



The President's Daily Brief

5 December 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

5 December 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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Enemy harassing attacks continue to stymie Cambodian Government efforts to reopen Routes 6 and 7. (Page 5)

Gomulka's speech on Thursday has thrown light on developments at the East Berlin summit meeting. (Page 6)

On Monday, Pakistan will hold its first nationwide direct election since independence. (Page 8)

At the SALT talks, Semenov has elaborated on his proposal for a separate ABM agreement. (Page 9)

The increasing number of incidents along the border may soon provoke Israeli action against Fatah bases in Lebanon. (Page 9)

The Soviet submarine tender and missile frigate that rendezvoused north of Puerto Rico were refueled yesterday by an oiler. (Page 9)



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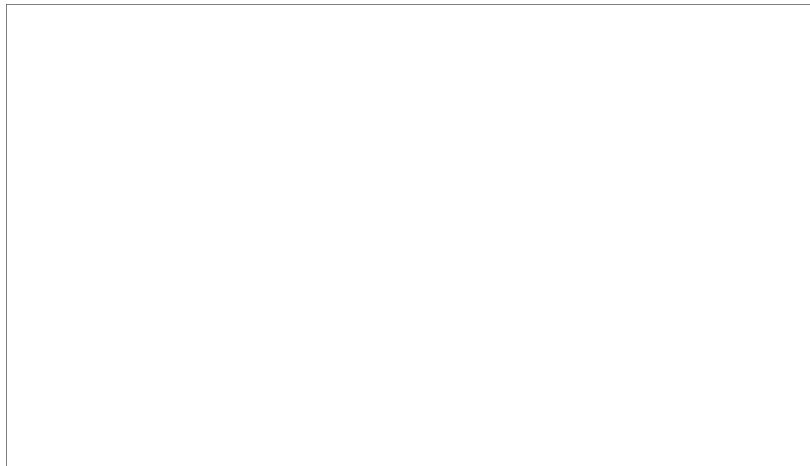
JORDAN - EGYPT - SAUDI ARABIA



