



The President's Daily Brief

1 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

1 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The enemy's "highpoint" of military activity in South Vietnam yesterday does not seem to have been as intense as similar efforts last year. (Page 1)

While Peking has been soft-pedaling its polemics, Moscow has become shriller in its propaganda attacks on the Chinese. (Page 2)

The North Vietnamese continue to put troops into the infiltration pipeline but at a rate considerably less than what it was for the same period last year. (Page 4)

[Redacted]
China [Redacted]
(Page 5)

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The situation in the Cambodian countryside is fairly quiet, but this may be only temporary. (Page 6)

[Redacted] (Page 7)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

Communist forces hit over 100 US and South Vietnamese positions last night. Among the targets of generally light shelling attacks were Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay, and three US division headquarters north of Saigon. Some ground fighting was reported along the Cambodian border, but none of it lasted very long. First reports put American casualties at eight killed and almost 100 wounded.

This surge is one of the biggest Communist efforts of the current winter-spring period, but it does not seem to measure up to the enemy's periodic "highpoints" in 1969. There is some indication that yesterday's action may be followed by a second phase of attacks. The enemy has supply problems, however, and the current deployment pattern of most of his larger units suggests that the Communists will be unable to maintain this activity for long.

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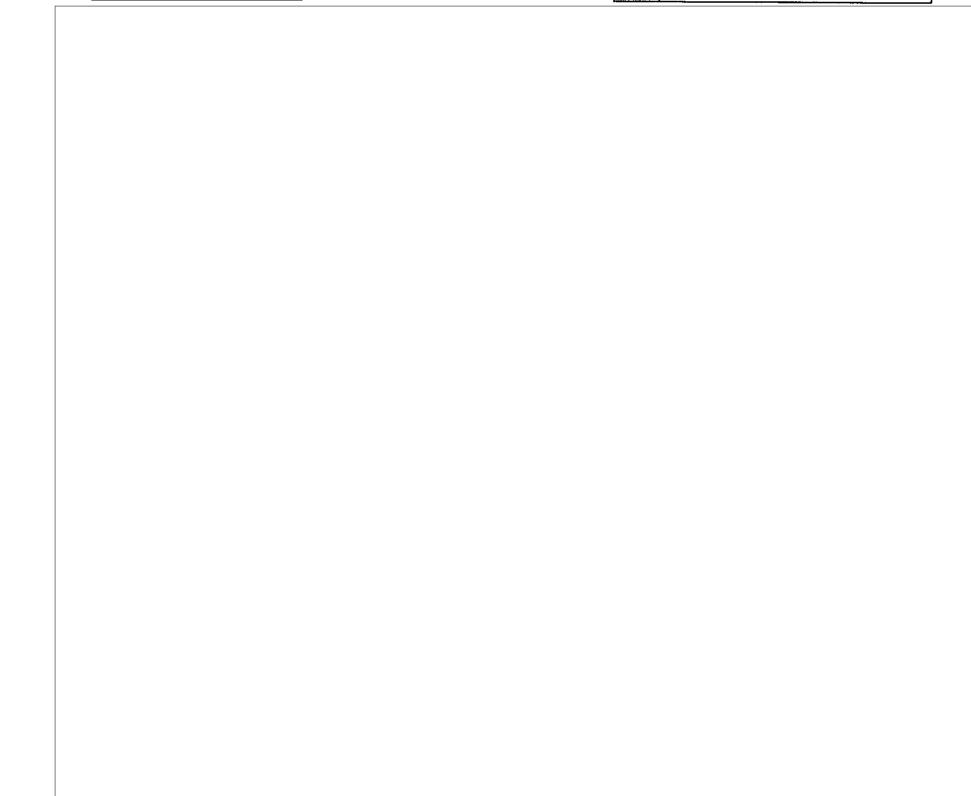
**Chinese Maintaining Defensive Positions
on Ussuri River Islands**



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USSR-CHINA

Soviet propaganda attacks on China are becoming shriller. While Peking has been soft-pedaling its polemics, Moscow has been hammering away at the Chinese on a variety of issues. An article in Red Star on 31 March, for instance, accused China of taking "openly provocative" military measures, including large-scale military construction, in areas bordering the Soviet Union and Mongolia.

Actually the Chinese have taken only limited defensive measures in these areas. Such accusations are probably Moscow's way of countering the Chinese allegations that the Soviets are forcing them to negotiate under military pressure. They also help the record in case the Peking talks collapse.

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Satellite photography [redacted] indicates that the Chinese are maintaining their defensive positions on the contested islands in the Ussuri River. Since the most recent previous photography-- [redacted] the Chinese had cleared snow from defensive trench networks on Damanskiy/Chen-pao Island, where they clashed with the Soviets a year ago, and from a small segment of the trench network on Chi-li-chin, a larger island north of Damanskiy/Chen-pao.

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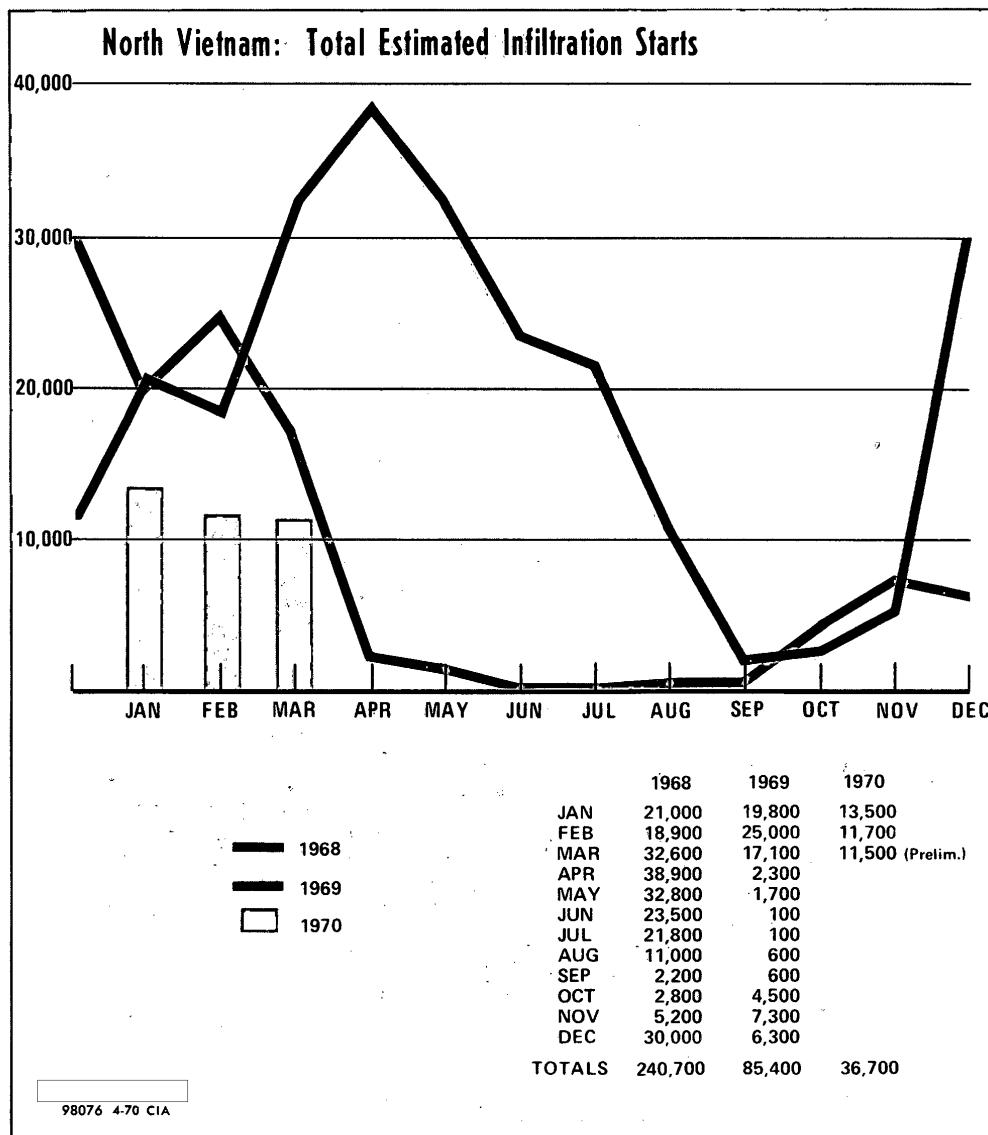
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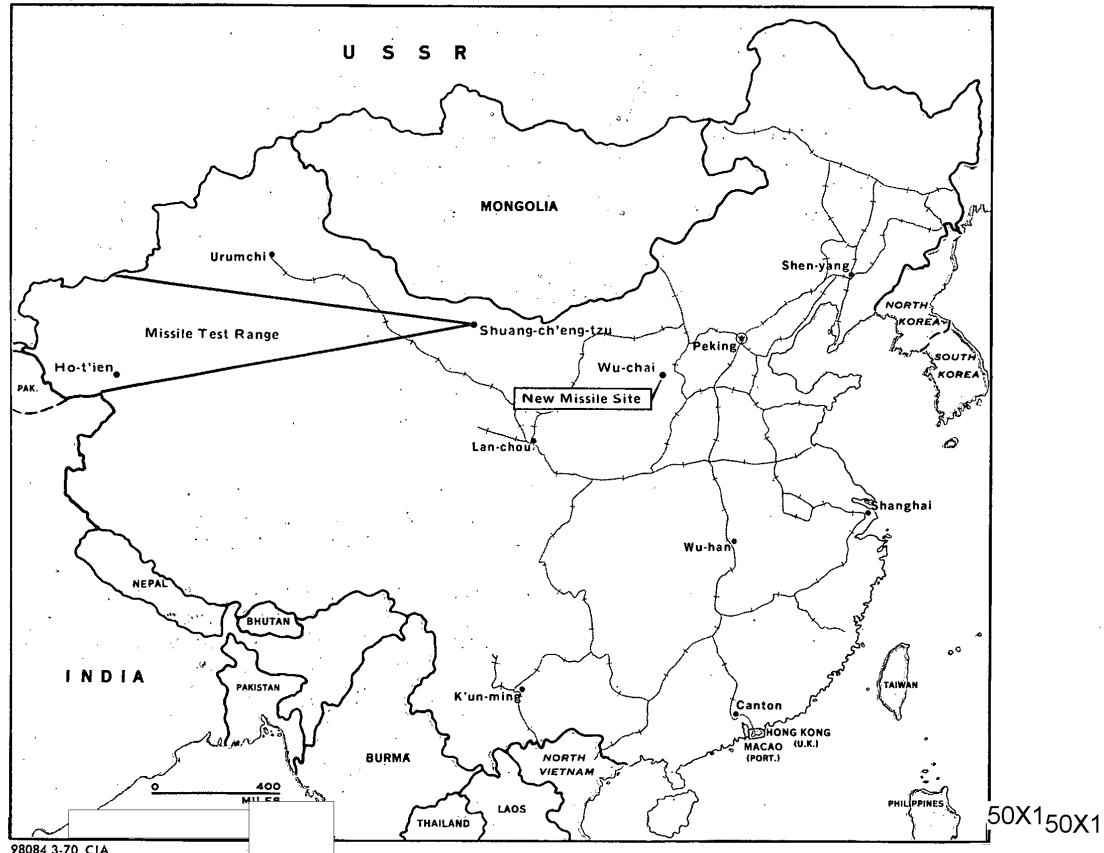
NORTH VIETNAM

Over the past week, new battalion-sized groups have been entering the infiltration system at the rate of one a day. This had been forecast in an intercept of 20 March, which said such a rate would be maintained between 25 March and 2 April. A more recent message indicates, moreover, that new departures will continue at least through 4 April.

With most of the returns in, it now looks as if the total input for March will be about 11,500. For the first quarter, then, about 37,000 have entered the pipeline, as compared with some 61,000 during the same period last year.

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Newly Discovered Chinese Missile Site at Wu-chai



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COMMUNIST CHINA



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A missile about 70 feet long aboard a transporter-erector is discernible on the pad in photography of 15 November 1968. The missile length generally equates with the Chinese MRBMs seen on several occasions at the Shuang-cheng-tzu test range.

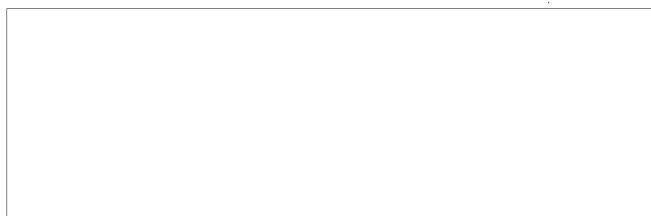


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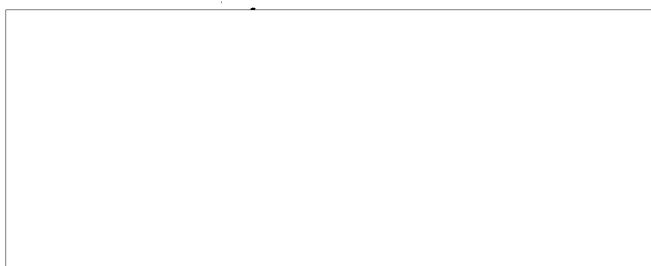


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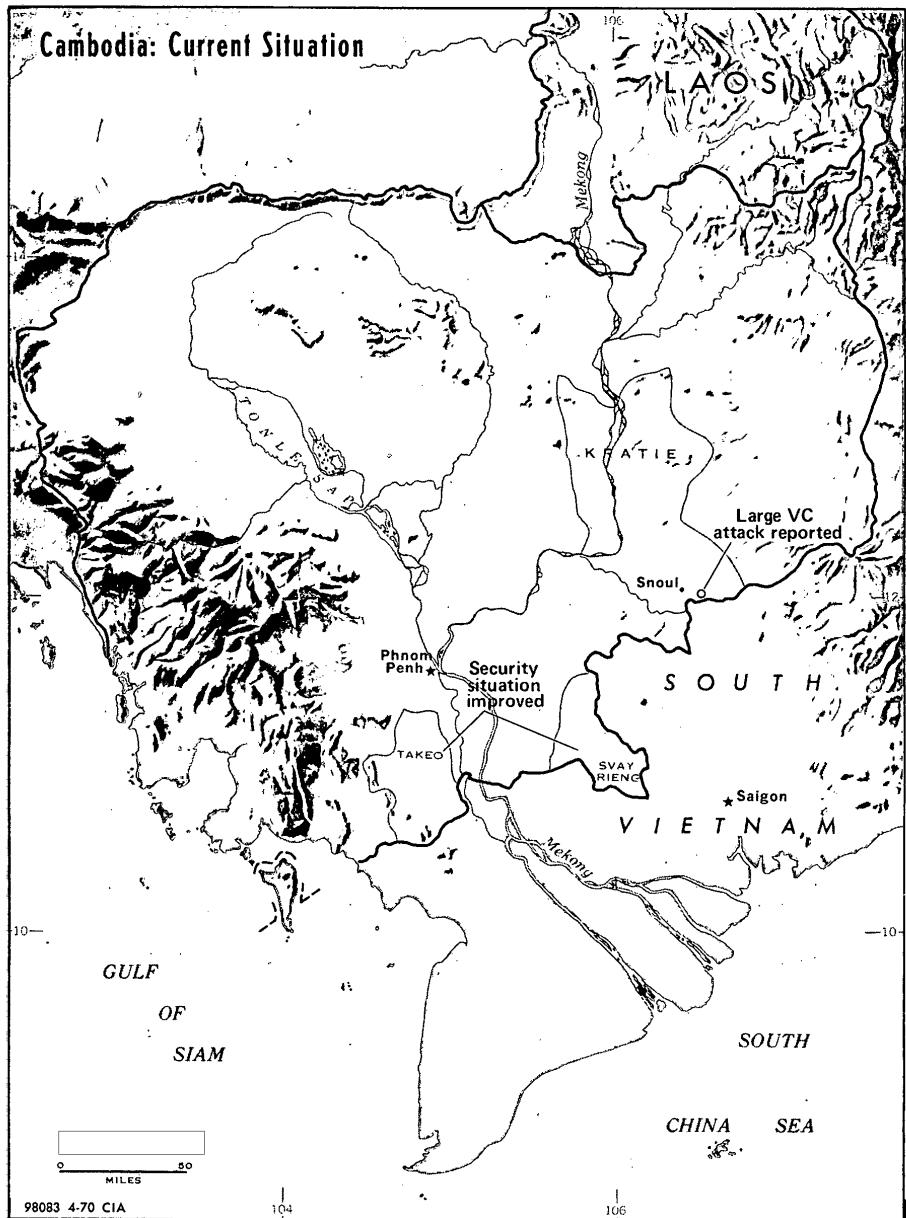


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CAMBODIA

Western correspondents who have motored into Svay Rieng and Takeo provinces report civilian traffic back to normal, but they say that Cambodian security forces are maintaining roadblocks along major routes into Phnom Penh. The journalists saw no evidence of new demonstrations nor any sign of the peasant bands that were active in Takeo earlier in the week.

