



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 5 August 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
5 AUGUST 1968

1. Israel-Jordan

Jordan is calling for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to take up yesterday's Israeli attack. The Jordanians will ask for "coercive measures" against Israel. Last night, when Jordanian Foreign Minister Rifai told ambassadors of Security Council states about the planned UN appeal, he said 32 Jordanians had been killed in the raid.

The Israelis have officially stated that the air and artillery strikes were in retaliation for recent acts by the Arab terrorists. The Tel Aviv announcement said the attacks were launched against bases used by these terrorists.

2. Czechoslovakia-Soviet Union

From the things Dubcek said--and left unsaid--in his speech to the nation last night, it appears he has bought the right to continue his domestic reforms. The price, however, looks high and includes giving up thoughts of independent economic, defense, and foreign policies. Furthermore, the wording of the Bratislava declaration indicates that Dubcek's Soviet and East European colleagues will be keeping a close watch on developments in Czechoslovakia.

No participant at Bratislava came away completely satisfied. Hungarian party boss Kadar has been quoted saying "differences" still remain. The fact that Dubcek came off with his domestic program reasonably intact is certainly one of those differences and one that is likely to be felt in other East European countries where liberalism is considered an infectious disease.

3. South Vietnam

There is increasing evidence in all four corps areas that the Communists are nearly ready to attack. Prisoners report as many as eight battalions moving on Saigon. Pleiku and Da Nang may also be targets. Exact timing is not certain, although some Viet Cong units have been alerted for a "third round" offensive to begin within the next two weeks.

4. Brazil

Vacation is over, Brazilian students are returning to class, and the government has failed to do anything about the badly needed educational reforms. The prospects for a new round of riots are excellent. This time some labor unions may join the students.

Costa e Silva seems unwilling to take any decisive action that would help solve Brazil's growing problems.

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5. Canada

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6. Soviet Union

Moscow is trying to put together a new organization that would be open competition for the International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium (INTELSAT). The Russians [redacted] [redacted] claim they are making their proposal to most United Nations members. Many of the 62 nations belonging to INTELSAT would be included.

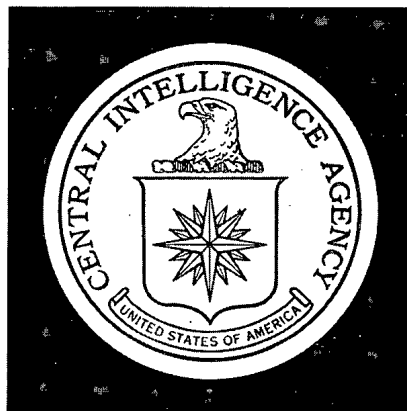
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The Soviet plan does not look as if it would cause defections from INTELSAT, but it does have some provisions that INTELSAT members would like to have in their contracts. In this respect, the existence of the Soviet plan as a second option will complicate negotiations for long-term INTELSAT agreements next year.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam

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



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

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Shipping Report: Foreign flag merchant shipping to North Vietnam during July declined from the preceding record-breaking month. In July, 39 arrivals were recorded in North Vietnamese ports, including six tankers and three cargo ships. This is the lowest number of foreign flag arrivals since February 1968 when there were 29 arrivals.

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Dry cargo deliveries to North Vietnam during July totaled about 148,000 tons. This compares closely with the average monthly figure for dry cargo deliveries noted thus far in 1968. It is a significant decrease, however, when compared with the months of May and June.

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Hanoi Hints at Further Pilot Releases: During their conversations with Ambassador Sullivan in Vientiane, the three recently released US pilots stated that their decision to return home by commercial air rather than military resulted from several broad statements made to them by the North Vietnamese suggesting that three more pilots might be released if the present group's return was "satisfactory." The pilots got the impression, although the North Vietnamese did not spell it out, that returning home commercially would be one of the conditions for a "satisfactory" rating.

Hanoi has never set out any specific conditions for releasing pilots, but the North Vietnamese have muttered unpleasantly in the past over the use of government aircraft for returnees.

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Still No Evidence of North Vietnamese Involvement in Udorn Attack: Ambassador Unger has poured cold water on Thai allegations that Hanoi was responsible for the 26 July attack. He states that, contrary to Deputy Prime Minister Praphat's claims, there were no documents that proved Hanoi's involvement found on the bodies of the two terrorists killed in the attack. While the attack on the air base would have Hanoi's blessing, local Communists seem to have been the ones who carried it out.

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Hanoi Calls on Population for Further Efforts: In an editorial on 3 August, Nan Danh quotes an appeal from President Ho for "our 31 million compatriots" to overcome all hardships and sacrifices and for the Northern compatriots to heighten their vigilance against "espionage and psychological war tricks" of the US "aggressor." By strengthening local and national security, by "developing production," and by wholeheartedly helping the kith and kin in the South, the Northern compatriots and combatants will fulfill the "great rear's duties toward the great front line."

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

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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