



The President's Daily Brief

17 August 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

17 August 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on Page 1.

A North Vietnamese intercept provides confirmation of the priority Hanoi attaches to the Cambodian campaign. (Page 3)

[Redacted]

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The Chinese have granted formal agreement to Soviet ambassadorial nominee Tolstikov. (Page 6)

Israeli attacks against military installations in Jordan will compound Husayn's problems with the fed-ayeen. (Page 7)

At Annex [Redacted] Israel [Redacted] Egypt [Redacted]

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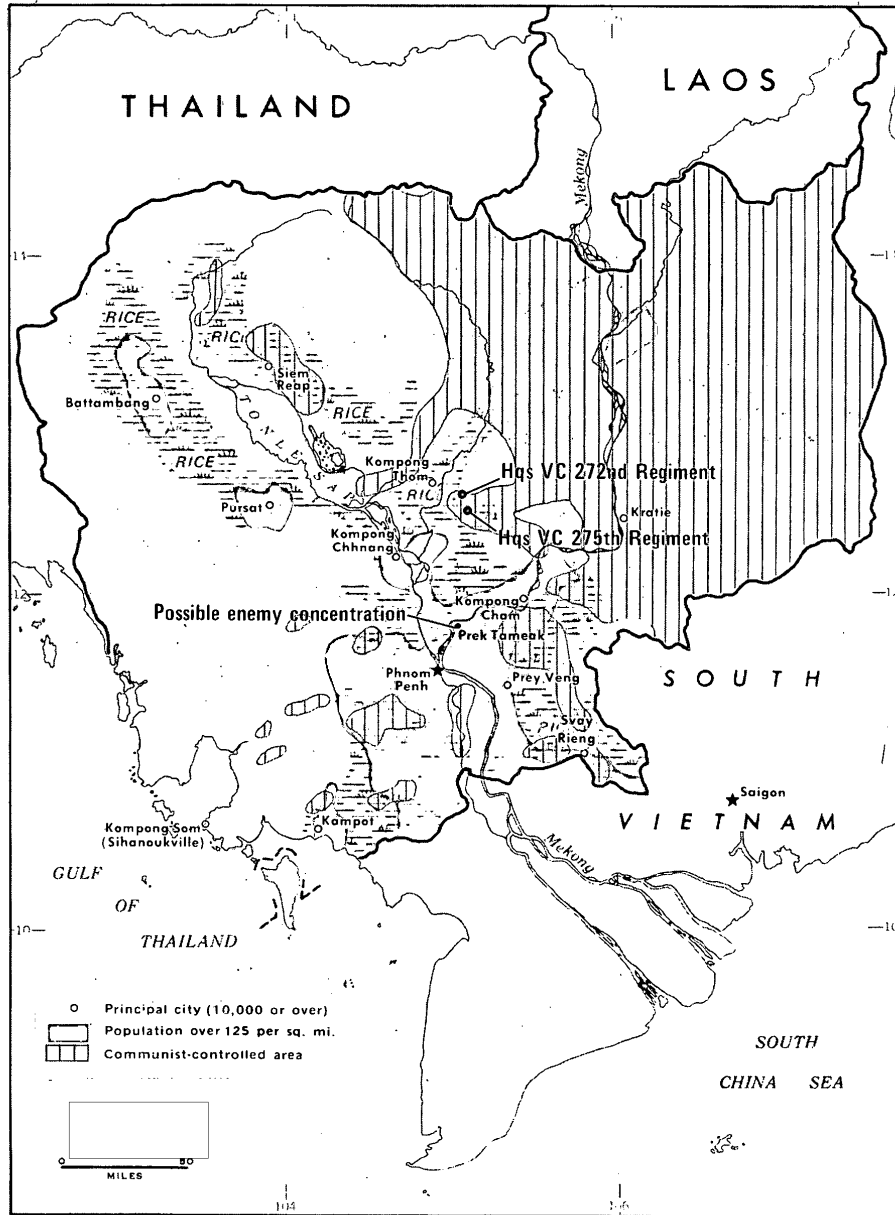
Soviet airlift to Peru canceled. (Page 8)

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CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

The general military situation remains quiet, but Cambodian officials continue to be apprehensive about enemy forces within striking distance of Phnom Penh. [redacted] there are approximately 8,000 enemy troops within a 20-mile radius of the city.

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[redacted] there may be sizable numbers of Cambodian and Vietnamese Communist troops in the Prek Tameak area, some 15 miles northeast of the capital.