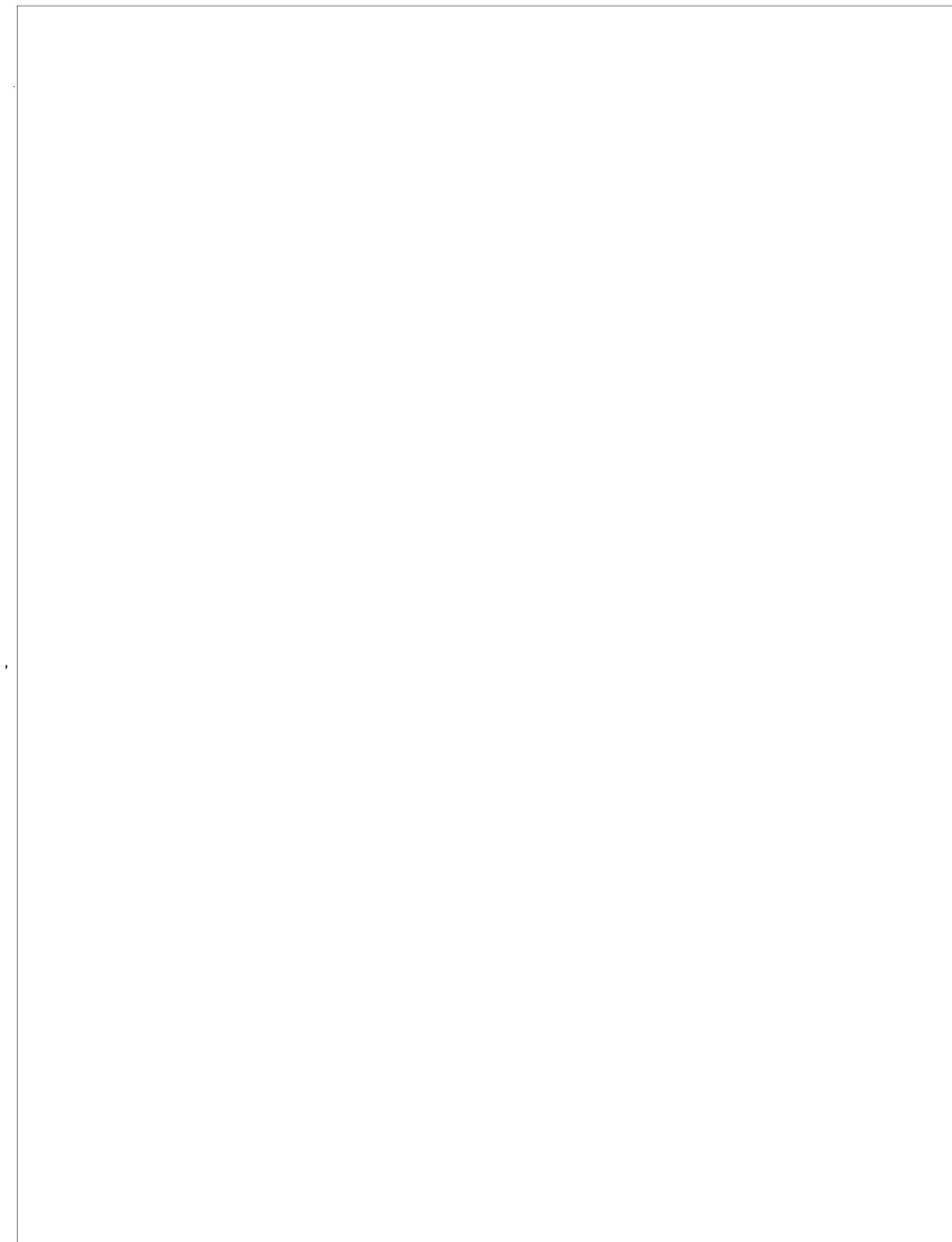
The government has also been picking up some welcome support in the capital. Large crowds of enthusiastic youths turned out in Phnom Penh in response to government appeals that they enlist in the armed forces. The influential head of the principal Buddhist order addressed the nation in a radio broadcast that was hardly flattering to Sihanouk.

Along the South Vietnamese border, more Communist attacks against government positions have been reported. Several posts south of Snoul were overrun yesterday, in what seems to be a continuing Vietnamese Communist effort to drive Cambodian forces away from the border.

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NOTES

USSR:	

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USSR: The Soviet naval force operating in the Mediterranean has now increased to some 64 ships, including 27 warships and 13 submarines. Most of the ships have been occupied with small-scale exercises and surveillance of NATO naval forces. The helicopter carrier Leningrad is conducting ASW training near Crete; its sister ship, Moskva, is operating west of Malta.

Cuba-USSR: Raul Castro, Cuba's armed forces minister, has accepted Soviet Defense Minister Grechko's invitation to visit Moscow early in April. Raul has been in the USSR several times before, most recently in November 1966. No reason for his April visit has been announced--it is described only as "an official friendly visit"--but it seems probable that he and Grechko will get around to discussing Soviet military aid to Cuba.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

2 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

France has called for an Indochina peace conference (Page 1) and at Annex we assess the reactions of the countries most affected. 50X1

Cambodian anti-Communist fervor is cooling. (Page 2)

The Communists in South Vietnam displayed their strength Tuesday night (Page 3) [redacted] (Pages 3 and 4) 50X1

The Sudanese Government forces scored a victory over the Ansar insurrectionists, but the conflict is far from settled. (Page 5)

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FRANCE-INDOCHINA

France has called for an international peace conference on Indochina.

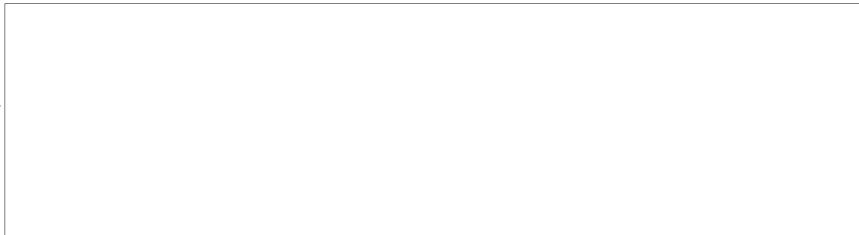
Since the opening of the Paris peace talks in 1968, the French have refrained from publicly pressing their long-held view that the Vietnamese war is only one part of a broader crisis that requires a regional solution. Because of the recent deterioration of both the Cambodian and Laotian situation, as well as the continued stalemate in the Paris talks, the French apparently are convinced that a reassessment of their position now has a good chance of being well-received by all parties concerned.

Our preliminary thoughts on the reactions of the interested parties are outlined at Annex.

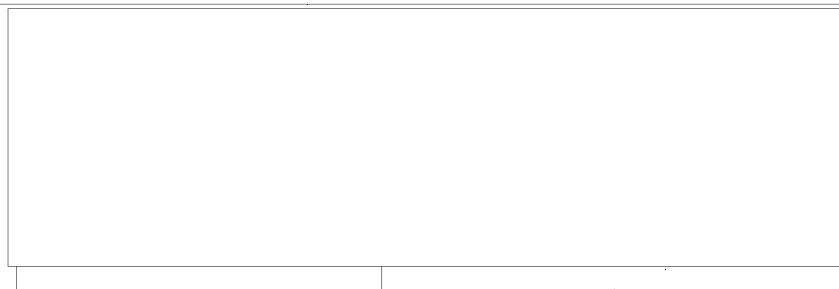
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CAMBODIA



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On 1 April, the government issued a communiqué protesting recent South Vietnamese cross-border forays against Communist troops. This further reflects the government's efforts to persuade Hanoi that Phnom Penh wants to talk.

Phnom Penh's initiatives are in marked contrast to the tough line taken toward the Vietnamese Communists since the sacking of their embassies last month. They may stem from a more sober assessment of the difficult position the government's anti-Vietnamese gyrations have put it in. The government probably is greatly concerned about prospects for increased Communist military and subversive pressures against it.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

As more reports become available, it seems apparent that the Communist attacks on the night of 31 March - 1 April were the heaviest of the past six months. They were roughly comparable to the flare-ups that occurred almost monthly in 1969. The Communists have been trying to mount a "high point" for more than a month, although until a few days ago most indications suggested something less than a country-wide effort.

Hanoi may have concluded only recently that a show of strength would be useful. It might have seen this as a way to back up its tough stance on Cambodia, dampen Saigon's ardor for cross-border attacks on Communist forces, and contribute to apprehension in the US about recent developments in Southeast Asia.

The effort highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of the Communists' present position. Such widespread, coordinated action demonstrates once again the viability of the Communist apparatus, the continued effectiveness of its command and control mechanisms, and its ability to increase allied casualties sharply. On the other hand, unless the offensive action is sustained for some time, which seems unlikely, it probably will not inflict any permanent damage on the allied position or even set back significantly such programs as pacification. At this stage in the war, the Communists seem unwilling to pay the price in manpower that serious pursuit of these objectives would require.

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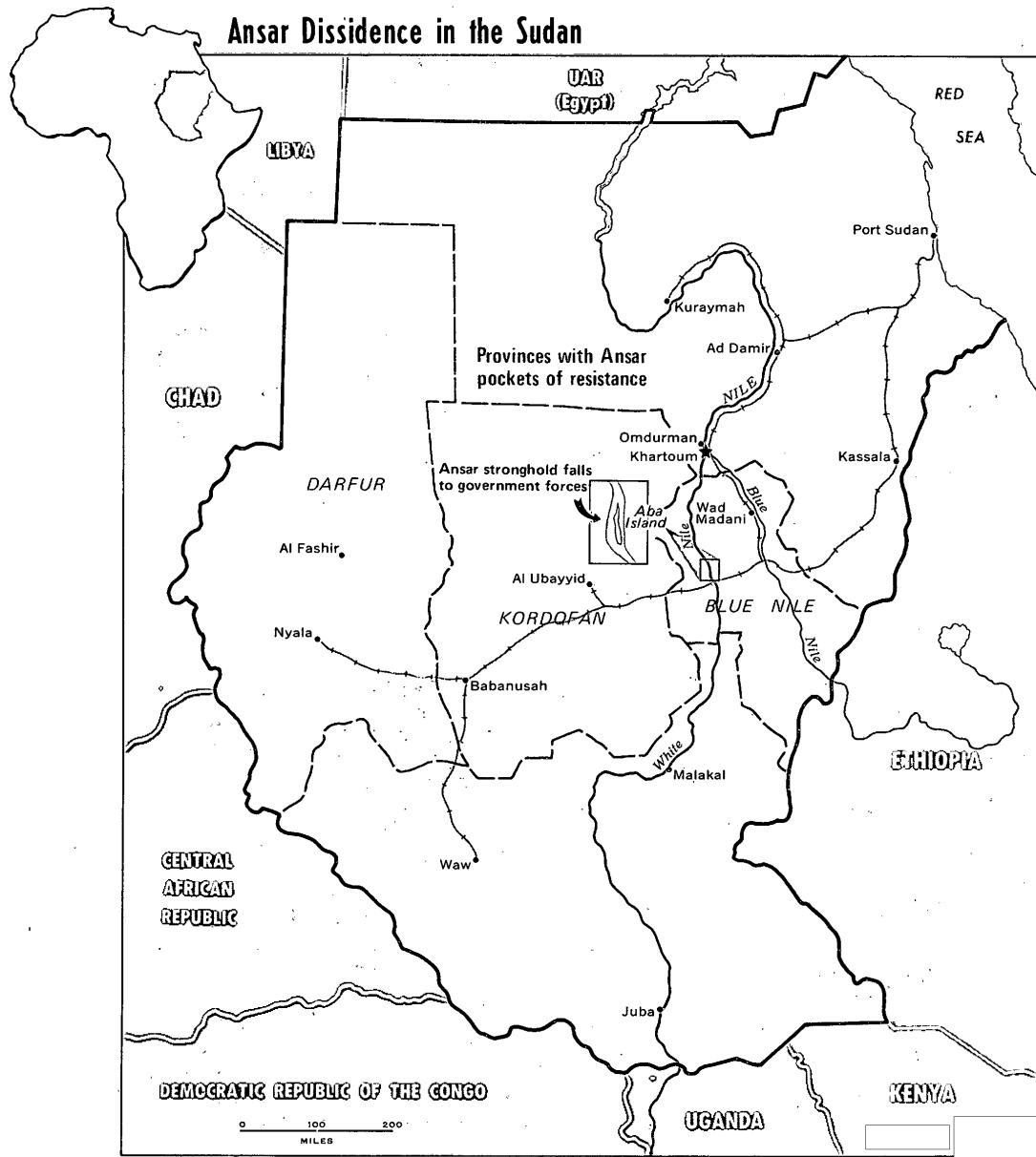


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SUDAN

Aba Island, softened by shelling and air attacks, fell to government forces on 31 March. [redacted] the Ansar defenders put up a tough fight and [redacted] casualties were heavy on both sides.

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Although the Numayri regime has won the first round, Ansars throughout the rest of the country (they number about three million) may be stimulated to greater resistance by the fall of Aba. [redacted]

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[redacted] an undetermined number of Ansar tribesmen in the western province of Kordofan were already moving toward Khartoum.

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If armed resistance by the Ansars grows, Khartoum may renew the request it made to Egypt during the siege of Aba Island for military assistance, including TU-16s.

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NOTES

Fedayeen - North Vietnam: Fatah leader Yasir Arafat, eager to tap all available sources for military aid to his guerrillas, wound up a week in Peking and is now in Hanoi. We assume he is seeking weapons, propaganda support, and some kind of official status for the fedayeen.

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[redacted]
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Argentina: [redacted]

[redacted]
[redacted]

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Israel-Syria: A large buildup of Israeli forces has been noted in the Golan Heights area of occupied Syria. [redacted] It is too early to deduce Israeli intentions, but some kind of action against Syria is not unlikely.

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**POSSIBLE REACTIONS TO THE FRENCH PROPOSAL
ON INDOCHINA**

All the potential participants in any conference will find it very hard to turn the new French proposal down cold. This would even be true for the North Vietnamese, who have historically taken the position that Indochina's inhabitants do not need such a forum--or indeed any outside interference at all--to work out their problems. Hanoi may in fact discern some advantage in being relatively forthcoming in its reply. The Communists may think, for instance, that in keeping the idea of talks alive they would be encouraging friction between the US and the South Vietnamese, and they may also see the proposal as a way of encouraging antiwar sentiment in the US. Beyond this they may believe there is a chance of bringing pressure to bear for a bombing halt in Laos and for recognition of their present advantageous position on the ground there. They could also see a conference as a way of putting Sihanouk to better use than they can while he is in Peking.

On the other hand, Hanoi must reckon with the possibility that US withdrawals from South Vietnam would be delayed if a conference was in the offing, as well as the danger that the Saigon government might be able to consolidate its position while the talks dragged on. Moreover, they must view with some apprehension the prospect of going to the negotiating table with their Soviet and Chinese backers at odds.

Unless they actually inspired the French initiative, the Communists probably will take some time hammering out their response while they wait for reactions from other countries. If they do feel constrained to reply, the best guess is that they will combine an acceptance of the basic idea with some fairly steep preconditions, such as a demand for an end to US bombing in Laos or of B-52 raids in South Vietnam.

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The Saigon government almost certainly sees the French proposal as a Pandora's box of new challenges to its legitimacy and to its desire to carry on the war against the Communists. Its response, however, is likely to be tempered to avoid any outright rejection of a conference or any appearance of serious discord with the US.

Moscow will almost certainly take its cue from Hanoi. The Soviets apparently have not been deeply involved in recent developments and they have shown no signs of interest in such a move lately. [redacted]

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[redacted] Moscow would probably prefer, however, to see the Indochina problem switched to the diplomatic arena.

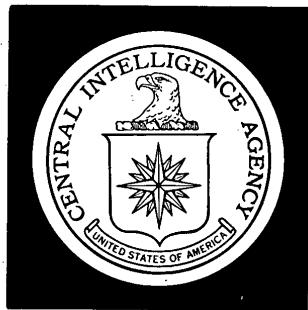
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Peking is probably unhappy over the French initiative because for some years it has opposed any move toward a negotiated end to the war. Nevertheless, if Hanoi approves of such a conference, Peking almost certainly would attend.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

3 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Enemy forces in South Vietnam are likely to begin another round of coordinated attacks within the next few days. (Page 1)

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on Page 2.

Lao Government forces in the Long Tieng area have made limited gains; the Communists meanwhile are trying to improve their supply situation southwest of the Plaine des Jarres and are threatening another government base to the north. (Page 4)

Israel's attack yesterday in the Golan Heights area probably was meant as a warning to Syria not to increase activity on its front in order to ease pressure on Egypt. (Page 5)

Chou En-lai is to visit North Korea soon. (Page 6)

In the Dominican Republic, President Balaguer's refusal this week to resign from office may trigger new disorders. (Page 7)

President Mendez has declared a state of emergency in Guatemala. (Page 8)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

The Communists appear ready to launch further coordinated attacks within the next few days.

