



The President's Daily Brief

17 November 1969



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Lebanese President Hilu fears loss of control over the military. *(Page 1)*

India's Congress Party takes another step toward a final split. *(Page 2)*

Paraguayan church leaders are taking on the government on several fronts. *(Page 3)*

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50X1

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LEBANON

President Hilu believes General Bustani did a poor job of negotiating in Cairo. The President told Ambassador Porter that Bustani had fallen for flattery and agreed to several provisions he had not discussed with his government. Hilu did not specify which provisions, but said the most dangerous one concerned the status of the refugee camps.

Ambassador Porter points out that Hilu now has doubts about his control over the military. He quotes the President as saying, "What will happen to Lebanon if tomorrow we have a prime minister who is unwilling to use force to control the fedayeen and an army whose leadership may be similarly unwilling or unable?"

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INDIA

The warring factions of the ruling Congress Party have moved closer to a final split. Yesterday, about 100 of the party's parliamentary delegation who are opposed to Prime Minister Gandhi elected their own leadership under former deputy prime minister Morarji Desai. Desai resigned from the cabinet last July during an intraparty fight over bank nationalization and the nomination of a presidential candidate.

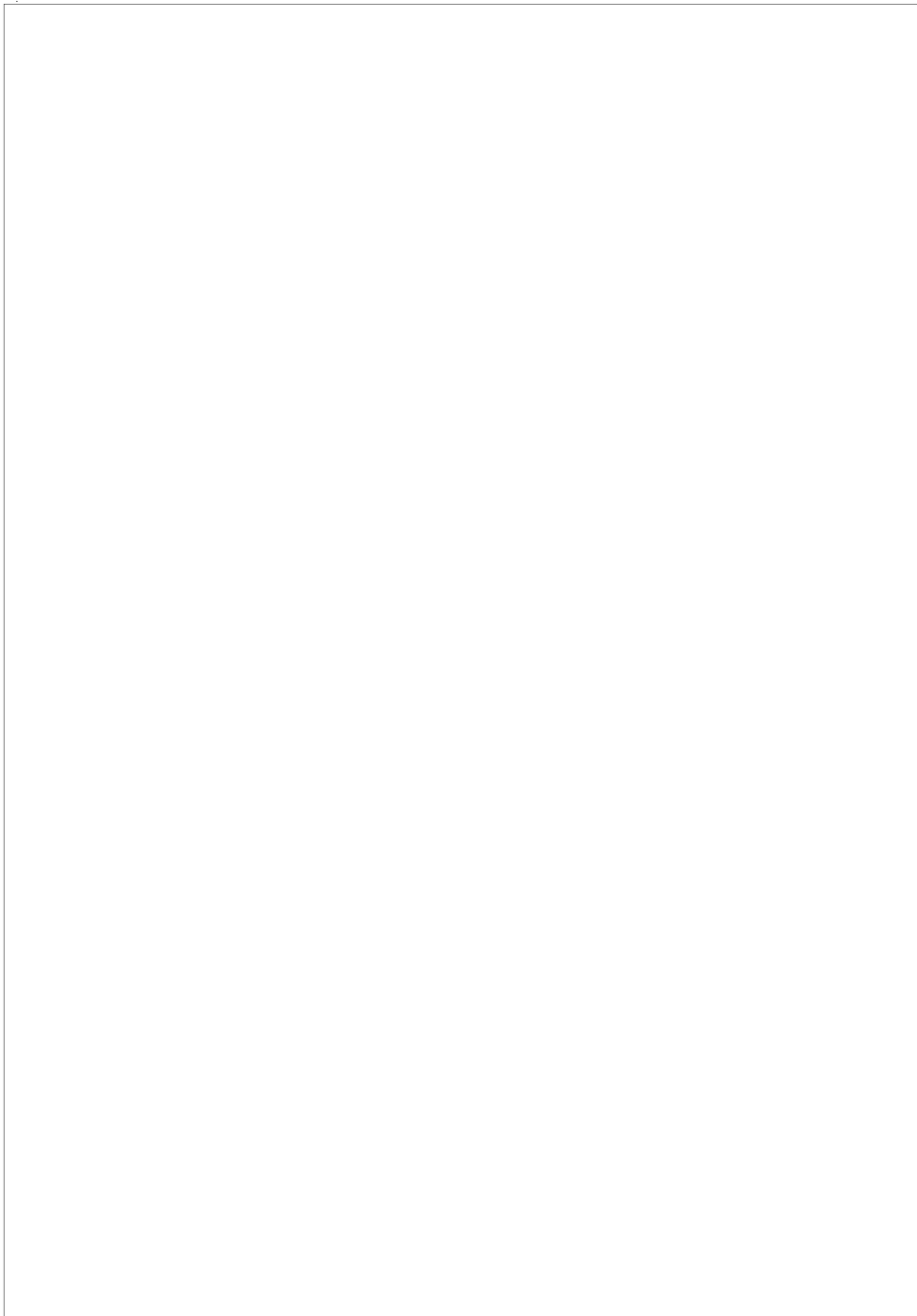
Mrs. Gandhi probably has enough strength to win a vote of confidence in Parliament, which opens today. If her party remains divided, however, she would have to rely on the votes of the leftist opposition parties to stay in power.

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PARAGUAY

General Stroessner's heavy-handed tactics against student demonstrations have brought on a new struggle with reform-minded members of the Catholic hierarchy. Some priests and nuns have joined students in protesting the continued detention of students arrested last June during Governor Rockefeller's visit. Late in October several priests were beaten by police who were breaking up a lay/clergy procession. The council of bishops retaliated by excommunicating the officials involved, and in turn the government closed the church's semiofficial weekly newspaper. Behind-the-scenes efforts to mediate have so far proved fruitless. Church leaders and government officials, including Stroessner himself, continue to exchange recriminations.

The Paraguayan church is emerging rapidly from its former isolation, and an increasing number of bishops and priests are involving themselves in the political issues of economic and social reform. In a country where political compromise is rare, the dispute between church and state is likely to sputter on for a long time. It is not apt to cause a real crisis, but it could weaken the 15-year-old regime's position as sole arbiter of Paraguayan political life.



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NOTES

Vietnam:

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Israel - Arab States: The sabotaging of two Israeli ships in Eilat harbor early yesterday was carried out by Egyptian frogmen apparently from the nearby Jordanian port of Aqaba. The Israelis are extremely sensitive to any threat to the port, which is their only trade outlet to the Far East as well as the main supply route for Israel's oil imports. Terrorist attacks on Eilat have in the past brought Israeli reprisals on Aqaba, and yesterday's incident is not likely to be an exception.

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