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The increasing fears of government officials over an expansion of enemy activity against Phnom Penh appear to be at least partially justified by a COSVN message of 13 August. This message did not suggest a massive attack was forthcoming but it did indicate that the Communists intend to continue reconnaissance activities and "oppressive" action around the city.

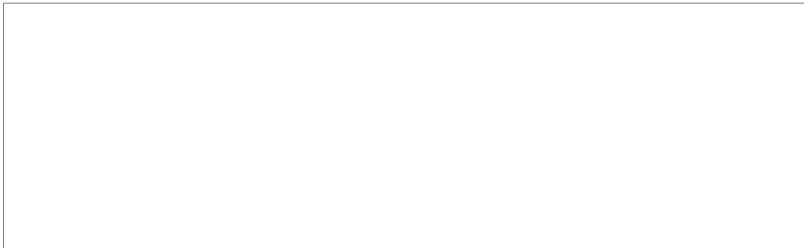
Elsewhere, there are signs that the Communists may be moving to make fresh attacks on Kompong Thom. Recent communications intelligence indicates elements of enemy main force units, including the headquarters of the Viet Cong 275th Regiment, are converging south and southeast of that isolated city.

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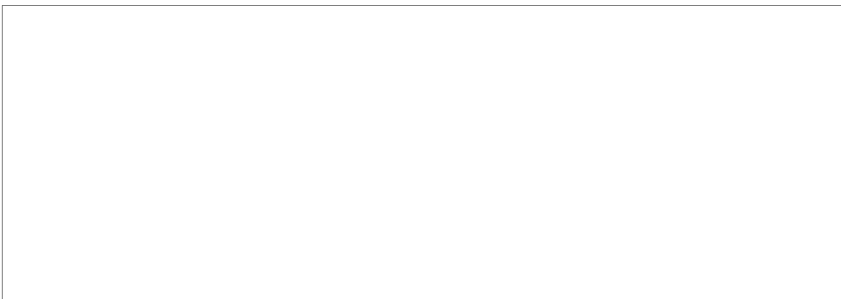
Lon Nol apparently has reconsidered his decision (reported in The President's Daily Brief of 11 August) to suspend the training of Cambodian troops in South Vietnam and Thailand. A Cambodian delegation recently visited South Vietnam to investigate charges of South Vietnamese Army exploitation of Cambodian troops being trained there. The delegation has advised Lon Nol that many of the alleged complaints were false, and were due to irresponsible reporting by Cambodian journalists. The advice has reassured Lon Nol, who now wants the Vietnamese training program continued.

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NORTH VIETNAM - CAMBODIA

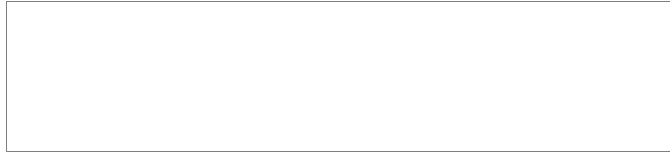
An intercept of a recent directive from the senior logistic authority in the Lao panhandle to components of the Communist infiltration system provides further confirmation of the priority Hanoi currently attaches to the Cambodian campaign. In addition to the usual exhortations to greater effort, the directive urges the troops in the panhandle to "coordinate with our friends and...use the proper procedures within the strategic corridor and the liberated areas of central, southern, and northeastern Cambodia to bring about the success of the major offensive by our friends and our own forces." The message adds, "that is our basic, long-range strategic mission." The summary did not mention South Vietnam.

In this context, the directive's allusion to "friends" almost certainly means the Cambodian Communists. The emphasis on Cambodia, however, does not mean that South Vietnam has been displaced as the Communists' ultimate target. Indeed, northern South Vietnam--where the Communists are not particularly dependent on the infiltration system--is likely to see a further increase in military activity over the near term. The directive does leave a strong impression that Hanoi believes it must achieve success in Cambodia before it can profitably turn its attention back to other parts of South Vietnam.