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Many enemy units throughout the country remain in a high state of readiness.

Forthcoming attacks probably will be similar to those of the past two days: many shellings and some heavy infantry and sapper actions against US and South Vietnamese field positions. Enemy forces still do not appear to be in position for major attacks on population centers.

Communist shellings have dropped off considerably since the first night of the current phase. Allied casualty lists are still growing, however, as additional details become available on the recent actions.

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CAMBODIA

The new government in Phnom Penh remains in control and is working hard--with some success--to broaden its power base. Lon Nol and Sirik Matak are obviously worried that too close an identification with Washington or Saigon will make this task more difficult, and will prevent resumption of negotiations with the Vietnamese Communists.

The Communists appear to be undecided about how far to push the new government. They have used their assets to create trouble in the countryside, and there is much more they can do, even without actually using Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops. At a minimum, they can be expected to bargain hard for the position they previously enjoyed with regard to supplies and border sanctuaries. Meanwhile Sihanouk continues to issue propaganda statements from Peking, but aside from Hanoi's endorsement, he has had little success in gaining support.

* * *

No major fighting has been reported on the border in recent days, and Communist units seem unsure of their future course of action. Intercepted messages indicate that at least some Communist units are under instructions to fire on Cambodian forces only in self-defense. It is clear from other enemy messages that in some areas of the border the enemy is convinced Cambodian forces are acting in concert with South Vietnamese and US forces, and these Communist elements have been more aggressive.

South Vietnamese cross-border operations, such as one that moved into Svay Rieng Province on 1 April, are undoubtedly contributing to the Communists' concern. [redacted]

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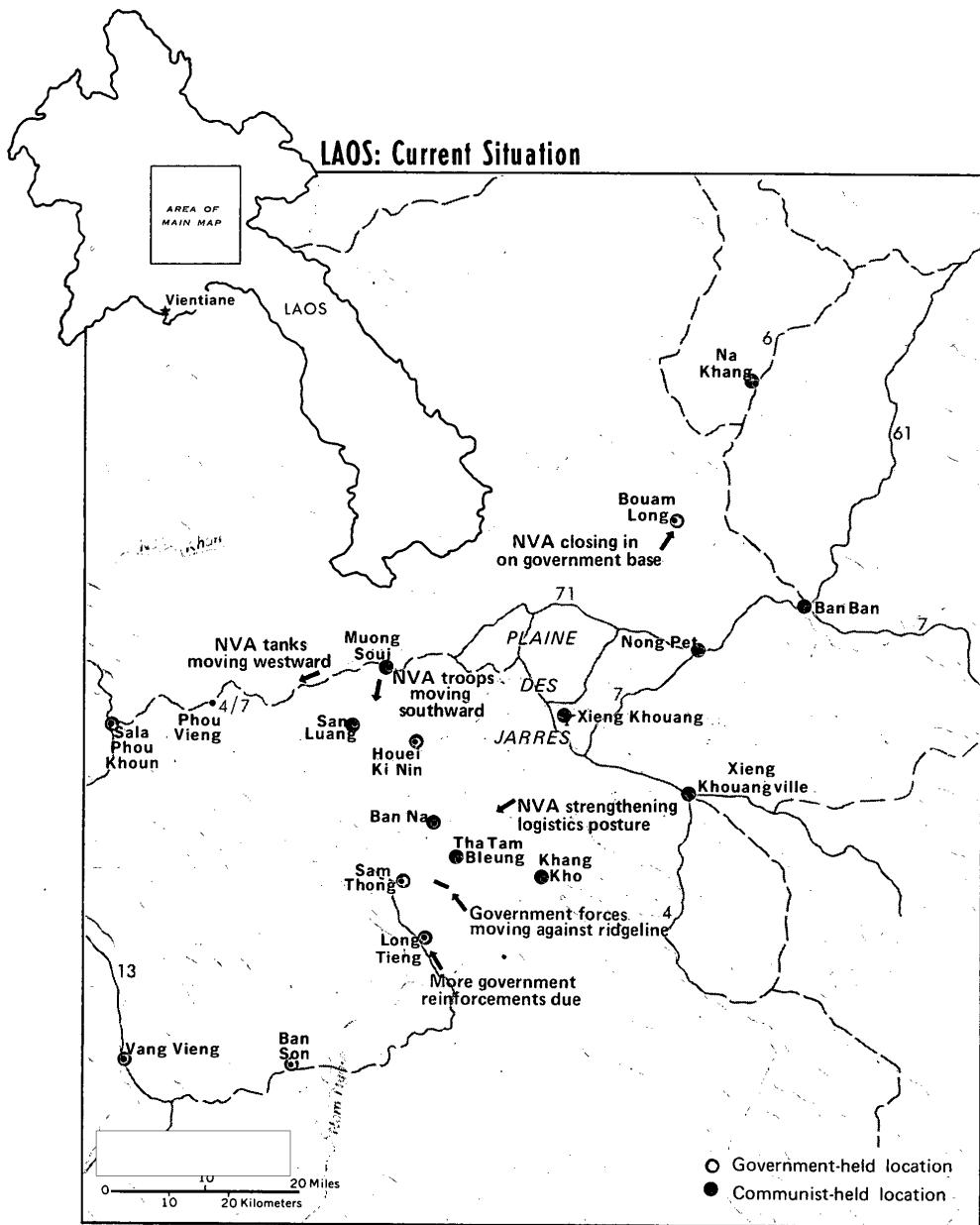
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In Peking, Sihanouk's spokesman stated on 2 April that the "government of national union" will be formed when certain "young leading figures" of the resistance movement arrive in the Chinese capital. The odds are fairly good that these will be some of the same leading Cambodian leftists who were once members of Sihanouk's government.

The government in Phnom Penh, meanwhile, is also trying to enlist support from leftist elements. There also are rumors that the monarchy will be abolished, a move that would find favor among intellectuals and the youth, but might alienate the more conservative peasantry. The government has also released a large number of "political prisoners," at least some of whom were jailed by Sihanouk for Communist sympathies.

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LAOS

During the past few days, government guerrillas have pushed onto an important ridgeline seven miles north of Long Tieng and have held their ground against enemy counterattacks. The new government position overlooks a key enemy staging area that has served as a springboard for attacks against the Long Tieng defense perimeter.

Intercepted communications, meanwhile, disclose recent efforts by the North Vietnamese 316th Division to improve logistic support of forces operating southwest of the Plaine des Jarres. A supply depot is being moved to the southern edge of the Plaine, and engineers have been ordered to improve roads in this area. These developments suggest the Communists may be preparing for a long and costly campaign against Long Tieng.

Elements of the North Vietnamese 312th Division--which has seen little action thus far in the current offensive--are moving long-range artillery and armor into position for an assault against Bouam Long, the most important government base north of the Plaine. Rugged terrain and heavy airstrikes, however, thus far have prevented the enemy from closing in on the base in strength. The further commitment of significant enemy resources at this time points up the Communists' sensitivity to guerrilla operations against their supply lines.

Enemy operations may also be under way to the west. [] tanks moving westward along Route 7 near the government's base at Phou Vieng, some 15 miles from the Sala Phou Khoun road junction. [] that enemy units of company size are deploying southward from the Muong Soui area.

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On the political front, Prime Minister Souvanna continues to touch base with important civilian and military leaders on the government's response to the Communist peace proposal of 6 March. At a recent cabinet meeting, there was unanimous support for Souvanna's intention to take a tough line with the Communists regarding a bombing halt in Laos. Souvanna will present a draft of his response to Souphanouvong for cabinet approval in the next few days.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

ISRAEL-SYRIA

Yesterday's seven-hour Israeli military action in the Golan Heights was confined to artillery and air attacks and did not take Israeli ground forces across the border. A Jerusalem broadcast while the attack was in progress clearly suggested that the Israelis--who are concerned primarily with developments on the Egyptian front--want to nip in the bud any plans Damascus may have to "ease the burden on Egypt" by warming up the Syrian front. The broadcast hinted that such Syrian plans would risk severe Israeli reprisal, noting pointedly that Israeli forces, in their actions yesterday, "did not use all the possibilities at their disposal."

Israel probably now has about 6,000 troops and some 100 tanks on the Golan Heights. With these forces they could make a combined ground-air attack into Syria.

Tel Aviv claims to have knocked down three Syrian MIG-21s yesterday--bringing the total Syrian aircraft losses since the 1967 war to 20; it admits the loss of one aircraft, an F-4 Phantom.

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COMMUNIST CHINA - NORTH KOREA

Chou En-lai's imminent visit to Pyongyang shows how much Chinese relations with North Korea have warmed over the past six months. The visit, scheduled for early this month, was announced on 1 April, several days after Peking's new ambassador was received in Pyongyang. Aside from his brief trip to Hanoi last September on the occasion of Ho Chi Minh's death, this marks Chou's first trip outside China since mid-1966.

Discussion topics are almost certain to include Japan's expanding role in Asia, the latest developments in Indochina, and the possibility of additional economic assistance. The two leaders probably will avoid Sino-Soviet affairs. Pyongyang's steadfast neutrality in the Sino-Soviet dispute was the primary reason relations have been chilly; the North Koreans were treated to a dose of Red Guard diplomacy in 1967.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

President Balaguer's refusal this week to resign from office may trigger new disorders. Seven opposition parties have agreed to abstain from the elections on 16 May unless Balaguer steps down. Since Balaguer is a candidate, the opposition contends that his resignation is necessary to ensure fair elections. The President, whose term expires in August, had earlier offered to quit temporarily for the month preceding elections

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He has vowed to stand for election with or without opposition participation.

Faced with the President's hard-nosed response, it is doubtful that the opposition's fragile coalition will remain united, and some parties probably will cave in and participate in the elections. The presidential announcement, however, will further strengthen the belief of some factions that violence is their only effective political weapon.

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NOTE

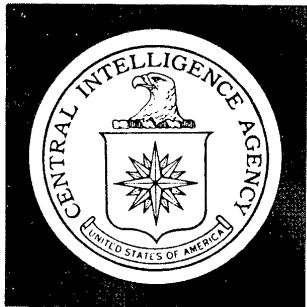
Guatemala: In the face of a deteriorating security situation, President Mendez last night declared a state of emergency. The government has been highly embarrassed by the number of terrorist incidents in the country and presumably now hopes to deal more forcefully with the security problem.

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Meanwhile, the government has refused the demands of the kidnapers of West German Ambassador von Spreti for the release of 15 imprisoned subversives.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on *Page 1*.

[redacted] Laos [redacted]
[redacted] (Page 2)

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In Guatemala, the leftist kidnapers of West German Ambassador von Spreti have threatened to execute him if their demands are not met. (Page 3)

A rumored personnel shakeup in the Soviet propaganda apparatus may be the backwash of a larger struggle within the Soviet hierarchy. (Page 4)

Student unrest is growing in Saigon. (Page 5)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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CAMBODIA

The situation in the countryside is quiet. No new pro-Sihanouk demonstrations have been reported, and all is relatively calm along the border.

The leaders in Phnom Penh are still waiting for the Communists to drop the other shoe, but they calculate that if they do not press the Communists to vacate Cambodian territory, they can buy some more time.

The long shadow of Sihanouk has them worried, but Matak and Lon Nol are fairly confident that they can consolidate their control if the Vietnamese stay out of it.

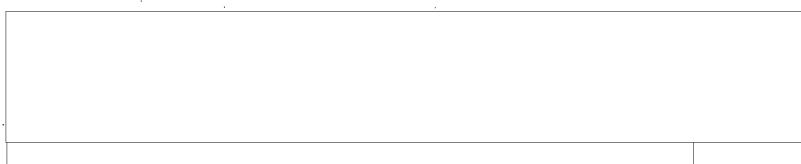
The Communists are unsure about their ability to push the new government further and faster. They still have civilian assets in reserve and can always fall back on Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops, but it seems they prefer for now to rely on the psychological pressures already built up.

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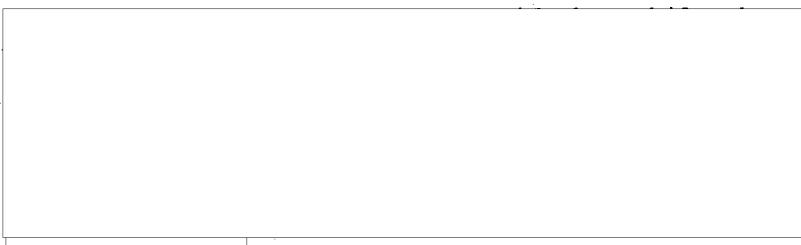
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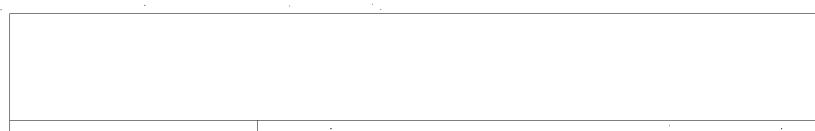
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

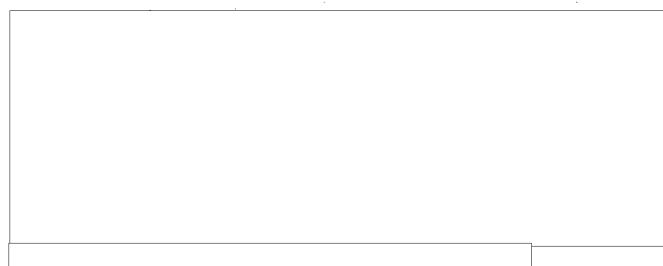


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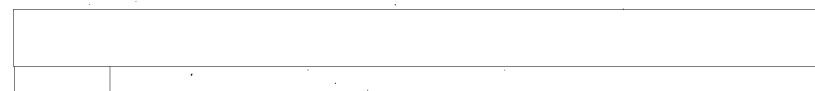
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GUATEMALA

No settlement is in sight as the countdown continues toward a deadline set by the leftist kidnapers of West German Ambassador von Spreti. The pro-Cuban Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) has indicated that if its demands are not met by 4 p.m. (EST) today, von Spreti will be executed. Meanwhile FAR has raised the terms to 22 prisoners and \$700,000 in ransom following the government's refusal to release the 15 subversives originally demanded by the kidnapers.

The FAR may attempt to kidnap other members of the diplomatic community to strengthen its case. [redacted]

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USSR

According to the Moscow rumor circuit, informed Soviet sources are talking of important changes among officials in charge of the Soviet information, culture, and propaganda services. Four officials are reported thus far to have been removed from their jobs.

If these moves have indeed taken place, they signal an assault by Brezhnev and others on Shelepin's power base, since at least two of those removed are clearly his supporters. One of these men has been retired; another is to be removed from the center of power with an assignment to a post abroad. At the same time, Ambassador to Czechoslovakia Chervonenko, who is said to be coming home to fill the party slot in charge of propaganda, is a Brezhnev man [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

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Shelepin has been out of sight and probably ill since late February. [redacted]
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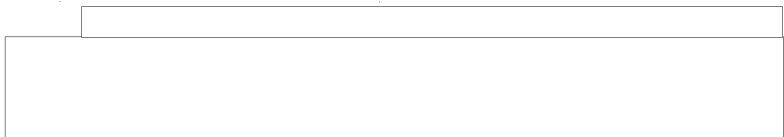
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SOUTH VIETNAM

The government has not been able to calm student unrest, and the boycott of classes at Saigon University may spread to secondary schools. A student spokesman has announced that the boycott would last indefinitely unless the government releases the students accused of being Communist agents or gives them an early trial.



