

The President's Daily Brief

13 October 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

13 October 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Bonn's State Secretary Bahr reports that in his visit to Moscow early this week he found no inclination on the part of the Soviet leaders to influence Pankow's position in the stalled inter-German talks. (Page 1)

[Redacted] So-
viet [Redacted]
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The ten-man Pathet Lao peace delegation that is to arrive in Vientiane this weekend has been given a broadly based appearance. In military action, the Communists have driven most of Vang Pao's task force from the southern tip of the Plaine des Jarres. (Page 4)

Bangladesh Prime Minister Mujib appears to have restored some public confidence in his government following his return from Europe. A few efforts are also being made to mend the rift with Pakistan, but he and President Bhutto remain poles apart. (Page 5)

Greek [Redacted] (Page 6)

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Several Chilean labor and business groups plan to close down today in sympathy to a truck owners' strike; the government has declared a state of emergency. (Page 7)

Last night the Soviets conducted their first extended range test of the SS-11 Mod 3, the version with three re-entry vehicles, in over two years. (Page 8)

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

State Secretary Egon Bahr on Wednesday reported to Allied ambassadors on his visit to Moscow earlier this week. Bahr said that party chief Brezhnev and Foreign Minister Gromyko showed no inclination to influence Pankow's position in the inter-German talks. He said the Soviet leaders emphasized that decisions on the treaty negotiations could not be made in Moscow. The Soviets in fact asked Bonn to withdraw its demand that the inter-German treaty contain references to a single German nation and to the lack of a final peace treaty--the two principal issues now standing in the way of agreement.

The Soviets did, however, indicate willingness to consider Allied demands for a quadripartite declaration on Berlin. Brezhnev stated that Moscow was no longer opposed to the idea and Gromyko assured Bahr that contacts had already begun. *(The Soviets did not, however, imply acceptance of Western requirements that the declaration be concluded prior to the inter-German treaty.)*

The reserved attitude taken at this stage by Brezhnev and Gromyko on the inter-German talks was not unexpected. Their position was doubtless designed to counter any impression that Bahr had succeeded in going over the head of Pankow to gain concessions. We believe any Soviet willingness to pressure East Germany would be reflected only in the inter-German talks themselves. Moreover, both Moscow and Pankow would prefer to withhold significant concessions until the West German elections draw closer in the hope that electoral pressures on Brandt will result in at least some give in the West German position.

Bahr also told the Allied ambassadors that there has been no progress in the talks that he has held with East German negotiator Kohl since his return.

