

The President's Daily Brief

8 March 1973



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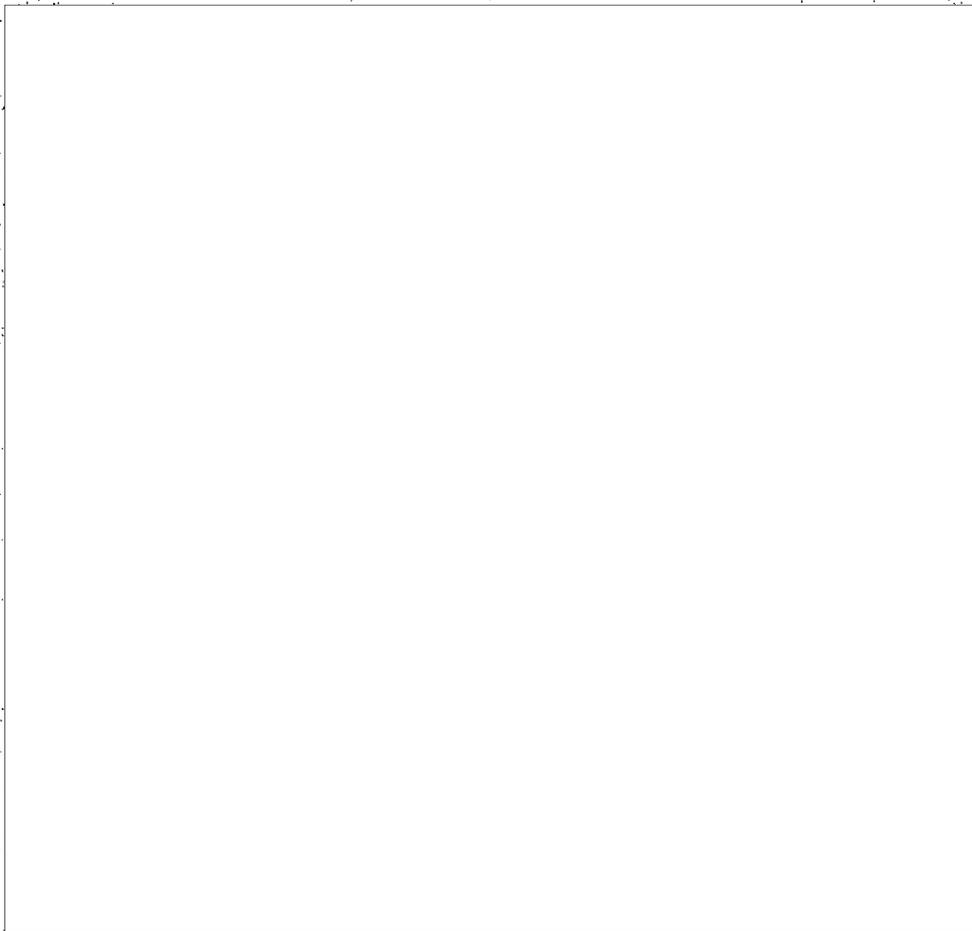
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