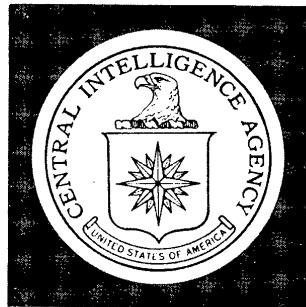
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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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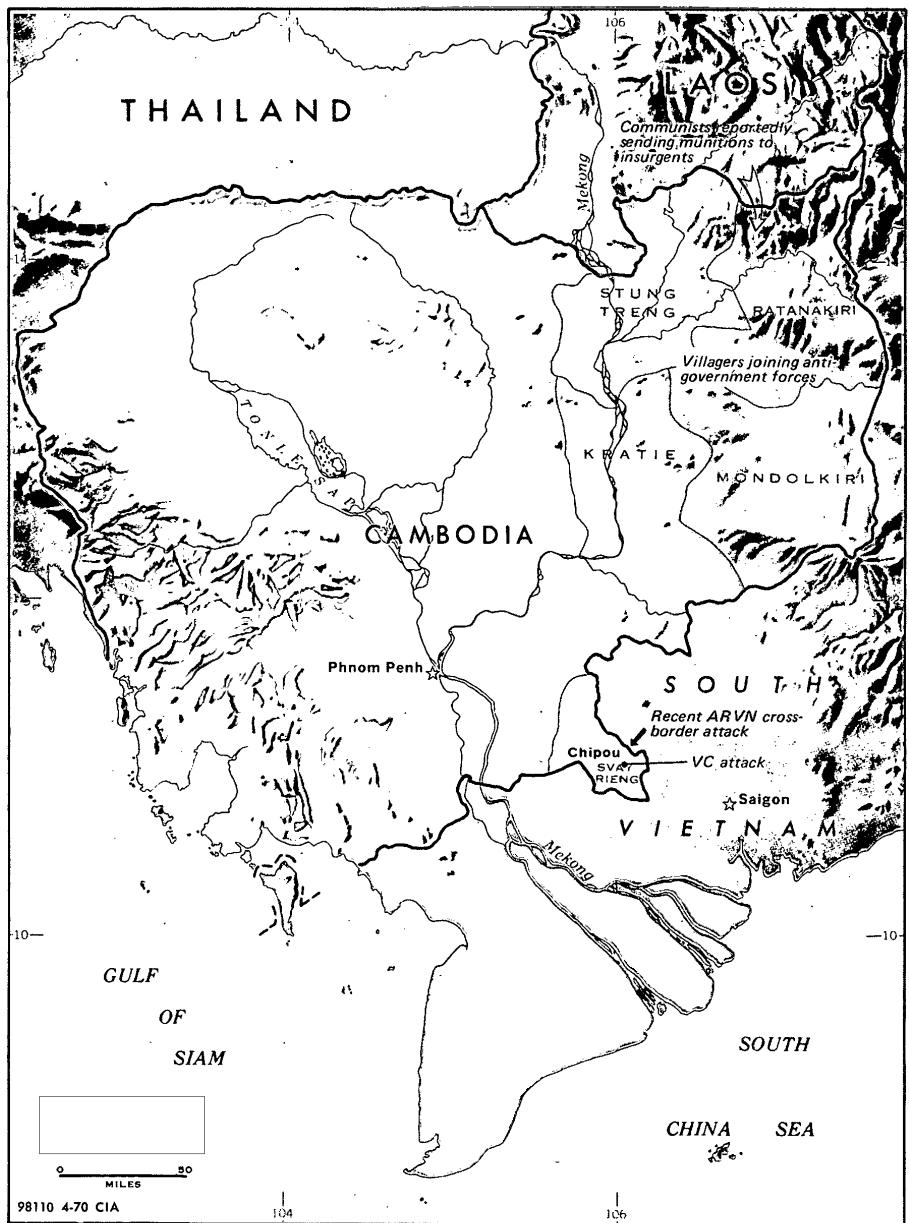
PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Communists increased the pressure throughout Indo-china over the weekend. They made their deepest penetration yet in Cambodia (Page 1) and renewed their advance in Laos (Page 2). They continued to operate at a relatively high level in South Vietnam (Page 3).

In Latin America, Guatemala has only begun to feel the repercussions of the kidnap-murder of Ambassador von Spreti (Page 4), and Colombia appears to be headed for trouble (Page 5).

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Cambodia: Current Situation



CAMBODIA

Intercepts of Cambodian Army messages show that Svay Rieng Province is bearing the brunt of stepped up Communist military pressure along the border, but there is no suggestion that a major push is under way. On 4 April the Communists attacked Chipou, about 12 miles from the border; this was their deepest penetration to date, and the first time they have hit a heavily populated area. Several government outposts also have been attacked. [redacted]

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Communist activity in Svay Rieng may be in response to recent South Vietnamese cross-border operations there. [redacted]

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There also are signs that the Communists are preparing to increase antigovernment activity soon in the north. [redacted]

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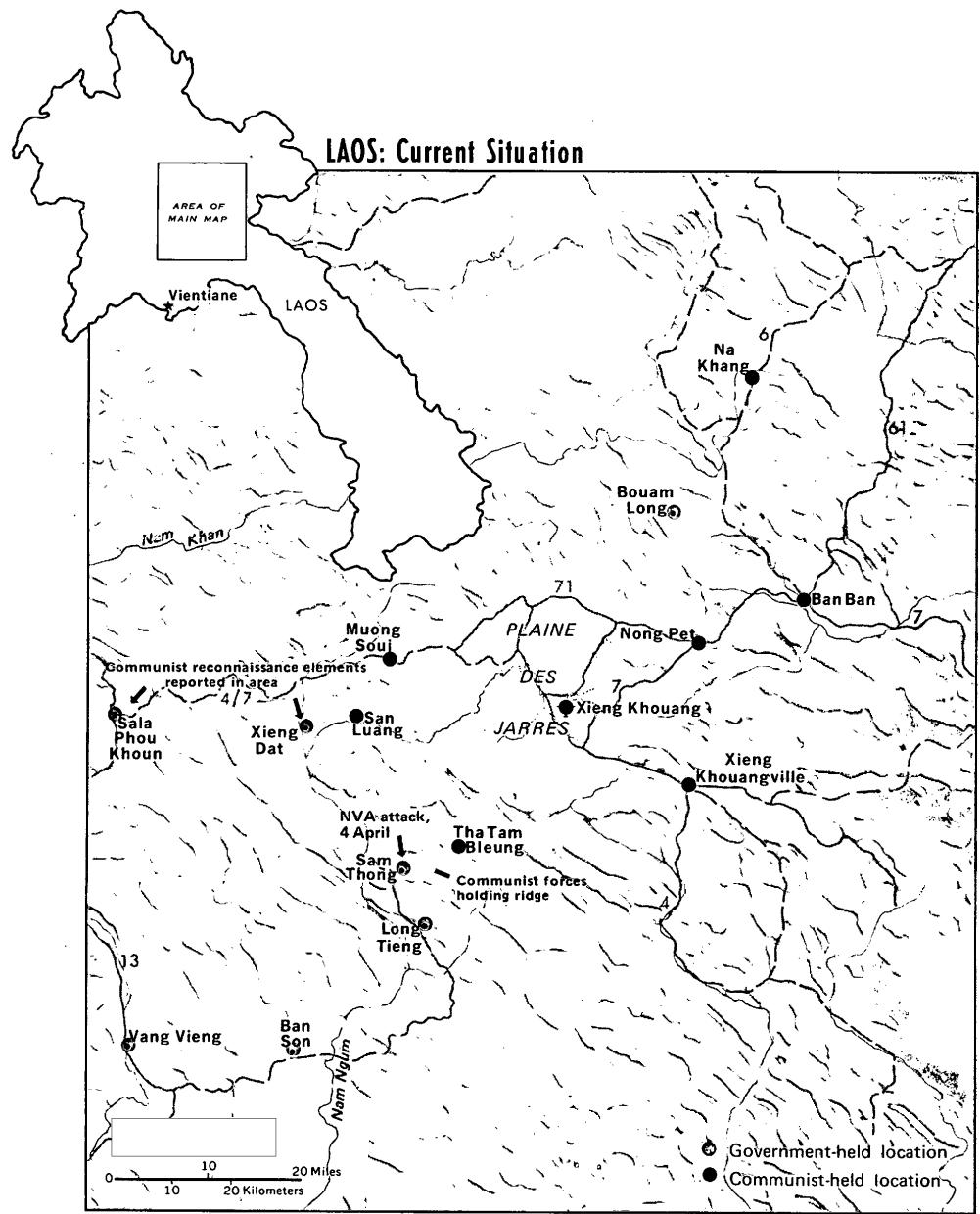
since late March over 600 Sihanouk sympathizers have left their homes in Stung Treng, Ratanakiri, and Mondolkiri provinces to join Vietnamese Communist or Cambodian insurgent forces. [redacted]

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[redacted] Communist troops are already transporting munitions from southern Laos to support insurgents in the northeast.

The government has long had trouble extending its control over the isolated and sparsely populated northern provinces, and it is possible that the Communists may move to establish a "liberated area" there.

Sihanouk continues his appeals from Peking. In a message on 4 April he implied for the first time that he would return to Cambodia in the near future. This message again asked the Cambodian people to take to the "bush."



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**LAOS**

On 4 April, North Vietnamese troops launched their first major attack in almost a week as they pushed within a mile of the Sam Thong airstrip. At last report, reinforced government troops with air support were still holding the base and most of the Sam Thong valley. Intercepts indicate that the enemy attaches considerable importance to retaking Sam Thong, and at least two North Vietnamese battalions have moved into the area.

The situation continues to be quiet around the main guerrilla base at Long Tieng. Another battalion of regular army troops has moved into Long Tieng, raising the government total in the area to approximately 5,700. Guerrilla forces continue to patrol the valleys north of the base, but they are still having trouble dislodging Communist forces from an important ridge between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung.

The Communists are demonstrating fresh interest in government positions west of the Plaine. Reconnaissance elements are operating near the government base at Xieng Dat, and one team apparently is being sent into the Sala Phou Khoun area, according to intercepts. There is no evidence of any imminent attack by substantial North Vietnamese forces against these two positions, however. Last year, a North Vietnamese battalion threatened the road junction at Sala Phou Khoun, and there has been some speculation that the enemy intends to cut Route 13 there, possibly as a prelude to a drive into northern Vientiane Province.

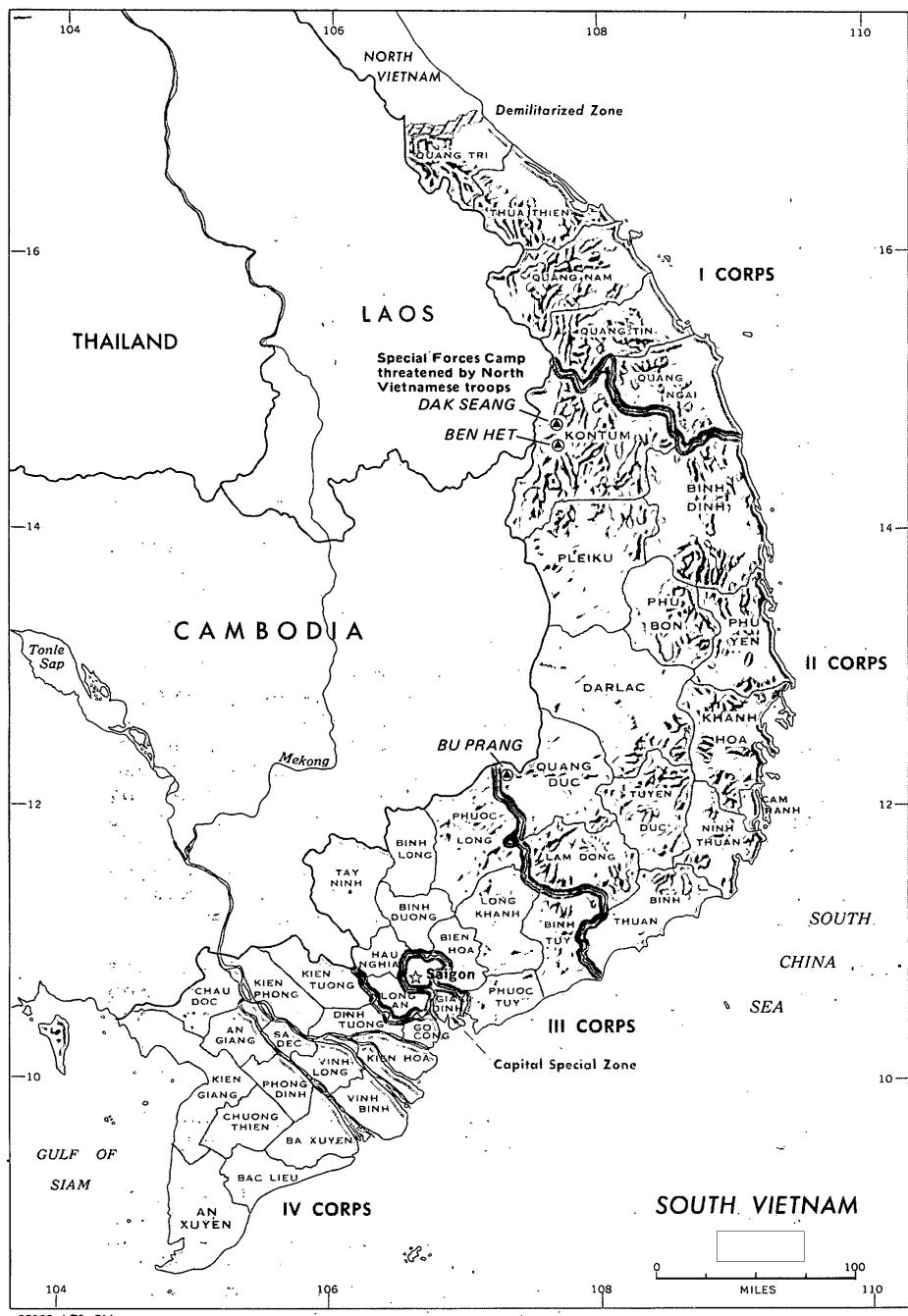
On the political front, rumors continue to circulate regarding the return of Phoumi Nosavan.



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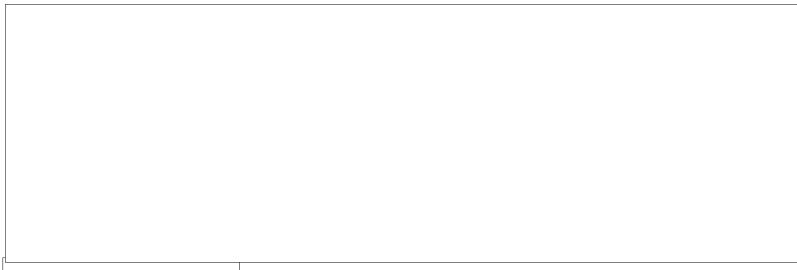
SOUTH VIETNAM

Communist mortar and rocket attacks continued at a relatively high level during the weekend. Some 100 allied positions were struck by light enemy shellings. Stiff ground fighting occurred near the Demilitarized Zone and at a half dozen locations in other areas of the country.

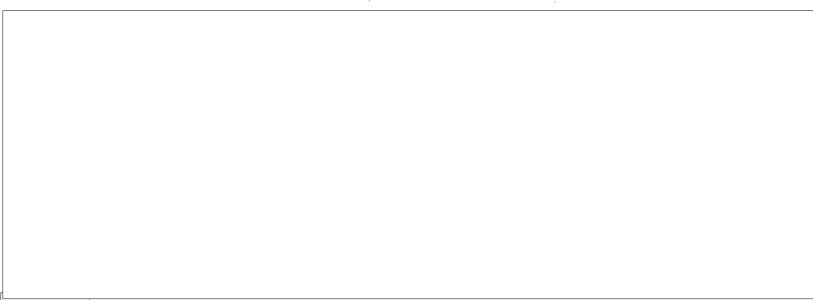
An enemy threat is building in the central highlands, where the North Vietnamese appear to be closing in again on an allied Special Forces camp--this time at Dak Seang. The South Vietnamese now are largely on their own in the highlands. Major elements of the US 4th Infantry Division, which operated in the region for four years, were pulled out recently.

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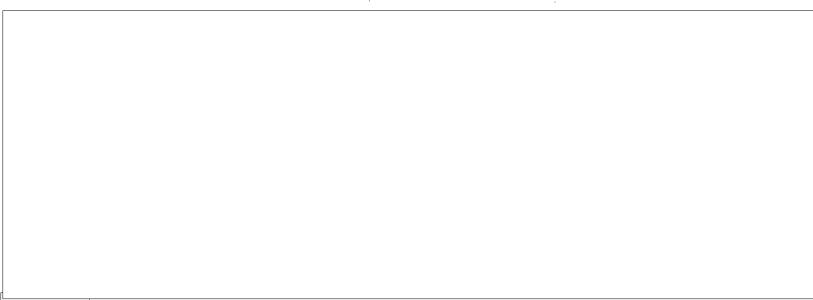


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GUATEMALA

The kidnap-murder of Ambassador von Spreti leaves the Mendez government in a precarious position. Coup plotting has long been fairly common among military officers, and it will be increased by the present widespread frustration over the terrorist incident.

The government may attempt to arrest subversives and "leftists" generally, in the hope of placating the military and the public with at least the semblance of action. Probably none of von Spreti's kidnappers will be caught in the dragnet, however.

The diplomatic community in Guatemala City is understandably worried. Additional kidnapings are likely, as are attempts at assassination. US personnel are especially vulnerable--the terrorists probably believe the US was responsible for the Guatemalans' unwillingness to free prisoners and pay ransom.

International reactions are not yet known. West Germany may break relations altogether, and other countries may recall their envoys.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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COLOMBIA

Although four candidates are campaigning for the presidency, the election on 19 April is really a contest between only two: the "official" National Front nominee, Misael Pastrana Borrero, and the former dictator, General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. At this time, we cannot predict the share of the vote each will get--except that their totals should be nearly equal--and we cannot be sure the winner will take office and serve out the term.

If Pastrana Borrero becomes president (and stays president) he will attempt to carry on with the forward-looking programs and policies of President Lleras. Obviously, a continuation of the National Front's political philosophy would, in the long run, benefit Colombia and preserve its good relations with its neighbors.

