



The President's Daily Brief

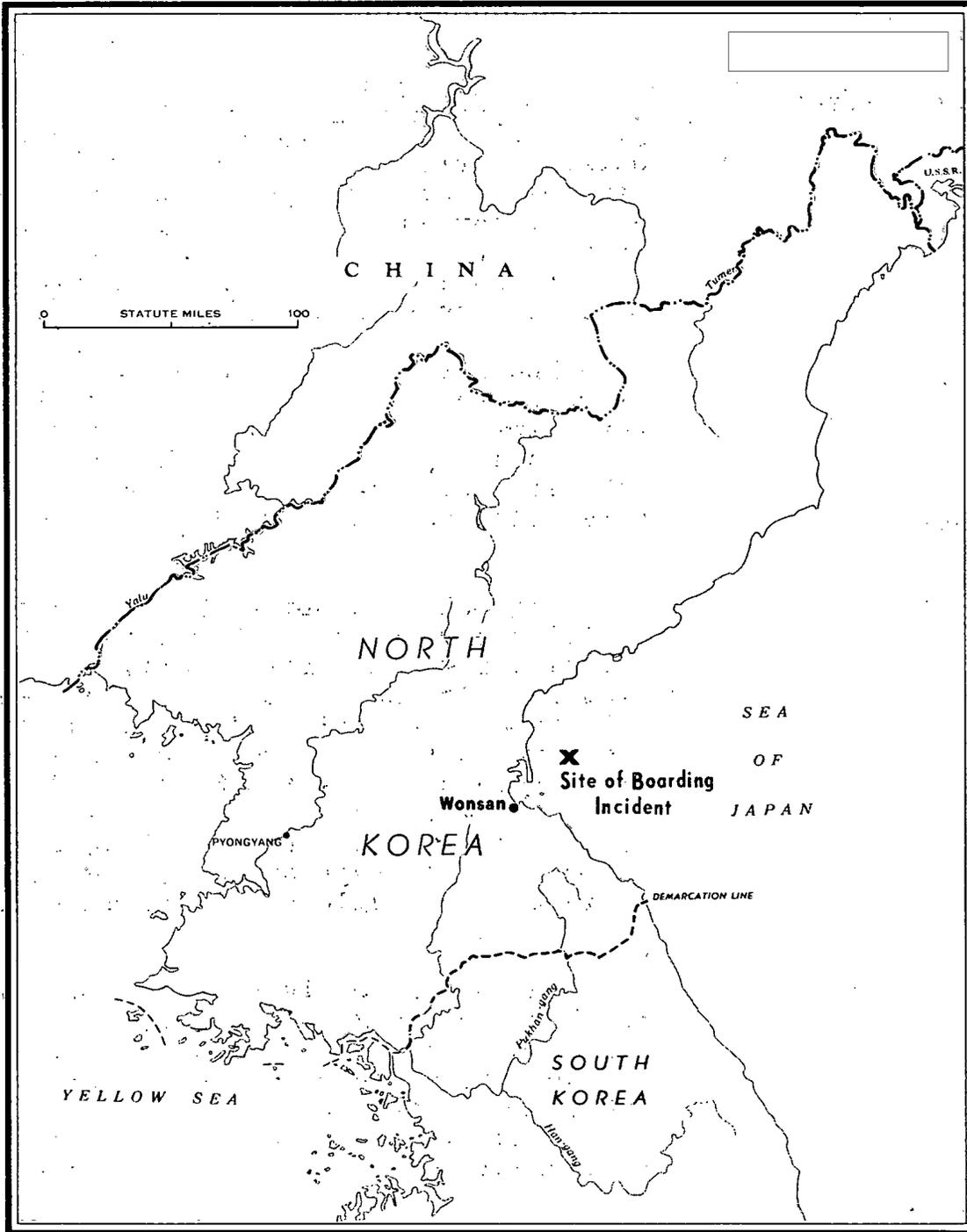
~~Top Secret~~ 23 January 1968



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USS 'Pueblo' Boarding Incident

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DAILY BRIEF
23 JANUARY 1968

1. North Korea

The USS Pueblo, a [redacted] ship patrolling just outside North Korea's twelve-mile limit, was seized by North Korean patrol boats early today and taken to the port of Wonsan. Four US crewmen were injured, one critically, by Communist gunfire prior to the boarding.

