



The President's Daily Brief



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I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

VIETNAM

Communist propagandists have played up the Ben Het attacks as a blow to allied plans to "Vietnamize" the war. The North Vietnamese party daily claimed on 28 June that Communist military activities throughout the highlands have undermined US hopes to have South Vietnamese troops take over more of the fighting.

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Huynh Tan Phat, head of the Communists' Provisional Revolutionary Government, is now in Phnom Penh for talks. It appears that Sihanouk is at best a reluctant host. He may have agreed to Phat's visit at this time as part of the price for the Communists' recent promise to remove their troops from Cambodian soil "as soon as possible."

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Phat may have a number of other problems relating to the Vietnam war that he wants to discuss now with Sihanouk. One likely request would be the easing of military pressure against Communist elements in Cambodia.

SOVIET AFFAIRS

The Soviet proposal for a "collective security system" for Asia, surfaced by Brezhnev on 7 June, "is still no more

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than a general concept," according to a Soviet foreign ministry official. A planning group is working on details, the official added, and a more concrete plan may soon be offered for international discussion.

The Asian security system probably will resemble past Soviet proposals for European security, calling for all nations to abolish military blocs and to work peacefully toward better economic, political, and cultural relations. The Soviets probably have no illusions that such a system could be implemented, but by proposing it they would be able to portray themselves as more interested in Asian peace and harmony than are the Chinese.

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In Czechoslovakia, more than two months after Dubcek's ouster, party leader Husak is still enmeshed in a factional struggle that has frustrated his efforts to gain complete control. Husak's insistence on a relatively moderate retreat from Dubcek's liberalism has created a series of disputes with pro-Soviet conservatives who desire a return to full orthodoxy. At the same time his repeated compromises have moved the nation steadily toward a conservative position. Thus far, Husak has achieved a period of relative domestic calm, partly because he has refused to impose police terror to enforce the retrogressive decrees.

The people regard the regime as a creature of Soviet pressure, and they have become increasingly alienated by

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Husak's compromises with the conservatives. Passive resistance is growing among workers, students, and intellectuals-- demonstrated primarily in popular determination to reject further concessions to Moscow and to oppose austerity measures which are being drafted to bolster the sagging economy.

EUROPE

The general attitude in NATO toward strategic arms limitations talks between the US and the USSR is favorable. The allies are pleased by US plans for a comprehensive exchange of views, but have nagging fears that the US will enter NATO consultations with an inflexible position.

The Allies will seek assurance that the US will not accept any agreement which might have the effect of lessening Western European security. The UK and West Germany will probably urge that bargaining explicitly include NATO nuclear forces and similar Soviet forces targeted against Europe. The UK would prefer as a first step to freeze such forces rather than to reduce them.

The West Germans, while supporting the talks in principle, fear an arms limitation arrangement which might appear to formalize the political status quo in Europe. They have urged parallel progress on the political problems deriving from the division of Germany and have advised the US not to accept nuclear parity without political concessions from the Soviets.

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MIDDLE EAST

The UN Security Council is scheduled to meet today to consider another protest by Jordan about Israeli activities in Jerusalem. If Jordan presses for a strongly worded resolution, a full-scale debate could result which might be damaging to the four-power negotiations.

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II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

MALAYSIA

Communal clashes in Kuala Lumpur over the weekend were the worst since the rioting of mid-May. Security forces apparently have the immediate situation in hand, but the city is still highly volatile. The emergency government, almost

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exclusively Malay, is likely to point to the latest incidents as a further argument against reinstating parliamentary government. In fact, a major cause of the unrest is lack of progress toward adequate Chinese representation.

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