

The President's Daily Brief

26 November 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

North Vietnam's tactics at the Paris talks are discussed on *Page 1*.

In Greece, dissatisfaction with Papadopoulos' leadership continues, but the Prime Minister remains in firm control. (*Page 2*)

Laos
(*Page 3*)

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Prime Minister Colombo may ask the Italian parliament for a vote of confidence next week. (*Page 4*)

Military activity in Cambodia is summarized on *Page 5*.

Thailand's cabinet reshuffle is noted on *Page 5*.

Communist China
(*Page 5*)

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The Presidential succession has become topical in Haiti. (*Page 6*)

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NORTH VIETNAM

Hanoi's decision to put off temporarily any further private talks with the US parallels the Communist boycott of the regular plenary session. These gestures are a minimum protest against US actions last weekend and, we think, do not constitute a basic change in the Communist attitude at Paris. The North Vietnamese may consider the gestures a way of underscoring that, while they expect to resume private talks in the future, progress will be possible only if the US is prepared to take up all issues in a bilateral format, as Xuan Thuy indicated at the private meeting on 16 November. Communist avoidance of more dramatic moves in response to last weekend's events suggests that they still hope that the Paris talks eventually will be fruitful for them.

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GREECE

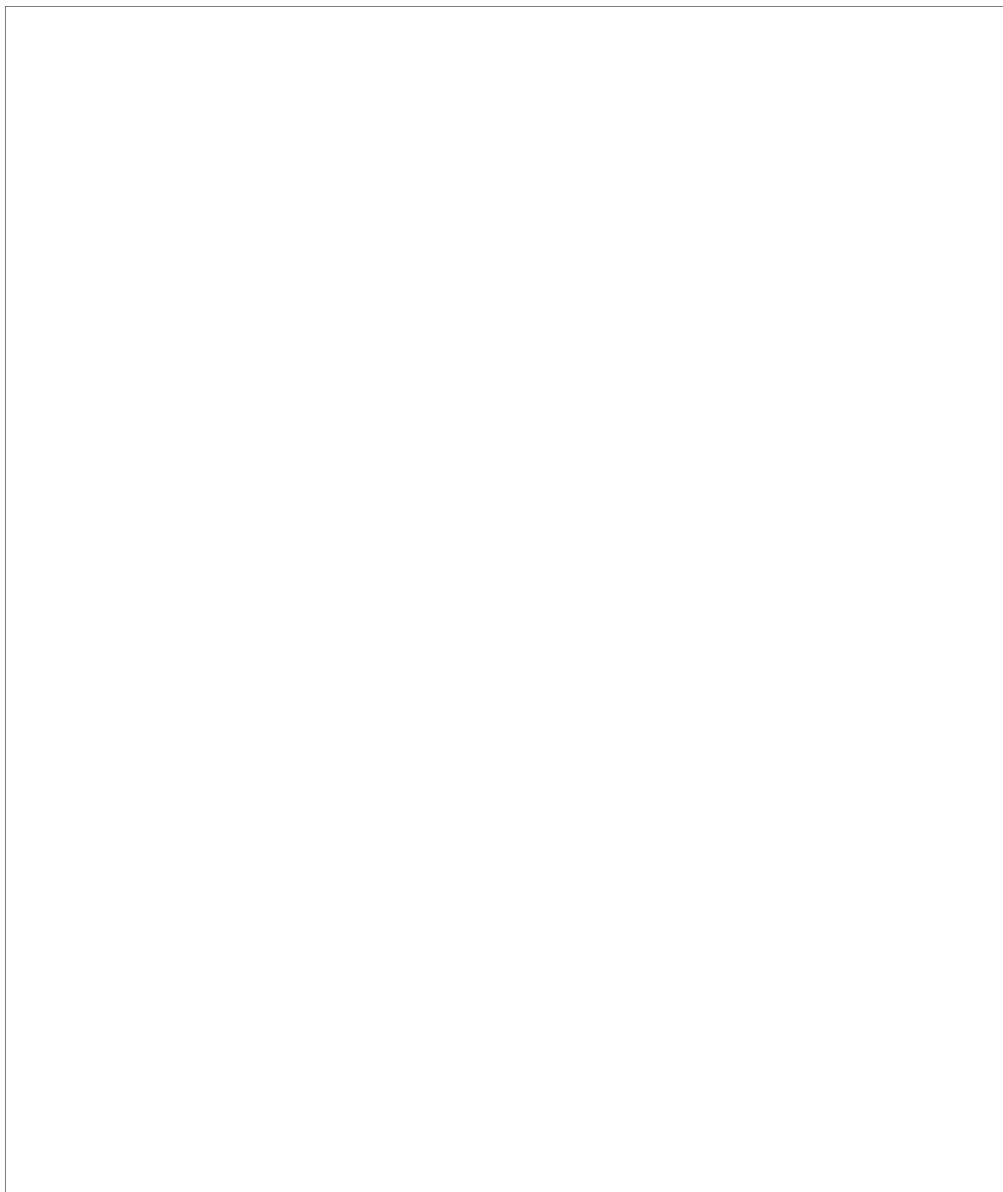
US officials in Athens report that opposition to the leadership of Prime Minister Papadopoulos may soon come to a head.

