



*The President's Daily Brief*

11 March 1971



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Arab-Israeli [redacted] (Page 1)

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Lon Nol's absence from the country and his uncertain future have stimulated political ferment in Phnom Penh. (Page 2)

A status report on Chinese road building in northern Laos appears on Page 4.

Prime Minister Gandhi's party has taken a solid lead in the early returns from India's national elections. (Page 5)

Argentina [redacted] (Page 6)

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Turkish [redacted] (Page 7)

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New attacks against US property in Ceylon are being planned by revolutionary groups. (Page 8)

Soviet ship positions in the Caribbean area are noted on Page 9.

[redacted] (Page 9)

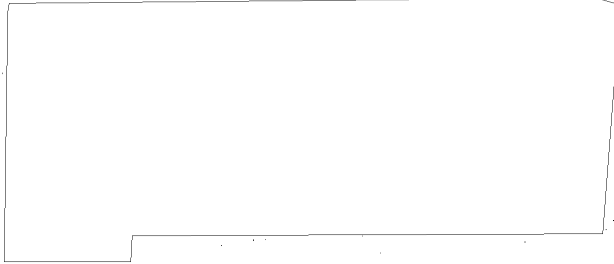
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ISRAEL - ARAB STATES



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CAMBODIA

[redacted] signs of growing political ferment in Phnom Penh. Students and Buddhist monks in the capital are planning anticorruption demonstrations, including one aimed specifically at Acting Prime Minister Sirik Matak, whose alleged venality has been criticized sharply in civilian circles. [redacted] student agitators are also thinking of circulating petitions calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops, including the South Vietnamese.

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*The regime is aware of these developments, and several as yet unidentified persons apparently have been arrested for planning such activities. The possibility of demonstrations is being used by supporters of Prime Minister Lon Nol to discredit Matak. One junior officer, for example, is spreading the story that the demonstrations are part of a Matak-inspired plot to dump Lon Nol. Although this mischief-making is not likely to get out of hand, it is symptomatic of the fear for the future among those closely associated with Lon Nol.*

Concern that a threat to the government's stability may be developing apparently prompted a meeting of the government's extralegal "special coordinating committee." The committee, which is headed by the Prime Minister's brother, Lon Non, has obtained Matak's approval in principle to establish a new ad hoc committee, ostensibly to facilitate action against government corruption and incompetence. The committee's recommendations may also be designed to increase its own power, which appears to have been in eclipse since Lon Nol's illness.

(continued)

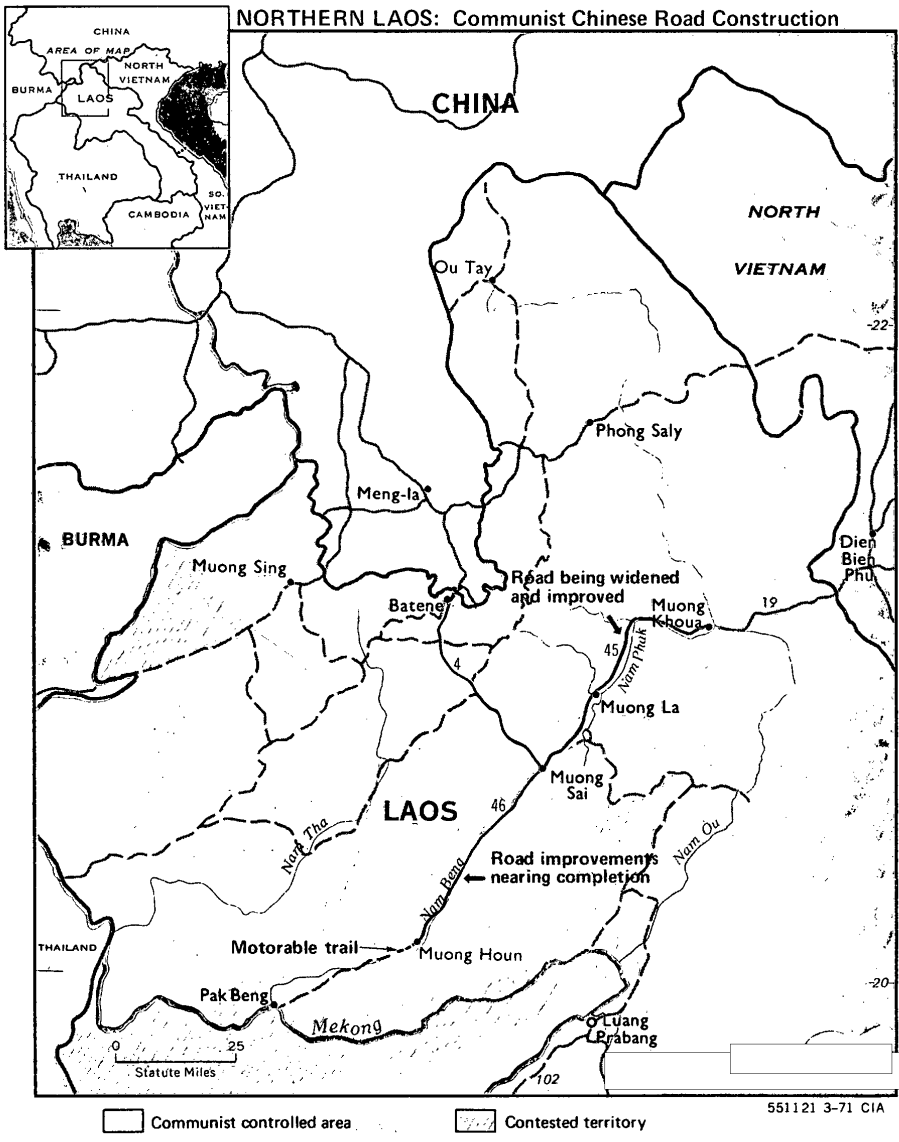
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*In addition to these immediate manifestations of political unease, a more fundamental issue--namely, the question of Lon Nol's ultimate successor--may be involved. Chief of State Cheng Heng and National Assembly President In Tam have recently said [redacted] that they are convinced that Lon Nol will have to step down soon. Some top military officers, who have been given an uncommon degree of freedom by Matak, have also expressed the view that even if Lon Nol returns, he will not be able to exercise as much authority as before his illness. Under these circumstances, political rumormongering and maneuvering for power have intensified and are likely to continue as long as Lon Nol is out of the country and his physical well-being is in doubt.*