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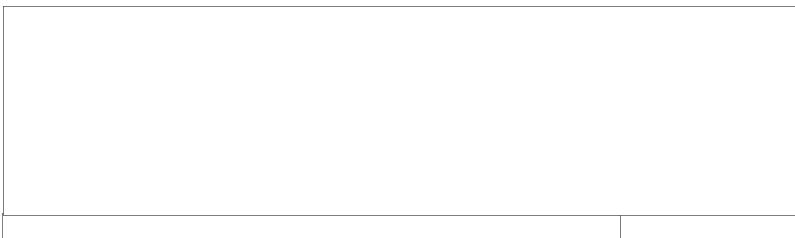
The election of seventy-year old Rojas Pinilla would present a number of sticky problems, some of which would affect relations between Colombia and the US. Following his usurption of the presidency in June 1953, Rojas was popularly acclaimed as a saviour, but within a year he was progressing toward a ruthless dictatorship. His ouster in May 1957 was greeted with widespread rejoicing among politically aware Colombians. Nevertheless, the public works and social welfare projects that Rojas instituted created a large reservoir of support among the urban and rural poor. This support has been carefully nurtured for 13 years by his daughter's radical rightist fringe party, the National Popular Alliance--usually called ANAPO, its Spanish acronym.

The ANAPO campaign probably gives us a foretaste of the Rojas administration, if there is to be one. In his speeches, Rojas has been openly, almost flamboyantly, demagogic. He has promised to raise the peso to parity with the dollar, although it is now about 18 to 1, and he says he intends to nationalize all imports. Also, ANAPO seems to have a scheme to set up some kind of corporate state, but its intentions in this regard have been so poorly spelled out that the idea cannot be assessed.

(continued)

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The greatest danger to public order we can foresee is that Rojas would lose by a narrow margin. He is bound to charge fraud, and his followers, by resorting to violence, could plunge the nation into serious, prolonged turbulence.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

7 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on *Page 1*.

There is independent evidence to support Moscow's official statement that several Soviet leaders are ill. (*Page 3*)

Peking is answering Moscow's propaganda attacks by criticizing Soviet leadership, while muting polemics on sensitive bilateral Sino-Soviet issues. (*Page 5*)

There are signs that opposition parties in the Dominican Republic are weakening in their resolve to boycott next month's elections. (*Page 6*)

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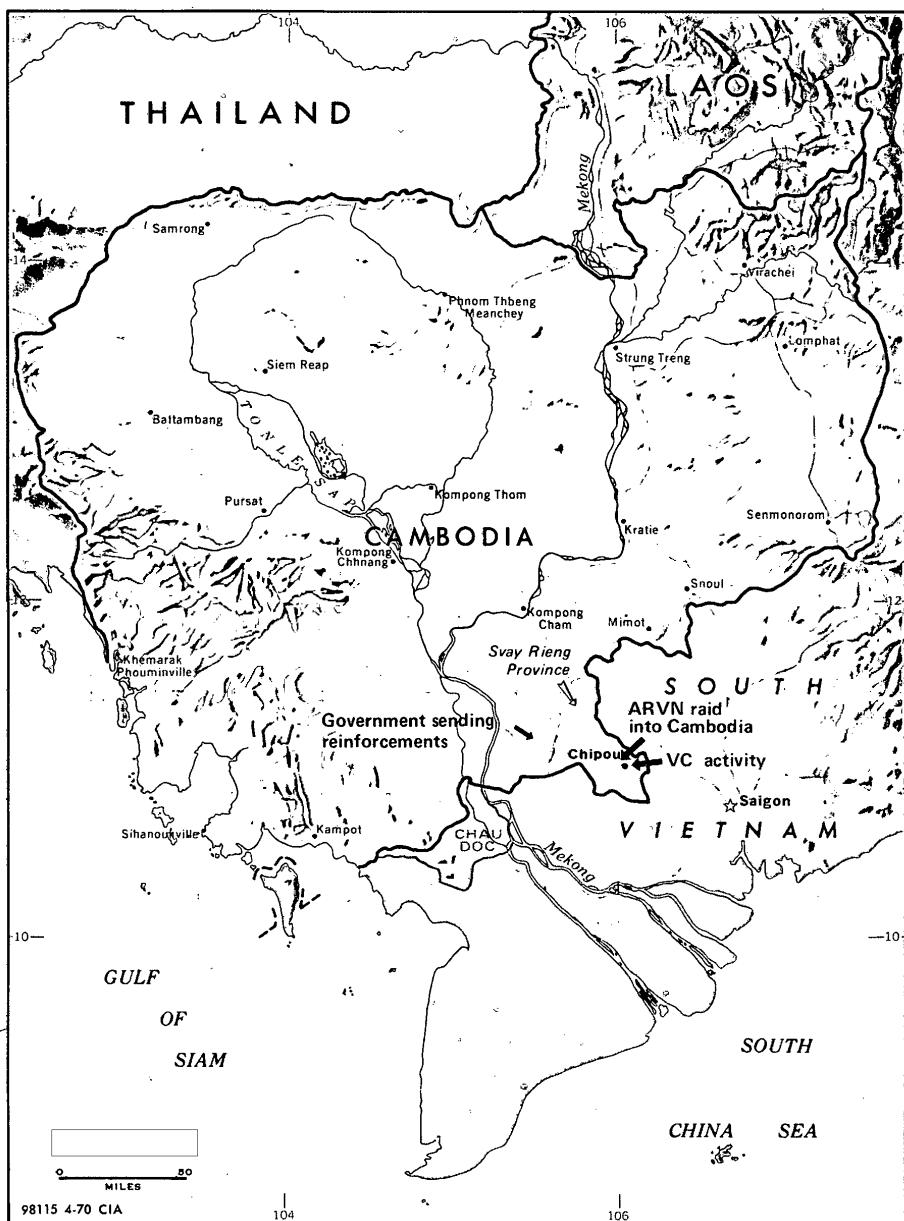
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Cambodia: Current Situation



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The new government in Phnom Penh is still moving to erode Sihanouk's popular base and to build one of its own. The godhead image of the former ruler is strong, however, especially in the countryside. If Phnom Penh pushes too fast, it may only complicate the security problem in the eastern provinces, where the Vietnamese Communists are maintaining pressure. Currently the main trouble spot is the border province of Svay Rieng.

Sihanouk's calls to "liberate" Cambodia, while perhaps not falling on deaf ears, have yet to produce any concrete results. Hanoi's support of his liberation statement finally has been echoed by Peking.

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[redacted] government leaders apparently are determined to move toward abolishing the monarchy. They have solicited the "advice" of the country on the issue, and the official press agency is reporting the receipt of petitions signed by students, professors, and civil servants, all in favor of a republic.

On the military side, the government is having its troubles in Svay Rieng Province. An intercepted army message states that on 5 April "many hundreds" of Viet Cong near Chipou had dug up the main highway in order to halt traffic. Phnom Penh is sending additional reinforcements to Svay Rieng. Farther to the northeast of this activity, South Vietnamese troops on 5 April made a raid against Communist bases just across the Cambodian border.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

In the meantime, Sihanouk picked up some important Communist backing when Chou En-lai announced on 5 April that Peking firmly supports Sihanouk's call for a "liberation" movement in Cambodia. It is not yet clear what prompted Peking to abandon its previously cautious approach, or whether the Chinese, like the Vietnamese, will pull their diplomats out of Phnom Penh.

* * *

The idea of taking the Cambodian problem to the UN Security Council has met with an almost uniformly negative reaction. A number of the Council members believe such a session would bog down in acrimonious debate on Southeast Asian issues, including Vietnam, and would involve a credentials fight, in view of Sihanouk's continued claim to legitimacy. The Soviets meanwhile have gone along with Hanoi's position against Cambodia's request to reactivate the ICC.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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USSR

There is some independent evidence to support a Soviet Foreign Ministry statement that four leading Soviet officials are sidelined by illness. The four--President Podgorny, Premier Kosygin, and politburo members Suslov and Shelepin--have recently been absent from official functions. Podgorny canceled a scheduled trip to Japan on short notice; Japanese officials were informed on 3 April that he would not be able to make the visit because of a cold.

Kosygin was publicly active through 30 March, but he was not on hand to see General Secretary Brezhnev off to Hungary on 1 April.

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Shelepin probably has been ill since late February, when he canceled a trip to Sudan at the last moment.

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Another politburo member, First Deputy Premier Polyansky, has also been out of sight for several weeks, possibly for reasons of health. He last appeared in public on 24 March and has missed several important affairs.

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COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

Peking pointedly denounced the current agricultural program of the Brezhnev leadership in a broadcast on 4 April, charging that its "Hitler-like" policy of guns instead of butter had worsened an already serious food crisis. In particular, it scored what it claimed was Moscow's imitation of the discredited agricultural policies of the Khrushchev regime. In a similar vein, Peking last week attacked the "Brezhnev renegade clique" for selling out hard-fought Soviet interests in Siberia--a reference to the granting of an air route across the USSR--in order to gain favor with the Japanese Government.

Peking no doubt believes that recent reports of dissatisfaction in the USSR with a number of the regime's current programs have made Moscow vulnerable to this type of attack. The Chinese probably are responding to the recent sharp increase in Soviet propaganda against China's stonewalling in the border talks and "provocative" activity along the Sino-Soviet frontier. While damning the Soviet leadership in general terms, China has in contrast been muting polemics on these sensitive bilateral Sino-Soviet problems. Presumably it hopes to portray itself as the more reasonable party in the dispute and to avoid giving Moscow a convenient excuse to break off or downgrade the discussions in Peking.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Opposition parties are weakening in their announced intention to boycott elections on 16 May (see The President's Daily Brief of 3 April). Faced with President Balaguer's refusal to resign and run like any other candidate, the opposition bloc has asked Foreign Minister Amiama Tio to serve as an intermediary in discussions with the President.

President Balaguer has said publicly he will talk to the opposition at any time, either directly or through intermediaries. Balaguer has also created a commission with power to investigate the fairness of the elections, presumably in an attempt to make it easier for the opposition to come around.

Nevertheless, the trend toward compromise could easily be reversed. There are, for example, continuing rumors of a general strike, and there could be major outbreaks of violence for a variety of other reasons.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

8 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The military situation in Laos is assessed on *Page 1*.

[redacted] the Vietnamese Communists,
who are still keeping up their military pressure on
the new government. (*Page 3*)

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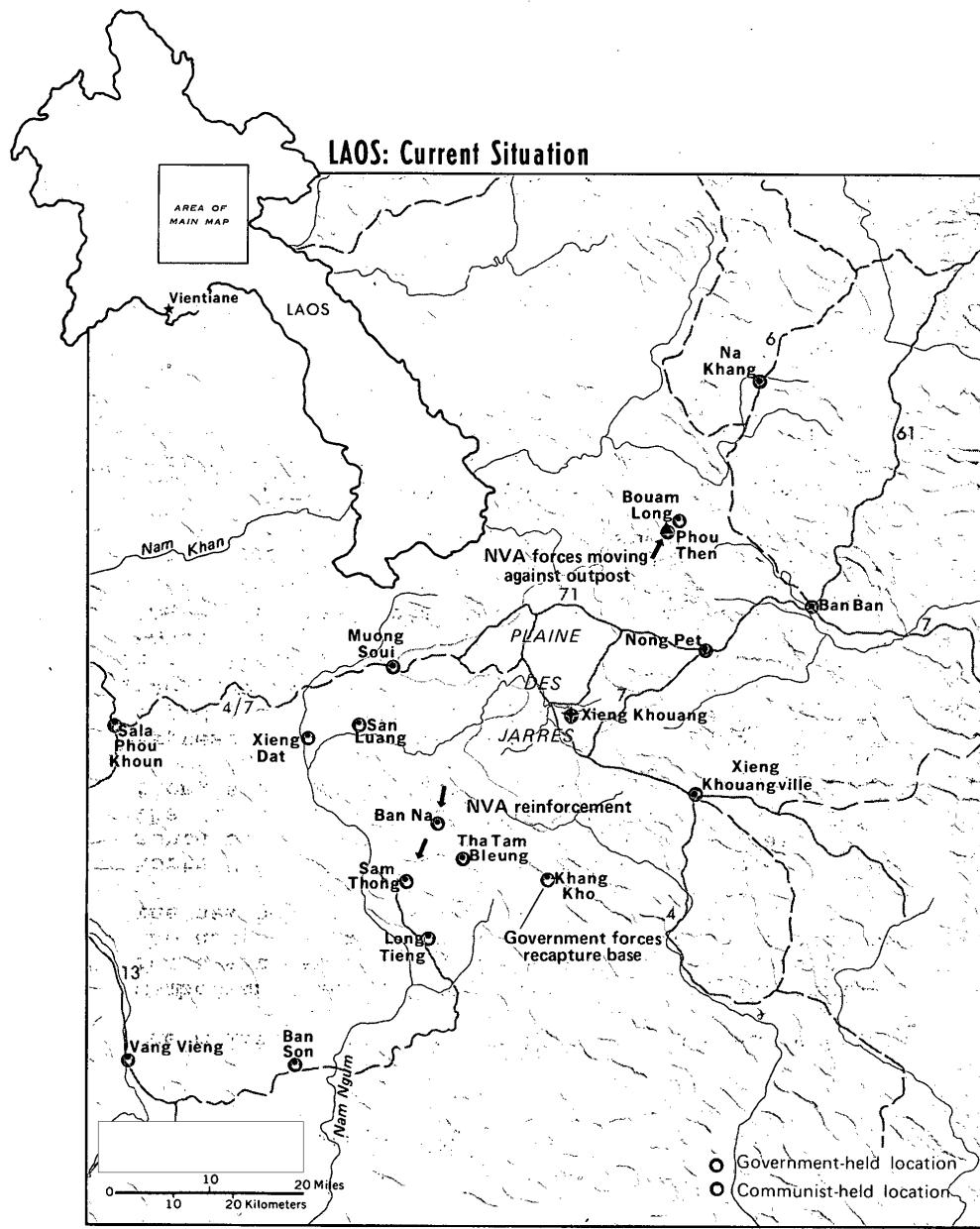
North Vietnam's efforts to supply its forces in the
south prior to the start of the monsoon season, and
the latest information on the rate of troop infiltration,
are discussed on *Page 4*.

Protests of South Vietnamese veterans and students
could lead to considerably more serious trouble for
the government. (*Page 5*)

Soviet willingness to risk becoming more deeply involved in the Middle East conflict through the installation of its SA-3 missiles in Egypt is causing uncertainty among Israeli leaders and more thought among them about reliance on US support. (*Page 6*)

The Soviet Union and Communist China may exchange
ambassadors once again. (*Page 7*)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**LAOS**

Despite the ineffectiveness of enemy actions in recent weeks, the Communists are now preparing to return to the offensive and the battle for Long Tieng is headed into a new phase. The Communists' first sharp thrust toward the base, which three weeks ago came perilously close to sweeping Vang Pao's beleaguered guerrillas from the area, was blunted. At least for the present, the initiative has passed to the government. With regular Lao Army troops from south Laos

Vang Pao has deployed his guerrillas against Communist forces northward to the Plaine des Jarres. This is the kind of work the guerrillas do best, and with continuing heavy air support, they have managed to take back several strategically located ridges and are now pressing the enemy at Tha Tam Bleung.

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For their part, the North Vietnamese appear somewhat at a loss about how to respond to the turnaround in the situation. They have brought up some reinforcements to retake Sam Thong--the refugee center a few miles from Long Tieng--but so far without success. The enemy is clearly having supply problems, although efforts are under way to establish a capability for a prolonged campaign against Long Tieng.

Long Tieng is not out of the woods. The recent history of Laos is replete with instances where the Communists were able to defeat ostensibly superior government forces with remarkable speed and ease. There is no reason to suspect that the Royal Laotian forces reinforcing at Long Tieng will be any better in a serious fight. Nonetheless, time is beginning to slip through the enemy's fingers. The rainy season is about two months away, and the Communists' principal objective is still not gained. The North Vietnamese will almost certainly continue to bore in against Long Tieng, but their capacity to mount deeper offensives into government territory is beginning to slip away.

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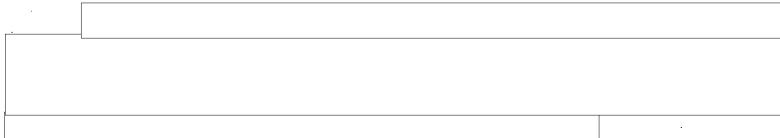
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

After several weeks of preparation, the enemy yesterday launched a series of assaults against Phou Then, an outpost guarding Bouam Long, the most important government base north of the Plaine des Jarres. This action is probably being carried out by major elements of the North Vietnamese 312th Division and designed to eliminate Bouam Long as a springboard for guerrilla operations against Communist supply lines in northern Laos.