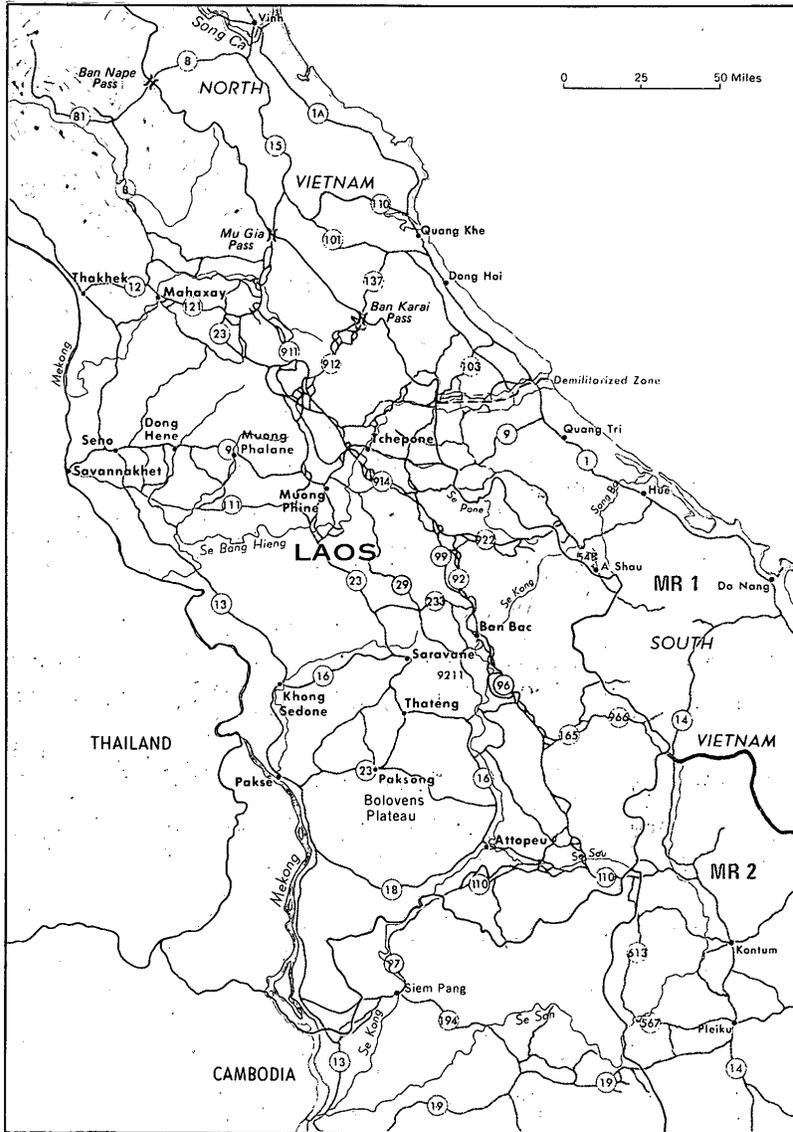
The North Vietnamese are still moving large quantities of supplies into South Vietnam. (*Page 1*)

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China is trying to improve relations with India and Bangladesh. (*Page 2*)


On *Page 4*, we present our latest estimate of Soviet winter grain production.

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INDOCHINA

[redacted]
 [redacted] aerial photography confirm that large quantities of supplies continue moving into and through the Lao panhandle as the North Vietnamese take advantage of the bombing halt there to resupply units in all regions of South Vietnam. Traffic is heaviest through the Ban Karai Pass, where the rate of truck travel appears to be equal to peak levels of past dry seasons.

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There are indications of continuing heavy movement of supplies from Vinh south to the DMZ, albeit at a pace lower than before the cease-fire. Heavy barge traffic was noted near Vinh on 23 February, probably along the Song Ca River [redacted]

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[redacted]

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CHINA-INDIA-BANGLADESH

China once more is signaling its interest in improving relations with India. [redacted]

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[redacted] the Chinese Foreign Ministry has shifted from its earlier tactic of raising a wide spectrum of Sino-Indian problems. [redacted]

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[redacted] a return of the 90,000 Pakistani prisoners held in India would result in the restoration of normal relations between Peking [redacted]

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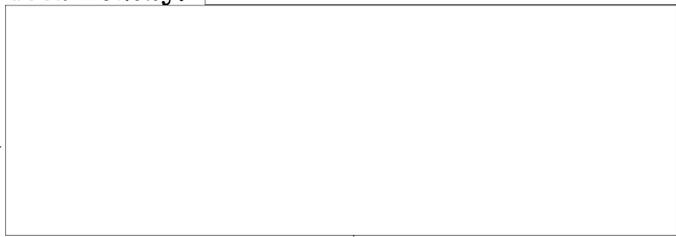
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The Chinese have also apparently decided to send a counselor as chargé in New Delhi-- an increase in rank over the present level.

