



The President's Daily Brief

22 April 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

22 April 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In appealing to Lon Nol to form a new Cambodian government, Chief of State Cheng Heng has bowed to pressure from the prime minister's brother. (Page 1)

Communist forces are preparing for another "high point" in South Vietnam in the immediate future. (Page 2)

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[Redacted] (Page 3)

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[Redacted] (Page 4)

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Pressures for a full military takeover are again building within the Turkish armed forces. (Page 5)

At Annex, we discuss further steps Peking may take in following up its "ping pong initiative" toward the US.

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CAMBODIA

Cheng Heng has appealed to Lon Nol to form a new government, apparently bowing to pressure artfully organized by Lon Non, Lon Nol's brother. Lon Non has been keeping his campaign alive by circulating petitions in favor of Lon Nol, and by hinting to the press that elite Khmer Krom units will be sent back to South Vietnam if the prime minister is replaced.

Although Heng has indicated that he does not plan to press Lon Nol for an immediate decision, there is evidence that the prime minister has already decided to stay on. If he does indeed remain in office, his initial task of selecting a new cabinet is likely to be a difficult one. He must not only ensure that it represents all political factions, but also that it excludes the corrupt "old guard" elements responsible for much of the opposition to his outgoing government. This is a tall order, since Phnom Penh has more professional critics than it has talented technicians willing to assume the thankless jobs of running ministries.

Over the longer run, however, Lon Nol's main problem will be his limited physical and emotional capacity to govern. His personal physician has told the US ambassador that the prime minister is quite concerned over his health and that he wanted more time to recuperate before trying again to play an active political role. It thus seems likely that he will continue to rely heavily on Sirik Matak and other leaders to conduct the government's business. Lon Non has indicated that his brother has already delegated to Matak the task of putting together a new cabinet.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

scattered evidence indicate that the Communists intend to launch another round in their "spring campaign" before the end of the month. A frequently mentioned date is 26 April. Communist units have been noted making preparations for combat, particularly in the coastal regions of the northern provinces, but also to some extent elsewhere.

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Communist seasonal campaigns usually follow a cyclical pattern in accordance with the phases of the lunar month. The last "high point" began at the end of March, under cover of lunar darkness, and the next phase is evidently timed for a similarly dark period. It is likely that allied outposts, refugee centers, and isolated district towns will again be the primary targets, although major cities and military bases may also come under attack from Communist artillery or terrorist squads.

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NOTE

Turkey: Pressures may again be building up within the armed forces for a full military takeover. In the wake of a recent bleak report on the economy by Turkey's deputy prime minister, many middle- and senior-level officers have become highly critical of the parliament as well as of former prime minister Demirel.

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There is also some sentiment for dissolving the entire parliament--in which Demirel's Justice Party holds about half the seats--if it tries to block the reform legislation soon to be introduced by the new Erim government.

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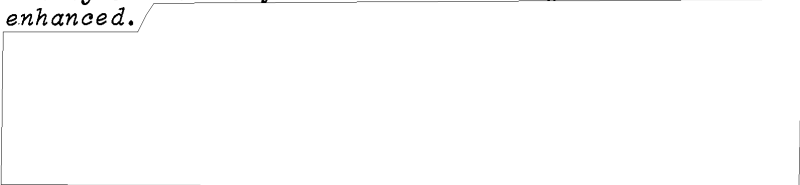
LATE ITEM

Haiti: Ambassador Knox was personally summoned to the palace about midnight last night to receive official notice of Duvalier's death from his son and designated successor, Jean-Claude Duvalier. In the presence of other top officials and his sister, Marie Denise Dominique, young Duvalier read the ambassador a statement requesting that the US provide naval surveillance to prevent any Cuban invasion of Haiti and act to forestall attacks by any external groups--presumably meaning Haitian exiles in the US.

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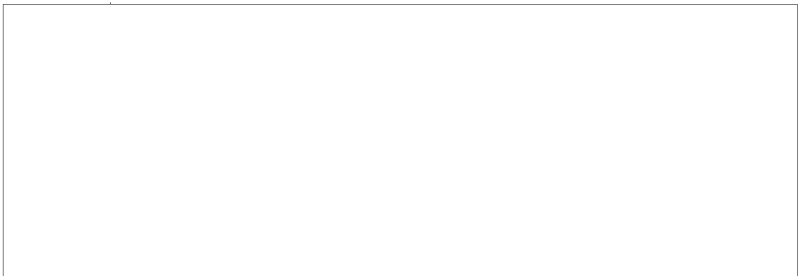
COMMUNIST CHINA - US

As it reviews the initial response to its American initiative, Peking must be quite pleased. World reaction has been favorable--even euphoric--in practically all quarters; where the response has been negative, in the case of Taipei and Moscow for example, low-key growls were undoubtedly expected and even desired by the Chinese. Concern over relations with China has been heightened in Japan, where the Sato government must consider the possibility that it will be left behind in a general improvement of Sino-US relations. The atmosphere in which Peking conducts its quest for additional recognitions and for additional votes on the UN issue has undoubtedly been improved by this dramatic sign of Chinese "reasonableness." The consensus appears to be that Peking's chances for admission this year have been enhanced.



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While the Chinese clearly see a wide range of benefits flowing from their new attitude toward relations with Washington, they have taken a number of risks in the attempt to achieve these benefits. Although Soviet displeasure was undoubtedly discounted in advance, the Chinese have probably been unpleasantly surprised by Fidel Castro's quick disavowal of any Cuban move toward rapprochement with the United States, with its implied rebuke of Peking's current diplomacy. More importantly, Chinese gestures toward the United States are bound to strain relations with North Korea and North Vietnam, which Peking has laboriously cultivated in the past year and a half. There have already been reports--albeit from such self-serving parties as the Soviets and the French--that Hanoi is "concerned" about the implications of Peking's initiative.



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The Chinese will almost certainly also permit the entry of a number of US scholars. Groups of ordinary tourists might also be admitted, but this move probably has a lower priority in Chinese eyes. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] there is no sign that Peking has yet relaxed its longstanding regulations excluding US businessmen from entering China; it seems unlikely that Americans will be allowed to visit the Canton trade fair now in progress. Nevertheless, Peking will almost certainly wish to make some move in this area in the next four months--before presidential review of the results of the recent relaxation of US restrictions on trade with China. Peking's initial gestures in this field are likely to be fairly small, however; a dramatic upsurge in trade does not appear to be in the cards. China in any event already has been able to buy most of the technically advanced goods it needs from Europe and Japan.

[Redacted] the Chinese invitation to US table tennis players involved "no change in policy toward the US Government," but this ought not be taken literally. The Chinese are well aware that "people-to-people diplomacy" cannot be fully separated from bilateral state-to-state relations; indeed, many of the moves they now appear to have in mind have long been under discussion in Warsaw. We think Peking may want to resume the talks there well before next autumn's vote in the UN General Assembly. When the Chinese broke off the talks last year they carefully fudged the issue of which side would call for the next meeting, and in fact the ball appears to be resting on the net rather than in either court.

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When the discussions resume, the Chinese, as always, will have Taiwan on their mind. They undoubtedly hope for some progress on this thorny problem, but there are many signs that they recognize that it cannot be "solved" very quickly. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] the Chinese will be probing for indications that the United States will adopt a

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position that would arrest movement toward a "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan" idea in the UN and in the wider international sphere. This is a cause of major and immediate concern to Peking, but the Chinese will also be interested in how the Nixon Doctrine applies to Taiwan and, in particular, to US force levels there.

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