



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 24 November 1967



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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

Special Daily Report on North Vietnam



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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Burchett on Negotiations: United Press International ticker yesterday carried a summary of an article by Wilfred Burchett for a "forthcoming issue of War/Peace, a liberal journal." Burchett's comments are said to be in answer to a published letter by War/Peace editor Richard Hudson.

"It is not correct to say that the Liberation Front is waiting for an American withdrawal before it will talk with non-Viet Cong South Vietnamese," he said. "Indeed, just this possibility is perhaps one of the main points in the new Front program."

Burchett said the offer of "halt the bombings and talks can start" made last January still holds. He said the talks would be "meaningful as far as the North Vietnamese are concerned."

--"Haiphong is already one-third destroyed as far as residential, commercial, and industrial sections are concerned."

--"All power stations, as they existed before the bombing started, have been destroyed."

--"China is ready to intervene at any moment."

--"Communists have no illusions that a new US President will mean a pull-out."

--"Communists are prepared for a war of 10, 15, or 20 years or more, and have organized accordingly."

--"The Viet Cong never regarded the South Vietnamese elections as serious and therefore did not sabotage them, and in fact voted. Bombing incidents were organized by the Saigon government."

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

Hanoi on President Johnson's Press Conference:
Hanoi Radio on Wednesday, quoting Nhan Dan for the same date, had this to say about the President's press conference on 17 November.

"Never before have Johnson and his aides talked so much of peace as recently. Johnson alone made 11 speeches on the Vietnam problem in the first 17 days of this month. The latest was delivered at a White House press conference 17 November in which, as noted by Western press reports, he looked out of temper from beginning to end. This reflected the tragic isolation which has forced him to come out as a pleader for his own policy of war intensification and expansion in Vietnam.

"Apart from harping on the old theme of commitments in Vietnam, Johnson gave other pleas for the US aggression. He claimed that the United States had dispatched more than 470,000 troops to Vietnam to protect US security and that this is tied in with Southeast Asia. This is sheer sophistry often resorted to by the colonialists.

"Another plea used by Johnson to intensify and widen his aggressive war in Vietnam is that North Vietnam has not yet agreed to come to the negotiating table. Johnson once again threatened to use maximum strength against the Vietnamese people. This proves that the US imperialists have not yet given up the illusion of forcing the Vietnamese people into submission by violence. Their peace talk proposals merely serve as a smokescreen to cover their reckless war escalation. Their words have always clashed with their deeds. On the same day, Johnson personally ordered American warplanes to launch new air raids on Hanoi and Haiphong. US planes ruthlessly bombed hospitals, markets, pagodas, churches, and heavily populated quarters, and even fired missiles on the foreign embassy area and the Office of the Indian Delegation to the ICC in Hanoi.

"The intensified raids on North Vietnam cannot save the Johnson clique from its critical situation in South Vietnam, but have only brought it still heavier defeats and greater isolation. So long as the US imperialists have not stopped definitively and unconditionally the bombing of North Vietnam, have not stopped their aggressive acts in South Vietnam and withdrawn their troops from there, the friends of peace, justice, and freedom all over the world will reject with utmost indignation and contempt any professions of peace desires by US imperialism, however attractive a form they may assume.

"The 17 November press conference brought nothing new except that it shed more light on the odious features of the chieftain of aggression, a past master in deception and lying."

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