The Chinese, because of their support for Pakistan, cannot go much further until the status of the prisoners is settled. Prospects for movement on the prisoner-of-war issue could improve now that yesterday's elections in Bangladesh are out of the way.

Mujib's victory now leaves him free to tackle this emotional issue. He has said many times that he wants better relations with Peking. [redacted]

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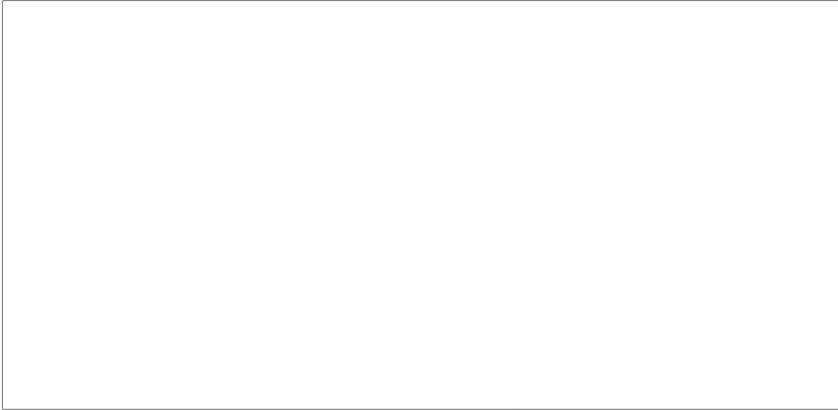


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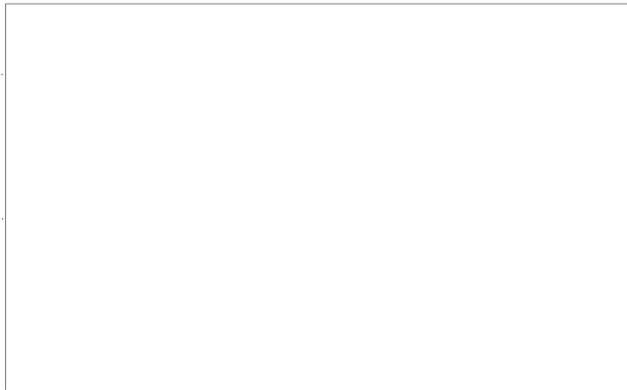
All three countries have a stake in improving mutual relations. Bangladesh wants to lessen its heavy dependence on India and the USSR. India may hope to loosen its uncomfortably close ties with Moscow. Peking is well aware that India is the major power in South Asia and that if it is to counter Soviet influence in the region, it can do so best in New Delhi.

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WEST GERMANY



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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY***NOTES**

USSR: It now appears that the surviving winter grain area in the Soviet Union will be about 23 million hectares, compared with 23.5 million last year and an average annual figure of 31 million between 1966 and 1970. Winter grains normally provide about one third of total grain production. A major effort will be required to plant spring grains in winterkill areas. Moreover, according to a Central Committee member, Soviet agricultural specialists are worried because much of the seed grain is of such poor quality that it may not germinate and because some varieties imported for seed are unsuitable for Soviet conditions.

UN: Secretary-General Waldheim is thinking of giving the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam some sort of official status in New York. On Wednesday, Waldheim told the permanent members of the Security Council that the establishment of a PRG "liaison office" at the UN would be useful in discussions of humanitarian aid to Vietnam and provide a way to "contact all parties" if it proved necessary to reconvene the Paris Peace Conference. Earlier, he told the press that he had the authority to grant "observer" status to the Viet Cong's "government." Establishment of a "liaison office" would not necessarily imply UN recognition that the PRG represented a state, but "observer" status has historically meant UN recognition of statehood.

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