The opposition comes from those officers who joined with Papadopoulos in the coup of 1967. Ambition for power rather than disagreement over a significant issue seems to be the dominant factor.

The challenge to Papadopoulos surfaced early this fall when he threatened to resign over his colleagues' insistence on greater participation in the government. Papadopoulos' critics backed down at that time because they could neither decide on an alternative to him nor muster support in the army. There is no substantial information at present to indicate significant erosion of the army's support for the Prime Minister but tensions are high and acrimonious gossip against Papadopoulos is mounting.

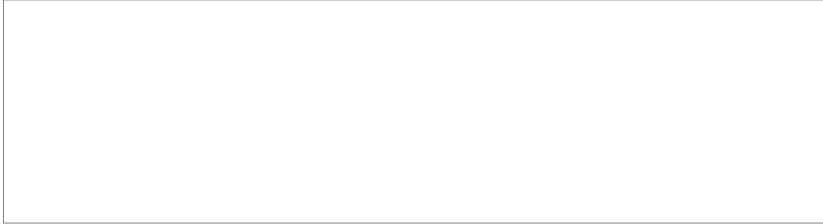
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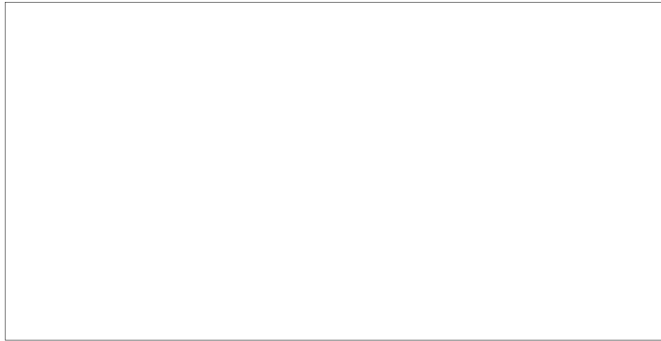


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LAOS



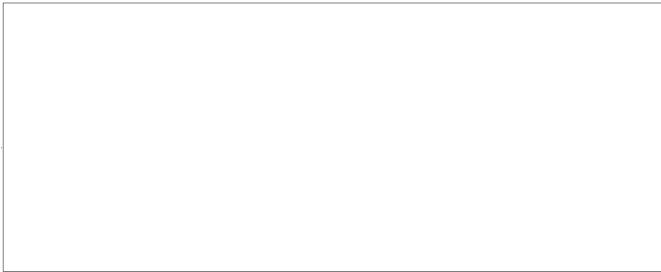
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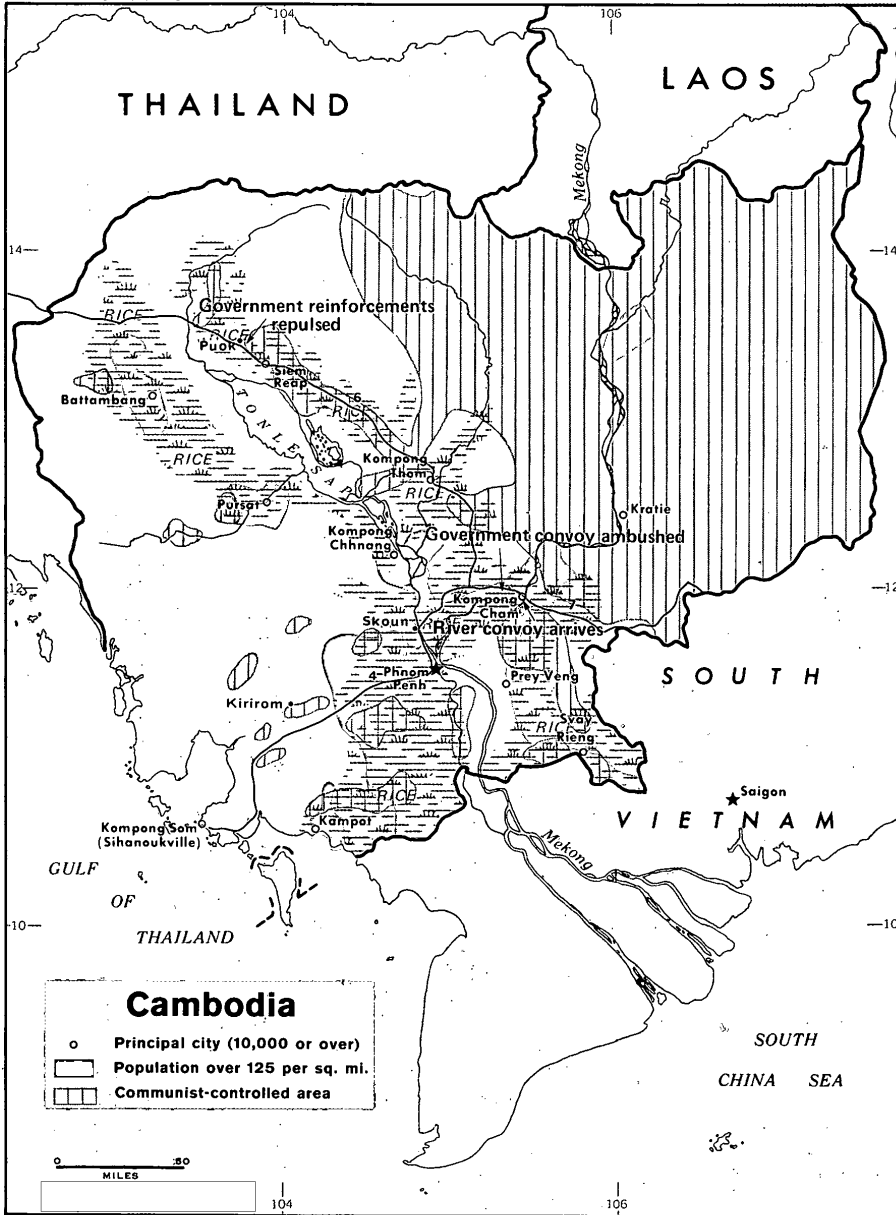
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**ITALY**

