



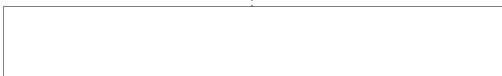
The President's Daily Brief

27 March 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The current situation in Pakistan is assessed on
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The situation in Luang Prabang appears on *Page 4.*

President Thieu is said to have offered Prime Minister Khiem the vice presidential nomination next fall. (*Page 5*)

Lanusse takes the Argentine presidency on a rotating basis. (*Page 6*)

Two days of clashes have been reported in Jordan. (*Page 6*)

The Soviets are sending naval replacements to the Mediterranean area. (*Page 6*)

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PAKISTAN

The army's ability to re-establish central government authority in East Pakistan remains in doubt. According to clandestine East Pakistani broadcasts, paramilitary forces and troops from the army's East Bengal Regiment have surrounded West Pakistani forces in most garrison towns. The Indian press reports that East Pakistanis have seized the government radio station in Chittagong, the province's major port. These reports are un-

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confirmed, however [redacted]

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Reports from the US Consulate-General indicate that Dacca is under army control and relatively calm, despite scattered shooting and an enormous fire which burned through the night in the Old City. The curfew has been lifted from 0700 to 1600, but is still in effect at night. Twenty-five foreign correspondents, including five Americans, were ordered out of East Pakistan for their own safety and flown to Karachi by way of Colombo, where they were not permitted to disembark.

Yesterday, in a radiobroadcast, President Yahya Khan tried to justify the military intervention as necessary to preserve the nation's unity. He accused Mujib of treason and banned his party. According to Yahya, in the recent series of meetings to resolve differences over the projected constitution, Mujib had insisted on a program that would have resulted in chaos, and Yahya could not allow "some power hungry and unpatriotic people" to destroy Pakistan.

The clandestine radio claims that Mujib has proclaimed East Pakistan independent as the People's Republic of Bangla Desh (the Bengali Nation). Early today, however, the government announced that Mujib had been arrested some hours before the proclamation of independence. Mujib's followers deny this

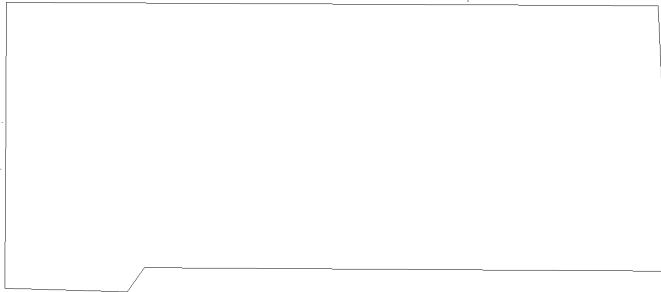
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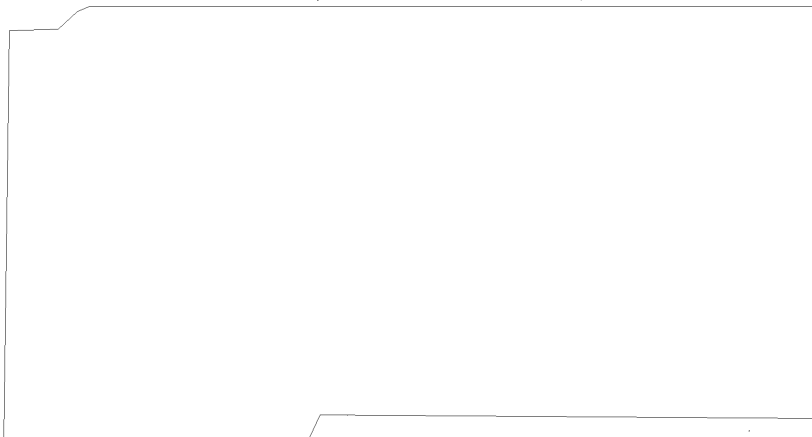
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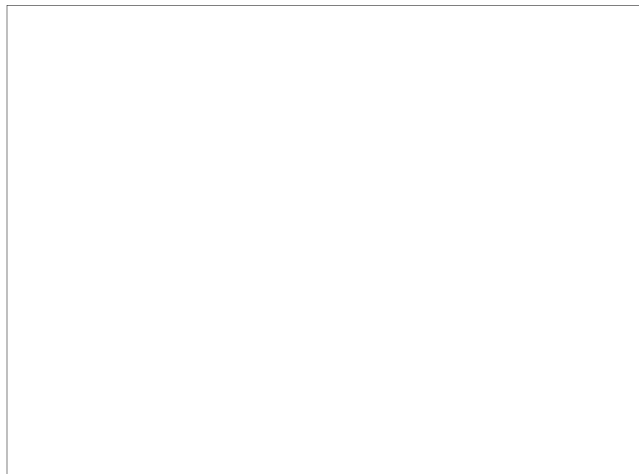
COMMUNIST CHINA



