



The President's Daily Brief

16 March 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS



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The Cambodian Government has reported thwarting a plot, but the current air of intrigue is likely to persist. *(Page 2)*

In talks with President Yahya, Mujibur Rahman plans to press his drive for complete authority in East Pakistan. *(Page 3)*

North Korea has issued its first public denunciation of an overflight by a US SR-71 reconnaissance aircraft. *(Page 4)*

The Chinese Communists have moved additional anti-aircraft weapons and air defense troops into north-western Laos. *(Page 5)*

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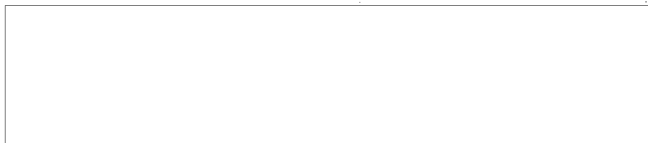


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SOUTH VIETNAM - LAOS



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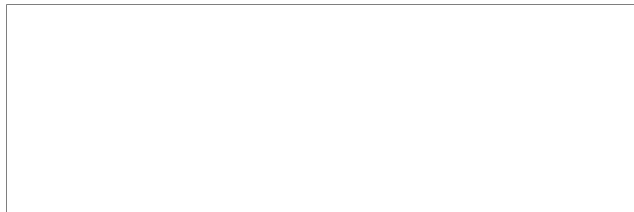
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CAMBODIA

The government has told the local press that Sirik Matak has ordered the arrest of a number of officers who allegedly were moving to place a member of his family on the throne. [redacted]

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It seems likely that Matak has surfaced this story to allay the fears of Khmer Krom leaders and other military officers loyal to Lon Nol that Matak was planning a royalist coup while Lon Nol is out of the country. Matak seems also to be using the "royalist plot" to be rid of Srey Saman, a man Matak has wanted to remove from his post. In any event, the government's press announcement is not likely to clear the air of allegations that now involve virtually every major political figure.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

PAKISTAN

According to one of Mujib's advisers, the East Pakistani leader intended to urge President Yahya, during discussions between the two in Dacca, to turn over power in East Pakistan to Mujib's Awami League immediately. Mujib also planned to demand the withdrawal of troop reinforcements sent to East Pakistan in the last few weeks. Should the military attempt to use force, Mujib plans to proclaim independence.

Yahya will be reluctant to agree to such actions. On the other hand, he will find the alternatives--East Pakistani secession or a costly and probably futile effort to hold the country together by force--just as unpalatable.

Meanwhile, there has been no central government response to Mujib's latest move toward complete independence for East Pakistan. The 35-point directive that Mujib issued yesterday essentially clarifies and amplifies actions to be taken under the noncooperation movement he launched on 7 March. If and when implemented, the actions would put Mujib in effective control of East Pakistan's government.

