

The President's Daily Brief

~~*Top Secret*~~ 18 April 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
18 APRIL 1967

1. South Vietnam

Ky has just come up with another device to avoid a showdown inside the military over the presidency. He has had a group of some 300 students polled on their preferences for president. The survey, just completed, showed that about 80 percent in Saigon and 60 percent in Hue preferred Ky to Thieu. They felt Ky was more open and dynamic.

Ky and his staff are now disseminating these results throughout the political community. One statistic is being omitted, however. The students were also queried as to their preference for a military versus a civilian candidate. They registered 90 percent for the latter.

2. North Vietnam -
Laos

[redacted] a large increase in truck traffic from North Vietnam toward the Plaine des Jarres in northern Laos. This traffic is still heavy, but our road watchers deeper in Laos have not seen comparable increases. We cannot yet determine what is going on.

50X1

3. Communist China

Militant Red Guard factions in Peking are now, for the first time, clawing at one another. The rivalry among these groups--all of them believed responsive to the most militant elements in the party leadership--apparently resulted in violent clashes at Peking University last week.

We have no ready explanation for this latest twist and are not yet ready to call it a reflection of new divisions in the leadership. It could simply be youthful aggressiveness.

50X1

4. Greece

Ambassador Talbot fears that the brewing political storm may well bring the country to a fateful choice between two evils: rightist dictatorship or a government basically hostile to the monarchy and probably also to Greece's present foreign alignment.

The principal players in this latest Greek drama have now taken up inflexibly hostile positions. On the one side are the traditional instruments of power--the King, the military establishment, and conservative political interests.

The political forces ranging from the center to the far left now undoubtedly represent the majority of the population. The problem is that Andreas Papandreou, the left-leaning son of the ex-premier, is now the only vigorous leader of the main opposition party.

At this point, it seems that the best that could happen would be if Papandreou's party wins only a plurality in next month's election. The King could then insist on a coalition government excluding the Communists and keeping Andreas out of sensitive security posts.

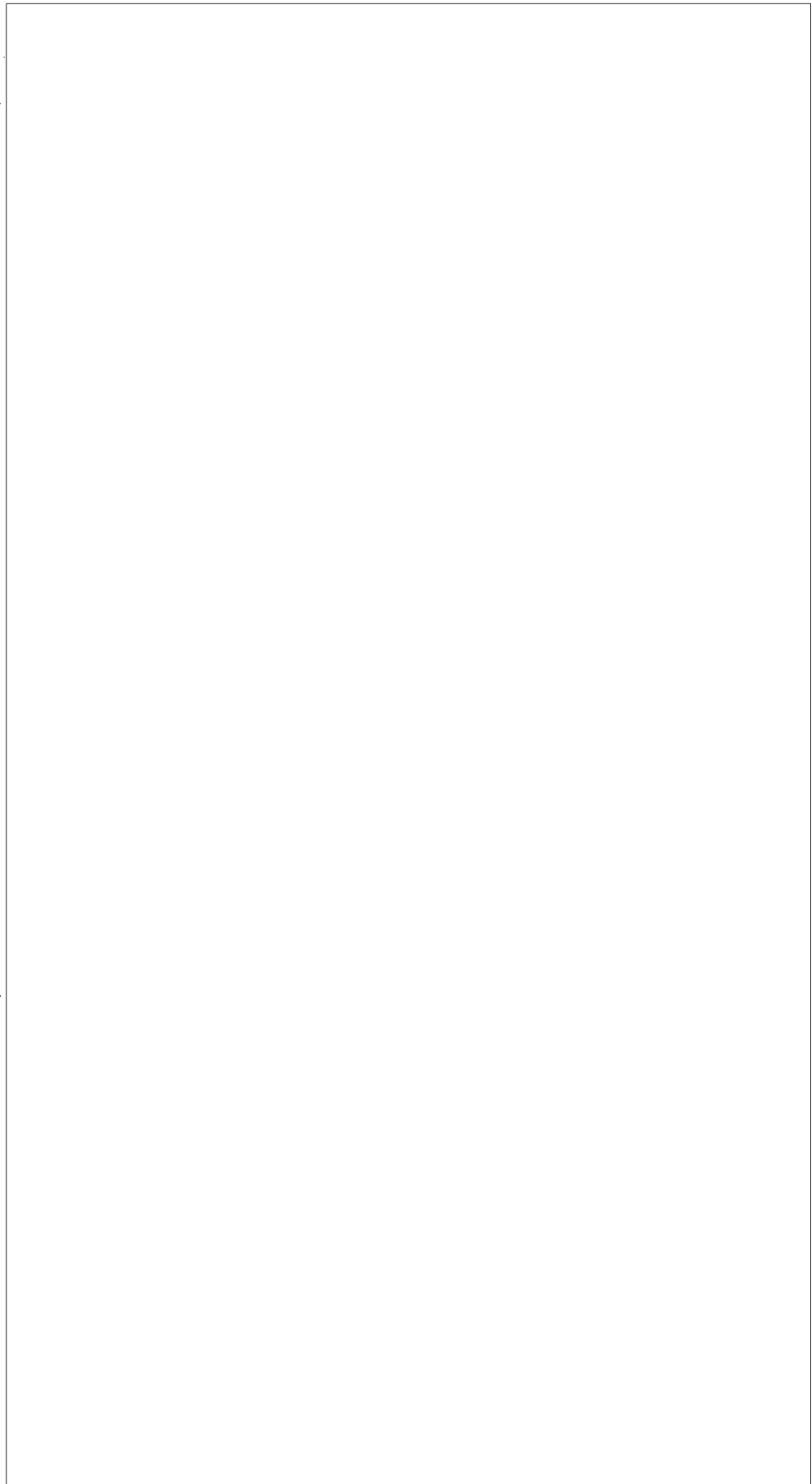
5. Ghana

The country is quiet and back under the control of the military leaders who threw out Nkrumah. Yesterday's coup attempt was poorly planned and carried out. It seems to have had the backing of only a limited number of troops. There was little bloodshed.

One unfortunate effect of the episode has been to derail or at least set back Ghana's attempt to arrange a new meeting among Nigeria's feuding rulers.

6. West Germany

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