Such a use of the 312th Division, which presumably could be used in an all-out assault against Long Tieng, is a fresh sign that the enemy is almost as concerned about avoiding a repetition of Vang Pao's offensive against the Plaine des Jarres as it is about taking Long Tieng itself.

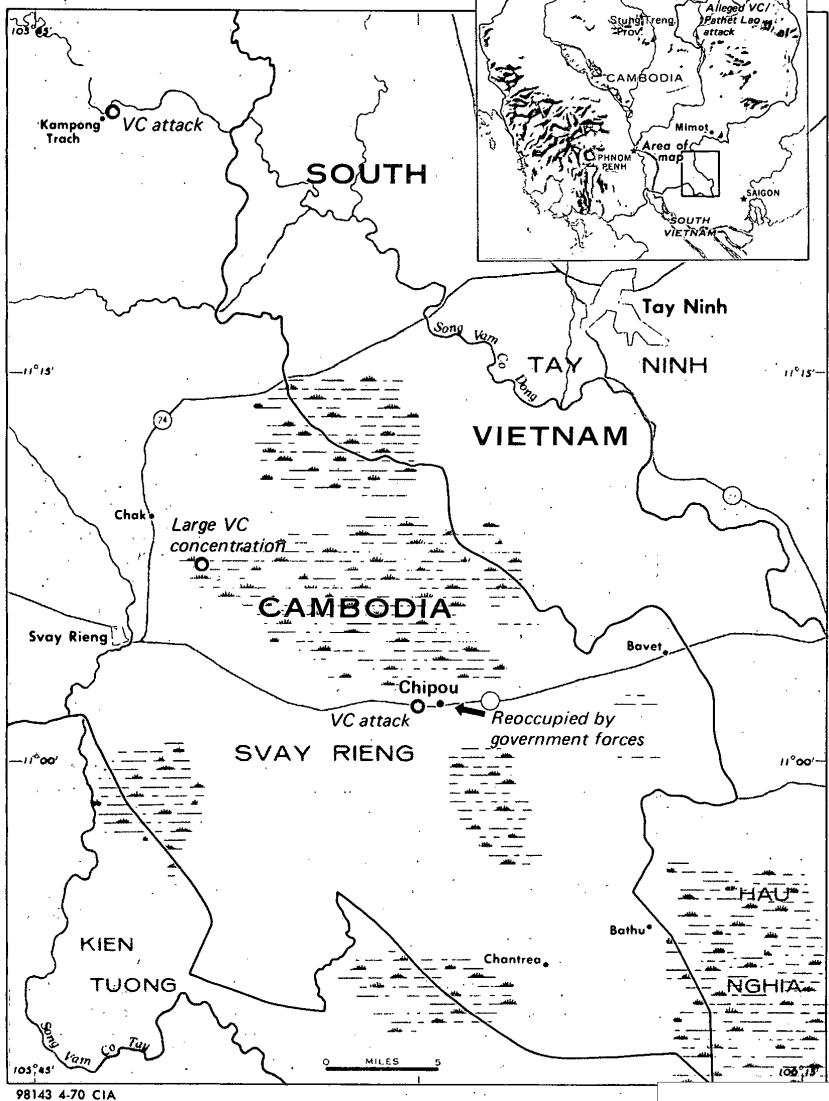
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CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The image consists of seven identical horizontal rectangular frames stacked vertically. Each frame contains a smaller, centered rectangular box at its bottom edge. The top four frames have a thin horizontal line extending from their left edges towards the center. The rightmost frame has a thin horizontal line extending from its right edge towards the center. The entire set is rendered in black and white.

The Vietnamese Communists are keeping up military pressure. Yesterday government forces reoccupied the town of Chipou in Svay Rieng Province but already they are reported preparing to abandon it, fearing more Communist attacks. Viet Cong elements burned two district headquarters and their small military outposts in Svay Rieng on 4 and 5 April. Elsewhere, in northern Cambodia, Vietnamese and Lao Communist forces were said by the Cambodians to have attacked and burned an army outpost in Stung Treng Province on the night of 4 April. Although Stung Treng has been the scene of fairly heavy insurgent activity, this is the first time an attack there has been attributed to the Communists.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

VIETNAM-LAOS

The Communists seem embarked on a final effort to complete supply shipments to South Vietnam before the rainy season settles in. Rear service intercepts mention April as the "critical stage of the crash program," describing it as a "short period of intense work." One major organization in the Laos Panhandle claimed in a recent intercept that 83 percent of the current dry season supply program for South Vietnam had been completed by the end of March.

The possibility of an early advent of the rains may be giving the Communists added reason to finish up quickly. [redacted]

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It is too early yet to judge how complete the rainy season curtailment of supply shipments will be this year. Preliminary indications are that it will be nearly as complete as last year, when the logistics organization virtually withdrew from the panhandle. [redacted]

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As yet there are few signs the Communists intend to turn off the infiltration flow as completely or as early as they did last year. The input so far this month already has surpassed the total for the whole of April 1969, when only 2,300 men started south. But if most of the enemy's logistics units in Laos go home next month--which seems suggested in their recent communications--the Communists probably will be able to sustain only a token infiltration flow over the summer months.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM

The government over the last two days has tried by a combination of firmness and conciliation to get demonstrating veterans off the streets, but so far with little effect. Despite orders to act with restraint, the police in Saigon on a number of occasions used tear gas on the veterans. The government's offer of temporary quarters in Saigon while permanent housing is being built so far has failed to mollify the veterans. President Thieu has also asked for urgent National Assembly action on a bill providing increased payments to veterans.

Thieu is clearly concerned about the veterans' demonstrations because of a fear that their cause is viewed with some sympathy in the armed forces. His attempts to calm the situation are being complicated by a simultaneous student protest and by the general discontent over rising living costs. So far the students and the veterans have not concerted their actions. Should they do so, the government would be in for considerably more serious trouble.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

ISRAEL-USSR-EGYPT

The introduction of Soviet SA-3 missiles into Egypt has caused uncertainty to creep into the calculations of Israeli leaders about Soviet intentions. Heretofore, the Israelis had estimated that Moscow would avoid becoming directly involved in the fighting. Ambassador Barbour believes the government is less certain of this now, and is worried about drawing the Soviets deeper into the conflict. Recently, there has been more emphasis in Tel Aviv on the need for US support and for a US warning to the Soviets against further entanglement.

The changed situation has provoked a wide-ranging debate on future Israeli military actions. There is general agreement, however, that air superiority must be maintained over the Suez Canal in order to keep down casualties and prevent Nasir from undertaking new adventures. In this regard, Israeli leaders have said they would not raid Cairo, Alexandria, or the Aswan region, all areas of special interest to the Soviets, in tacit exchange for continued Israeli air superiority along the canal.

There have been no raids on SA-3 sites in any of these places, and no strikes close to Cairo since late February. At the same time, the Israelis have bombed heavily along the canal in the hope of preventing the installation of an effective Soviet air defense.

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USSR - COMMUNIST CHINA

Soviet officials say that they and the Chinese have agreed to exchange ambassadors once again, after a hiatus going back to 1966. Public announcement has been delayed pending Peking's acceptance of Moscow's nominee, Vladimir Stepakov. Stepakov, who until recently headed the party central committee's propaganda department, has neither diplomatic experience nor expertise in Chinese affairs. No one has been nominated yet by the Chinese side.

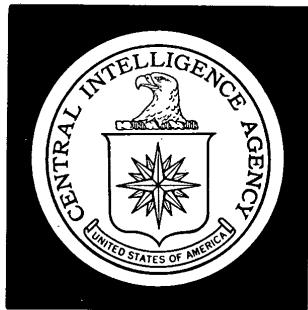
Soviet officials made a point of presenting this news to US Embassy officials in Moscow as evidence of progress at the Peking talks. Even so, there is no indication of progress on basic differences such as the frontier question, and Moscow's war of words with China continues.

The Chinese clearly view the current talks as a useful means to forestall potentially dangerous Soviet pressure. As a result they also have an interest in creating the appearance of some progress and probably will accept the new Soviet ambassador. For their part, the Soviets may be calculating that they could substitute the new ambassador for Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov and continue talks at a lower level, avoiding the appearance of failure.

We also suspect that in notifying the US of the ambassadorial agreement, the Soviets may be trying to suggest that they are bringing their problems with China under control on the eve of the second round of the strategic arms limitation talks.

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9 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Soviets have launched a [redacted]
[redacted] satellite, the fifth since early 1968.
(Page 1)

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

A Soviet satellite, dubbed Cosmos 330, was orbited on 7 April from Plesetsk.

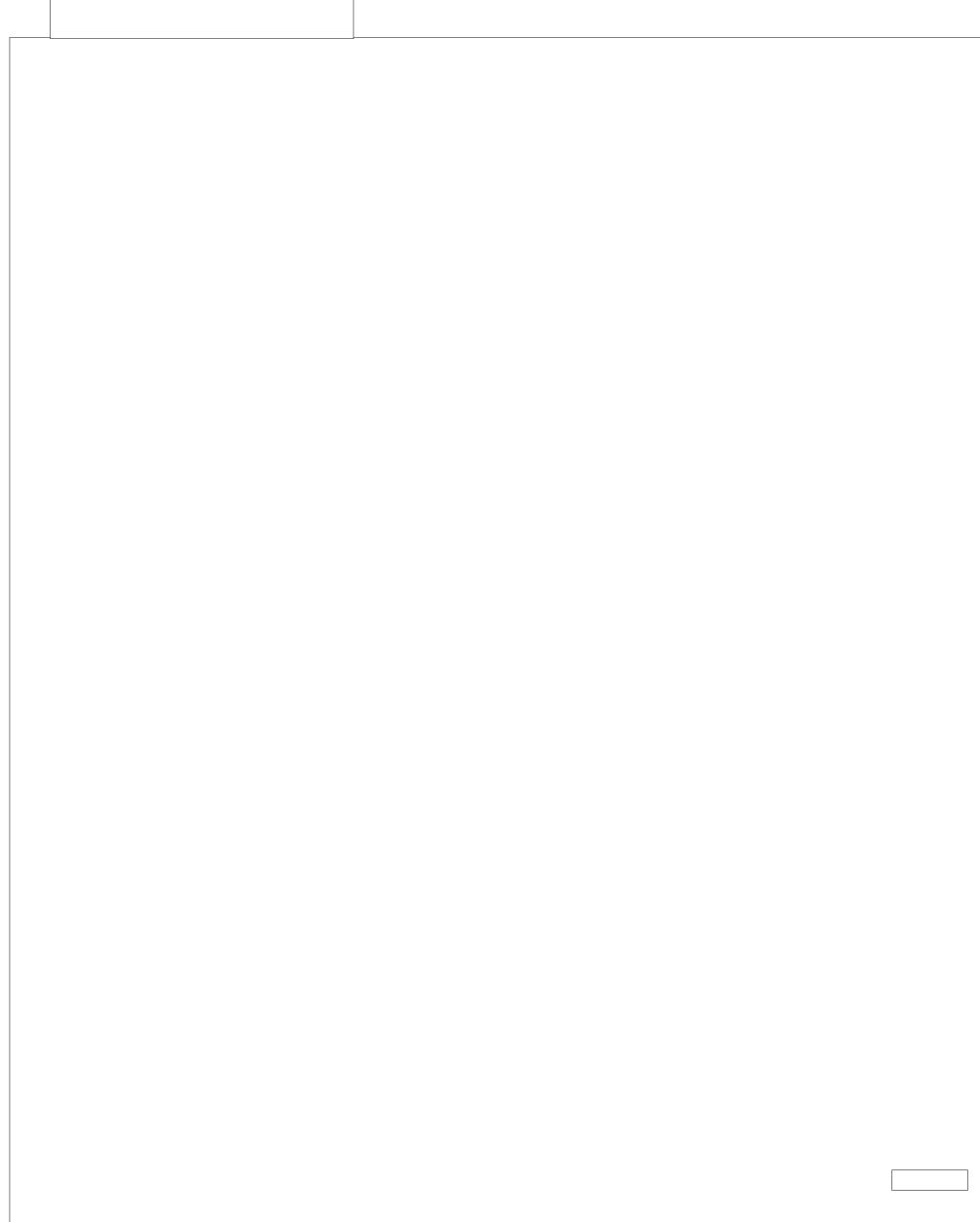
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[redacted] the fifth in a series sent up since early in 1968. Four are still active.

These satellites--whose missions were only recently determined--record data collected while passing over preselected target areas.

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EGYPT-USSR



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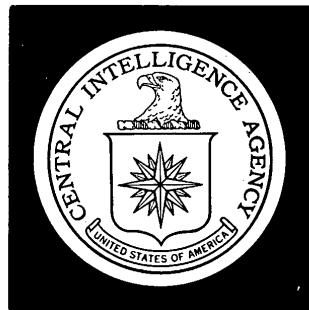


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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

10 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The party central committee is expected to meet in Moscow today, and if it does it may stop some of the extravagant rumor-mongering about a shake-up in the Soviet power structure. (Page 1)

Le Duc Tho is leaving Paris for Hanoi, but it is hard to say if he is really needed at home or if his departure is just another slap at the US. (Page 2)

In Saigon, the National Assembly will balk at giving Thieu special decree powers. (Page 3)

[redacted] Cambodia. 50X1
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[redacted] Cambodia [redacted] 550X1
[redacted] (Page 5) 50X1

[redacted] Lao [redacted] 50X1
[redacted] (Page 6) 50X1

The Canadian Parliament now has government-sponsored legislation giving Canada control of the northern archipelago and setting a 12-mile territorial limit. (Page 7)

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(Page 8)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

The French press report from Moscow that the Soviet party central committee will meet today in Moscow is the most specific report of the many we have seen recently on this subject. The "informed Soviet sources" quoted by AFP claim that this is the first step toward an eventual reshuffle of the leadership. They note, however, that the meeting might be delayed, pending the recovery of the four ailing leaders--President Podgorny, Premier Kosygin, and politburo members Suslov and Shelepin.

We have no firm evidence to confirm or deny this report. Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin, a candidate member of the central committee, is leaving for home on 10 April, but his trip had been planned since mid-March. The Soviet ambassador in Rome, who is a member of the central auditing commission but not of the central committee, left his post on 1 April, presumably for home leave. No other ambassadorial travel, which we sometimes note in connection with plenums, has been reported.

Rumors of impending changes in the Soviet leadership have been flying for the past week, sparked at least in part by the absence due to illness of so many members of the politburo. If a central committee meeting indeed comes off, it could be for the purpose of demonstrating the unity of the leadership, despite the widespread reports of rifts, or for some routine purpose.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NORTH VIETNAM

Le Duc Tho, the real power in North Vietnam's delegation at the Paris talks, is returning to Hanoi. North Vietnamese officials in Paris announced that he will leave today. Tho returned to Paris in late January after a seven-month absence, ostensibly to attend the French Communist Party Congress. Why he stayed on for some two months after the congress has never been made clear.

Tho's return probably is connected with a new round of decision-making in Hanoi, possibly involving the coup in Cambodia and last week's proposals by France for international consultations on Indochina. As a ranking politburo figure, Tho probably would have a hand in any decisions that are to be made. His previous departures from Paris have seemed to signal the start of over-all policy reviews.

Tho's trip also could serve a narrower, tactical purpose. It could be designed as pressure on Washington. The Communists may attempt to depict Tho's departure as a result of American obduracy in not sending a replacement for Ambassador Lodge.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM

The National Assembly probably will resist passage of Thieu's planned legislation giving the president special decree powers. When Khiem presented Thieu's scheme to the Upper House on 8 April, he did not indicate how Thieu would use such powers if he had them, but South Vietnamese officials believe they will be directed at resolving economic problems and, perhaps, responding to the grievances of the disabled veterans.

Thieu is already under heavy criticism for relying on extraconstitutional devices, such as the military tribunal which recently convicted Tran Ngoc Chau. The Assembly is jealous of its prerogatives, however, and is highly unlikely to grant Thieu more extensive authority than he already has, especially in sensitive economic matters.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Cambodia: Current Situation



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM - CAMBODIA

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The South Vietnamese carried out several raids into Cambodia during late March, after which there was a lull in such activity for about a week. Since 5 April, however, South Vietnamese troops and air forces have conducted daily cross-border raids on the Communists in Svay Rieng Province.

