



The President's Daily Brief

8 March 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

8 March 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Mujibur Rahman yesterday stopped short of proclaiming East Pakistan's independence, but set conditions for cooperation that President Yahya will find virtually impossible to accept. (Page 1)

North Vietnam (Page 2)

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On Page 3 we review military activity elsewhere in Laos.

[Redacted]

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The Turkish dragnet still has produced no information concerning the missing US airmen. (Page 6)

In his speech yesterday Sadat left open Egypt's military options and showed continuing interest in a political solution

(Page 7)

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the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Page 8)

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Ceylon has been placed in a state of emergency. (Page 9)

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PAKISTAN

Mujibur Rahman's much-heralded address yesterday stopped short of proclaiming East Pakistan's independence, and thereby averted an immediate showdown with President Yahya Khan. Instead Mujib announced a policy of noncooperation whereby East Pakistan would largely return to normal but with government functions suspended. Mujib also said that his party would not consider attending the Constituent Assembly called for 25 March unless several conditions were met: the end of martial law, withdrawal of the army to barracks, and transfer of power to elected representatives of the people.

If Mujib's call to keep government offices closed is heeded, he and his Awami League will move farther toward becoming the de facto authority in East Pakistan. At the same time, by failing to declare independence, he has lessened the chances of an open confrontation with Yahya, who on Saturday expressed his determination to preserve Pakistan's integrity.

Yahya does not need to respond immediately, and some room has been left for negotiation. Nevertheless, he will find it virtually impossible to accept Mujib's demands in their present form, which would be tantamount to acquiescing in de facto self-rule for East Pakistan. Indeed, he will be under some pressure to crack down on Mujib's noncooperation movement.

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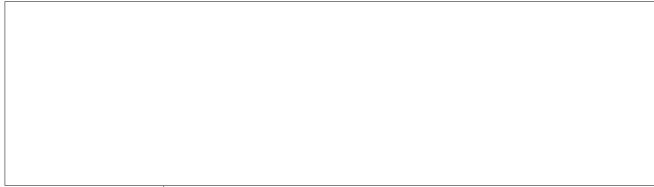


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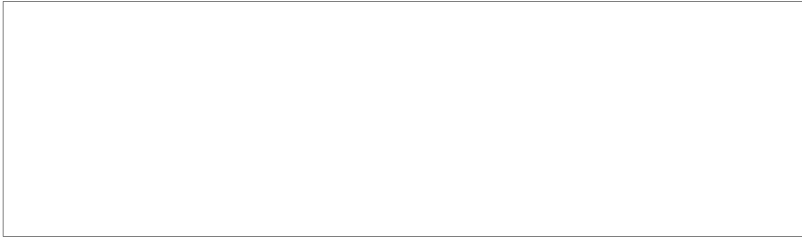
VIETNAM-LAOS



