



The President's Daily Brief

3 December 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the East Pakistan fighting, the Mukti Bahini and the Indians have scored gains in several areas.

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[Redacted] (Page 1)

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Military reverses are causing political reverberations in Cambodia. (Page 3)

Satellite photography of the USSR shows that some incomplete Y-class ballistic missile submarines are being modified. (Page 4)

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[Redacted]

The Warsaw Pact communiqué seeks to increase pressure on the West to adopt a more forthcoming attitude toward a Conference on European Security. (Page 6)

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[Redacted] South Vietnam [Redacted] (Page 7)

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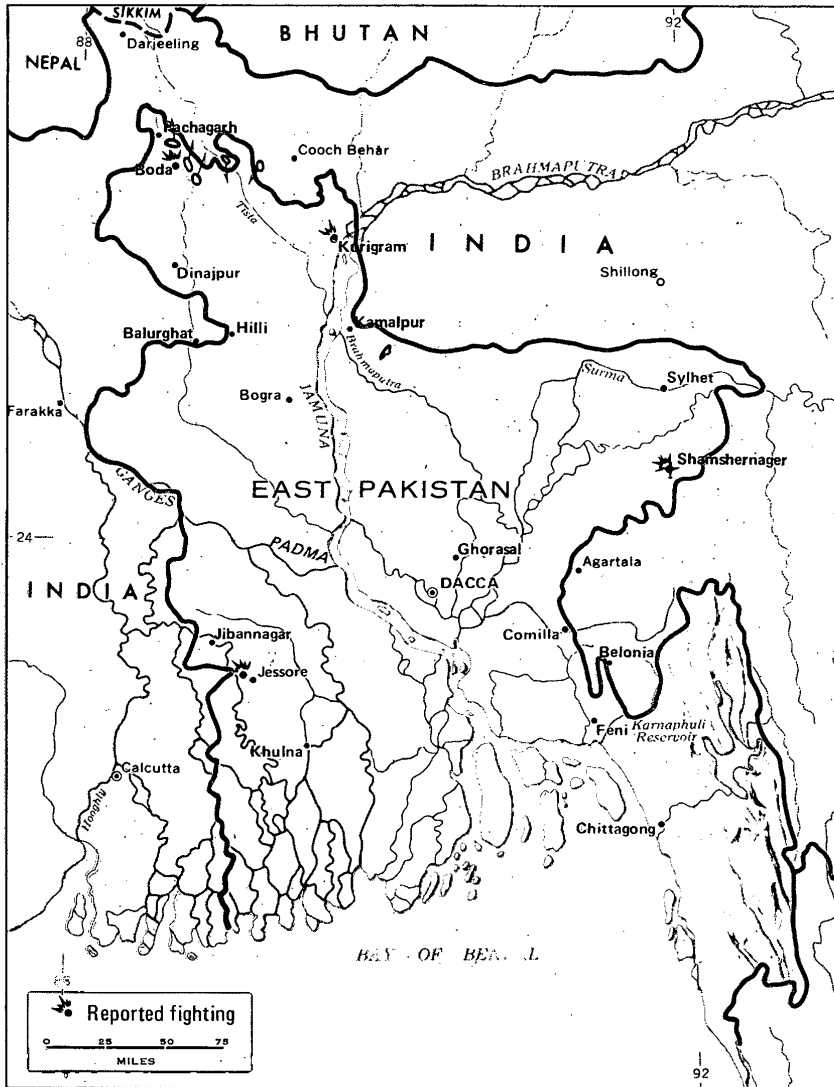
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Tito has intervened with Croatian party leaders in an attempt to bring them into line with federal party policies. (Page 8)

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At Annex, we discuss Egyptian diplomatic [Redacted] intentions as the UN begins its annual debate on the Middle East situation.

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INDIA-PAKISTAN

The Mukti Bahini and the Indians have made gains in several areas. Fighting is underway for control of Shamshernagar Airfield.

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Guerrillas and Indians have advanced to within a few miles of Boda and Kurigram

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The Feni area has been quiet since 30 November, but almost all the Pakistani troops there are on line with little reserve.

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although the initial attacks last month were made by the Mukti Bahini, he is now facing Indian regulars. Indian artillery has disrupted traffic on the road from Chittagong at a point about 15 miles south of Feni, but the railroad remains open.

Fighting continues in the Jessore area, but there is no firm evidence of any significant Indian gains there.