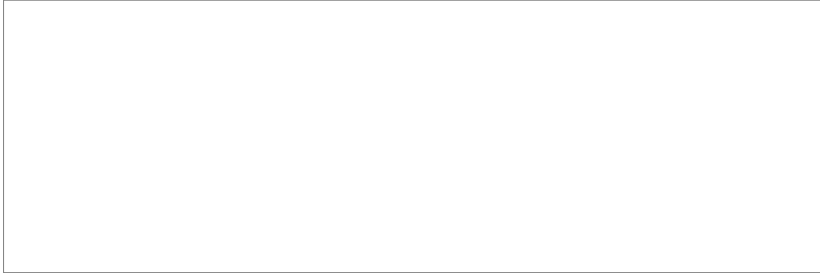
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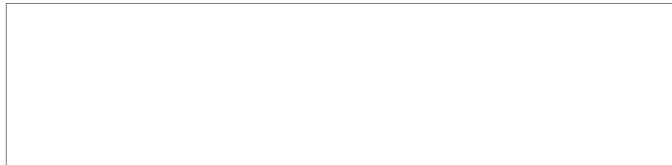
USSR



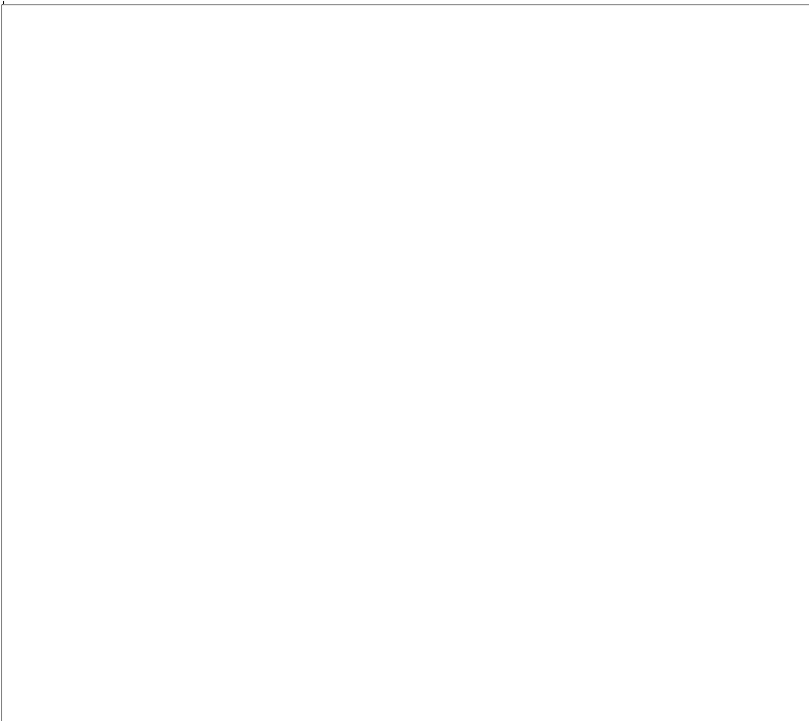
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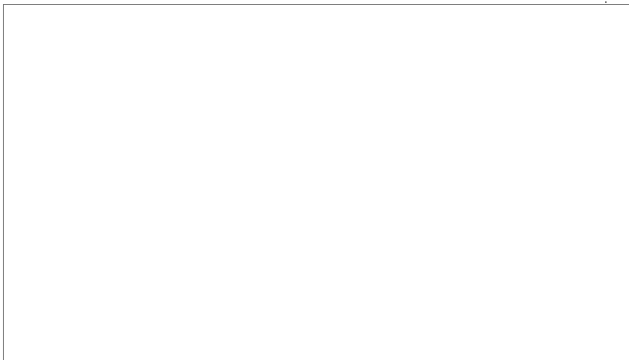


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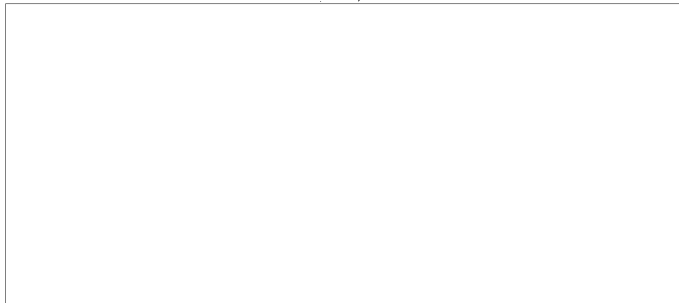
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COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

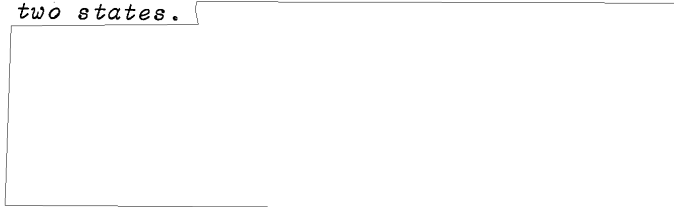
The Chinese chargé in Moscow told foreign diplomats last week that formal agreement has been granted to the Soviet ambassadorial nominee, Vasily Tolstikov. Peking's decision ends China's four-month delay in responding to strong Soviet efforts to accredit an ambassador to Peking.

