



*The President's Daily Brief*

17 March 1972



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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Cambodian politicians are reluctant to serve as prime minister under Lon Nol. (Page 1)

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[REDACTED] Soviet  
(Page 2)

The British are making concessions to the Guatemalans on British Honduras. (Page 3)

Pakistani President Bhutto has again signaled to the Indians that he is ready to negotiate. (Page 4)

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CAMBODIA

President Lon Nol is having trouble finding a prominent civilian to fill the prime ministership.

[redacted] several politicians have already refused to head a new cabinet. Sirik Matak, the former prime minister delegate, has publicly petitioned Lon Nol for permission to return to private life. [redacted]

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*The politicians' reluctance to serve as prime minister reflects the widespread fear that the military will dominate the new government. This fear appears to be justified.* [redacted]

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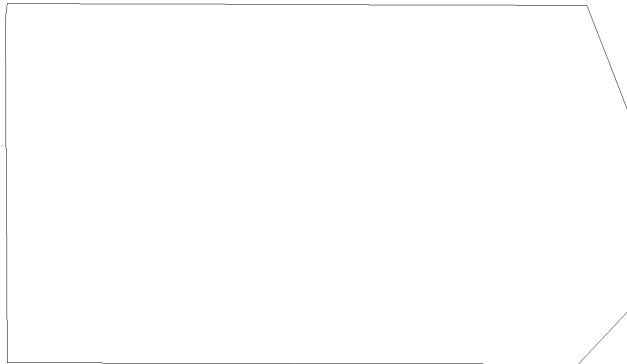
*Once the temperamental Matak cools down, he may have second thoughts about quitting, and Lon Nol, who is aware of the need for Matak's skills, may make an effort to persuade him to stay on. If Matak does bow out, the students and those Buddhist and intellectual elements who have supported their protests will claim a victory and be encouraged to begin agitating on other issues.*

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USSR-MALTA-UK



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UK-GUATEMALA

The British [redacted] intend to tell Foreign Minister Herrera that, out of deference to Guatemala's views, London will not send any Gurkha troops to British Honduras. Furthermore, London will raise its total garrison strength in the colony to less than 600 men rather than 700 to 1,000 as originally planned. British Honduran Premier Price, meanwhile, is arriving in London on Monday.

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*The British presumably intend to tell Price to shelve his plans for independence in the near future and to stop making public statements that provoke the Guatemalans. These British concessions should ease the situation. President Arana can be expected to press for further concessions, but, with few trumps to play, he may eventually decide to be satisfied with these adjustments.*

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PAKISTAN

President Bhutto has provided an additional signal to encourage India into early negotiations. Before leaving for Moscow he told Indian newsmen that he was willing to end Pakistan's past policy of confrontation over Kashmir, leaving the resolution of the dispute to the local inhabitants.

*Previously, Pakistan has claimed Kashmir because the majority of its people are Muslim and has committed itself to helping the Kashmiris fight for their self-determination. India has rejected all past proposals for a plebiscite. Bhutto may calculate that, by suggesting flexibility on Kashmir, he can facilitate the negotiations he needs to get back Pakistan's 90,000 prisoners of war.*

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