

The President's Daily Brief

15 November 1971

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Chinese [redacted]

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Cambodian troops have been evacuated from Rumlong,
and Communist harassment near Phnom Penh continues.
(Page 2)

West Germany's Egon Bahr believes that Pankow wants
an accord with Bonn within the next month. (Page 3)

Czechoslovakia [redacted]

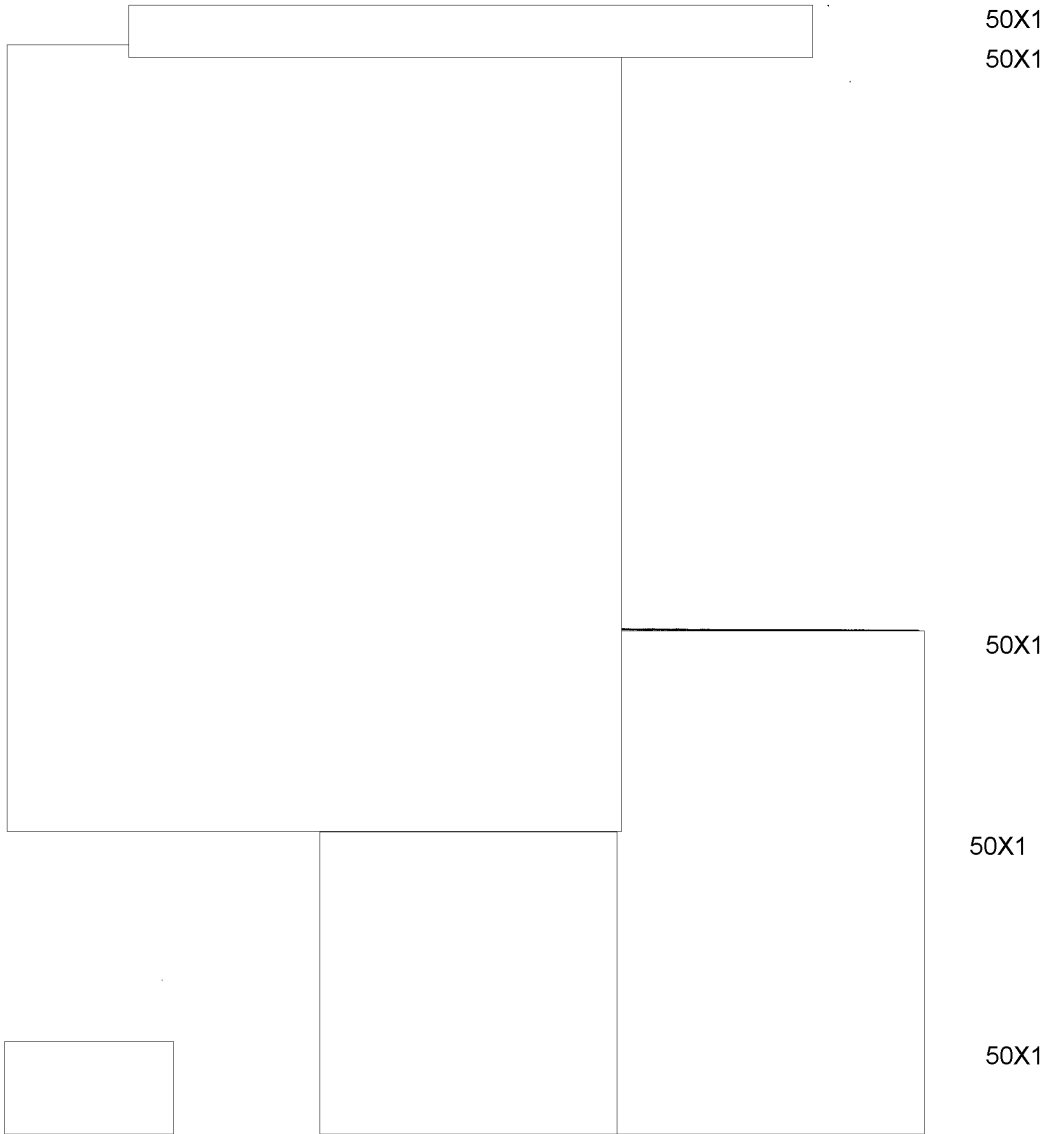
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[redacted]

[redacted] West Germany. (Page 4)