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Peking's acceptance of Tolstikov almost certainly reflects no basic change in the status of either the deadlocked border talks or the frozen relations between the two states.

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Tolstikov is a long-time party official with no diplomatic experience. He has been the boss of the important Leningrad party apparatus.

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ISRAEL - ARAB STATES

The Israeli attacks against military installations in northwest Jordan will compound King Husayn's difficulties in reining in the fedayeen.

The military command in Tel Aviv has publicly admitted the strikes, claiming they were in retaliation for Jordanian Army assistance to the fedayeen during earlier attacks against Israeli border settlements.

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Husayn's visit to Cairo next Thursday is probably intended to play up the fact that Nasir took the initiative in accepting the US peace plan. Husayn presumably hopes to deflect fedayeen criticism of him for "selling out" the Arab cause onto Nasir, who is in a less vulnerable position.

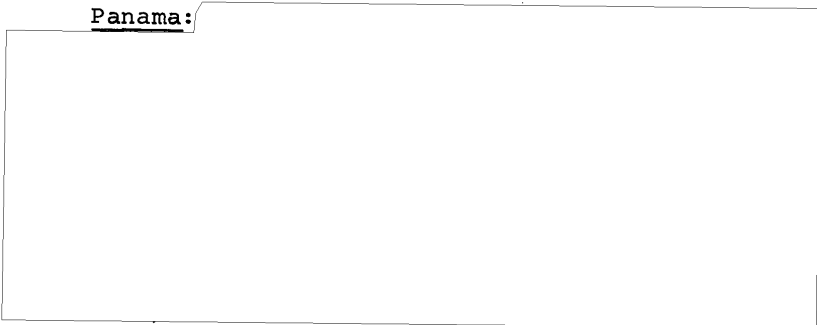
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NOTES

USSR: The Soviets launched a space probe toward Venus early this morning using a launch vehicle based on the SS-6 ICBM. At this time it is not clear whether the probe will orbit, land on Venus, or pass close to that planet before proceeding toward Mercury. Additional interplanetary probes--possibly using the larger SL-12 booster vehicle--may be launched in the next week or so.

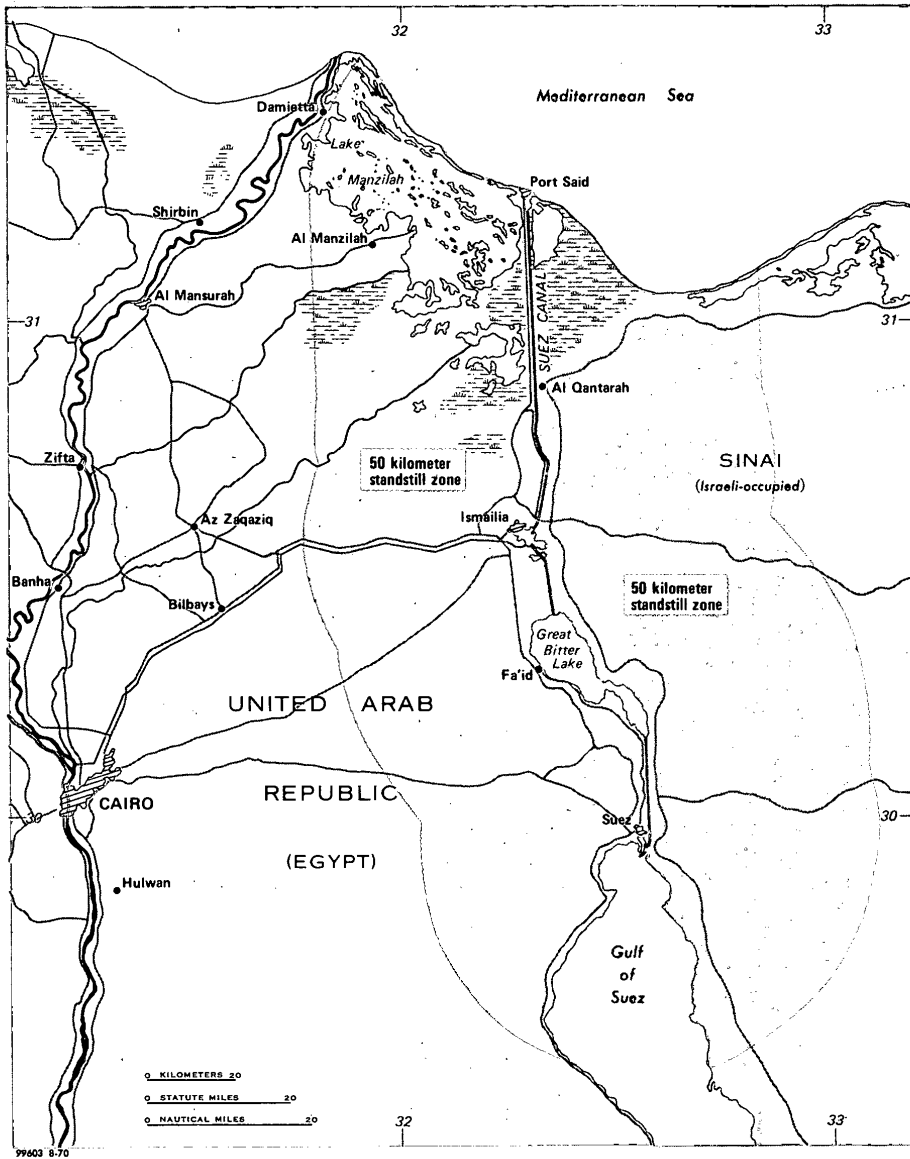
USSR-Peru: Late in getting started and delayed many times once it was under way, the Soviet relief airlift to Peru has finally been canceled after completing only 21 of the planned 65 flights. A Soviet official in Lima has announced that the promised aid will be delivered by sea. He gave no reason for the cancellation, but it represents a serious setback to whatever political capital Moscow had hoped to derive.

