in several areas, including Saigon. Allied spoiling operations may have upset the Communist schedule.

2. May Day

We are watching West Germany in general and West Berlin in particular for May Day violence. There may also be flare-ups in France, Spain, Britain, and Austria.

The demonstrations may not even be limited to the non-Communist part of Europe. In Poland the students reportedly will be trying to get some antigovernment demonstrations going against the backdrop of the traditional Communist May Day festivities.

3. Panama

4. France -
Soviet Union

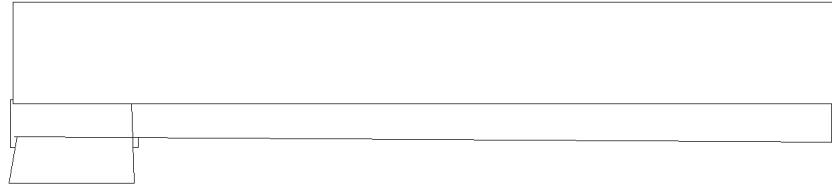
Matters of real substance are cropping up more and more frequently in the increasingly cordial ties between Paris and Moscow. For instance:

--The Soviets let French Defense Minister Messmer watch some of their military exercises during his recent visit to Moscow. We assume they are hoping the French will do the same for Messmer's opposite number, Marshal Grechko, when he returns the visit. A Soviet defense minister watching French troops in action would certainly raise the hackles of many NATO members.

--Our embassy in Paris has been told that contacts between scientists of the two countries have become more frequent and more fruitful. The embassy's contact says the Frenchmen are seeing a good deal more of what the Russians are doing than other Westerners see.

--We understand the two countries are considering the establishment of a French consulate in Leningrad and a Soviet consulate in Marseille. The Supreme Soviet recently ratified a Franco-Soviet consular convention, and Paris may follow suit any day.

5. South Korea -
South Vietnam



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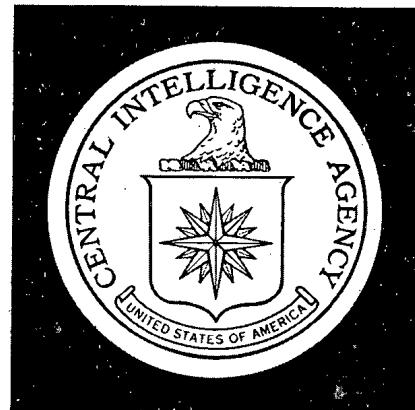
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6. Soviet Union -
India

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- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes

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16
30 April 1968

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

30 April 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

North Vietnam Refutes US Spokesmen: Hanoi has warned again that the US "must bear full responsibility" for the delay in opening bilateral talks. On 29 April, a statement by a Foreign Ministry spokesman takes the usual line that the US has raised one condition after another in delaying selection of a site. This statement is aimed specifically at Assistant Secretary Bundy's remarks of 28 April.

Reflecting North Vietnamese sensitivity to reports of official dealings between the US and Hanoi, the statement says that Bundy "cooked up" a story about "private discussions" in Vientiane while ruling out North Vietnam's choices of venue. Bundy's "crafty arguments," the statement said, are "another proof" that the US is deliberately delaying talks; Vice President Humphrey is charged with saying the same thing in a "roundabout way" by claiming selection of a suitable site is a long and difficult procedure.

The statement concludes by charging that the US is using this time to step up the pace of the war. The statement is being broadcast in Vietnamese and English.

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More Talk on Talks: Among the rumors going around in Warsaw is one that claims serious disagreement at the highest levels of the US Government prevented acceptance of the Polish capital as a talk site.

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

Hanoi on US Antiwar Demonstrations: North Vietnam's news agency carried a roundup of US anti-war demonstrations in English on its international service on 29 April. VNA noted that "huge demonstrations" demanding an end to the war were held recently in several US cities as part of the current ten days of resistance organized by the "National Mobilization Committee." The broadcast reported antiwar meetings in Washington and New York, and various student boycotts protesting the war. On 28 April the North Vietnamese carried a similar item, also in English, focused on student strikes at some 26 universities and colleges. As usual, Hanoi added no commentary of its own.

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