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COMMUNIST CHINA

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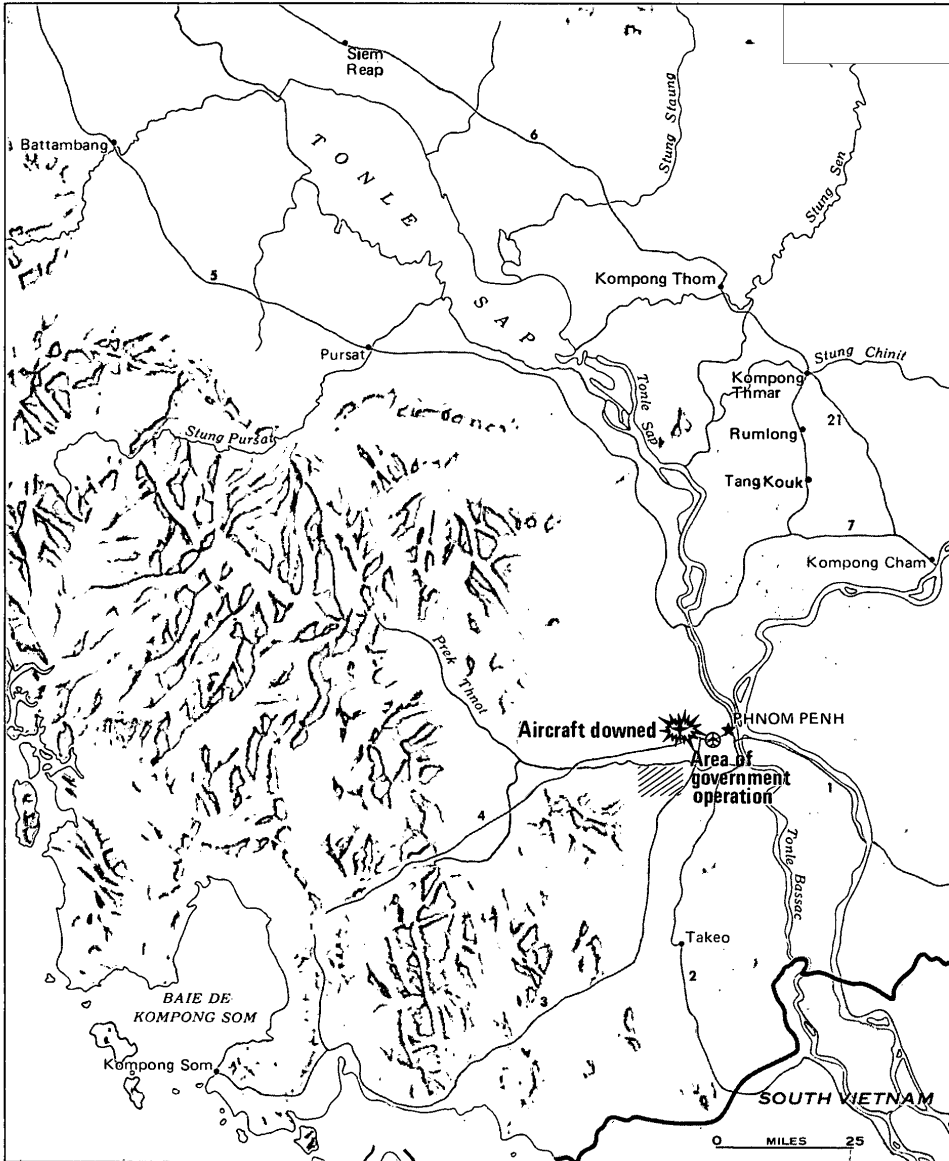
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CAMBODIA

The US Defense Attaché reports that the more than 700 Cambodian Army troops defending the town of Rumlong abandoned it without incident on Saturday. The government reinforcements that had tried unsuccessfully to break through the Communists' three-week siege of the village remain dug in along Route 6 awaiting new orders from Phnom Penh.

These reinforcements, consisting of 20 battalions divided into task forces north and south of Rumlong, have been kept largely immobilized by effective Communist mortar and rocket fire. Although Prime Minister Lon Nol has asked his commanders to propose a course of action, new offensive thrusts along the highway are not likely. One Cambodian General Staff officer has commented that, with the abandonment of Rumlong, there is no need to try to reopen Route 6 as the forces cut off north of the town can be resupplied by air. Intercepts have indicated that the Communist units closest to the road are located near this northern task force.