Panama:



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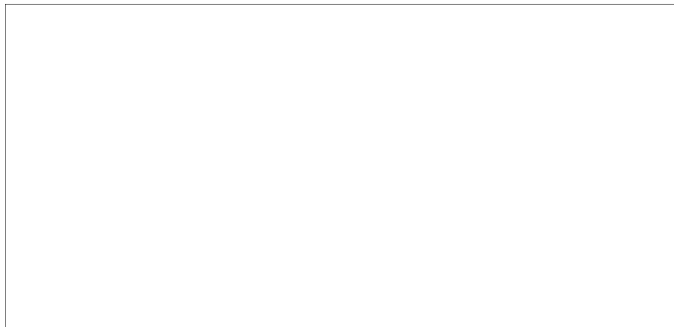
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ISRAEL-EGYPT



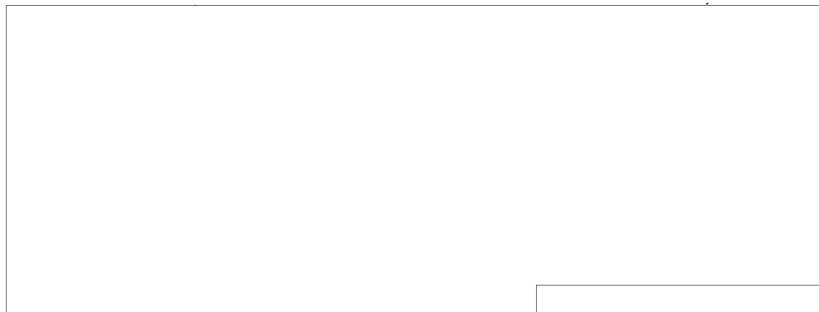
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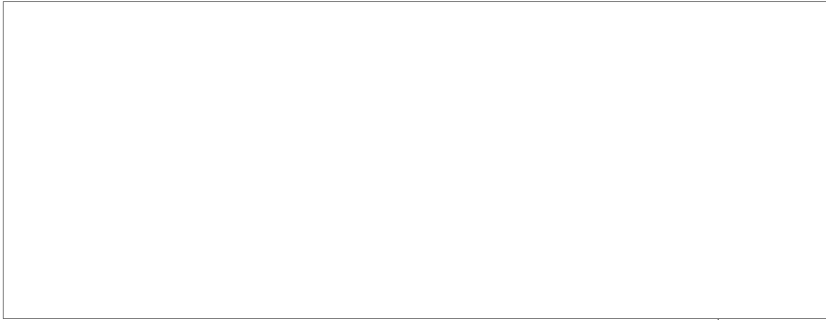
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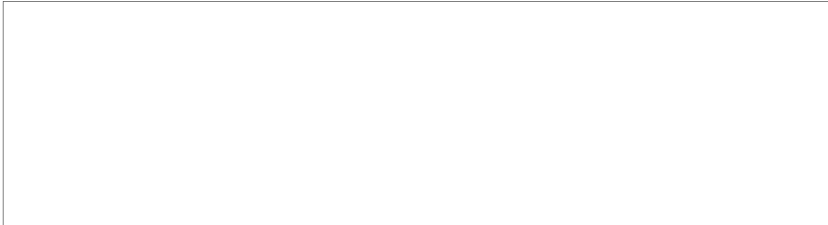
