



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 10 July 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
10 JULY 1967

1. Congo

The near panic among the European population is subsiding, especially in Lubumbashi (Elisabethville). Our consul there notes that the local governor has made an "impressive and effective" effort and seems to have reestablished discipline. Mobutu, "shocked" by his soldiers' behavior, has sent his top military confidant to the city to be sure the army stays in line. Inflammatory antiwhite propaganda on the Congolese radio and television, however, is continuing.

In Kisangani (Stanleyville), the airport is still in the hands of the mutineers. Some Europeans, apparently taken to the airport by the mercenaries, may be in danger as Mobutu's forces advance. Reports of extensive brutality by Congolese troops in Kisangani have not been confirmed.

Even if calm is restored, however, many Europeans will decide they have had enough. The European employees of the Congolese company that took over Union Miniere have already resigned en masse. Mobutu, however, may not allow a mass departure of technicians, which would shut down Katanga's copper mines and cripple the country's economy.

2. Nigeria

We have conflicting reports from Lagos and the Eastern region (Biafra) as to how the civil war is going. There have, however, been casualties on both sides. Gowon's forces are unlikely to bring off a quick victory, since the rains and logistical problems are enough to keep them from making a rapid penetration even if unopposed.

3. North Vietnam

The sudden death of Senior General Nguyen Chi Thanh presents Hanoi with a double-barrelled problem: replacing him as head of the Communist apparatus in South Vietnam, and filling his place in the North Vietnamese Politburo.

Hanoi already has half a dozen generals in command positions in South Vietnam who could take over the military effort, but none of them could speak with Thanh's authority on political matters. Since his arrival in the South early in 1965, Thanh is believed to have had decision making authority over both the planning and implementation of strategy, as well as the deployment of Communist forces.

Thanh's death has caused the first vacancy on the Politburo in more than half a dozen years. With Thanh alive, the eleven man group was probably pretty evenly divided along militant and moderate lines. Trying to pick a successor could cause much bitterness, especially between hardline First Secretary Le Duan (with whom Thanh was generally aligned) and powerful Defense Minister Giap, who was no friend of Thanh's.

4. Middle East

Saturday's clash between Egyptian and Israeli forces along the Suez Canal was probably another Egyptian effort to spark UN action, rather than a prelude to major fighting. Despite Cairo's charges, Egyptian artillery appears to have begun the incident, which mushroomed into an engagement involving aircraft, tanks, and heavy artillery.

The stepped-up Israeli response to the harassment, however, indicates that Israeli patience is beginning to wear thin.

5. Hong Kong

There has been no further shooting along the border following the clash Saturday morning between Chinese infiltrators and British security forces. Violence and terrorism continue in Hong Kong city, however.

Peking is trying to blame the British for the Saturday incident and has demanded an apology. The Chinese protest, however, was not as strongly worded as some of their previous statements on Hong Kong.

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We believe there may be more such incidents, but no immediate showdown with the British.

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