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In numerous public statements over the last several days Mrs. Gandhi has insisted that India will proceed according to what it perceives to be in its best national interest, regardless of the advice and actions of foreign powers. Her remarks

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to the upper house of parliament on Tuesday seem to indicate India will not be deflected from its present course of pressing for an early resolution of the crisis. The Prime Minister did not, however, refer to demands from the opposition for immediate recognition of Bangla Desh, but instead again emphasized the necessity of an immediate dialogue between Islamabad and the elected Bengali leaders, including their "undisputed leader" Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. India remains adamantly opposed to UN Security Council involvement and Mrs. Gandhi has publicly spurned Pakistan's request to have UN observers posted on Pakistani territory near the Indian border.

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CAMBODIA

Military reverses are causing political reverberations in Phnom Penh. Civilian leaders in the cabinet have been remarkably frank and caustic concerning the deficiencies of the army.

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The civilian leaders were reacting to the generals' assertions that the army was spread too thin to provide better security for Phnom Penh, and that civilian commandos would have to play a greater role in the capital's defense. The meeting took place before this week's rout on Route 6.

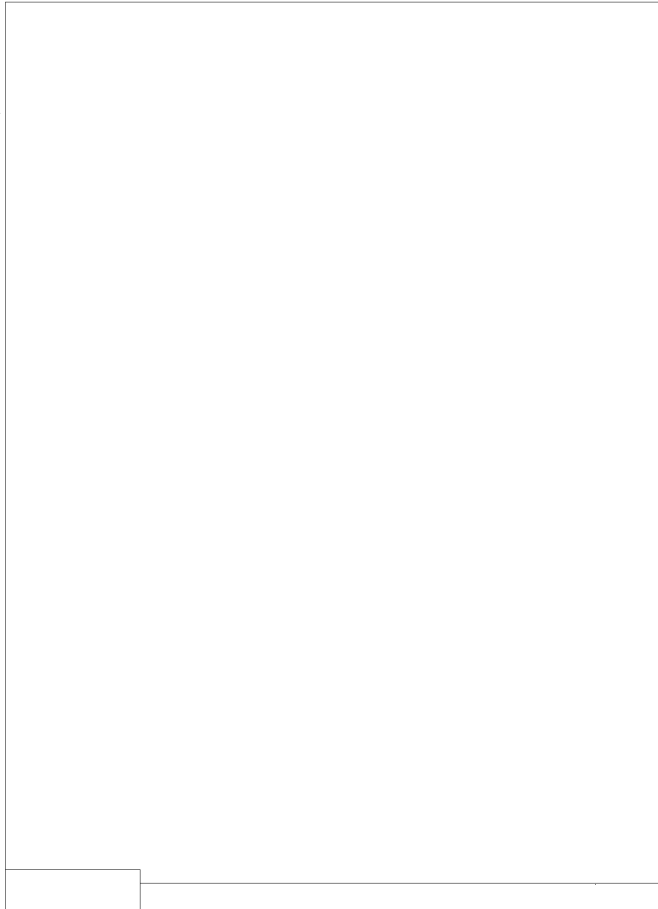
Much of the grumbling is the natural reaction of civilians to battlefield reverses and to the military's growing political role. Although the critics might have some influence on Lon Nol's policies, they will not have a major impact on the political situation as long as Lon Nol holds things together. Any serious threat to political stability would have to come from the military establishment itself. There is as yet no evidence, however, of any restiveness in either the ranks or the officer corps in reaction to the recent military setbacks.

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USSR

Satellite photography of the Severodvinsk shipyard discloses that some of the incomplete Y-class ballistic missile submarines there are being constructed differently than were previous units of this class. At least one of the hull sections that comprise the missile bay has been lengthened. Not all 15 of the hull sections that make up this submarine have been photographed recently, so we cannot say with certainty that the over-all length of the submarine will be increased.

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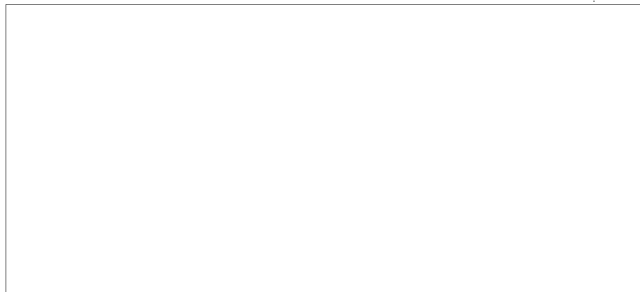
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USSR - MIDDLE EAST