Prime Minister Colombo has threatened to ask for a vote of confidence next week on the government's economic decree law if the legislature does not approve the bill by then. The Chamber of Deputies plans to remain in session until the end of the week in an effort to secure final passage of the bill. Italy's Communist Party (PCI) has several amendments it would like to incorporate into the bill but the filibustering tactics of the small Soviet-financed Proletarian Socialist Party have been the greatest single obstacle.

The PCI believes the ultraleft Proletarian Socialists are working at cross purposes to the best interests of leftist parties in Italy. The Communists want to avoid a confidence vote because it might unite the coalition and thereby reduce the influence the Communist Party has achieved as an opposition party in formulating major legislation. The Communists may ask Moscow to call off the Proletarian Socialists rather than risk damaging the PCI's ability to influence other reform bills pending in parliament.

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Current Situation



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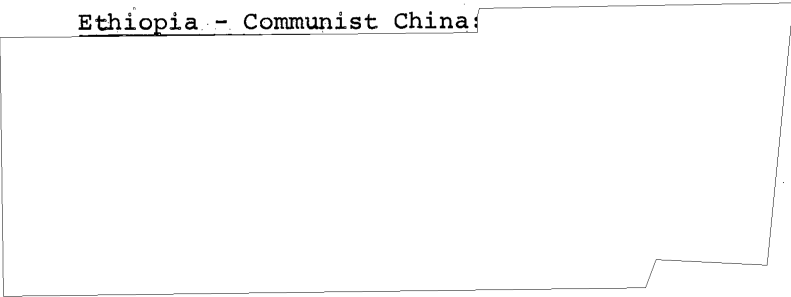
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NOTES

Cambodia: The government's riverine supply convoy reached Kompong Cham city yesterday without further incident. The Cambodians are now preparing another push to clear portions of Route 7 between Skoun and Kompong Cham, following the recent ambush of a government convoy on that road. In the southwest, the six government battalions assigned to re-take positions near Route 4 in the Kirirom area have not yet made contact with the enemy. The road is still closed to through traffic. Elsewhere, the Communists still control the district headquarters at Puok, ten miles west of Siem Reap city, which they seized on 24 November. Cambodian troops attempting to recapture the town on 25 November were forced to retreat in the face of heavy Communist resistance.

Thailand: In a reshuffle of his cabinet, Prime Minister Thanom has given important posts to supporters of Deputy Prime Minister Praphat. The appointments will strengthen the impression among Thai politicians that momentum is building for Praphat's early replacement of Thanom. The timing still lies with Thanom, but one obstacle apparently has been removed. A member of the Privy Council suggested recently to Ambassador Unger that the monarchy, to whom Praphat has long been anathema, is now reconciled to Praphat's succession.

Ethiopia - Communist China:



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Haiti: President Duvalier's failing health has focused attention on the succession problem.

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The President appears to be favoring his only son, Jean-Claude as his successor and recently has allowed him to make public appearances usually reserved for the President. Max Dominique, Duvalier's son-in-law, is another possible candidate but neither he nor Jean-Claude appear to have the necessary military support to maintain control of the country.

USSR: Last night the Soviets test fired an SS-13 ICBM from the Plesetsk missile test center to an impact closure area in the Pacific, a distance of 4,700 nautical miles. This is the first extended-range firing into this area since it was closed on 28 October. The closure termination date is 30 November.

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