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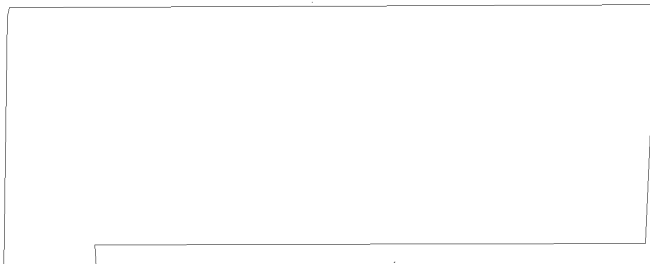


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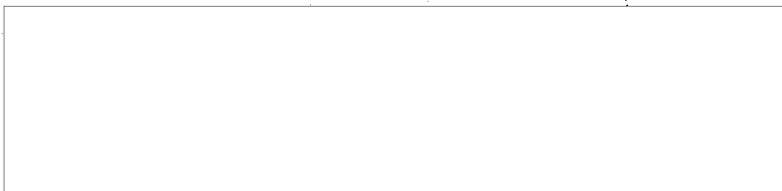


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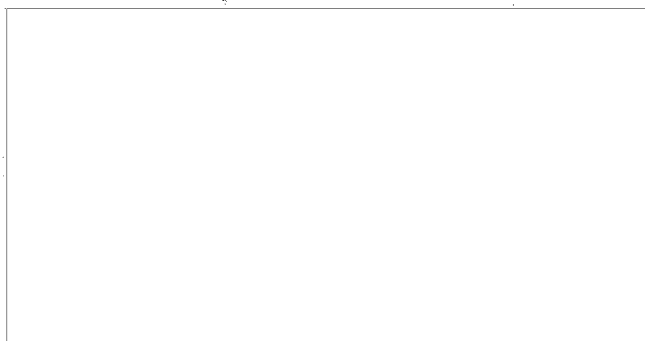
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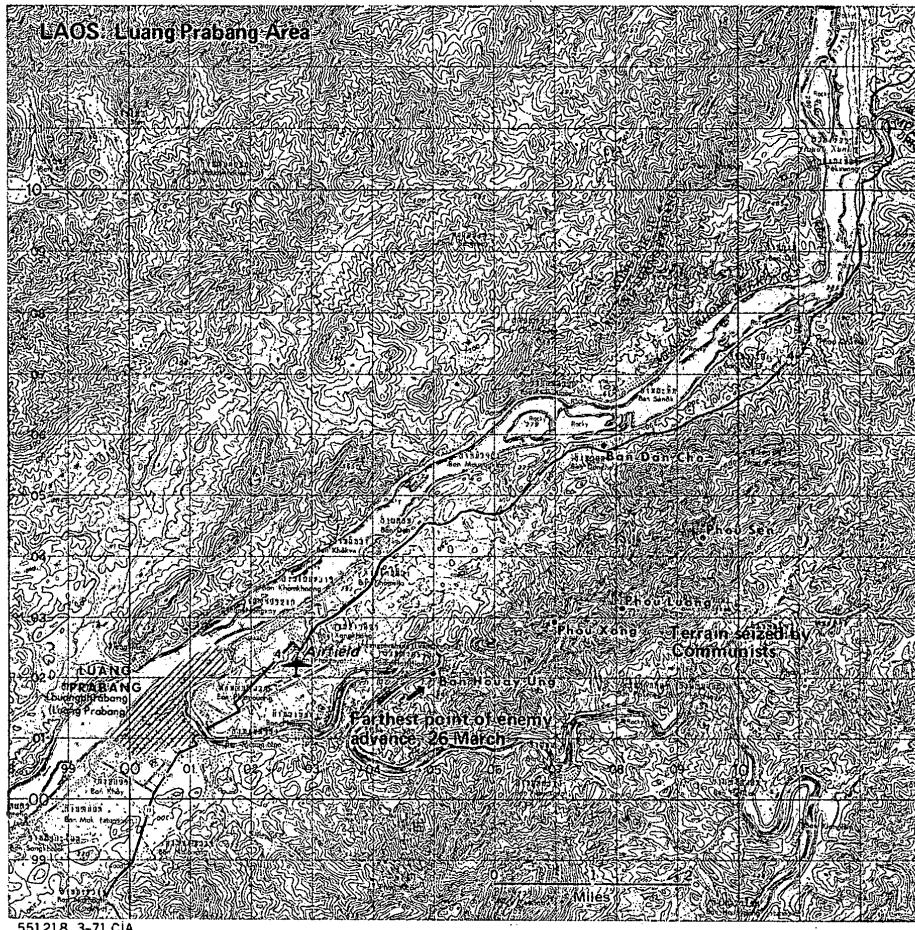


