



The President's Daily Brief

2 November 1972

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

2 November 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

General Secretary Brezhnev now has not appeared in public for three weeks [redacted]

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[redacted] USSR [redacted]

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[redacted] (Page 2)

For the first time in a year and a half, Phnom Penh's land link with its seaport at Kompong Som has come under Communist pressure. (Page 3)

The South Korean Government is leaving nothing to chance in planning for the referendum on the new constitution on 21 November. (Page 4)

Political observers in Cairo are becoming increasingly uneasy over the outlook for stability since the firing of War Minister Sadiq last week. (Page 5)

The planned shipments from China to North Vietnam this month are to be the largest since the mining of the ports. (Page 6)

The Israelis have moved additional troops and armor to the Golan Heights. (Page 6)

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USSR

General Secretary Brezhnev still has not reappeared in public since he received the Shah of Iran on 11 October.

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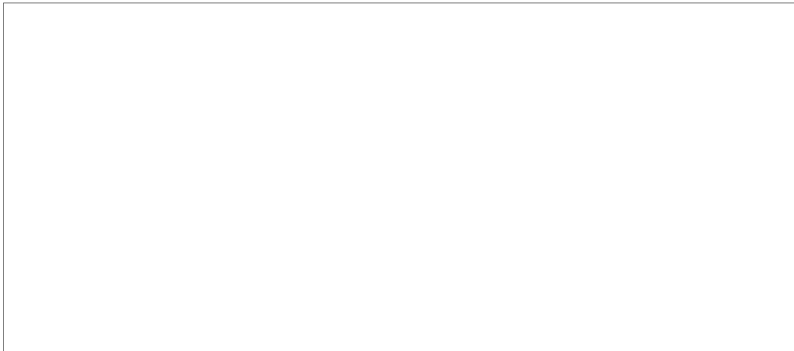
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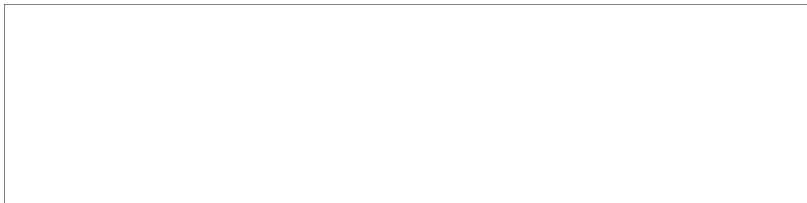
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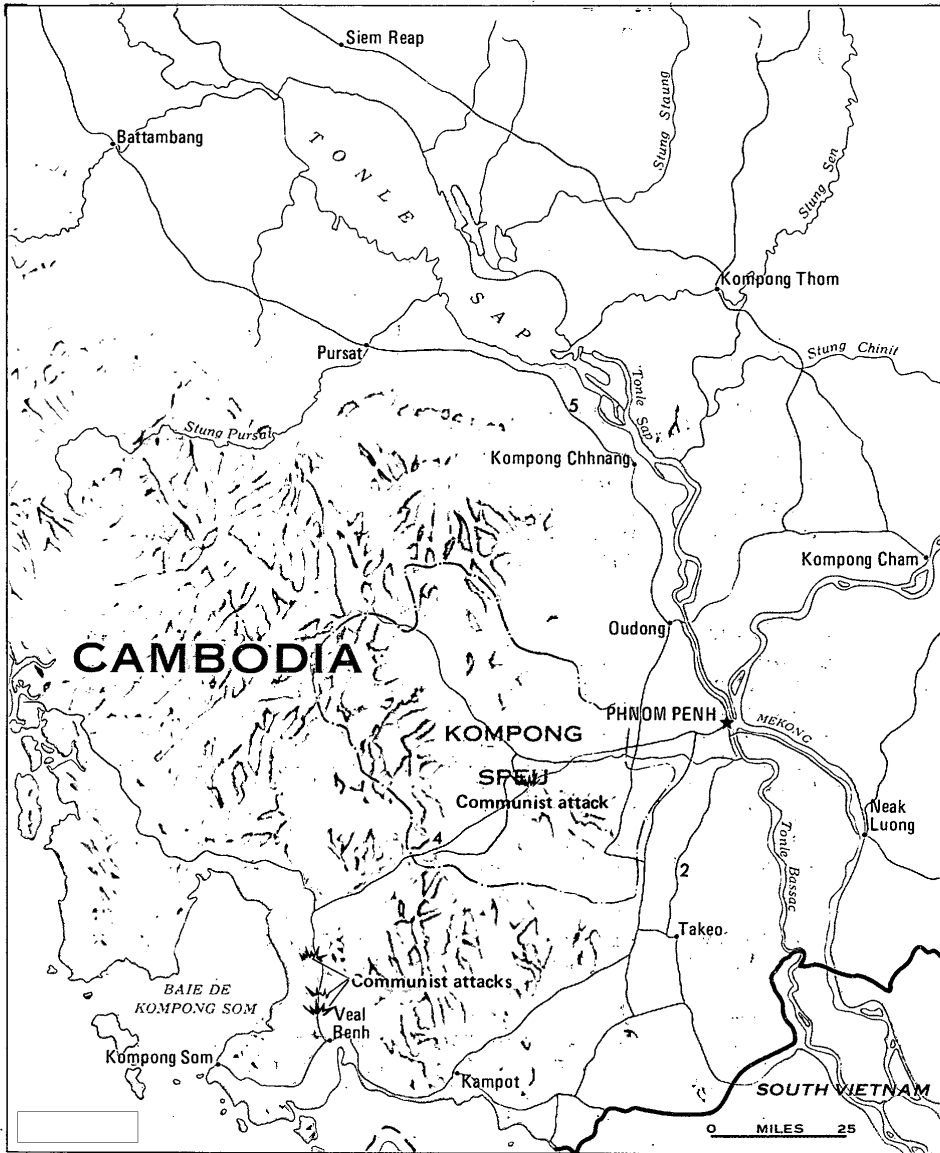
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CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh's overland route to its seaport at Kompong Som--Route 4--has come under Communist pressure again. Communist troops attacked two widely separated government positions on the highway yesterday and now control two short stretches of the road. Government reinforcements have been dispatched to help clear the sections.

