

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 8 August 1968

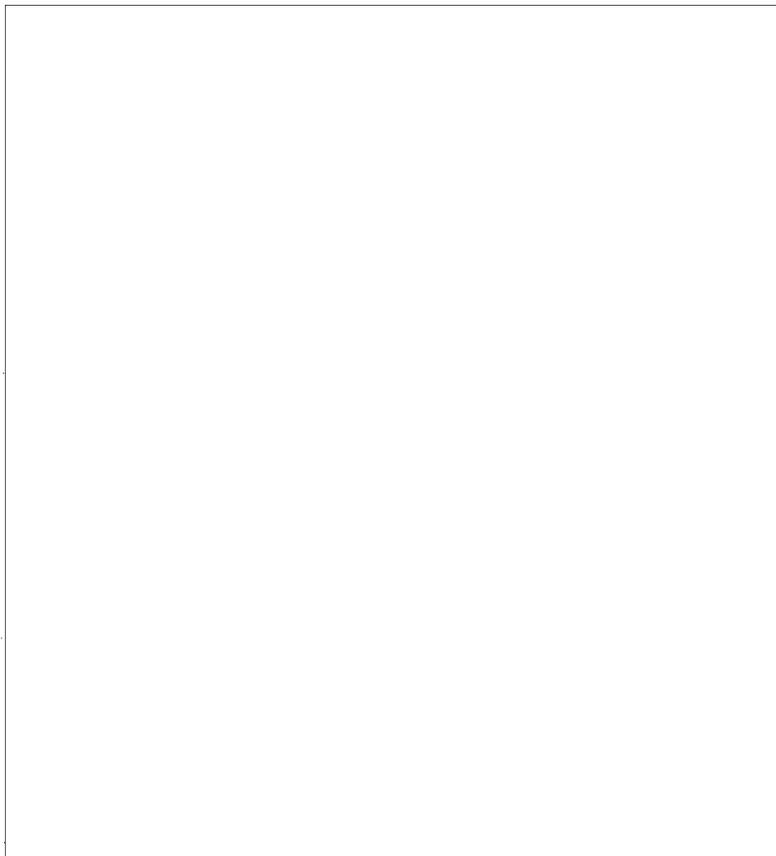


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**THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
8 AUGUST 1968**

1. South Vietnam

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2. Suez Canal

The Egyptians are courting trouble along the canal. UN officers assigned to the truce supervision detail have noted a series of relatively minor, but seemingly premeditated provocations. These include Egyptian soldiers touching briefly on Israel's side of the canal, advancing positions closer to those held by Israeli troops, and shooting at Israeli aircraft.

The UN officers asked Cairo for an explanation; they received no answer at all. General Bull, the Norwegian who heads up the UN truce observers, told the Egyptians he was "extremely concerned."

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[Redacted]

3. France

The US gained and the Soviet Union lost ground in French public opinion over the past year, but Frenchmen still prefer to be independent of both super-powers. These are the results of two polls taken by the French in late July. In terms of popularity, it looks this way:

1967

Good opinion of US	22%
Good opinion of USSR	28%

1968

Good opinion of US	35%
Good opinion of USSR	24%

As for France's alignment, 53 percent thought France should remain independent. In this second poll, however, 19 percent did feel France should be closely allied with the US--a rise of 6 percent.

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[Redacted]

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5. Syria

The situation in Syria is getting yeasty again [Redacted]

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[Redacted] The present ruling military group has managed to muddle through for three years--something of a record--