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* * *

The Communists, meanwhile, are continuing to put fairly strong pressure on Cambodian border defenses in Svay Rieng Province. They probably intend to use whatever force is necessary to ensure the security of their border bases and north-south supply routes. A major thrust by the Communists deep into Cambodia seems unlikely for now, unless their position along the border becomes untenable because of repeated attacks from the Vietnamese side.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA



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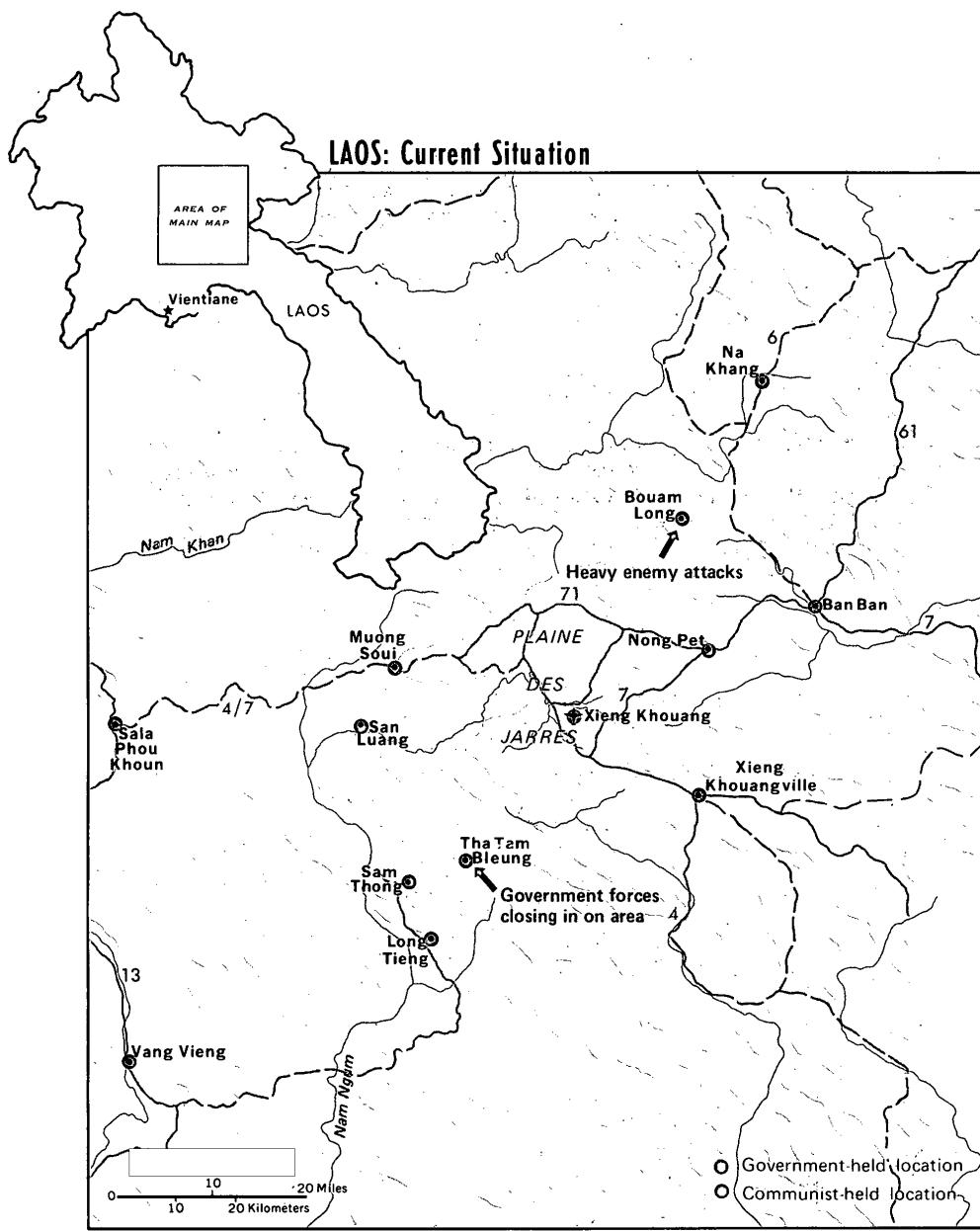


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



98170 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

The government's response to the Lao Communist peace proposal, delivered yesterday to Pathet Lao representative Soth Phetrasy in Vientiane, amounts to a counterproposal to the Neo Lao Hak Sat's statement of 6 March. Sidestepping the Communist demand for an unconditional bombing halt, the text calls for a total cease-fire and the immediate withdrawal of "foreign forces," supervised by the International Control Commission. It also calls for a meeting of "interested parties" in order to seek an equitable solution.

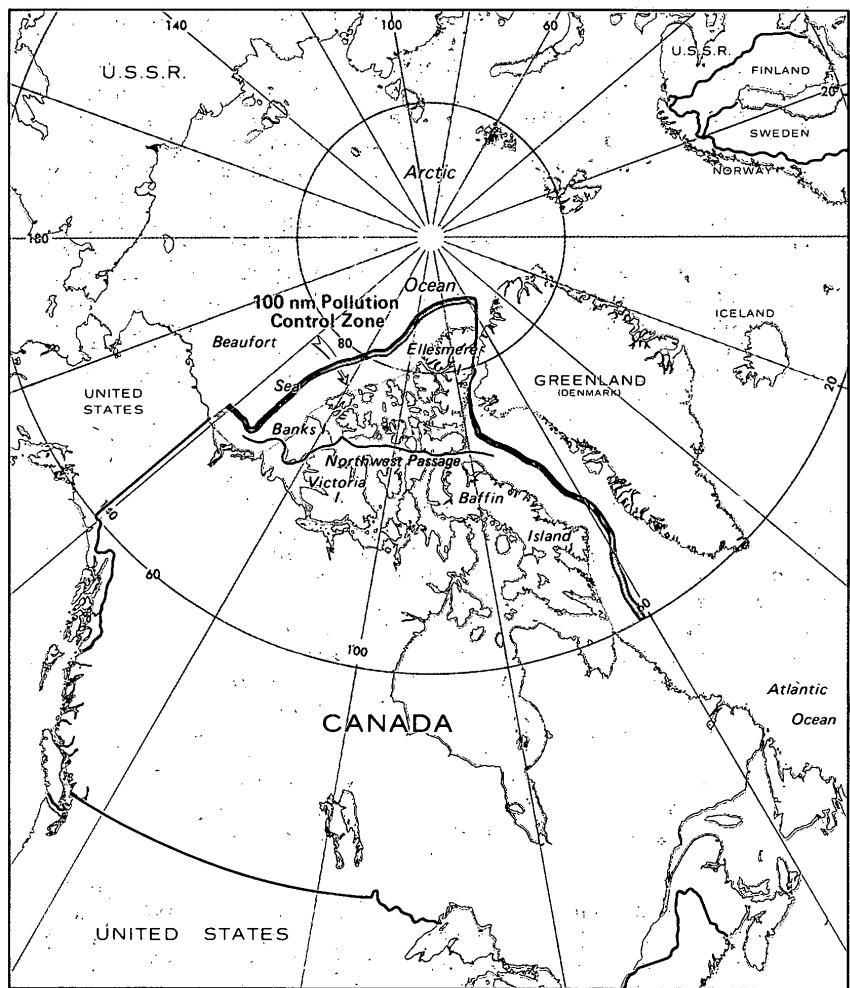
The message is replete with references to North Vietnamese aggression in Laos and makes it clear that this is at the heart of the country's difficulties. It does not, however, pose the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops as a precondition to a cease-fire or talks. The reference to a cease-fire in "all zones without exception," which presumably would include the Ho Chi Minh trail area, may have been designed to appeal specifically to Hanoi. Government leaders probably realize, however, that the Communists would almost certainly reject meaningful supervision of their "liberated areas."

* * *

Heavy fighting has again broken out near Bouam Long, the government's most important base north of the Plaine des Jarres. On the night of 8-9 April, several hundred North Vietnamese troops attacked four outposts commanding the southern approaches to the base. Guerrilla defenders successfully repulsed all of the attacks, but large numbers of enemy troops--probably from the North Vietnamese 312th Division--continue to maneuver throughout the area. Bouam Long itself remains under sporadic artillery fire. The Communist actions have already neutralized several of the government's heavy weapons in the area, and the situation is described as serious.

South of the Plaine, government forces are continuing to close in on the key enemy position at Tha Tam Bleung.

Canada Moves to Prevent Pollution of Arctic Waters



98165 4-70 CIA

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CANADA

A bill introduced in Parliament Wednesday provides that ships transiting the Northwest Passage will have to comply with stringent antipollution regulations. Trudeau also tabled legislation that, if passed, will extend Canada's territorial seas to 12 miles.

Although the bills as written avoid any outright claim to sovereignty, in effect they give Canada full control over the northern archipelago. The government stressed to the press, however, that the waterway would be open to "innocent passage" by ships of all nations.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR-EGYPT

The Soviet helicopter carrier Moskva is in Alexandria

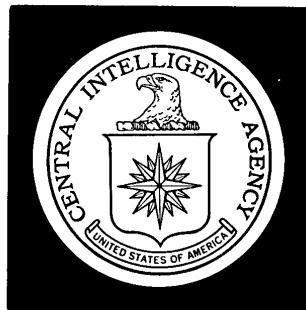


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The Moskva's visit probably is intended as a display of Soviet support for the Arab cause. Probably it also means that the Moskva's role in the Soviet naval exercises in the Mediterranean has been completed.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Top Secret



The President's Daily Brief

11 April 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

11 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hanoi's representatives in Paris seem cool to the French proposal for discussions on Indochina, and the French do not appear optimistic about getting a favorable response from Hanoi. (Page 1)

[redacted] (Page 2)

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[redacted] Cambodia. (Page 3)

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[redacted] Soviets [redacted] (Page 5)

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Lao Government forces, pressed by the enemy, have abandoned an outpost north of the Plaine des Jarres. (Page 5)

The Soviet military airlift to Egypt apparently has ended. (Page 5)

[redacted] Jordan [redacted]

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Page 5.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NORTH VIETNAM - FRANCE

Hanoi's representatives in Paris have thrown cold water on the recent French proposal for discussions on Indochina. Politburo member Le Duc Tho, talking to newsmen yesterday before he departed for home, left the strong impression that Hanoi still insists on reaching a settlement in South Vietnam--a settlement involving US withdrawal--before entering broader Indochina discussions. On 9 April the press spokesman for the North Vietnamese delegation, while emphasizing that his government was still reserving its position, implied that "our people" think the French suggestion "furthers American aggression."

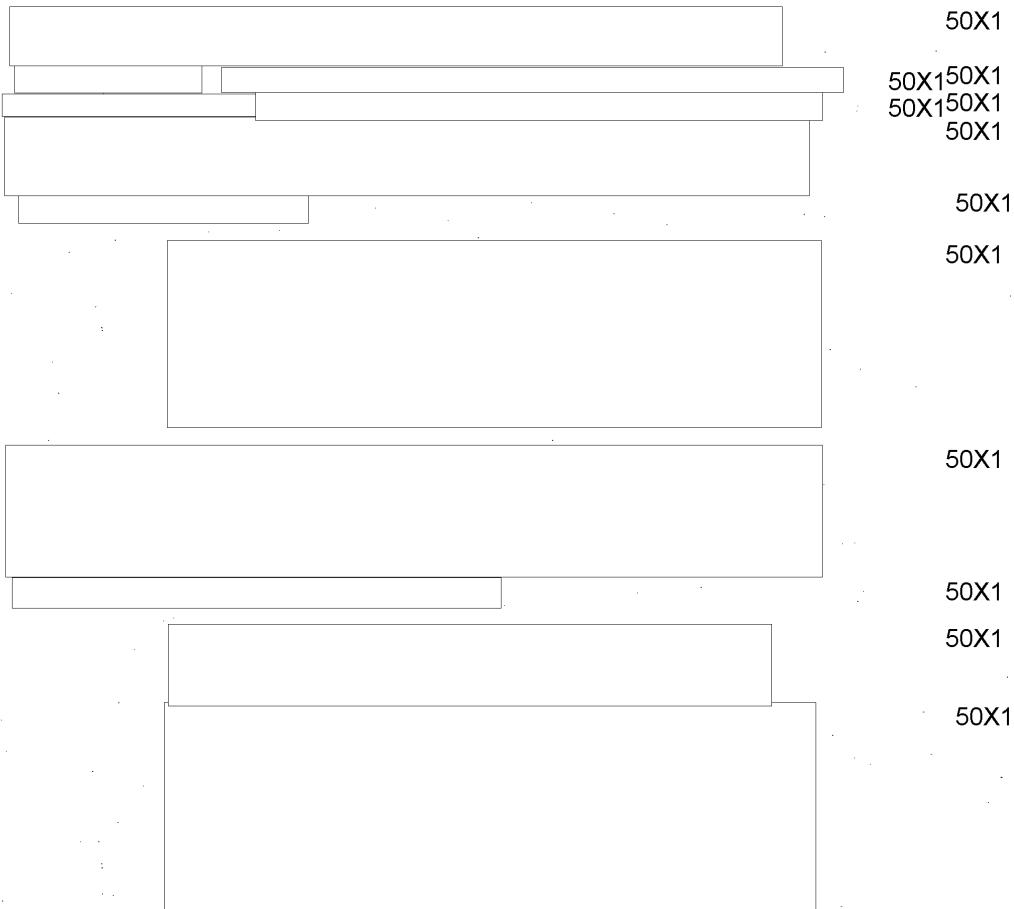
Both Tho and the press representative made plain that their pronouncements are not to be taken as a flat rejection of the French proposal. Tho's insistence on the priority of the "South Vietnamese problem" suggests a negotiating ploy: portions of the proposal dealing with South Vietnam are clearly favorable to the Vietnamese Communists. It seems clear, however, that the North Vietnamese are viewing it with a jaundiced eye.

The French themselves apparently are not sanguine about the possibility of a favorable response from Hanoi. Foreign Ministry Asian affairs director Froment-Meurice, who may have been present when Foreign Minister Schumann discussed the proposal with Tho, told Ambassador Habib on Thursday that he had "no great hopes" of an encouraging reply.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA



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SOUTH VIETNAM - CAMBODIA



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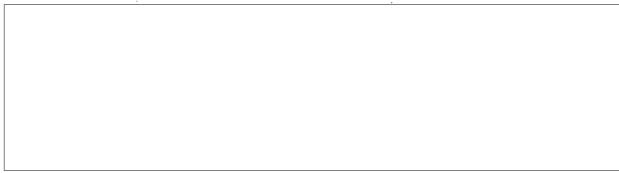
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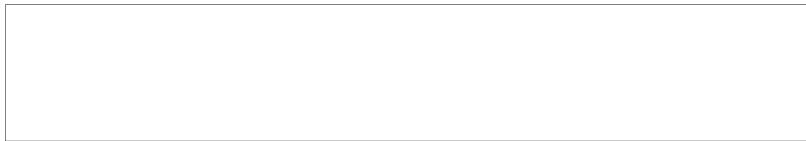
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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NOTES

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Laos: Under heavy enemy pressure, the government yesterday abandoned a key defensive outpost near Bouam Long, north of the Plaine des Jarres (see The President's Daily Brief of 10 April). The military situation otherwise is essentially unchanged.

USSR-Egypt: The Soviet military airlift appears to have ended. Only one AN-12 has arrived in Egypt since 5 April. In all there were 76 AN-12 flights.

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[redacted] cargo may have included additional equipment for improving the MIG-21s, urgently needed maintenance equipment and spare parts, and possibly air defense equipment.