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WARSAW PACT

The Pact foreign ministers have issued a communiqué following their meeting in Warsaw that is aimed at splitting the NATO ministers from the US on the issue of early convocation of a Conference on European Security. The statement stresses that European states can overcome "certain forces that are placing preconditions" in the way of a conference. With France already on record in support of the USSR's position and West Germany dodging the issue, that seems to point the finger at the US. The Pact said it was ready to appoint plenipotentiaries to the multilateral preparatory talks proposed by the Finns in 1970 and called on other "interested parties" to follow suit so that a full conference can be convened next year. The communiqué said nothing about mutual force reductions, an omission that suggests the Soviets want to see how their conference proposal fares before committing themselves on a way to discuss troop withdrawals.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

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NOTES

Yugoslavia: Tito has angrily intervened with Croatian party leaders, trying to bring them into line with federal party policies. The proximate cause of his action has been the failure of the Croatian party to put down a strike of Zagreb university students, who want to be free of federal control. Tito has called the students "counter-revolutionaries" and believes that Croatian leaders are encouraging the youngsters by their toleration of the strike. Tito is more concerned, however, that this episode could lead to a significant awakening of Croatian nationalism that would greatly complicate his task, and that of his successors, in maintaining a unified state. Croat leaders have met Tito part way on the strike issue, but apparently they believe that this kind of intervention by Tito jeopardizes the durability of the liberal reforms so painstakingly developed over the past five years. They are likely to insist on keeping the autonomy they have gained during that time.

USSR-Cuba: The two Soviet naval TU-95 reconnaissance aircraft that flew to Cuba on 25 November left Havana's Jose Marti Airfield early this morning and are currently en route back to the USSR. The TU-95s may overfly the US Navy task group, including the aircraft carrier Kennedy, that is now in the mid-Atlantic on the way to the Mediterranean. The Soviet Kresta-class missile cruiser, one F-class submarine, and the tanker are east of Bermuda and also heading for home. The Kashin-class destroyer and other F-class submarine remain in the port of Mariel on the northern coast of Cuba. These two units operated with Cuban Navy ships on 30 November.

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EGYPT-ISRAEL

Sadat, having disparaged US mediation efforts and having affirmed a decision to fight, has succeeded in raising the temperature in the Middle East. The diplomatic and military evidence indicates that his tactics are geared to the UN debate rather than imminent military action.

The Diplomatic Ploy

Up to this point the Egyptians have appeared willing to accept a moderately worded Middle East resolution and to waive demands for a reference to sanctions against Israel if, by doing so, they could obtain US support and isolate the Israelis. Their minimum demands include an endorsement of the 1967 resolution, reactivation of the Jarring mission, and a call on Tel Aviv to respond to Jarring's memorandum of last February requesting Israel's views on a settlement. The Egyptians have probably calculated that, should their effort to gain US support fail, they could place the onus on Washington for its "obstructionist tactics" and float a harsher resolution, which would then have a better-than-even chance for passage.

This UN initiative serves for the moment Cairo's purpose of keeping world attention on the issue, and justifies holding military moves in reserve. In talks with US officials earlier this week, Foreign Minister Riad indicated considerable flexibility on the timing for another round of fighting, thus softening the impact of Sadat's dramatic pronouncements two weeks ago stressing the inevitability of hostilities. It is true that Egyptian forces are better prepared now for any sort of engagement with the Israelis than they were in 1967. But they cannot force the Israelis out of the occupied territories, or even hold a piece of the east bank of the Suez Canal for more than a few hours.

The Soviet View

The Soviets appear to be taking Sadat's tough talk in stride. Since the six-day war it has been customary for Moscow to put the best face possible on the more extravagant remarks out of Arab capitals. Moscow went to great lengths to play down Sadat's speeches in July branding 1971 as the "year of decision." The USSR, according to a Soviet Foreign Ministry Near East expert, viewed Sadat's recent pronouncements as tailored for domestic purposes. At

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two public lectures last month, Moscow audiences were told that Sadat's rhetoric was "a pressure tactic on Israel to carry out the 1967 Security Council resolution."



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Soviet inability to devise a strategy that will produce an Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories remains a sore point between the Soviets and the Egyptians and probably contributes to Cairo's frustration.

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The Short-Run Outlook

If Egypt fails to win any political victories at the UN, Sadat's warlike talk could play a part in slowly conditioning the masses to an inevitable "battle." While Cairo can, to some extent, manipulate the popular mood, there is some danger that over time the media will amplify the militant propaganda, a bellicose and cocky mood will spread, and Egypt's leaders will come in some measure to believe their own propaganda. The period just before the 1967 war demonstrates how quickly the Egyptian national mood can shift from everyday concerns to "the battle of honor." This kind of pressure, plus the hope that the great powers would have to extricate Egypt from any disasters, plus sheer frustration could well persuade Sadat that the time for military action was at hand.

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