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The North Koreans have long shown extreme sensitivity to US and South Korean "spy ships" operating in the area. Pyongyang's propaganda during the past few weeks has taken a particularly harsh line against the US.

2. Korea

The bold attempt by North Korean infiltrators to attack President Pak's official residence may be only the beginning. The North Koreans have been putting considerable effort during the past two years into their apparatus for armed harassment of the South, and we expect them to use it. The idea, of course, is to make the resulting terrorism and sabotage appear to be an indigenous struggle against the Seoul government.

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3. Communist China

Rival factions continue fighting it out in a number of provinces as leaders in Peking keep on calling ineffectually for reconciliation. A dozen or so cities and provinces have been affected in the past two weeks and there is no end in sight. The regular military has become more deeply embroiled since early last month in at least the two most seriously affected provinces.

4. Denmark

Reaction to the US bomber crash in Greenland probably will not greatly affect today's election. The government has moved quickly to limit leftist exploitation of the event by stressing its long-standing public position that Danish law prohibits activity involving nuclear weapons at US bases in Greenland or in Greenland airspace. Nevertheless, there has already been one protest demonstration in front of the US Embassy, and more can be expected.

5. Soviet Union

Kosygin confirmed to Ambassador Thompson yesterday that his on again, off again visit to India is now on. Right now is a very busy period, he said, and he would be in India just "a few days."

When he gets to India on Thursday, Kosygin will find President Tito waiting for him alongside Mrs. Gandhi. Tito has extended his Indian visit and the three leaders will have a good opportunity to talk over a number of world issues.

6. Dominican Republic

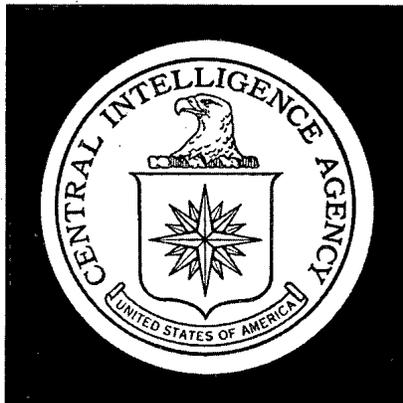
General Wessin y Wessin, front man for a well-financed and strongly conservative political party that has just been formally legalized, is pressing hard for permission to return home from exile in New York. Balaguer will be hard put to keep him out now, even though he regards him as a real threat to the government. This is just one more unsettling factor in the country's growing political restiveness.

7. Bahamas

Premier Pindling is pressing harder and harder for more self-government. If the British continue resisting--and signs point to just this--Pindling may well demand, and get, complete independence. In the meantime, he is considering an early election to strengthen his mandate. His Negro countrymen, who during the past year have enjoyed their first taste of real political power, would likely increase the government's present slim majority.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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23 January 1968

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Canadians to Hanoi:

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In a public statement on the 19th, Prime Minister Pearson revealed that Ormond Dier, senior Canadian delegate on the ICC [Redacted] had gone to Hanoi. His purpose, Pearson said, was to investigate Foreign Minister Trinh's "will talk" statement of 29 December. [Redacted]

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Although Hanoi is being careful to make sure that its intentions are not distorted, the North Vietnamese are continuing to publicize their "will talk" offer. The North Vietnamese ambassador in Cairo, for example, lost no time in calling on the Egyptian Foreign Ministry shortly after his return to Cairo from Hanoi. A press release on 20 January described the ambassador as just having returned from important consultations with his government on the present situation in Vietnam and the "possibility of talks between the North Vietnamese and the US."

