



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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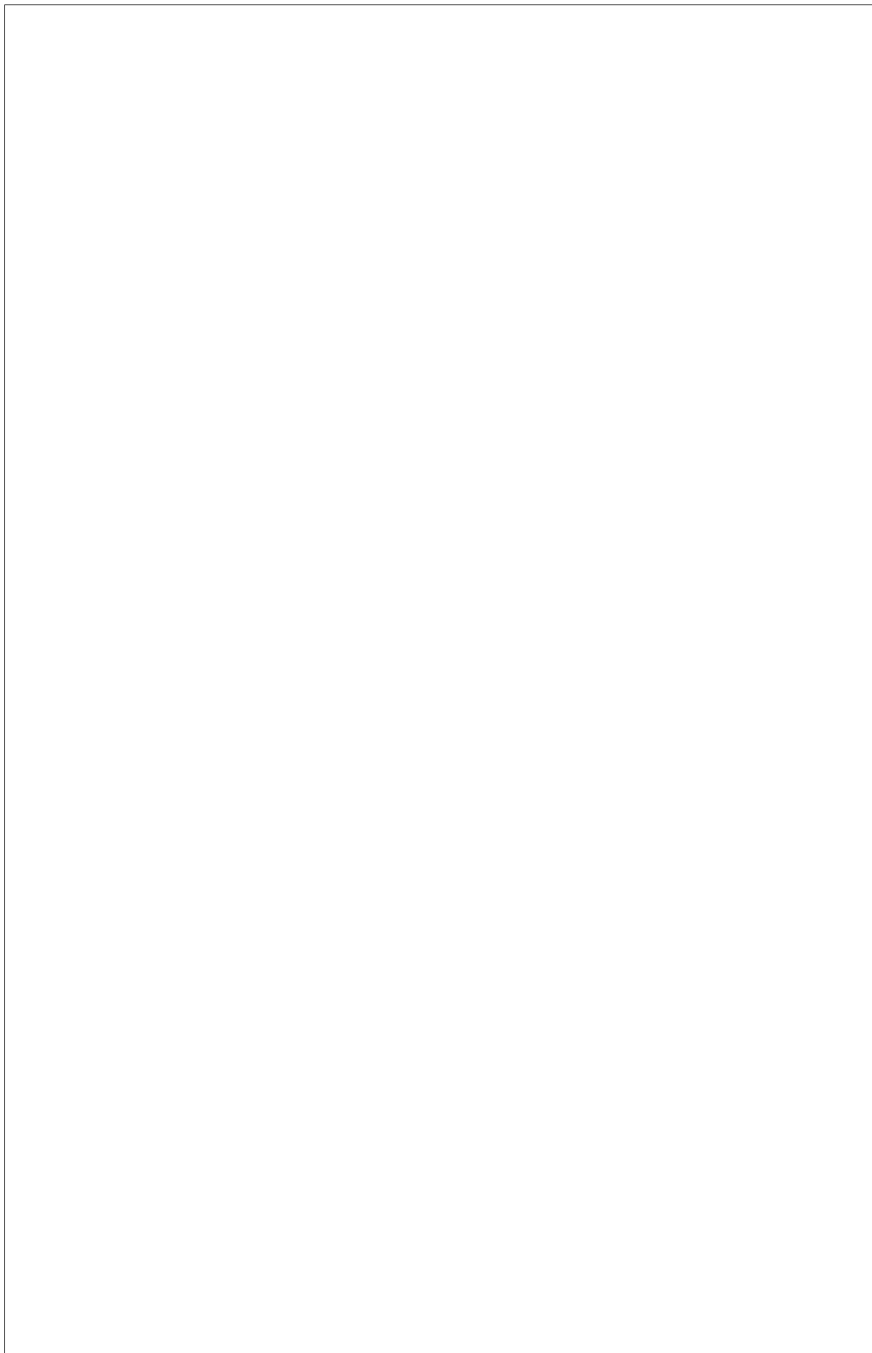
23 AUGUST 1966

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1. West Germany

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2. North Vietnam

We doubt that Hanoi has sanctioned the recent Polish soundings on negotiations. A brief examination of this is at Annex.

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3. South Vietnam

With just over two weeks to go before the elections, the unofficial pollsters are at work. One Saigon lawyer, an ex-minister of education, estimates the Buddhist boycott will be quite effective in central Vietnam with only 30 or 40 percent of the electorate voting. He expects 50 percent in the southern provinces and about 60 percent turnout in Saigon. The embassy comments that if 50 percent of South Vietnam's five million registered voters go to the polls on 11 September it will be a significant achievement.

4. Communist China

Mao and company may be preparing to broaden the party purge. Today Peking's leading daily changed its tune somewhat by claiming that there is a "faction in power" which is resisting the party's leadership and "taking the road of capitalism." Until now the line has been that only a "small handful" of people have been in opposition.

ANNEX

Communist Diplomatic Activity on Vietnam

We doubt that Hanoi has given its blessing to recent Polish soundings on negotiations.

Twice within the past week Polish officials have urged us to stop bombing North Vietnam and accept--"in principle"--Hanoi's oft-repeated four points. Such signs of faith by us, the Poles hint broadly, could produce a more cooperative North Vietnamese position.

There is little doubt that the North Vietnamese would like to see the bombing end. However, there has been no sign of give in any public or private statements coming from Hanoi. Only yesterday, the North Vietnamese reiterated their uncompromising position in a foreign ministry statement condemning an Asian peace initiative proposed by the Thais.

We believe the latest Polish proposals represent a unilateral effort to promote some US concessions which Warsaw hopes might bring Hanoi and Washington closer to the negotiating table.

The current Polish effort is quite similar to that undertaken by the Rumanians last May--in fact, the price tag is identical. Both the Poles and the Rumanians seem convinced that the first move must come from Washington.

As for the Soviets, there has been no sign from that quarter of any change in position nor of any effort to prod the North Vietnamese along.

We believe it is likely that the recent Yalta meeting between top Soviet leaders and a very senior North Vietnamese delegation concerned itself with Soviet military and economic aid to North Vietnam--and not with bringing the war to a conference table.

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