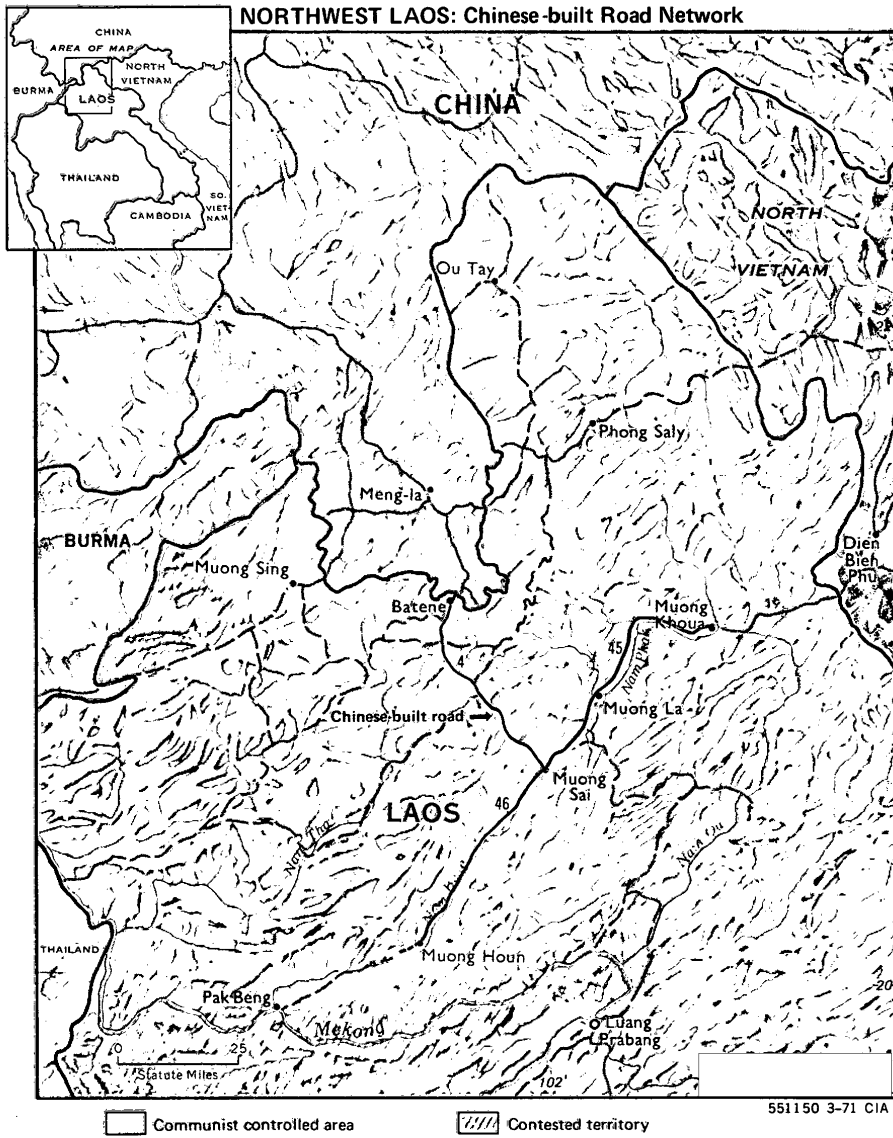
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NORTH KOREA

Pyongyang, in its first public denunciation of an overflight by a US SR-71 reconnaissance aircraft, has broadcast statements over both domestic and international radio services linking a flight on 14 March to alleged US war preparations and warning obliquely of retribution.

No military reaction was noted to this flight or to 13 earlier ones since the program began in June 1969. The North Koreans have gradually become more proficient in tracking the SR-71, but they have little, if any, capability to intercept the aircraft.

Although the denunciation may be nothing more than propaganda to discredit such US intelligence collection activities, it could also be designed as a warning that Pyongyang might retaliate against some more accessible US target of opportunity in the Korean area.



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NOTES

Communist China - Laos: Aerial photography shows that the Chinese have moved additional anti-aircraft weapons into northwestern Laos since late last year. Judging from the numbers of such weapons, we now estimate that there are 6,000 to 7,000 Chinese air defense troops in this area. We continue to estimate that there are an additional 10,000 to 13,000 Chinese in engineer units there. Over half of the 400 Chinese anti-aircraft weapons now in northwestern Laos are light or medium radar-controlled guns. Most of them protect bridges, construction sites, and barracks in the Muong Khoua, Muong La, Muong Sai, and Muong Houn areas. The smaller pieces are more widely scattered to defend road construction forces. Additional air surveillance radars have also been noted emplaced along the road network.

Turkey: Talks among top political leaders are continuing amid expectations that President Sunay will announce the selection of a new prime minister tomorrow. Yesterday, Sunay called upon all Turks to rally behind the new government but gave no hint of who might head it. If agreement on a new cabinet is not reached within a reasonable time, however, military leaders reportedly are prepared to ask Sunay to dissolve Parliament and to take control themselves.

Japan: Foreign Minister Aichi has told Ambassador Meyer that he fears US Senators from textile-producing states will oppose an Okinawa reversion agreement as a consequence of last week's flurry over textiles and be able to muster enough votes to prevent the necessary two-thirds approval. The Japanese Government, which is under pressure in the Diet not to be too compromising on the unresolved Okinawa issues, had been hoping to wrap up the reversion negotiations by 1 April, before local and national elections this spring. Aichi now evidently considers this timing questionable.

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