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COMMUNIST CHINA - LAOS

[redacted] Chinese road builders in northern Laos are widening and improving Route 45, the northeast branch of their road, between Muong La and the Nam Ou River. In order to link up with Route 19, which leads to North Vietnam, the Chinese will have to cross the wide Nam Ou barrier. There is no evidence of bridge or ferry construction at this location.

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

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*It seems clear, however, that the Chinese consider the road a priority project and intend to push ahead with improvements before the rainy season begins in May.*

On the other hand, there is still no indication that Route 46, the southwest branch toward the Mekong, is being extended beyond its present terminus at Muong Houn, some 25 miles from the river. Improvements on the existing road between Muong Sai and Muong Houn are almost complete, however, and storage facilities and upgraded air defenses have been expanded in the Muong Houn area.

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**INDIA**

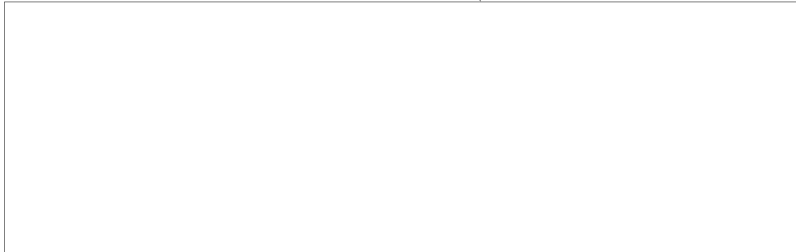
Prime Minister Gandhi's party jumped to an early lead in the national elections, winning 200 out of the first 271 results announced. Her party also is leading in a majority of the remaining elections for parliamentary seats. The vote thus far reflects strong support for Mrs. Gandhi from the young, the poor, and the minorities and should result in a comfortable majority in Parliament for her party.

*Mrs. Gandhi's campaign focused on the need for a more equitable distribution of wealth and better conditions for the poverty-stricken masses of India. Her party's victory will endorse the Ruling Congress as India's only truly national party and will provide the central government with the stability to develop moderate socialism at home while maintaining India's traditional independent foreign policy.*

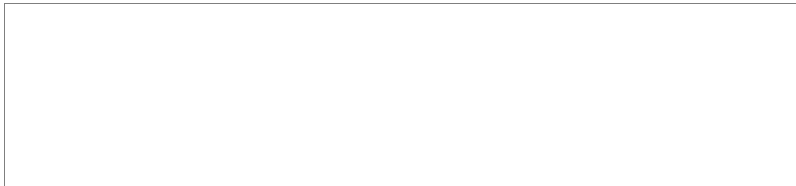


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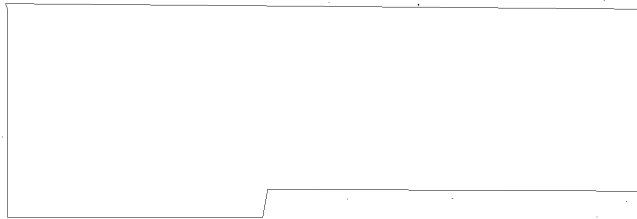
**ARGENTINA**



