



The President's Daily Brief

2 April 1971

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Developments in the Pakistani situation are reported on *Page 1*.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] Egypt. (*Page 2*)

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At Annex, we comment on the municipal council elections in Chile this weekend.

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PAKISTAN

Government reinforcements, mostly in civilian clothes, are continuing to fly into East Pakistan via Ceylon. Although the government remains in control of Dacca and Chittagong, the situation elsewhere is unclear.

[redacted] the Indian Army believes [redacted]

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[redacted] that much of the central region outside of Dacca is in East Pakistani hands and that the situation in army-held towns nearer the Indian border is "touch and go." Recent press reports claim that the East Pakistanis have gained control in one of these--Jessore, some 80 miles west of Dacca--although West Pakistani troops are still nearby. In Dacca, evacuation by air of some British and other foreign civilians is under way, while the departure of US citizens has been awaiting final Pakistani clearance.

The evacuees may well become the source of further press stories about West Pakistani atrocities, creating additional strains in relations between Washington and Islamabad. Earlier stories by US reporters, who were not even aware of the extent of the army's brutality, brought a strong reaction in the Pakistani press. One West Pakistani newsman claims that the Foreign Ministry recently asked him to prepare a release attacking the Anglo-American press while praising coverage of the situation by Pakistan's "socialist friends."

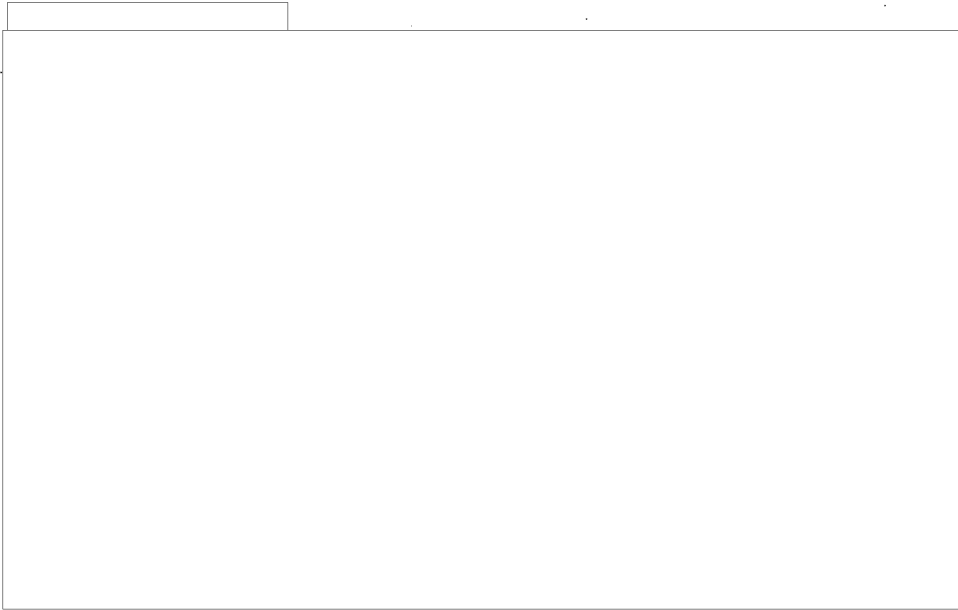
West Pakistani officials have [redacted] [redacted] has moved three additional army divisions to the area bordering East Pakistan. Defenses are reported being tightened at Dacca airport against the possibility of Indian air raids.

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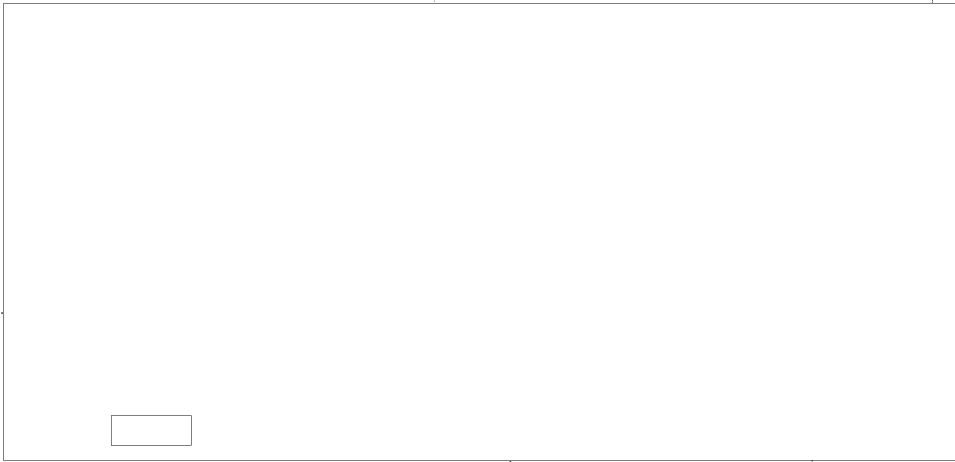
The information about Indian Army movements is unconfirmed and may have been passed to encourage the US and other countries to caution India against intervention. There is no firm evidence that India plans any overt intervention

