



The President's Daily Brief

13 November 1969



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Vietnamese Communists are setting up attacks to coincide with this week's antiwar demonstrations. (Page 1)

A Pravda editor's remarks provide an insight into Soviet concern about US reaction to Nasir's bellicose speech. (Page 2)

Mrs. Gandhi's opponents' efforts to throw her out of the party may cause an irrevocable split. (Page 3)



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SOUTH VIETNAM

The Communists are moving to make the most of this week's antiwar demonstrations in the US.

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There are likely to be widespread shellings and some limited ground attacks.

The Viet Cong's Liberation Radio has called for a major effort to encourage desertions from allied forces, and reports from several provinces indicate an attempt will also be made to stir up antiwar demonstrations.

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ISRAEL - ARAB STATES

An Israeli Phantom--one of the eight delivered to Israel in the past two months--shot down a MIG-21 on 11 November. It was the first time the Israeli Air Force has used a Phantom in combat.

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A Pravda editor, on his return to Moscow from Cairo, dropped in for a chat with a US Embassy official. He discounted Nasir's warlike speech on 6 November as "the usual rhetoric" to assuage Arab public opinion, and he urged the US to intensify its efforts for a peaceful settlement.

The editor's remarks appear to express genuine Soviet concern that the US might overreact to Nasir's speech. The semi-official approach suggests that Moscow does not want to see negotiations for a settlement break down.

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INDIA

Mrs. Gandhi was expelled yesterday from the Congress Party by her opponents in the party's working committee, but received an overwhelming vote of confidence from a meeting of the parliamentary party members today. All of the members present--330 out of 432--endorsed her leadership.

Mrs. Gandhi is also likely to be successful in her bid to remain prime minister when Parliament reconvenes on Monday. Even if as many as one third of Congress Party legislators defect, which now seems unlikely, she should still be able to arrange a vote of confidence with the help of opposition parties. She could thus continue to govern, however unsteadily, with patchwork support, and would not necessarily have to form a coalition.

Mrs. Gandhi's supporters meanwhile continue to prepare for a meeting of the All India Congress Committee, which she has called for 22-23 November. Party President Nijalingappa, who presided over her ouster, in turn has termed this meeting illegal and expects to preside at his own faction's version of this assemblage in December.

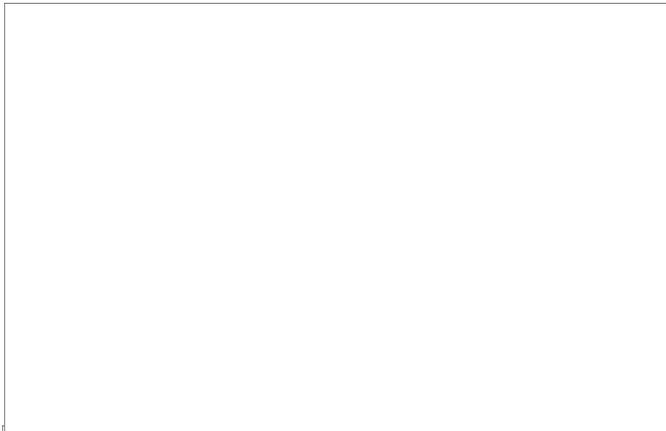
It is too soon to forecast political events in India beyond the opening of Parliament. It is clear, however, that the Congress Party will lose its majority position. This has been coming for a long time, and means that Indian politics at the national level will be increasingly unstable and Indian policy more erratic.

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WEST GERMANY



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NOTES

Bolivia: There are now at least two factions in the military that oppose the President. A so-called radical faction believes Ovando is too timid and vacillating to carry out the "revolution" effectively. It apparently is led by armed forces commander in chief General Torres, who-

[redacted] is working closely with the leftist extremist Minister of Mines Quiroga. The other faction, made up of more moderate officers, objects to having the armed forces associated with recent government actions. There is as yet no evidence that either faction is preparing to move against Ovando in the near future, but both groups undoubtedly will try to move their men into strategic positions.

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Colombia: The failure of last week's party conventions to choose a National Front candidate for next year's presidential elections has touched off a political imbroglio that might go on for a month before a candidate is selected. The National Front system of government provides for alternating presidencies and equal sharing of political offices between the country's two major parties. Most politicians agree that if they do not get together, the National Front may end before its scheduled date in 1974 and result in further political disintegration.

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