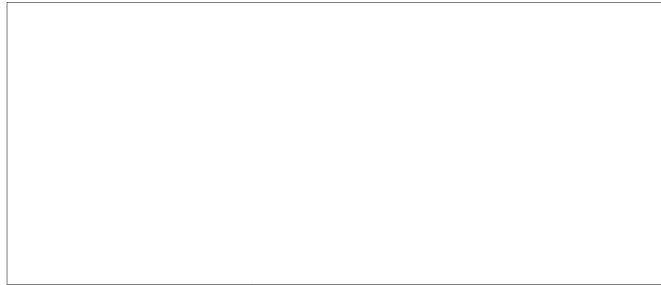
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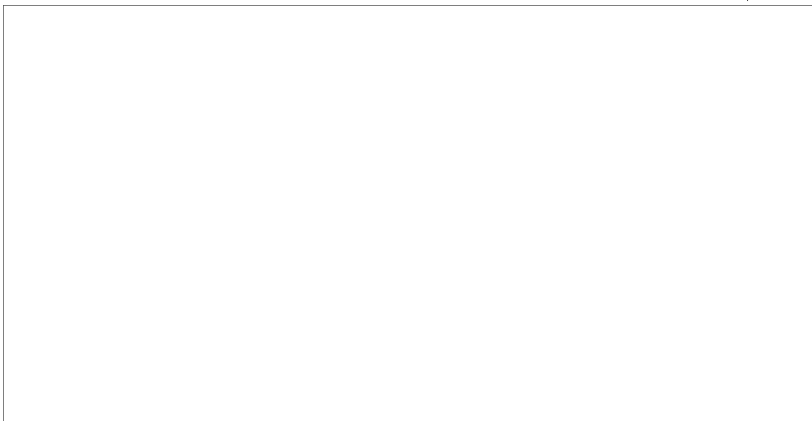
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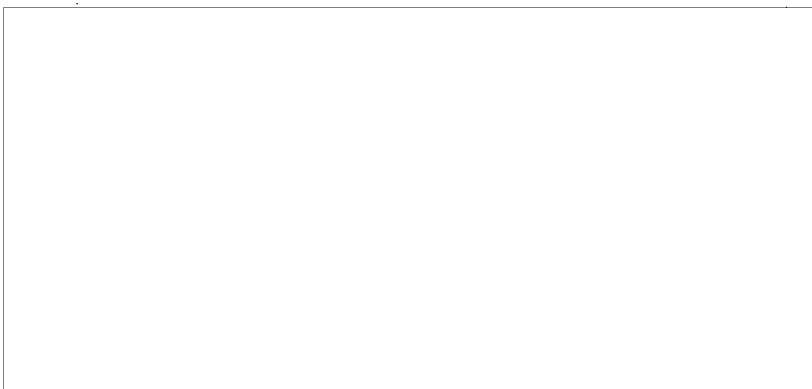
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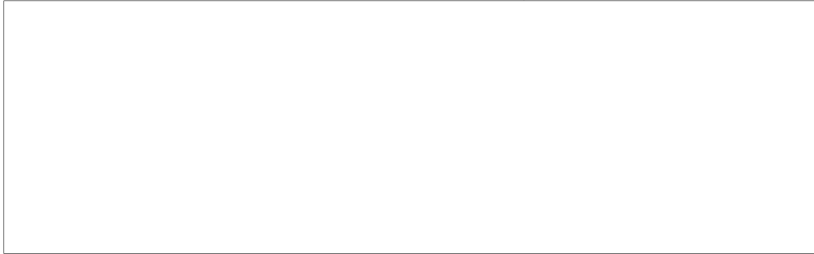
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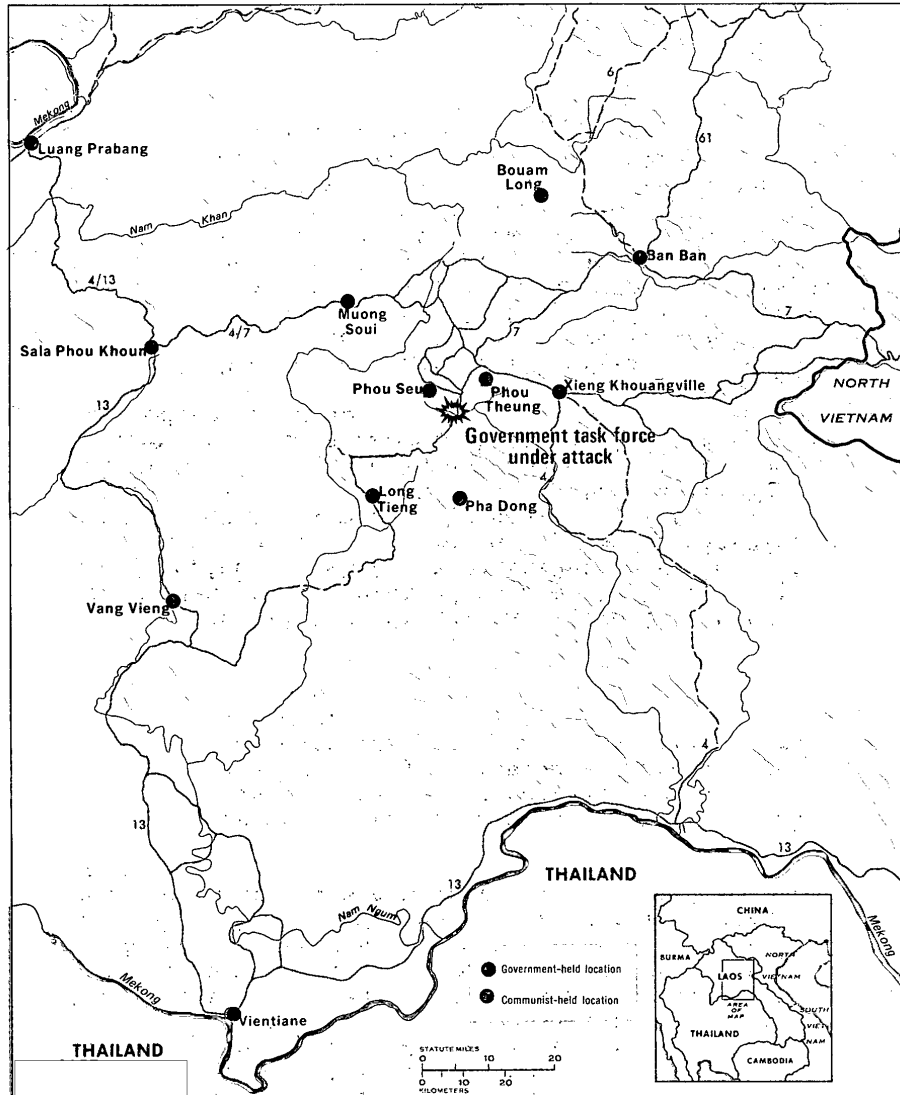
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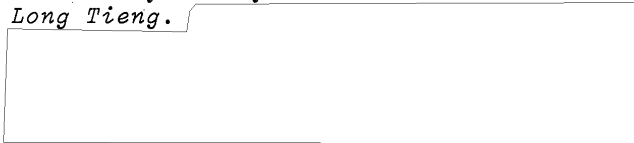
Pathet Lao leader Souphanouvong has named Phoune Sipraseuth to head the ten-man Communist peace delegation that is to arrive in Vientiane this weekend. Three "Patriotic Neutralists"--members of the neutralist faction that defected to the Communists in the early 1960s--were included in the delegation to give it a broadly based appearance. No definite date has been set for the beginning of the talks, but the Communists are still holding to the line that talks can start without a US bombing halt.

