

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 29 July 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
29 JULY 1968

1. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

The meeting of Soviet and Czech leaders may now be under way. A Czech domestic broadcast last night announced the arrival of the presidium at the Czech village of Cierna, near the Soviet border, and said that the talks would take place today.

There has been no sign of give on the part of either Prague or Moscow. Dubcek on Saturday assured the nation that the presidium intended to stand firm. He noted in particular the massive expressions of public support that he had received in recent days. Moscow has continued its barrage of propaganda with the apparent aim of convincing Czech conservatives that intervention will be necessary if the "democratization" process is not reversed.

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The Soviets are said to be determined to force Prague into retreat despite objections from Western Communist parties.

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Soviet demands will be presented against a backdrop of heavy military pressure. Late yesterday the Soviet military commander in East Germany declared all of East Germany south of Berlin to the Czech border a temporary restricted area.

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2. Philippines

By order of Marcos, the Philippine contingent in Vietnam is to be drawn down to 1,000 men from its present strength of 1,800 by mid-August. Marcos appears to think this is necessary in order to get Senate approval of funds for keeping a contingent in the field. Some of the votes he had previously lined up may now be turning soft.

3. Nigeria

The Biafrans have now agreed to discuss a political settlement with Nigeria at next week's talks in Addis Ababa. Ojukwu's worsening military situation probably was behind his agreement to put the political question first on the agenda.

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Gowon's successes in the field have made him more and more inclined to try for a military solution. He would have to see a considerable amount of give on the part of the Biafrans before he would abandon this line.

4. Mexico

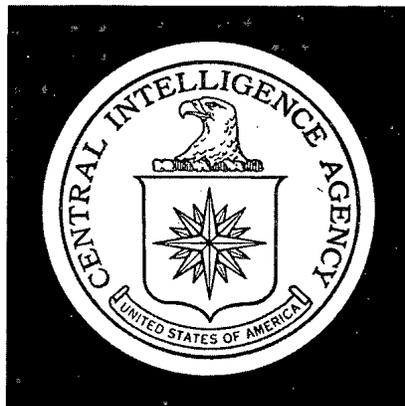
Communist agitators were behind Friday night's clash between several thousand students and police in downtown Mexico City. Scores were wounded and many arrested. In a raid on Communist Party headquarters, police seized a big quantity of inflammatory propaganda.

5. Bolivia

Barrientos on Saturday named a new cabinet composed almost entirely of military officers. This gives him a stronger whip in dealing with opposition groups that have been stirring up trouble over the Guevara diary issue. It also should damp down criticism from some segments of the military over his handling of recent political difficulties.

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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

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Nhan Dan on Honolulu: The Honolulu meeting "marked another gain" for Thieu against "his opponent" Ky, according to a 27 July Hanoi international service broadcast in English. The broadcast reported a commentary in the Hanoi daily Nhan Dan stating that Thieu and Ky are trying to eliminate each other. The paper asserted that the "Honolulu farce" helped the South Vietnamese president, but that he still cannot get rid of Ky because President Johnson "has not yet decided to kill one of his running dogs."

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Rail Shipments Through China: Soviet propaganda continues to exploit the intermittent disruption of rail transport through China to North Vietnam. The Soviets are now claiming that cargoes for North Vietnam are being delayed in China.

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The Soviets have claimed that during June Chinese authorities refused to accept any rail shipments to North Vietnam of arms and ammunition from either the Soviets or East Europeans for "technical reasons." Railroad transport has been hindered and delayed during June and July by factional strife in Kwangsi Province and by floods. Intercepts have confirmed that in mid-June the Chinese were not accepting some type of low-priority rail freight because of the "extreme confusion" in Kwangsi Province.

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

Hanoi on Antiwar Protests: The North Vietnamese have presented another roundup of Western press reports on antiwar protest activities in the US.

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A 27 July Hanoi international service broadcast in English described a 23 July antiwar demonstration in New York outside the Waldorf-Astoria, where Vice President Humphrey was speaking. A protest against the use of toxic chemicals by US troops in Vietnam voiced by the American Association for the Advancement of Science was also reported. The broadcast noted that two more US soldiers who had served in Vietnam sought political asylum in Sweden on 25 July.

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