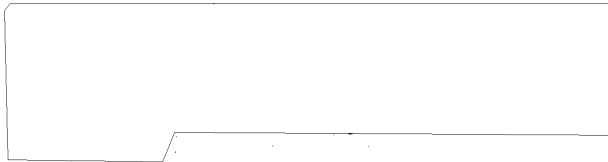
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TURKEY



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CEYLON

The American Embassy in Colombo received a new warning in the mail yesterday which threatened "to exterminate all concerned at the appropriate places." It was signed by the "Maoist Youth Front," the signature on leaflets left at the embassy when it was attacked on 6 March.

[redacted] a group within the Ceylon Communist Party/Peking (CCP/P) was to meet yesterday to discuss possible attacks on homes of US Embassy personnel. This group is said to have a layout of the residence of the US ambassador, who is currently in Washington. [redacted] a rebel group within the CCP/P was responsible for the attack on 6 March, but [redacted] other revolutionary groups may attempt to outdo each other in staging incidents against US property.

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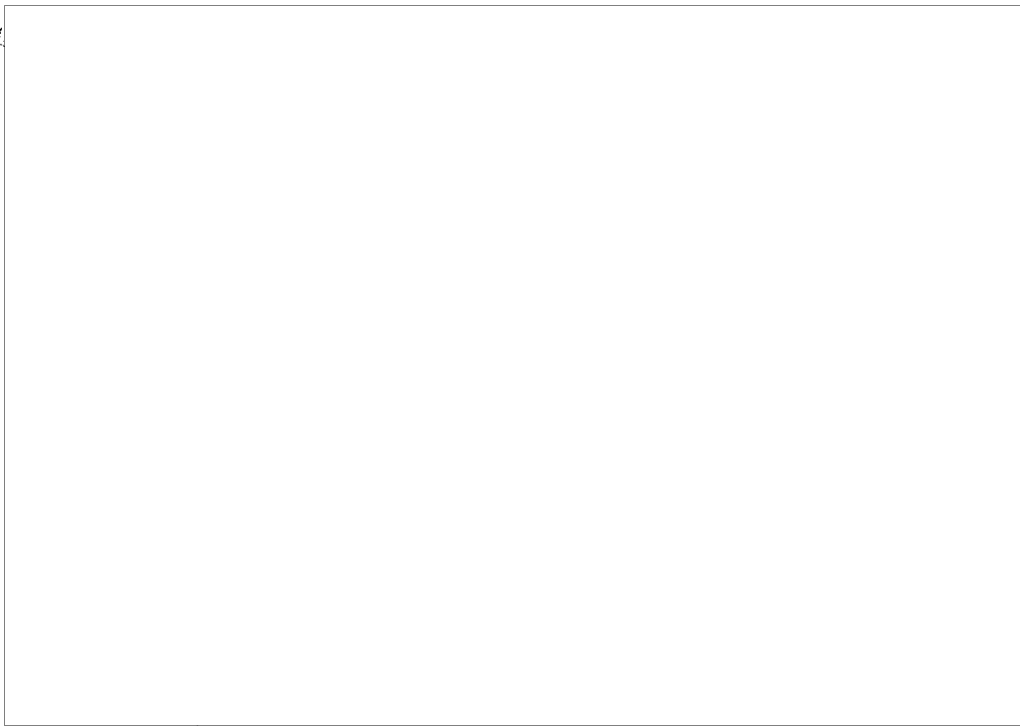
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*The CCP/P is a badly splintered organization which has two main wings and an undetermined number of so-called "Che Guevarist" revolutionary groups. In addition, there are other similar revolutionary groups in Ceylon not connected with the CCP/P, and the competition among all these elements makes it difficult to pin down the responsibility for any given incident.*

The Ceylonese Government, apparently concerned over the implications for its security, has invoked emergency powers. The Ceylonese Navy, which is considered a more disciplined force than the army or police, has assumed responsibility for guarding some of the US property in Colombo.

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NOTES

USSR-Cuba: The Soviet guided-missile cruiser and a tanker that have been visiting Cuba are now southeast of Bermuda, apparently heading for home waters. The submarine tender returned to Cuba yesterday and entered the port of Antilla, [redacted]

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[redacted] Two Soviet nuclear submarine support barges and a rescue tug are still in Cienfuegos.

USSR: [redacted]

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