These attacks, apparently mounted by Khmer Communists, are the first significant military activity against Route 4 for a year and a half. A prolonged closure of this highway would cause additional serious supply problems for the Lon Nol government, since it relies increasingly on the route for deliveries of imported rice and military equipment.

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SOUTH KOREA

Seoul is taking no chances that proposed constitutional changes will fail to receive overwhelming popular endorsement. President Pak is orchestrating an intensive propaganda campaign to drum up support for the draft constitution, which will go to national referendum on 21 November.

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So far the public has remained largely indifferent despite the fact that the proposed constitution gives the chief executive unlimited tenure, broad authority over weakened legislative and judicial branches, and considerable latitude to alter national policy goals.

Pak has attempted to assuage any domestic concerns by appealing to Korean nationalism. In announcing the new constitution, he stressed the need to disregard "foreign" democratic forms and to develop a uniquely Korean system which would satisfy popular aspirations for unification.

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EGYPT

Observers of the political scene in Cairo are becoming increasingly uneasy over the outlook for stability since the removal of War Minister Sadiq last week. The Saudi ambassador has gone so far as to warn his king that "the situation in the Egyptian leadership" is deteriorating rapidly and that "something" is likely to happen in the next several weeks.

While we see no imminent threat to President Sadat's position, we do feel that he took a serious risk in removing the war minister and that the consequences of this action have not yet been fully played out. Sadiq, popular for his anti-Soviet stand, was one of the most powerful figures in Egypt, and he now represents a potential rallying point for anti-regime malcontents. There are many such malcontents in Egypt today, and frustration continues in the military and elsewhere over Sadat's inability to do anything about the protracted "no war - no peace" relationship with Israel.

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NOTES

North Vietnam: The North Vietnamese commercial counselor in Peking informed Hanoi last week that 220,000 tons of goods were to be delivered from China in November. This quantity, nearly all of which was to move overland, would be the highest monthly level of deliveries since the mining of North Vietnamese ports, and nearly 20 percent higher than the average monthly seaborne shipments to North Vietnam in 1971. Foodstuffs were to comprise more than half the total, and petroleum a quarter.

Israel-Syria: The Israelis have moved additional troops, tanks, armored personnel carriers, and 175-mm. artillery into the Golan Heights, [redacted] [redacted] They may be trying, as in September, to intimidate Damascus into stopping its artillery attacks and curbing fedayeen activities. A cross-border ground operation involving armor and infantry (and losses) still seems less likely than a continuation of air strikes against Syrian targets, although helicopter-commando raids might also be undertaken.

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