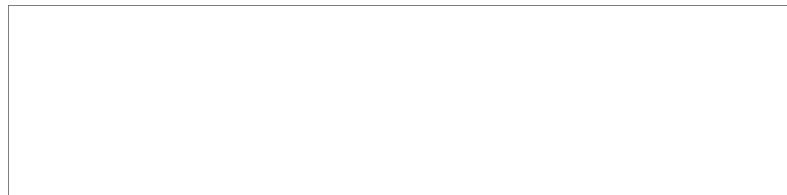
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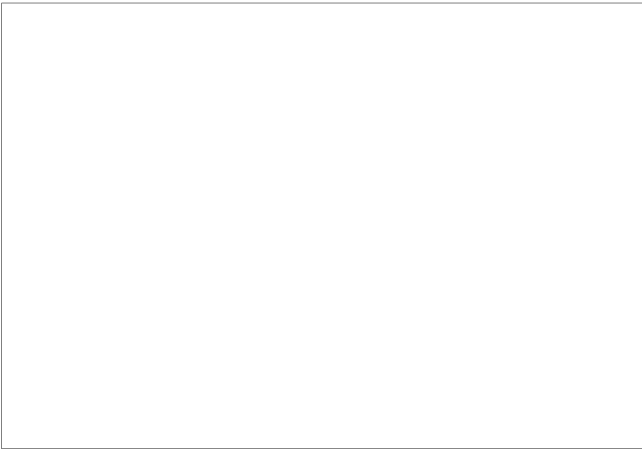
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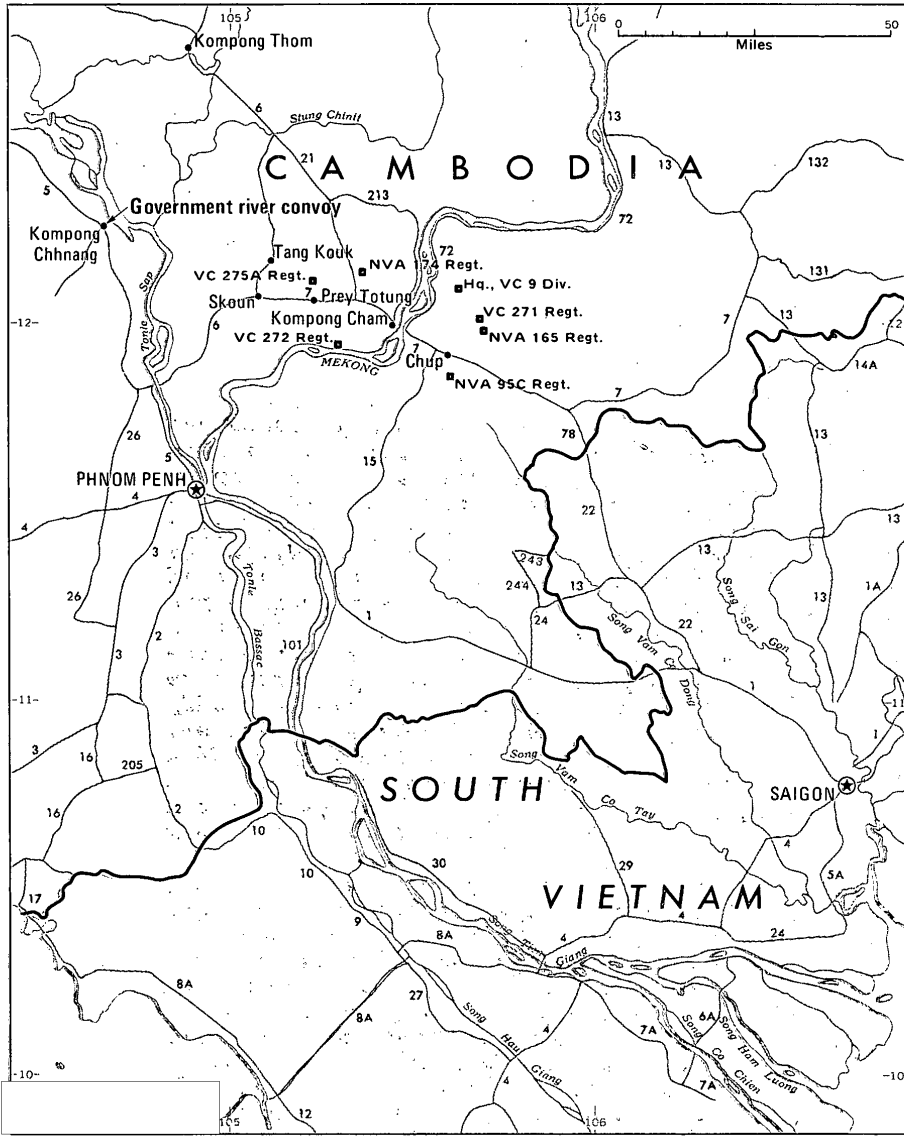


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Cambodia: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

Numerous harassing attacks during the week continued to stymie government efforts to reopen Route 6, southwest of Skoun, and Route 7, between Prey To-tung and Kompong Cham city. These actions have forced the Cambodians to divert several battalions from the "Chenla" task force that has been stalled between Skoun and Tang Kouk for three months. The government's military commitment in the area now exceeds 30 battalions.

The Communists have managed to keep this force on the defensive with about six main-force battalions subordinate to the VC 275A Regiment and the NVA 174th Regiment, and a smaller number of Cambodian Communist units. This force was augmented several days ago by elements of the VC 272nd Regiment which moved to the west bank of the Mekong River, where they are in a position to contest riverine resupply of Kompong Cham city.

Although the recent movement of elements of the 272nd Regiment west of the Mekong increases the Communists' capability against numerically superior government troops, there is no evidence that the Communists are ready to abandon their economy-of-force tactics. The Communists' failure to mount major ground assaults against the well-motivated but inexperienced Cambodian units evidently reflects a decision to keep losses to a minimum. It may also indicate supply shortages and a decision to husband resources until later in the dry season, when stockpiles may be replenished from the Laotian infiltration corridor.

Under present circumstances, the Communists find it difficult to take ground from the Cambodians, and government forces find it as hard to make inroads into Communist-held territory.

East of Kompong Cham city, the headquarters of the VC 9th Division and those of three of its subordinate regiments remain located near the Chup rubber plantation.

The task of these units apparently is still to serve as a defensive shield against possible South Vietnamese Army incursions against enemy base and supply lines in this area.

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WARSAW PACT

In a speech Thursday, one day after the East Berlin summit, Polish leader Gomulka said that the two main concerns at the meeting were formulating a united policy on negotiations with West Germany and ratification of the Soviet and Polish treaties with the Federal Republic. He asserted that the Pact leaders had taken a "very positive attitude toward a sensible normalization of relations" with West Germany, and indicated there is no reason the East Germans cannot follow the example of Moscow and Warsaw.