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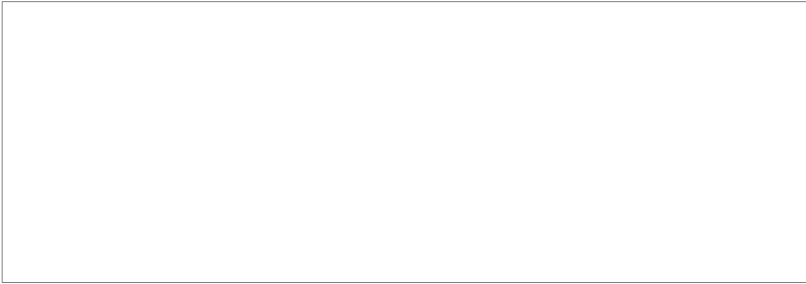
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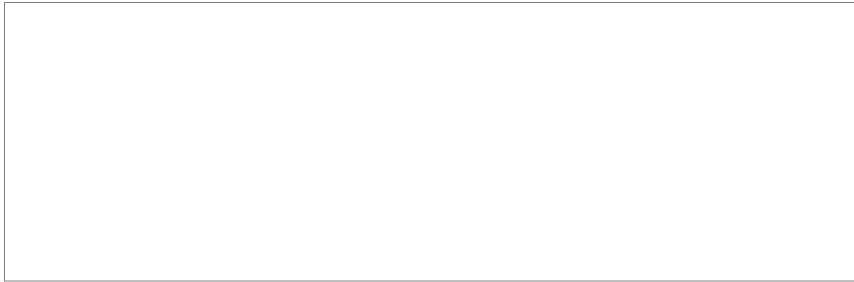
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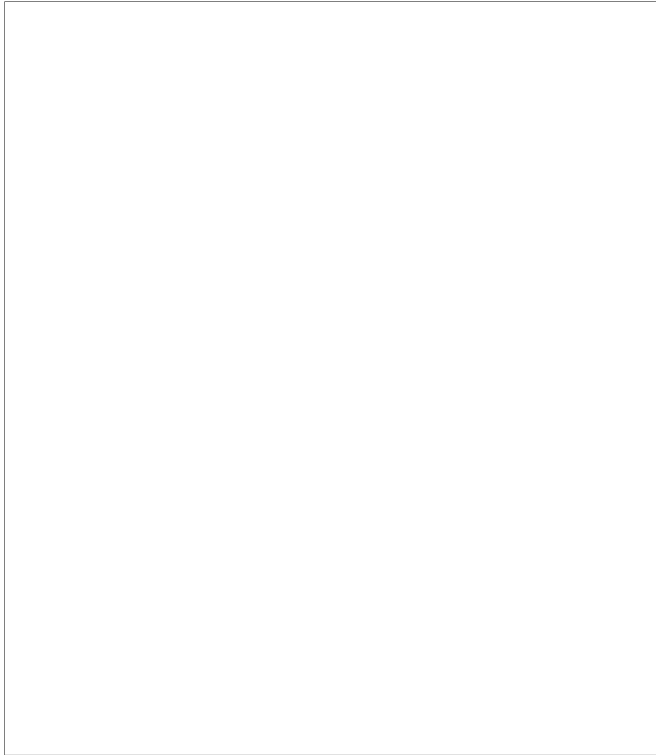
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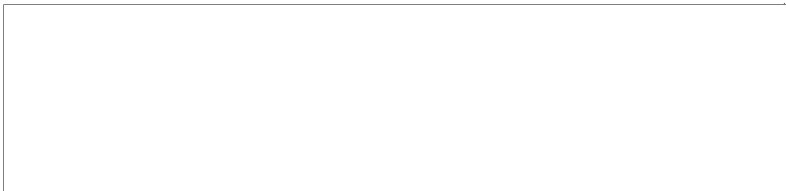
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