

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 19 August 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
19 AUGUST 1968

1. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

Moscow has stepped up the pressure again. According to an informant of our embassy in Prague, the Soviets are once more demanding that their troops be stationed in Czechoslovakia. One despondent Czech official says there are numerous Soviet agents ready to provoke incidents in Prague. He thinks the situation in some ways is worse than it was before last month's meeting in Warsaw.

We also note that the Soviet media have increased their criticism of the Czechs. They are edging closer to an open charge that Dubcek does not have things under control.

By Soviet standards this charge has some validity. In a recent meeting with 70 editors, representatives of the government apparently failed to persuade the newsmen to accept some restrictions on their freedom. This failure presumably will generate more pressure from Moscow.

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2. South Vietnam

Communist-initiated military activity has dropped almost to zero since the attacks Sunday morning. This suggests that Sunday's action was a one-shot affair. We may see more of this type of harassment before a full-scale offensive gets under way. Communist forces remain in a high state of readiness.

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3. South Vietnam

Nguyen Luu Vien, an old associate of Premier Huong, told a US observer recently that Thieu and Huong want to name him interior minister. We also hear they may fire Defense Minister Vy, who allegedly is involved in a case of corruption being scrutinized by the legislature.

These reports add substance to earlier information that Thieu and Huong are planning to move Interior Minister Khiem to the defense ministry, make him head of the Joint General Staff as well, and replace him at Interior with Vien. Khiem is anathema to Ky, but we believe Ky would go along with the appointments.

4. West Germany

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5. Bolivia

Student demonstrations are adding to Barrientos' woes. On Friday the National Guard broke up a student march and surrounded the university, but the demonstrators are undeterred. There are even rumors that they plan to "rescue" Antonio Arguedas, the controversial ex-minister who returned to La Paz Saturday and is now in government custody.

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6. Syria -
International
Communism

Even the close friends of the Communists came in for ham-handed treatment at the recent youth festival in Bulgaria. The Syrian delegation, for instance, was formed by the festival's organizers out of locally available Syrian Communist students.

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We had noted the thin representation from the Arab world and had attributed it to the presence of an Israeli delegation, but this incident leads us to think there may have been other reasons as well.

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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

Hien's Activities in Laos: Le Van Hien, Hanoi's ambassador to Laos who returned to Vientiane last month, appears to be attempting to recruit support for North Vietnam among Vietnamese nationals in Laos. He has called a meeting of Vientiane's Vietnamese community for 24 August.

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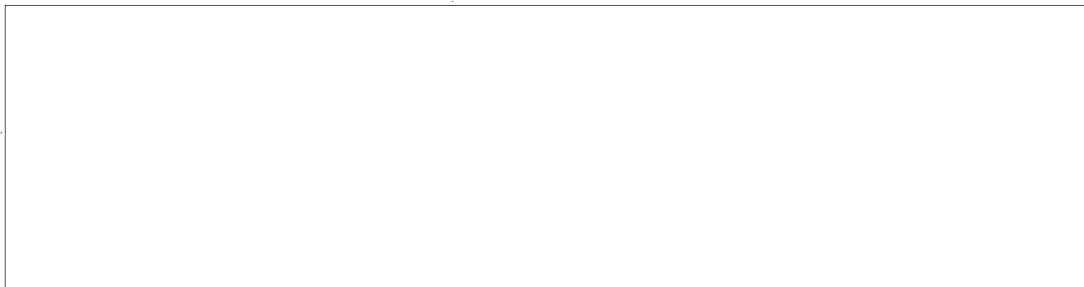
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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

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