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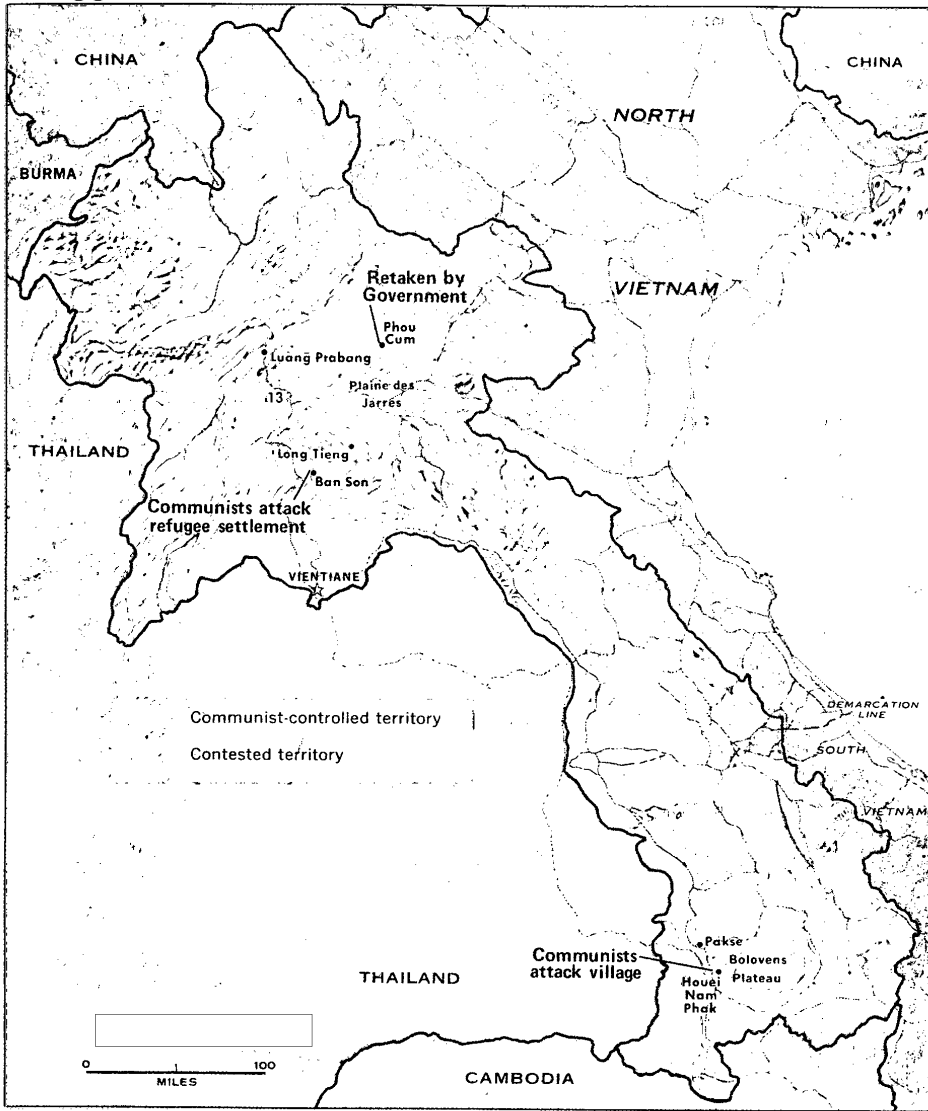


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LAOS



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LAOS

Government irregulars and village defense forces north of the Plaine des Jarres have recaptured Phou Cum, which fell to the Communists two weeks ago. The loss of Phou Cum had left only one position on the northern edge of the Plaine in government hands.

Although ground action remains light throughout northern Laos, shelling attacks and scattered clashes have continued to be reported in recent days around the Long Tieng complex. On 6 March, some 40-50 North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao attacked a refugee support center at Ban Son, about 20 miles southwest of Long Tieng. Rockets and explosives were used in the attack, destroying several vehicles and a refueling unit; nine civilians and three soldiers were killed.

In southern Laos, the village of Houei Nam Phak, about 15 miles south of Pakse, was overrun on 7 March by an estimated 100-200 Pathet Lao. The villagers were robbed and the village school, dispensary, and USAID office were destroyed.

The attacks over the weekend on civilian centers, coming on the heels of the rocketing of Pakse late last week, raise the possibility that the Communists may be embarking on a campaign of harassment against civilian facilities in government areas.

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COMMUNIST CHINA - NORTH VIETNAM



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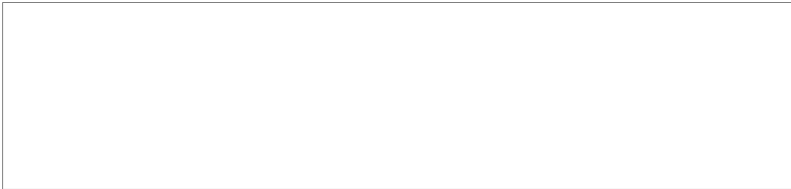
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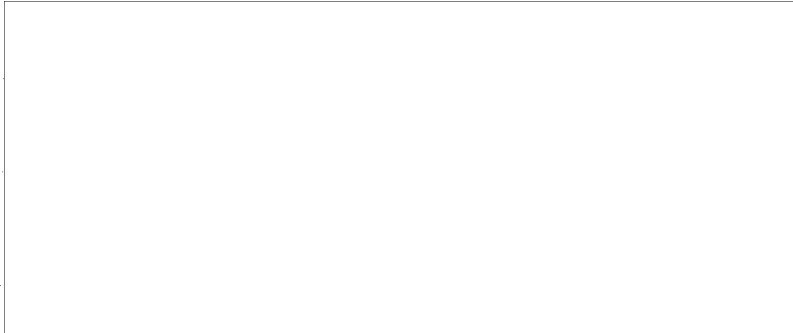
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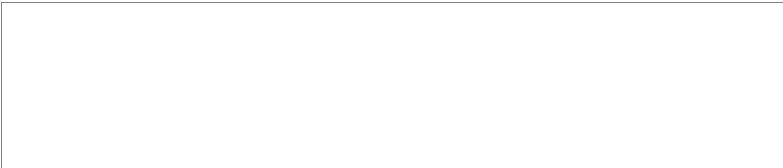
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TURKEY

A dragnet by some 30,000 police, troops, and plainclothesmen has still produced no information on the fate or whereabouts of the missing American airmen. The search has now spread as far as 70 miles outside of the capital.