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USSR-EGYPT

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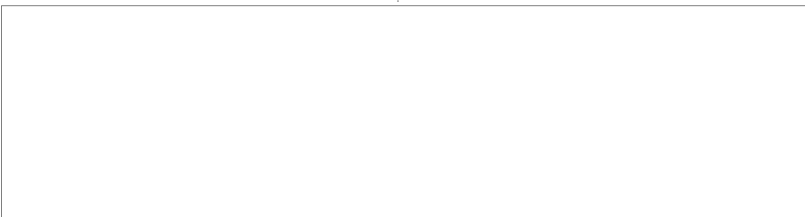
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NOTES



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SALT: Soviet delegate Timerbaev, standing in for Minister Semenov, emphasized at yesterday's plenary session that the USSR has already chosen in favor of the US proposal for NCA-level ABM and thus rejects the other two US ABM proposals. This marks the first time the Soviets have clearly turned down zero-level ABM. Ambassador Smith again pressed the Soviets to discuss offensive limitations, and called upon them to respond to US-proposed limits on an aggregate ceiling and sub-ceilings on total missiles and modern, large missiles.

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CHILE

On Sunday, 1,653 municipal council seats and President Allende's former senate seat will be contested in Chile's first election since Allende's inauguration last November. The contest is looked on by both the government and the opposition as a plebiscite on the first five months of the Allende administration. About 3 million votes will probably be cast--approximately the same number as in the presidential election last September.

Below the president and congress, municipal councilmen are the country's only popularly elected officials. Councilmen get no salary and their authority is greatly restricted by law, but their election is considered a stepping stone to a political career.

Allende's Popular Unity (UP) coalition is running candidates in the municipal election under the labels of four of its six member parties--the Communist, Socialist, Radical, and Social Democratic. The reason for this is that coalitions are prohibited by law from offering candidates on their own. The opposition candidates are from the Christian Democratic, National, and Democratic Radical parties.

The UP coalition gained only 36 percent of the votes in last September's presidential election, thus acquiring the stigma of being a minority government. It therefore is going all out to gain a majority of council seats in hopes of shedding this image. By election day Allende will have campaigned on behalf of UP candidates in all of Chile's major population centers.

Allende and his spokesmen have relied heavily on economic issues to attract votes. For example, the introduction of strict price controls since the inauguration has sharply reduced the rate of increase in the cost of living, despite highly inflationary budget and monetary policies. The business community is being tightly squeezed between rising wage costs and frozen prices, but the real income of workers has increased, and this is an important political asset for the UP parties. In addition, the government's permissive attitude toward illegal land seizures by peasants and its intervention in or nationalization of a number of mining and manufacturing operations seem likely to improve the UP's electoral showing.

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There is also keen competition within the UP itself for the greater share of the coalition's vote. The Communist Party is promoting itself as the pillar of the coalition and has been extremely active. The Socialists are centering their campaign on the fact that Allende is a Socialist and are urging voters to "build Socialism with Socialists." The Radical Party, the only major non-Marxist force in the UP, is promoting itself as the guarantor of democracy within the government and is counting on attracting the votes of those Allende supporters who could not otherwise bring themselves to vote for a Marxist ticket.

The opposition--chiefly the National Party and the Christian Democratic Party--is trying to capitalize on the high level of unemployment and the Marxist strong-arm tactics that have prevailed under the Allende administration. The effort has been weakened, however, by the traditional rivalry between the two parties and by divided leadership within the Christian Democratic Party.

Most political observers in Chile believe that the UP parties will receive somewhere between 45 and 54 percent of the vote, and that, if Allende achieves or even closely approaches an absolute majority, he will be able to speed Chile's evolution toward a Marxist society. With an absolute majority, Allende would have a popular mandate with which to blunt congressional and scattered military opposition. Such a mandate would also be a powerful tool for restructuring Chilean institutions and for encouraging defections from the anti-Allende forces. Allende has already indicated that if the UP parties win more than 50 percent of the vote he will call for a national plebiscite to replace the present congress with a unicameral "people's assembly." Whether or not the coalition wins a majority, the basic programs of the Allende government will be unchanged. What will be affected by the size of the UP vote are rather the pace and style with which Allende pursues these programs.

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