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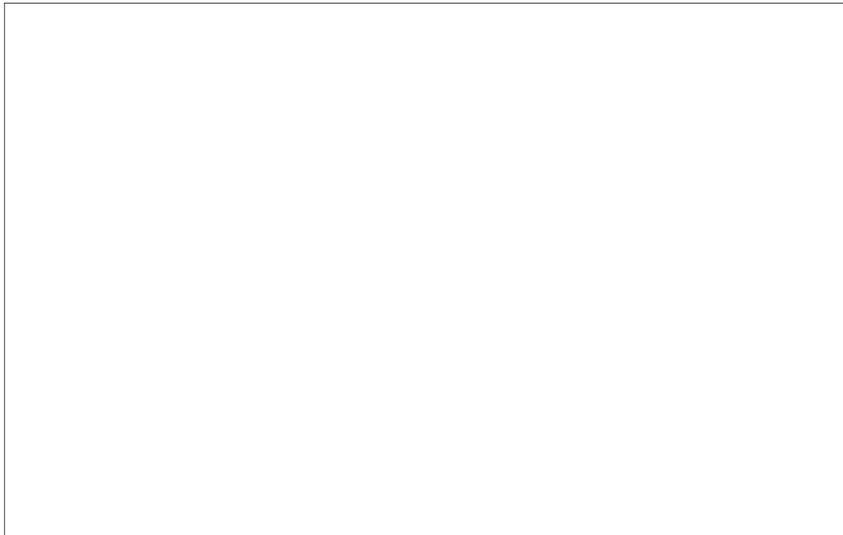
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6. Cambodia

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7. Mexico

A nationwide student strike has been threatened unless, by tonight, Diaz Ordaz meets a series of student demands. This ultimatum called for disbanding the riot police, indemnifying injured students, and releasing political prisoners.

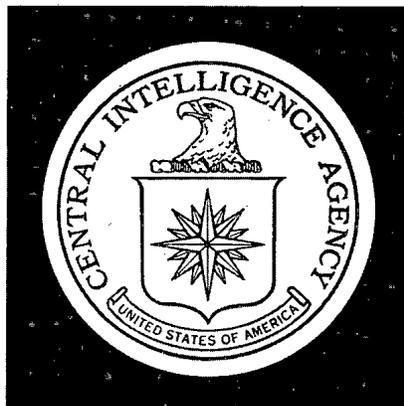
If a strike is called, the students will try to enlist support from workers and peasants. They are not likely to be successful as neither the workers nor the peasants have much patience with the students. The students, however, are quite capable of starting new riots without help.

Diaz Ordaz has the muscle to crack heads, but he may try instead to offer some concessions that will take the heat off through October and the Olympics.

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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

8 August 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

More on the Course of the War: Vietnamese Communist propoganda continues to promise additional military pressure because of the "obdurate attitude" of the United States. An article in Hanoi's army newspaper on 3 August takes the same line as other recent propoganda statements: the US claims to have exercised restraint, but in fact has stepped up the war. It cites many details of US air attacks to underline its point. The paper also condemns President Johnson's statements on 31 July calling on the Communists to exercise restraint and notes that "he even threatened that there was always the possibility of timely actions and new military measures by the United States."

The article concludes that the "Johnson clique" is still "very stubborn and bellicose" and that recent US statements and actions constitute a "most brazen and imprudent challenge." The paper said that allied forces in South Vietnam are "fearfully awaiting" attacks by Communist forces and promised that such attacks would be forthcoming.

A statement from the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front broadcast over the Viet Cong radio on 6 August contains the same message: as long as the US pursues its "aggression" in South Vietnam, Communist forces will continue to fight. It says the Communists are determined to step up the so-called "general offensive and uprisings."

* * *

Hanoi Captures "Spy Group": Hanoi radio announced on 7 August that a 12-man "spy-commando" group was recently "put out of action" in a northwestern province of North Vietnam. The radio said the group was on an allied intelligence mission designed to pinpoint targets for US air attacks, set up counterrevolutionary bases, and conduct sabotage operations. [redacted] the

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announcement says this mission was conducted by the US and Saigon authorities after President Johnson announced restrictions on the bombing.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] North Vietnam picked up a similar group earlier this year and lately has been stressing the need for security and vigilance against sabotage and espionage.

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

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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