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Problems for the British: Increasing restrictions and harassments are greatly reducing the usefulness of the British Consulate in Hanoi, according to information passed to the US Embassy in London

[Redacted]

Any kind of travel by the two officers at the mission has been severely limited. They are prohibited from going to the foreign community center, and their limited gasoline ration prevents them from going to the airport. The British also cannot use the North Vietnamese telegraph to send encrypted messages, although they can use the Canadian diplomatic pouch.

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Despite these limitations, the US Embassy in London feels that, as long as the consul general is able to make use of the Canadians to get his reports out, the British will maintain the mission.

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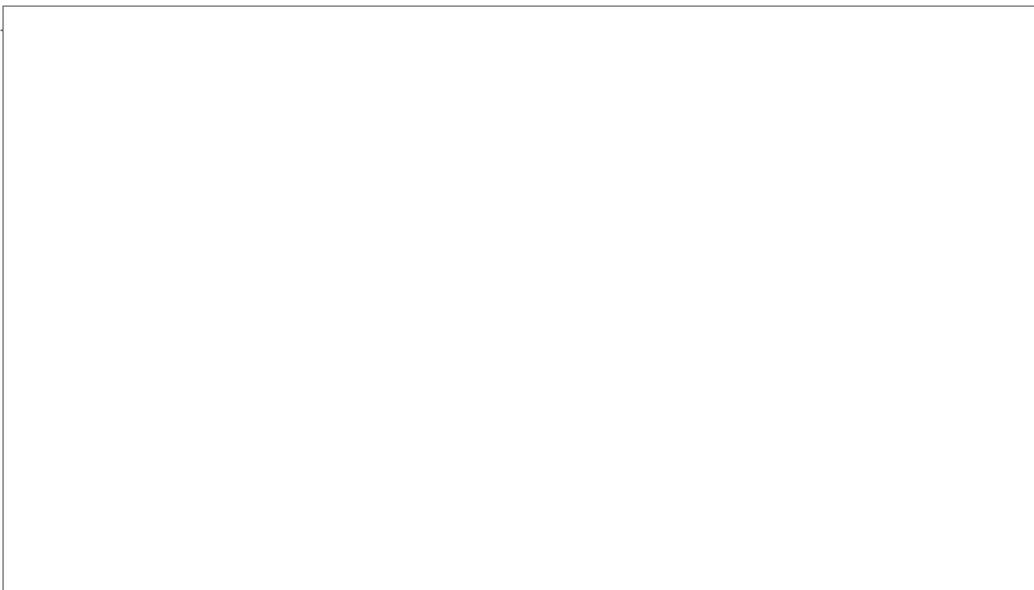
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Hanoi on Eartha Kitt: Hanoi's initial comment on remarks made by Eartha Kitt at a recent White House luncheon was contained in an English language broadcast on 21 January. The broadcast quoted Western news reports in claiming that Miss Kitt "angrily pointed a finger at President Johnson's wife and delivered an emotional tirade against the US war in Vietnam." The broadcast claimed that "only the shrill voice of anger and discord was heard." The Hanoi statement contained no comment of its own.

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More on the State of the Union: Hanoi in a broadcast yesterday claimed that the "more of the same" kind of obstinacy about the war in the President's State of the Union address had been strongly condemned by public opinion in the US. The broadcast quoted an American Broadcasting Company television commentary which claimed the speech meant "another year of troubles for the Americans." Roger Hilsman in a National Broadcasting Company interview was quoted as saying that the message "gave rise to deception, and that what we need in Vietnam is a radical change of policy." Finally,

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John Kenneth Galbraith's statement that he was "greatly disappointed by Johnson's message" and Senator Vance Hartke's claim that he "did not see any prospects for a settlement of our problems" were reported.

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Antiwar Activity: Hanoi on Saturday reported on several groups in the US which are opposed to US involvement in Vietnam. Members of the Hawaii Committee to End the US War in Vietnam, for example, are said to have sent a message to the Liberation Front expressing their militant solidarity with the Front, and stating that the committee's stand is to demand an immediate withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam. The students at Harvard University were reported to have sent a message to the President demanding an end to the war. Several antidraft activities were also reported without comment in the broadcast.

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