Gomulka also made clear that as far as he is concerned Pankow does not have a veto over his relations with Bonn. He said that he wanted ratification by the Bundestag of the Polish and Soviet treaties and seemed to imply acceptance of the West German position that ratification was conditional on substantial progress in the four-power Berlin talks and related East-West negotiations.

Gomulka appears to be apprehensive that the East Germans could block progress in the Berlin talks, and thus hold up his treaty and his plans to enter into normal relations with Bonn.

Gomulka has good reasons for his attitude. According to one of the Eastern European ambassadors in Moscow, Ulbricht opposed the idea of holding a summit meeting until after the East - West German and quadripartite Berlin talks were completed. Had this position been accepted, it is likely that there would have been no progress in either forum, since Pankow's demands on West Germany are clearly unacceptable to Bonn. It is possible that the extended harassment of West German autobahn traffic to and from West Berlin prior to the East Berlin summit was an East German attempt to check Moscow's and Warsaw's rapprochements with Bonn, as well as a coordinated attack on the West German presence in Berlin.

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Gomulka's revelations on the East Berlin meeting do not suggest that the course of East-West negotiations will become any easier. Tactically, the Communists may believe it necessary to take a tough position in order to make it clear they are not dealing from weakness. For example, the East Germans might harass access to Berlin during President Heinemann's visit to the western sector of the city early next week. Pankow's Foreign Ministry already has formally protested the visit.

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PAKISTAN

On Monday, Pakistanis will select members of a constituent assembly in the first nationwide direct election since independence in 1947. President Yahya--who took over from Ayub Khan in the coup of March 1969--called for the election a year ago as a step toward restoring Pakistan to civilian rule. The 313-member assembly has been charged with drafting a new constitution within 120 days and submitting it to Yahya for approval.

Despite apprehension in the military and sporadic violence during the election campaign, Yahya has remained committed to holding elections and they should occur without serious incident.

The Awami League, which advocates greater autonomy for East Pakistan, should win a large majority of the seats in this more heavily populated wing of the country and thus obtain the largest voting bloc in the assembly. West Pakistan's vote is likely to be split among a potpourri of leftist, moderate and religious conservative parties.

Merely holding a nationwide direct election is an achievement in Pakistan, but the performance of the constituent assembly is a more difficult test if the country is to return to civilian rule. The assembly could degenerate into petty haggling in the absence of a dominant national political party. East Pakistan's demand for greater autonomy will likely be the most difficult issue. Although some West Pakistani politicians are now willing to make concessions on this, the issue may become entangled in demands for greater autonomy for some of the provinces of West Pakistan.

Yahya has said he will call new elections if this assembly fails to produce an acceptable constitution. The military, which remains the most cohesive force in the country, might convince Yahya to act earlier to dissolve the assembly, if it reaches an impasse or if it appears to be significantly weakening the present powers of the central government.

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NOTES

SALT: Yesterday, as expected, Semenov elaborated on his 1 December proposal for a separate ABM agreement and repeated his earlier contention that this would facilitate the conclusion of a broader agreement. Except for two key provisions, the Soviet draft follows the general lines of the NCA-level alternative of Option E. Semenov labeled as superfluous the restrictions on radars and on SAM upgrade which were part of the US proposal. In keeping with Soviet practice, no numbers were given. Ambassador Smith's response reiterated the US position on the inter-relationship between strategic defensive and strategic offensive systems.

Israel-Lebanon: The increasing number of incidents along the border may soon provoke Israeli action against Fatah bases in Lebanon. Israeli Chief of Staff Bar-Lev yesterday complained to the US ambassador that terrorist acts had been averaging about one a day for the last three weeks. Bar-Lev said that the Lebanese had informed the Israelis that the Lebanese Army was controlling the border west of the Hasbani River in southern Lebanon, but had no forces east of the river where Fatah elements were located. Bar-Lev said that if the rate of incidents continued to rise, Israel would have to react.

USSR-Cuba: The Soviet submarine tender and missile frigate that rendezvoused north of Puerto Rico were refueled yesterday by an oiler. In addition to the Soviet F-class diesel submarine that has surfaced near the group, there may be a second one in the area, as these submarines usually travel in pairs. There have been no further reports on the whereabouts of the rescue tug which had been in Cienfuegos and its status is unclear.

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