

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 31 March 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
31 MARCH 1967

1. South Vietnam

Thieu will announce the new "national reconciliation plan" tomorrow, along with the official promulgation of the constitution. The draft of his proclamation offers the enemy political and economic integration, but does not spell out the specific rights and benefits returning Viet Cong can expect.

2. Greece

The King, who yesterday accepted Premier Paraskevopoulos' resignation, may try to form another government from the present fragmented parliament. Ex-premier George Papandreou's party, however, is demanding new elections--which it could well win--within 45 days. Should consultations with political leaders fail to solve the crisis, or if the situation threatens to produce a government headed by Papandreou's son Andreas, the King might resort to some form of military dictatorship.

The Papandreous head a loose collection of leftists, centrists, and miscellaneous types in which father and son head separate, and at times antagonistic, factions. They have sometimes played ball with the Communists and Andreas has adopted a bitterly anti-American pose. We suspect some of this is opportunism rather than conviction, however.

Thus Greece would appear headed for a major crisis, but it could yet be papered over.

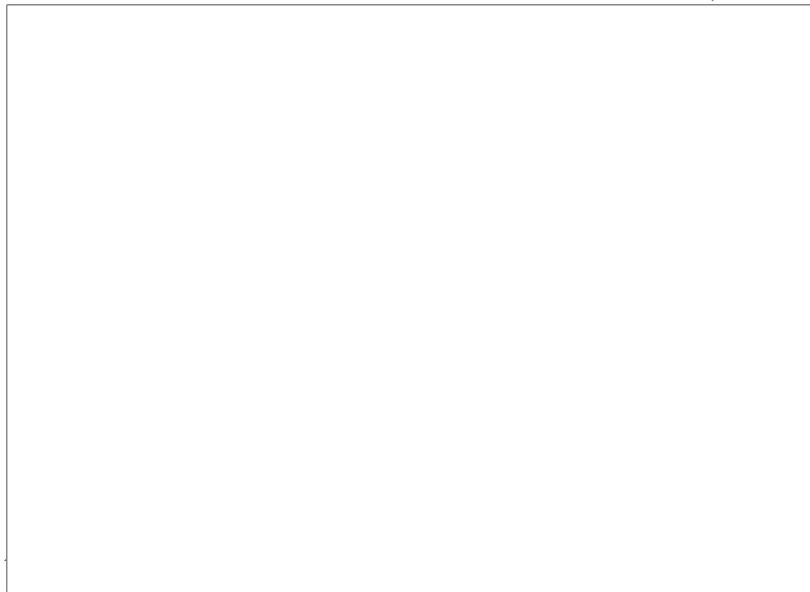
3. Soviet Union

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4. India

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5. Communist China

We now have evidence that the meningitis epidemic, noted in south-east China in February, is affecting most of the populous eastern portion of the country. It has been spread by the constant movement of Red Guards.

The regime is sending medical teams into the countryside from many of the large cities. The epidemic should run its course by about the end of April, but in the meantime will almost certainly put further crimps in the economy.

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6. Rhodesia

Our Consul General in Salisbury believes the British authorities are being dangerously optimistic about the effects of mandatory sanctions--on the books for about three months now.

He grants that major sectors of the Rhodesian economy are encountering "important difficulties," but sees no evidence that these difficulties are creating serious pressure on Smith and company to change their political course. The rising cost of living, although pinching everyone, is being taken in stride like similar privations in World War II Britain.

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The Consul General also notes that there is no effective dialogue between the regime and the African majority. He sees, however, no evidence of unrest that could pose a major security problem in the near future.

7. Communist China

The thought of Chairman Mao is getting ever closer to the Chinese people, if we can judge from the latest rage in Peking fashions--underwear adorned with quotations from his works.

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