

*The President's Daily Brief*

9 October 1971

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~~Top Secret~~



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

9 October 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Mao's appearance with Haile Selassie lays to rest rumors about Mao's health, but the failure of Lin Piao and other top military politicians to appear leaves their status clouded. (Page 1)

Soviet [redacted]

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(Page 2)

[redacted] Egypt-

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(Page 3)

Brezhnev [redacted] meeting with his colleagues at the Moscow airport last week

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[redacted]

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COMMUNIST CHINA

The meeting yesterday between Mao Tse-tung and visiting Emperor Haile Selassie rules out Mao's health as a major factor in the fluid Chinese picture. According to the New China News Agency, Chou En-lai was the only politburo member present, although a number of lesser officials were there. None of the top military leaders on the politburo who have been out of sight since 11 September (about the time that the leadership's difficulties were coming to a head) turned up at any of the activities honoring Haile Selassie.

*Mao's reappearance strengthens the impression that either the physical or political condition of Mao's heir-designate Lin Piao has become a major problem. Chinese officials show considerable sensitivity to foreign speculation that Lin, who has not appeared in public since early June, is in poor health. There are signs that they may also be trying to curb similar speculation at home.*

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*several persons have been arrested and tried for spreading rumors that Lin is extremely ill.*

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There is evidence that a major leadership meeting may have been called for early next week. Two Chinese trade delegations touring Western Europe have revised their itineraries so they can be back in Peking by 12 October.

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indications that important meetings were under way on 27 September and on 3 October, and that these apparently involved some members of the party central committee.

*If true, this may indicate that some of the more vexing problems that have preoccupied Chinese leaders have been resolved, at least temporarily, and that the decisions are beginning to be aired at a larger leadership conclave.*

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USSR-INDIA-PAKISTAN

The Soviets apparently plan to make an approach to Pakistani President Yahya during the Iranian anniversary celebration next week. President Podgorny will be in Iran, along with leaders of both India and Pakistan, and a Pakistani official says that plans are being made for political discussions between Yahya and Podgorny.

*If Moscow saw a chance of success in mediating Indo-Pakistani differences, Podgorny would pursue it.*

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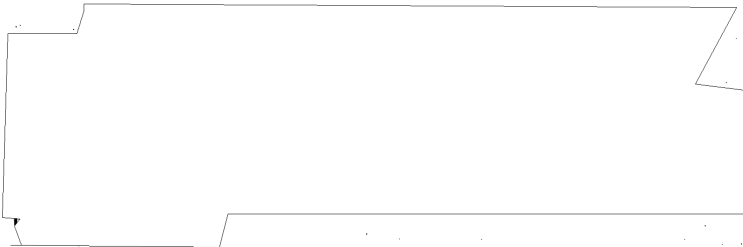
In the meantime, a propaganda campaign aimed at renewing political pressure on Pakistani President Yahya is under way in the USSR. In recent days a host of protest meetings and statements from allegedly "unofficial" organizations have castigated West Pakistan's handling of the situation in the East wing.

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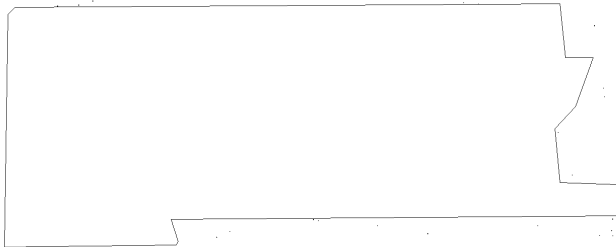
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USSR-EGYPT



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USSR

*We now have some insights into Brezhnev's airport meeting with his politburo that led to the last minute cancellation of a state dinner for Mrs. Gandhi.*

A Yugoslav diplomat who was present when Brezhnev returned from the Balkans on 27 September has told the US Embassy in Moscow that the Secretary General's politburo colleagues prevailed on him, despite his jocular protestations that he was tired, to retire to a private lounge.

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*We assume that the British decision three days earlier to expel 105 Soviet representatives on charges of spying was one of the topics under discussion in the politburo meeting. We would expect that brief attention was given to making amends with Mrs. Gandhi after the broken dinner date.*

*On China, we can only assume that with Brezhnev having been gone for six days, the subject was almost certainly discussed.*

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## NOTES

North Vietnam - USSR: President Podgorny's week-long visit to North Vietnam, ending yesterday, produced much rhetoric on Moscow's support of Hanoi's war effort, in an apparent attempt to outdo the Chinese on the subject. The only visible matters of substance were the signing of annual military and economic aid agreements and a trade pact. The public reportage indicates no sizable increase in aid.

USSR-UK: The Soviets' response to Britain's expulsion of 105 of its citizens on charges of spying suggests that they desire the incident to be buried quickly. The Soviets limited their counter-expulsions to four British diplomats and one businessman, and barred ten Britons from re-entering the USSR. Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home's visit was canceled, as were several planned economic contacts. Although it is possible the Soviets might engage in further harassment of British citizens in the USSR, their statement implied they would be glad to end the affair at this point, saying it was up to the UK to decide whether there would be a further deterioration of relations. This appears to be an attempt to head off threatened British counterreprisals.

Argentina: The colonels' revolt seems on its way to failure, as expected. The dissident colonels' hopes of generating support for their move from other military units proved illusory. President Lanusse retained the support of the air force and navy, as well as that of key army units in Buenos Aires and Cordoba. He has ordered troops to move against rebel armored units in Azul and Olavarria, 150 to 200 miles south of the capital. As we go to print, however, there is no sign of fighting and the rebels still control commandeered radio stations.

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