Turkish politicians of diverse orientation have condemned the kidnapers. Prominent opposition leaders and ranking press representatives are behind the government's drive to recover the airmen and apprehend the culprits. Even some of Turkey's best-known leftists have denounced the crime.



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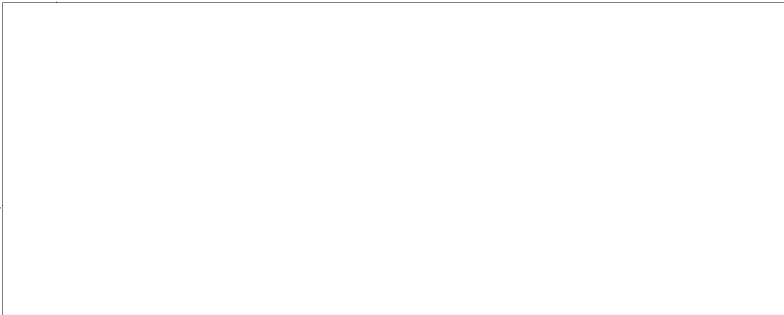
The firm measures [redacted] taken may help to dampen military criticism. Early passage of pending legislation to strengthen the government's hand in dealing with extremism should now be assured. Demirel continues to oppose a declaration of martial law.

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EGYPT

Sadat's speech yesterday rejecting a further cease-fire extension carefully left open Egypt's future military options against Israel while showing a continuing interest in a political solution. Sadat directed a special plea to the US to "discharge its duty" and get Israel to agree to withdraw from the occupied Arab territory.



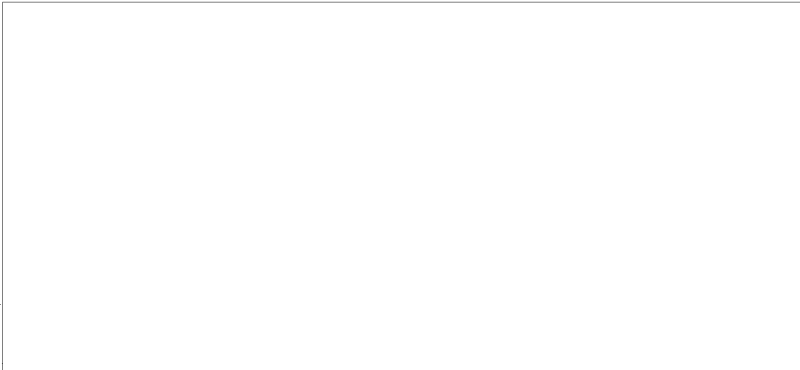
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[redacted] the uncertainty created by the absence of a formal cease-fire increases the chances of an inadvertent or miscalculated incident. Under the present full-scale defense alert conditions, any such incident could escalate rapidly.

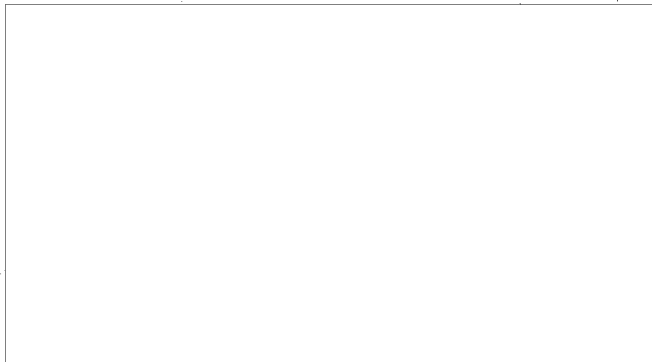
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MIDDLE EAST - FEDAYEEN



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NOTE

Ceylon: Last night Prime Minister Bandaranaike placed the country in a state of emergency and called out the armed forces to maintain law and order. Despite a seeming lack of concern over Saturday's attack on the US Embassy by a self-styled "Mao Youth Group," Mrs. Bandaranaike's leftist coalition government had clearly been worried over the violence perpetrated in the past year by a developing new left element, and yesterday police blocked a second march on the embassy.

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