Phoune, a relatively high-ranking Pathet Lao official, previously served as Souphanouvong's plenipotentiary during the abortive attempt to get talks started in 1970.

* * *

On the military front, the Communists have launched their anticipated counterattack against the government task force on the southern edge of the Plaine des Jarres. Yesterday, North Vietnamese ground troops, supported by tanks and artillery, attacked General Vang Pao's troops at the tip of the Plaine from the east and north. Most of the government units abandoned their positions and retreated to the south.

The North Vietnamese had spent at least two weeks preparing for this attack. Its aim is to push Vang Pao's force from its positions astride the Communist supply route to forces farther southwest toward Long Tieng.



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BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN

Recent actions of Prime Minister Mujib appear to have restored a measure of public confidence in the government, reports the US Embassy in Dacca. Mujib, when he returned home last month following an operation and seven weeks of convalescence in Europe, had found public restiveness mounting because of government corruption and maladministration. The prime minister responded quickly by firing a number of ranking bureaucrats and expelling 19 legislators from the ruling Awami League party, thereby automatically depriving them of their seats in the national legislature. He also closed several far-left opposition journals, announced that a draft constitution soon would be presented to the legislature, and speeded prosecution of persons accused last year of collaboration with Pakistan. In addition, he instituted new anti-smuggling measures and decreed a tough new policy to stem growing labor unrest.

Mujib remains strongly ensconced, and no opposition group poses a credible alternative. Official corruption and incompetence remain serious problems, however, and strong criticism is certain to surface again unless the government's performance improves further.

Officials of both Bangladesh and Pakistan meanwhile are floating new proposals for establishing relations.

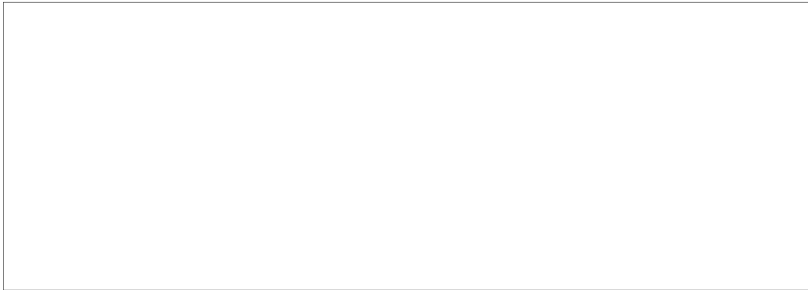


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Despite these efforts, Mujib and Bhutto remain poles apart regarding the sequence of events, with Bhutto demanding a summit meeting to deal with outstanding problems before recognition, and Mujib insisting on prior recognition. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that Bhutto would agree to trials of war criminals held in Bangladesh or accept any agreement that did not include the return of all Pakistani prisoners of war.

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GREECE



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CHILE

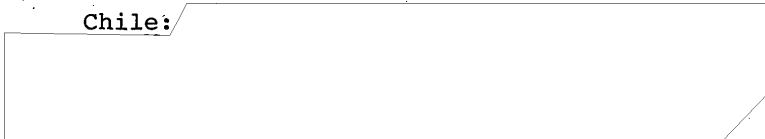
Several labor and business groups plan to close down today in sympathy to a widespread strike by truck owners. The government had already responded to the truckers' strike by declaring a state of emergency, by placing the army in charge of the central part of the country, and by threatening strikers with fines and confiscation of trucks.

If the government deploys the security forces against the strikers as it did during the shopowners' shutdown in August, the current tensions could result in violence.

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NOTES

USSR: Last night the Soviets fired the modified version of the SS-11 ICBM designated the Mod 3 some 4,700 nautical miles from Tyuratam to an impact area in the Pacific Ocean. This is the first extended range test of this missile, which carries three re-entry vehicles, since the summer of 1970. There have been three Mod 3 firings to Kamchatka this year, the most recent in July.

Chile: 

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Iran: The government has decided to reduce the area authorized for poppy cultivation next year by 90 percent because available supplies are adequate for the needs of Iran's 100,000 registered addicts for about a year. Iran's four-year old cultivation program is designed to eliminate smuggling and to prevent the loss of foreign exchange while still meeting the needs of its large addict population. Tehran has a long-standing offer to cease poppy growing completely if neighboring countries agree to do the same.

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