



The President's Daily Brief

6 November 1970

46

Top Secret

50X1



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

6 November 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hanoi has made some moves which suggest it may be preparing a new ingredient for the negotiations in Paris. (Page 1)



50X6

The Chinese are still on the disputed Damanskiy/Chen-pao Island near the Soviet border. (Page 3)

Rumors associated with the possibility Premier Thanom might step down have intensified political maneuvering in Bangkok. (Page 4)

Recent satellite photography has provided further evidence that troop training for Chinese MRBM crews is in progress. (Page 5)

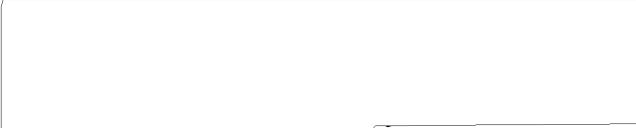
The Soviets are preparing another lunar mission. (Page 6)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

VIETNAM

The North Vietnamese seem to be paving the way for some new move. We know there have been North Vietnamese VIP flights between Hanoi and Moscow and Peking, and we think this means the Vietnamese Communists have been consulting with their major allies.



50X1

Our guess is that Hanoi is preparing to add some new ingredient to the negotiations: possibly another installment in the "diplomatic offensive" launched in September with Madame Binh's eight points; possibly a more substantive response to President Nixon's peace initiative last month.

The fact that Xuan Thuy has finally accepted the US initiative for a private meeting lends further support to this conjecture. We are inclined to think that the North Vietnamese stalled on this matter mainly because they believed the US might use an earlier acceptance as evidence of progress in Paris, and they did not want to do anything that might help the Administration in this week's elections. This conclusion is reinforced by their acceptance coming on the very day of the elections. Whatever the timing of the private talks, the diplomatic comings and goings at least raise the possibility that the Communists have been making the necessary arrangements before engaging in serious talks with the US.

A great deal has happened since the contact with the North Vietnamese in August 1969. We have no evidence to suggest what tack Thuy may take at the first private meeting, but we think the North Vietnamese are unhappy with current trends in the war in Indochina, and they may be more interested than they were a year ago in exploring the possibilities for negotiating with the United States.

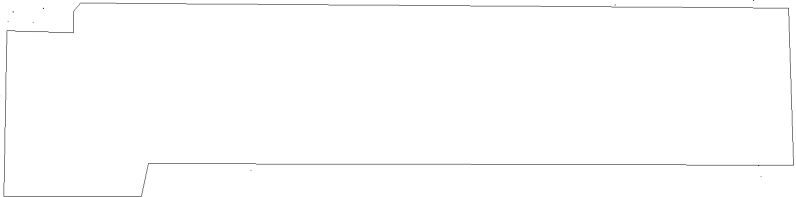


50X1

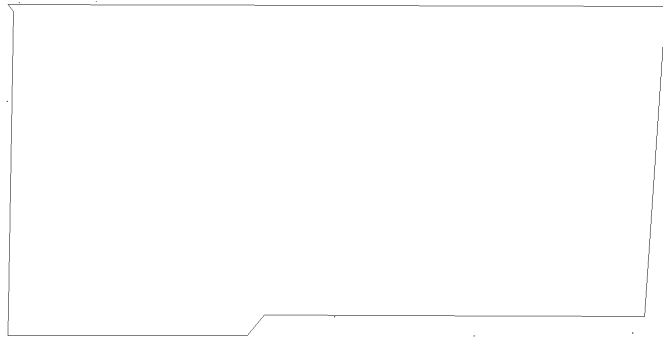
~~FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY~~

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

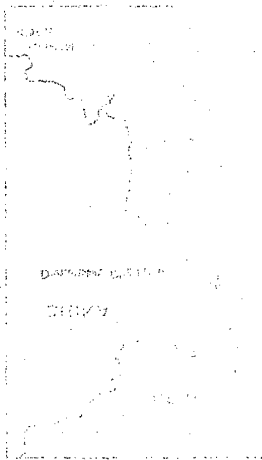
WEST GERMANY



50X6



50X6



50X1



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR-CHINA

Satellite photography of late October indicates that the Chinese continue to maintain a presence on disputed Damanskiy/Chen-pao Island and continue to occupy defenses in the area. Some weapons positions on the nearby hillsides along the Chinese side of the river were occupied and trenching was observed in the area. Bunkers under construction in June 1970 now are earth covered.

Kosygin and Chou En-lai apparently reached an informal understanding during their meeting in Peking in September 1969 that each side would employ restraint along the border and permit the other to remain on disputed territory it then held. Accordingly, the Soviets apparently tolerate a Chinese presence on the island in order to avoid an incident that might disrupt the Peking talks and lead to a renewal of border skirmishing. The lack of fighting during the past year suggests that the Chinese also have been circumspect with regard to disputed territory occupied by the Soviets.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THAILAND

[redacted] there is increased political maneuvering behind the scenes in Bangkok. Followers of Premier Thanom start rumors or create provocations designed to postpone the day when Thanom will lose his power position, while partisans of Deputy Prime Minister Praphat are taking similar action to hasten the day of Thanom's departure. The result of all this backstage churning is considerable confusion on the Thai political scene.

50X1

Although Thanom has announced that he will retain the prime ministership until parliamentary elections in early 1973, most political observers in Bangkok believe it unlikely that he has either the inclination or power to hold on that long. After almost seven years of unimaginative but steady stewardship, Thanom has become a casualty of his own style of leadership and of problems at home and abroad over which he, or any Thai prime minister, has only limited control. Although Thanom's self-effacement was ideally suited to the sort of collective rule by which Thailand has been governed since Marshal Sarit's death, there is a growing feeling that it is not appropriate for the tough decisions that the country now faces.

In the handling of controversial legislation--the tax bill, the budget, the proposed press act--the government has been divided and indecisive. Not only has Thanom had trouble whipping parliament into line, but the government's own ranks have become increasingly divided and unresponsive to the prime minister's leadership. He himself has grown increasingly weary of the political wars.

Thanom is nonetheless under some pressure from his supporters to continue in office as long as possible while they build support for either a congenial replacement or another potential rival to Deputy Prime Minister Praphat, who now appears almost certain to replace Thanom.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

COMMUNIST CHINA

Satellite photography of late October shows MRBM equipment at the Wu-wei surface-to-surface missile school in west China. The equipment was similar to that previously associated with a missile being tested to a range of 600 to 700 nautical miles at the Shuang-cheng-tzu test center.

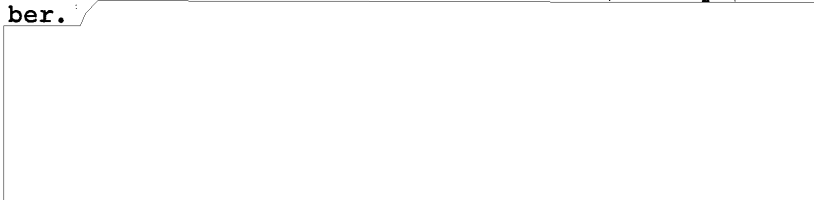
50X1



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTE

USSR: Preparations are under way for a lunar mission similar to the Luna 16 flight which soft landed on the moon and returned to earth in September.



50X1

Top Secret