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**LAOS**

In coordinated attacks beginning at sundown on Thursday, Communist units advanced on a two-mile front through the rugged terrain overlooking the Luang Prabang airfield. By yesterday morning the North Vietnamese had occupied a position about one mile east of the runway, while three battalions of government troops had withdrawn to the flatlands near the Mekong River. As of early this morning no government aircraft were using the field because North Vietnamese units armed with recoilless rifles were within range. Three additional irregular battalions arrived in Luang Prabang from other military regions two days ago and another three are expected soon.

In Vientiane, Pathet Lao representative Soth Pethrasay told reporters yesterday that the attacks were intended to enforce the neutrality of the Laotian capital and were a "warning to the Americans and Laotian rightists not to use the airfield as a military base." The government now uses Luang Prabang as a base for a small force of T-28 attack aircraft and AC-47 gunships. Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma is considering a number of diplomatic steps to bring pressure on the Communists to withdraw from Luang Prabang.

Soth's statement is consistent with a new letter from Pathet Lao chief Souphanouvong which Souvanna received on Tuesday. The Communist leader is said to have posed tough new conditions for the initiation of peace talks, including cessation of bombing in Xieng Khouang Province and the withdrawal of all Thai troops and American "advisers."

The Communists demanded a similar bombing halt last year, but in their efforts to get talks under way subsequently called for a stand-down only in the Plaine des Jarres area--the agreed venue for discussions. Souvanna then countered by proposing Luang Prabang as the site. King Savang believes Communist attacks in the Luang Prabang area are intended to be taken as a rejection of Souvanna's proposal.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

President Thieu would like Prime Minister Khiem as his running mate in the election next fall, [redacted]

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If Thieu in fact has selected Khiem, the decision carries the risk that Ky, if not chosen as Thieu's running mate, will run for the presidency and draw support away from Thieu. Such a diversion of votes from Thieu could, in turn, be of great help to Big Minh's candidacy.

There has been some speculation among South Vietnamese political observers that, despite the friction between them, Thieu would eventually opt to keep Ky. If Thieu has indeed ruled out Ky, the decision may have been prompted in part by irritation at Ky's recent criticism of South Vietnam's operations in Laos.

Khiem has some stature in his own right, particularly in military and government circles, but he is unlikely to be of much help in broadening support for Thieu's ticket among such groups as the Buddhists or junior officers. An offer to Khiem from Thieu therefore would probably reflect the latter's desire to have a more compatible vice president and to divest himself of the kind of major nuisance he regards Ky to be.

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NOTES

Argentina: As President, army chief Lanusse now has prime responsibility for initiating the return to constitutional government. According to new changes in the 1966 "Statute of the Argentine Revolution," the President will exercise both the executive and legislative functions, obtaining the concurrence of the junta on matters of "special significance." An important check in the new system is the planned rotation of the presidency among the three services. Lanusse is to be succeeded on 1 January 1972 by air force commander Rey, who will take over as head of the junta and as President.

Jordan: There have been two days of clashes in Irbid between the army and fedayeen, with each side blaming the other for sparking various incidents. It is clear, however, that the fighting resulted from the army's continuing policy of attempting to clear Jordanian cities of armed fedayeen.

USSR: The Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean will be temporarily strengthened during the next ten days as replacements arrive for forces that have been there some five months. In addition to a relief group of seven diesel submarines and four surface ships off the Portuguese coast, four warships now in the English Channel evidently are en route. Before heading home, the force now in the Mediterranean probably will conduct joint operations with the relief group.

SALT: The Soviets stood pat at yesterday's formal meeting. Semenov reiterated Moscow's well-worn argument for an initial agreement confined to limitations on ABMs. Ambassador Smith tabled the alternate ABM proposal which would limit the US to defense of four Minuteman complexes, and the USSR to its present system around Moscow. Reacting in the same vein as he had when Smith first broached the matter privately on Tuesday, Semenov read off a formal rejection of this plan, terming it "obviously unacceptable."

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