



*The President's Daily Brief*

24 July 1969

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

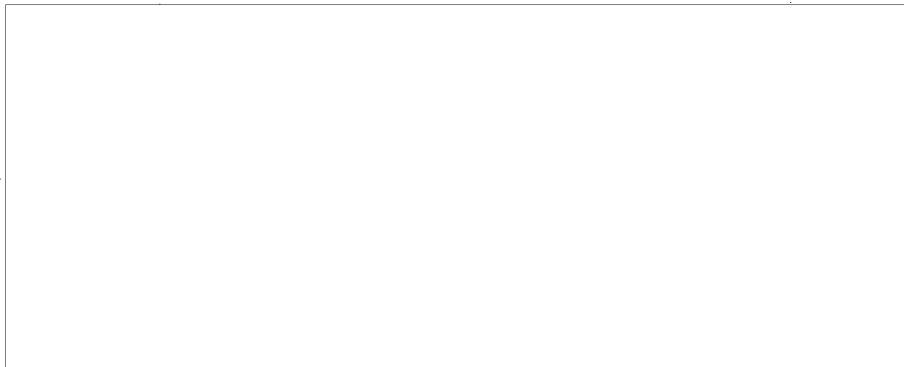
I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

VIETNAM

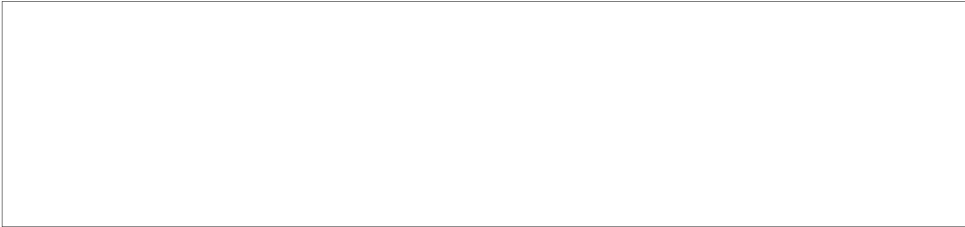
Hanoi Radio announced on 23 July that gifts for US prisoners in North Vietnam could be sent until 15 August and that they should be sent to the DRV in care of Moscow. The radio claimed that gifts originally were to be sent only between 4 and 25 July. A deadline and routing instructions were omitted from Hanoi's announcement of 3 July on the release of prisoners and sending gifts. They were mentioned by Xuan Thuy during his private meeting with Ambassador Lodge in Paris last Friday, however. The new North Vietnamese announcement appears to be a direct response to Ambassador Lodge's strong appeals at that meeting concerning US prisoners. It is an unusually positive North Vietnamese gesture, probably intended to underscore Communist interest in getting on with the negotiations and into serious substantive bargaining.

SOVIET AFFAIRS

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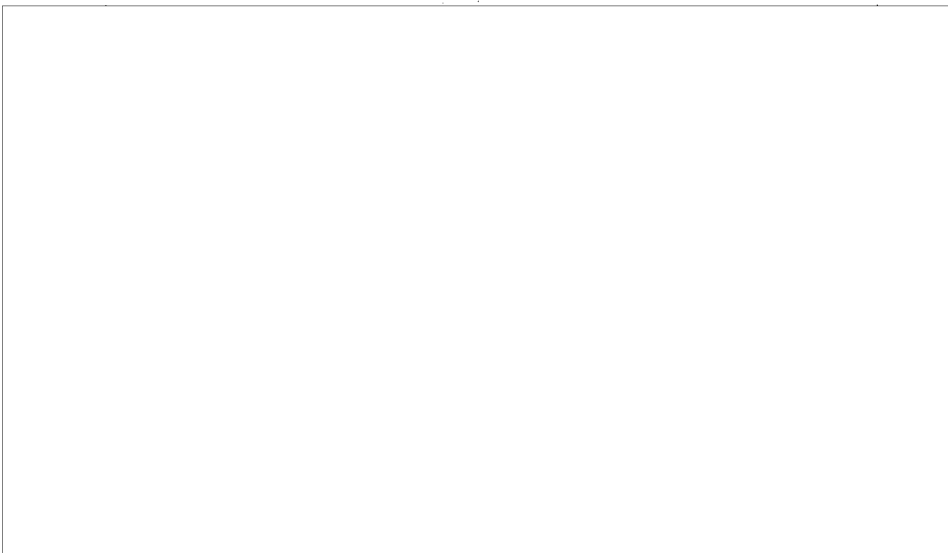
II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

LAOS

Government military leaders are planning to strengthen defenses along the Vientiane - Luang Prabang road. Recent enemy attacks on two positions along this route have pointed up the government's vulnerability there. The Communists meanwhile continue mopping-up operations around Muong Soui.

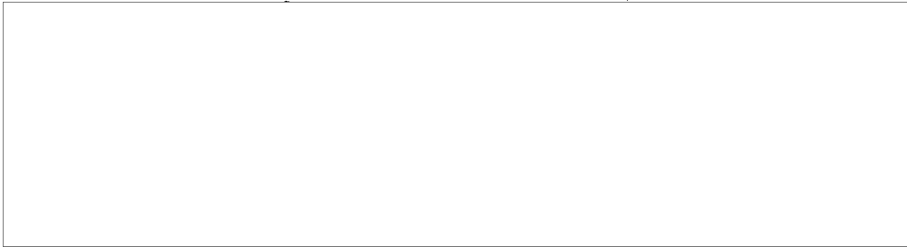
EL SALVADOR - HONDURAS

The cease-fire is still in effect, but high-level officials of neighboring countries doubt it will hold through the end of the week. Nicaraguan and Guatemalan spokesmen are especially pessimistic and have indicated their countries might join in on the Honduran side if the battle begins again.



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