In the Phnom Penh area, a nine-battalion government operation launched on 12 November to counter the recent spate of enemy attacks southwest of the capital has already engaged in several skirmishes. Pochentong Airfield also continues to be a Communist target. Six rocket and mortar rounds hit the field yesterday, causing the government to move a number of military aircraft to other locations. A Cambodian Air Force plane was downed in fighting just west of Phnom Penh

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**EAST GERMANY - WEST GERMANY**

Midway in last week's unprecedented four-day negotiating session, West Germany's Egon Bahr told Western ambassadors that he was convinced that Pan-kow wants to reach an accord before the NATO ministerial meetings in December. This would be designed to give a green light for multilateral preparations for a Conference on European Security. Bahr says that, in response to his direct question, East German negotiator Kohl confirmed this assessment. Bahr concludes that Bonn will be able to extract a very satisfactory agreement, but probably only at the last moment.

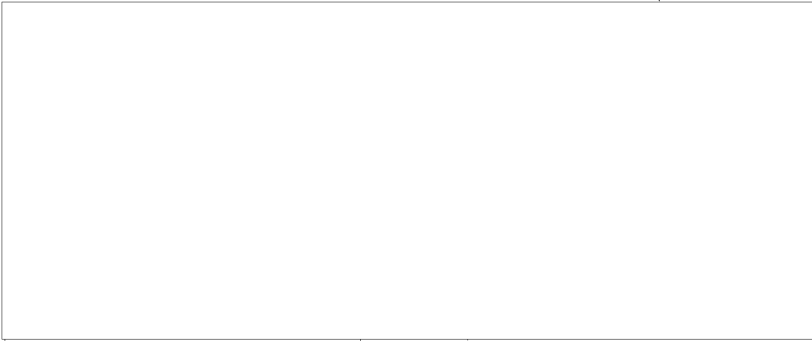
Bahr's assessment, which we think may be overoptimistic, is likely to induce him and his counterpart in the parallel West Berlin - East German talks to take a tough negotiating stance in the coming weeks. With the East Germans recently appearing even more forthcoming than usual in their public statements, however, Bahr stated that he was having some difficulty in upholding Bonn's position on matters of substance without appearing to procrastinate.

In both sets of talks last week, the East Germans gave ground on several points, while continuing to resist on others. Major differences include determining how closely the accords should be linked to the four-power Berlin agreement, defining misuse of the autobahns, inspecting unsealed vehicles, and granting one-day passes to West Berliners for visits to the East.

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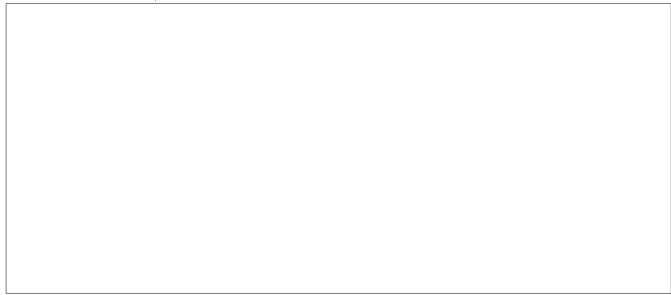
CZECHOSLOVAKIA - WEST GERMANY



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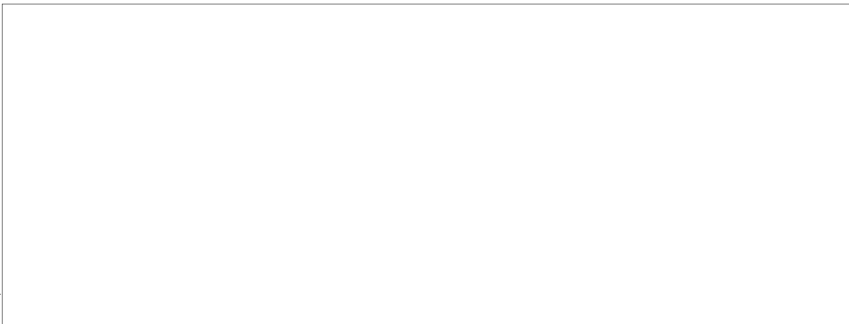
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NOTES



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South Vietnam: Some of the drastic economic reforms being announced today are likely to prove highly unpopular by sparking new price increases and market uncertainties, according to the US Embassy. In a major address before the National Assembly early today President Thieu sought to justify the new measures as necessary to increase tax revenues, to reduce dependence on foreign assistance, and generally to make the economy more self-sufficient. Thieu appears confident that he has emerged from the recent election strong enough to take fairly heavy criticism, but he may also anticipate that some of the blame for the unwelcome decrees can be deflected onto the uncertainties of US aid policy.

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