

The President's Daily Brief

26 March 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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	South Vietnam
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A Cambodian Government spokesman says that Phnom Penh has rejected a peace overture from the Khmer insurgents. (Page 2)

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Efforts to extend the Turkish president's term failed again. Parliament now may try again to break the deadlock on choosing a successor. (Page 3)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

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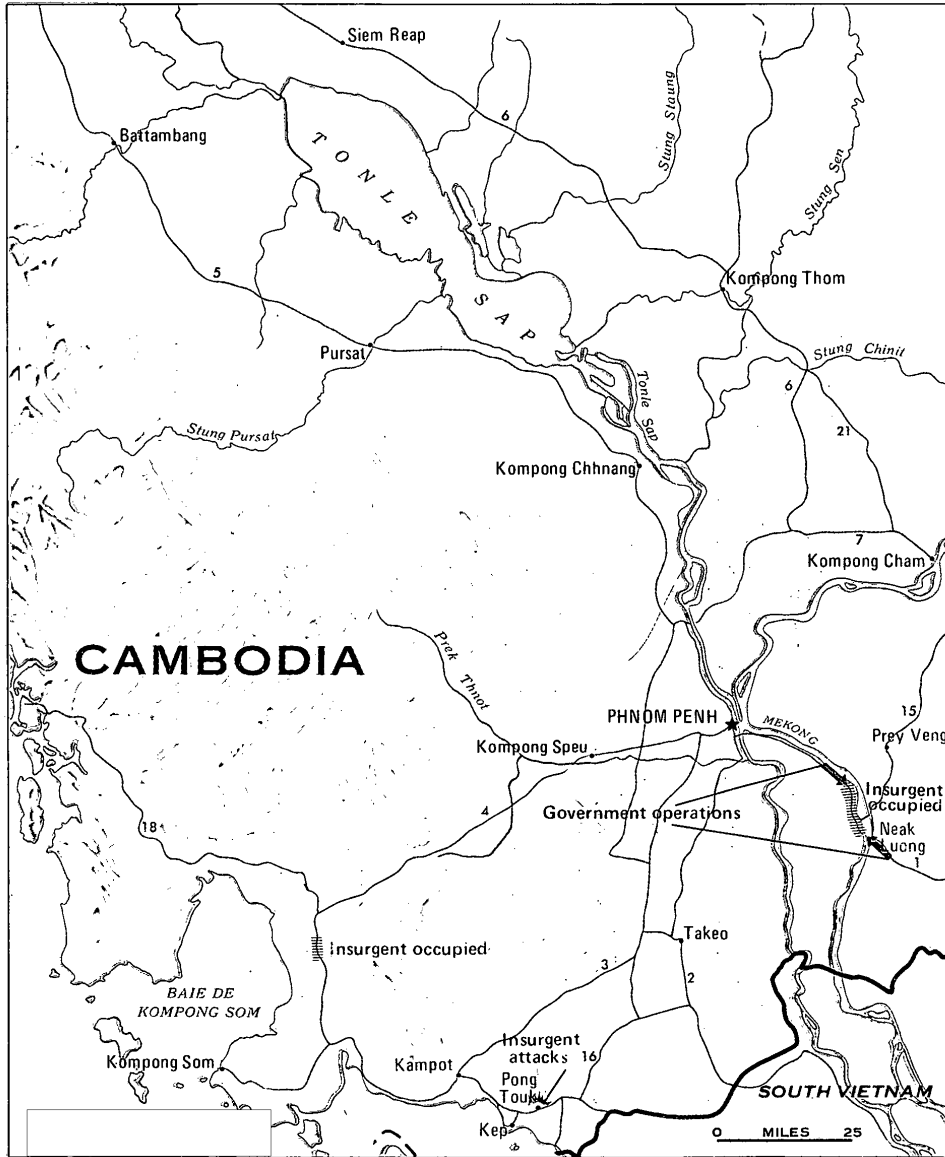
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CAMBODIA

The Khmer insurgents have offered to begin peace negotiations, but the Lon Nol government has turned down the Communist proposals, according to a government spokesman. The offer was contained in a letter to First Minister Hang Thun Hak which purportedly was written by Hou Youn, Sihanouk's in-country "minister of interior." The government spokesman, who gave the story to the press, refused to divulge the proposals other than one stipulation that Lon Nol and his supporters were not to participate in the negotiations.

There are some doubts that the offer is authentic, given the fragmentary nature of Hak's earlier accounts of his contacts with Hou Youn and the uncertainty that Youn is even alive. If the offer is authentic, however, the government's announcement to the press probably has closed this channel to the insurgents.



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NOTES

Turkey: The crisis over the presidency continues following the Senate's rejection yesterday of the proposed constitutional amendment to extend President Sunay's term by two years. With Sunay's term expiring on Wednesday, parliament probably will resume efforts to elect a successor today. If it is no more successful than in the eight previous ballots, the Senate's presiding officer, Tekin Ariburun of the Justice Party, will become acting president. In the early voting Ariburun held a substantial lead over Faruk Gurler, the military's candidate, but both withdrew in favor of the constitutional amendment approach when neither was able to secure the necessary two-thirds majority.

Cambodia: Over the weekend government forces began a multi-battalion operation to clear a 15-mile section of Route 1 between Phnom Penh and the Neak Luong ferry crossing on the Mekong. Four battalions are trying to push south along the highway, and other units are moving up from the south. In other action, government forces reopened Route 5 northwest of the capital on Friday, while the insurgents yesterday attacked government positions along Route 4 some 50 miles from the port of Kompong Som and closed a section of the highway. In the extreme south, three government outposts near Pong Touk have been overrun in the past few days.

Europe-Terrorism: Western European governments are making only limited progress in developing a collective approach against terrorism. At a recent meeting of EC foreign ministers, only the Belgian and German ministers advocated concerted action, such as demarches with Arab governments or tightened internal security measures. Some fear that coordinated diplomatic measures could make matters worse. Two study groups established after the Munich incident last September were reactivated, however, and EC members have begun exchanging information on terrorist activities with other European states.

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