Jordan

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Top Secret



The President's Daily Brief

13 April 1970



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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

13 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Weekend skirmishing in Laos centered on the government guerrilla base at Sam Thong, a few miles to the northwest of Long Tieng. (Page 1)

On Page 2, [redacted]

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In the Soviet Union, two veteran regional party bosses have been reassigned to jobs in Moscow dealing with economics and technology. (Page 3)

Vietnamese Communist forces are keeping up the pressure in two Cambodian border provinces. (Page 4)

South Vietnamese veteran and student agitation has tapered off. (Page 4)

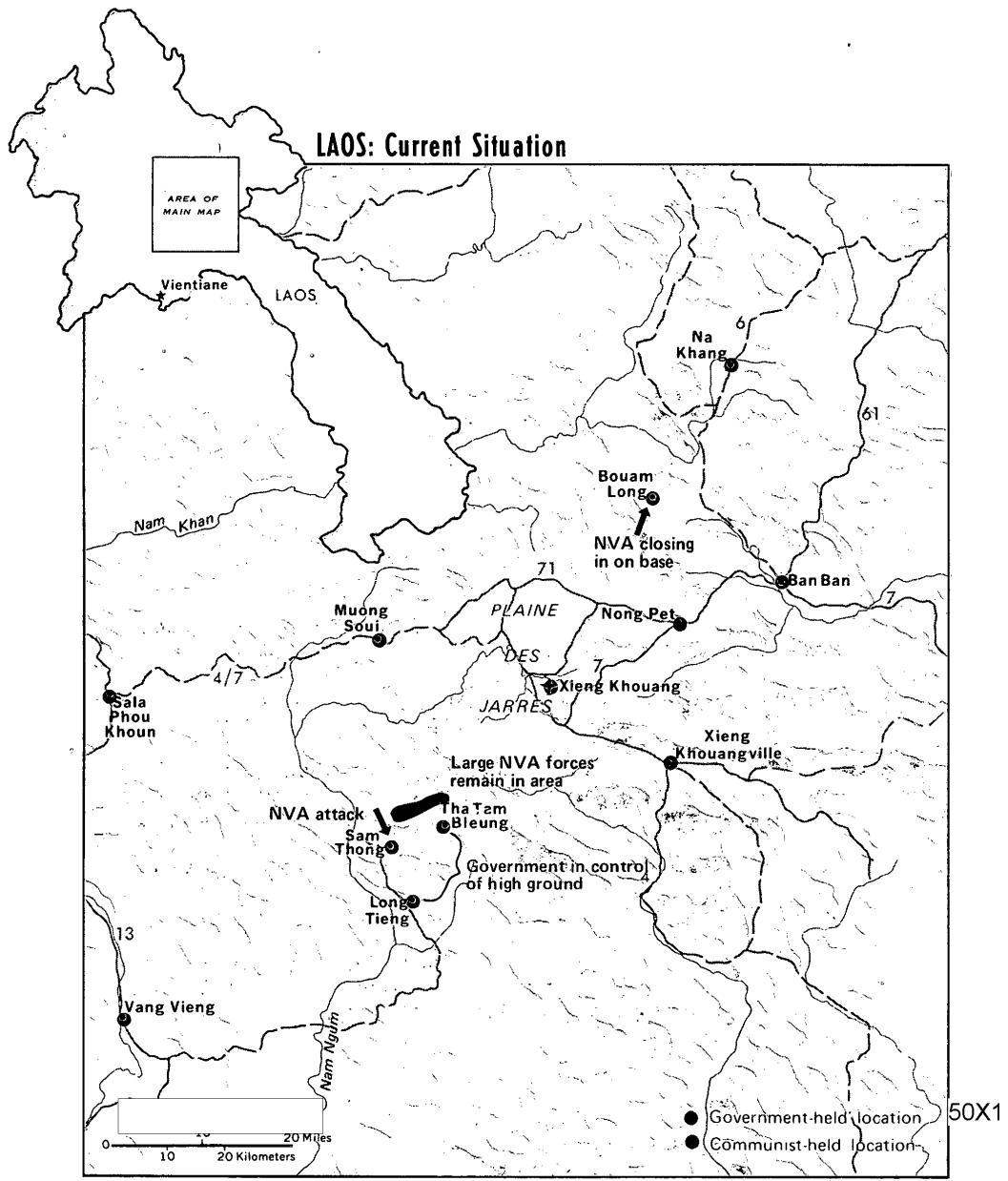
[redacted] Soviets [redacted]

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



98182 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

In the most significant ground action over the weekend, North Vietnamese forces launched an unsuccessful ground assault against the government base at Sam Thong early yesterday morning. This attack, the enemy's second major attempt to overrun the base within a week, proved costly to both sides--about 30 Communist attackers were killed, as were 15 government defenders. The government has moved reinforcements into the camp and is still holding all its positions, but late reports indicate enemy troops are again moving on the base from the north.

Although the enemy still poses a significant threat to Sam Thong, government guerrillas now are in control of all the prominent ridges to the north between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung.

The North Vietnamese are continuing to strengthen their supply lines southwest of the Plaine des Jarres. Recently, a North Vietnamese rear services unit moved into the area immediately northwest of Tha Tam Bleung.

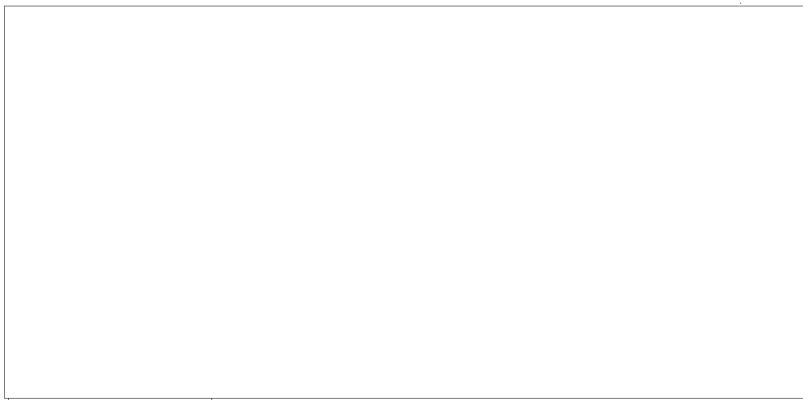
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North of the Plaine, Communist forces are edging closer to the government base at Bouam Long. Government defenders have pulled back from a key position guarding the southwestern approaches, and North Vietnamese troops have begun probing defenses within a mile of the base.

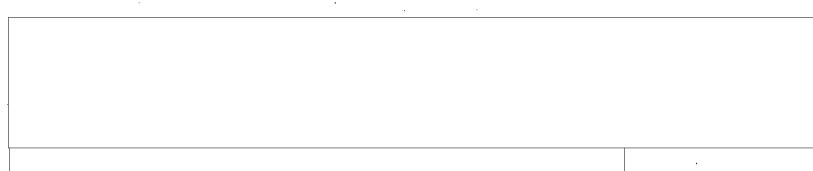
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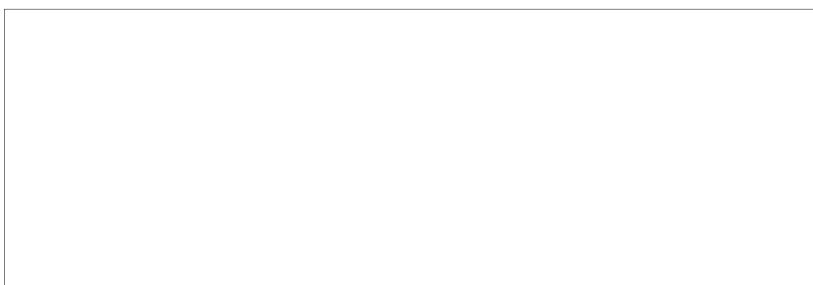


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

Pravda on 11 April announced the appointments of two regional party bosses to government jobs dealing with economic planning and technology. L. N. Yefremov was named first deputy chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology; and T. I. Sokolov was appointed first deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee.

Both men, who have specialized in management of agriculture, have been in eclipse for the past several years. Yefremov was demoted from the Presidium (Politburo) following Khrushchev's removal. Sokolov had run into trouble earlier, during the period when he was responsible for party affairs in the virgin lands.

Ambassador Beam says that both appointments may be demotions, since the two men stand a chance of losing the Central Committee status that went along with their former jobs. In the short run their appointments to the government bureaucracy represent an effort by the party to strengthen its control over the management of the ailing Soviet economy. Last December, Brezhnev harshly criticized the poor economic performance of 1969 and placed much of the blame on the government bureaucracy.

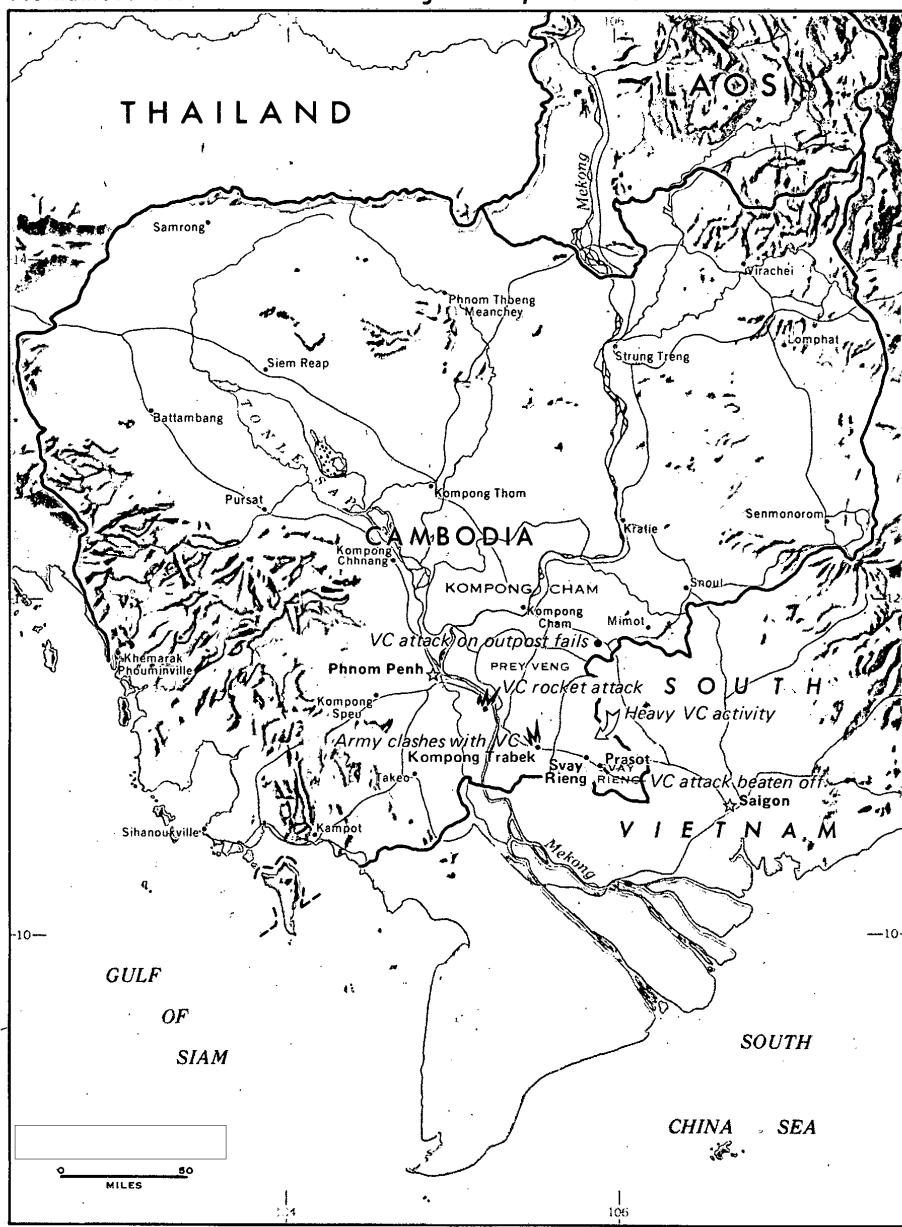


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Vietnamese Communists Maintaining Military Pressure



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98183 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Cambodia: The Communists are maintaining military pressure on government forces near the border. Large numbers of Viet Cong troops are still operating in eastern Svay Rieng Province, where another Communist attack on Prasot was beaten off Saturday.

The Communists are also more active in Prey Veng Province. Intercepted army messages indicate the presence of sizable Communist concentrations in Prey Veng, some of which are relatively far in from the border.

South Vietnam: Veteran and student demonstrators for the moment at least are holding their fire. Most veterans seem willing to await the outcome of pending National Assembly action on new benefits. They also appear disposed to give the government a little time to deliver on its promise of new housing. The students, too, have been fairly quiet the last few days. But some of the more militant of them may be spurred into renewed agitation by the government's announcement yesterday that, beginning on 20 April, a military court will try 21 students on charges of treason or otherwise endangering national security.

USSR: [redacted]

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

14 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Soviet leadership clique probably will survive
the stresses and strains noticed recently. (Page 1)

The Lon Nol government has turned in a creditable
performance thus far, but the Communists have not yet
demonstrated their real strength. (Page 2) [redacted]

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[redacted] (Page 3)
Laos was quiet last night, but both sides are probing
and testing each other while getting ready for more
vigorous action. (Page 5)

At Annex we present an assessment of the divisive
problems of the collective leadership in the USSR.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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USSR

Several current indicators tend to undercut recent rumors that a major shakeup in the Soviet leadership is about to occur. (Nevertheless, pressures for change are growing, and are examined at Annex.)

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--Shelepin, who appears to have lost ground [redacted] returned to [redacted]
public view last Friday.

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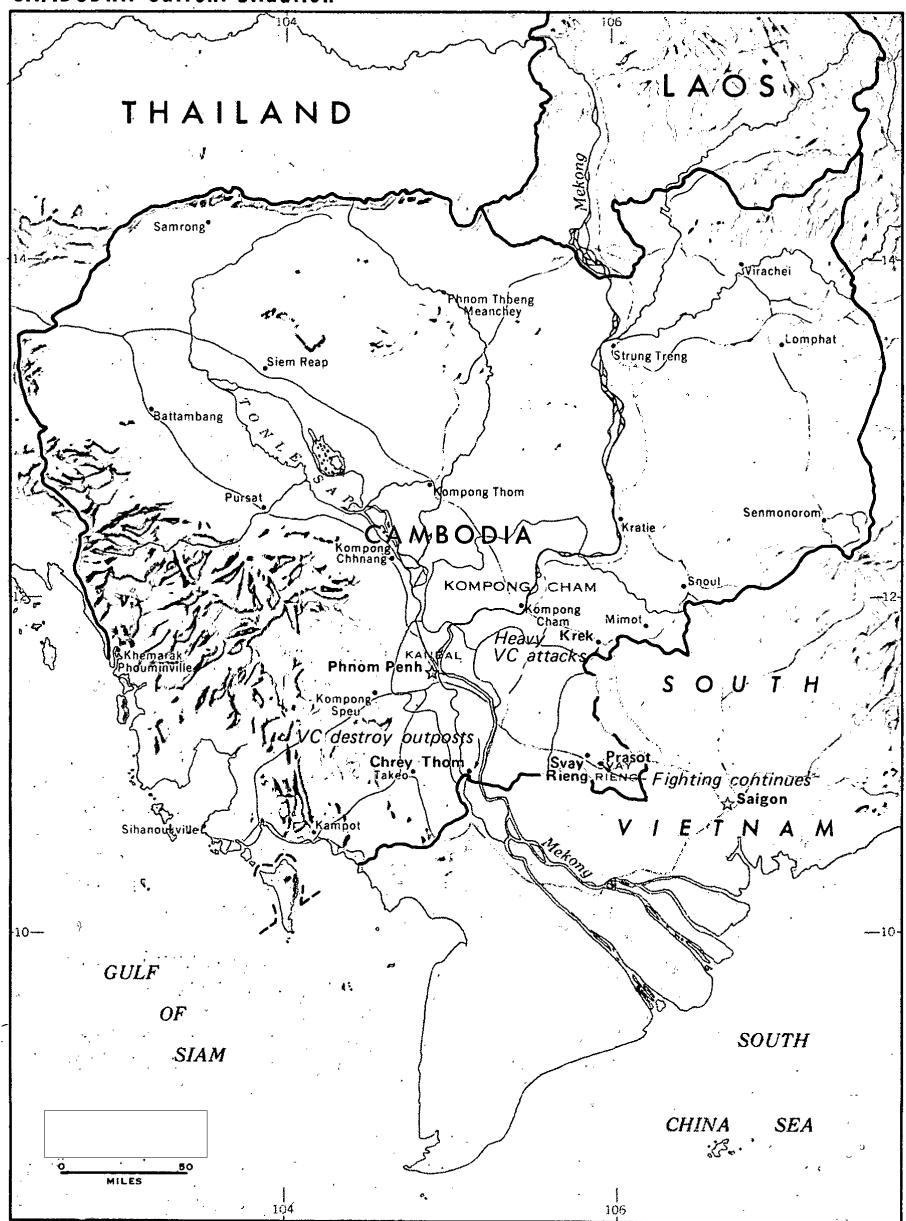
--Rumors of a Central Committee plenum last week proved to be false.

[redacted] 50X1

We expect a largely ceremonial Central Committee meeting early next week as part of the celebration of the Lenin centennial. Unity will probably be maintained for this occasion.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The new leaders in Phnom Penh have handled themselves with remarkable aplomb, but the crucial tests may still be before them. The spate of Communist attacks along the border in recent days once again raises the specter of an all-out Communist offensive. Because the Communists do not like to gamble, and because a heavy-handed attack against Cambodia would involve serious military and political losses, the odds are still against it.

The danger, however, is that the Communists may be driven to more forceful measures than they would otherwise wish to take. If the North Vietnamese become convinced that the Lon Nol government will not agree to some accommodation on bases and supply problems that they can live with, and if South Vietnamese forces continue to move across the border with Phnom Penh's tacit acquiescence if not active support, the Communists may then feel that they have no other choice but to move forcefully to restore Sihanouk.

Their current activity serves two purposes. It helps carve out larger areas of Communist influence in Cambodia, and at the same time it puts Phnom Penh on notice that it is in for rough treatment if it continues to be obdurate.

The Cambodians have suffered fresh setbacks along the border. Viet Cong forces attacked and destroyed seven small government outposts in Kandal Province on 12 April. In the largest action, over 40 government defenders were killed or wounded at the village of Chrey Thom. In Kompong Cham Province, heavy Viet Cong attacks against the Krek army garrison resulted in similar government losses. Near Prasot, in Svay Rieng Province, there were further clashes between Cambodian and Communist forces. According to an unconfirmed press report, the town of Svay Rieng came under artillery fire yesterday, but damage apparently was slight.

Cambodian army intercepts indicate that the Viet Cong have been arming local Vietnamese villagers in scattered areas along the eastern border.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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Such reports have contributed to the increasingly hostile attitude Phnom Penh is showing toward the Vietnamese community in Cambodia.



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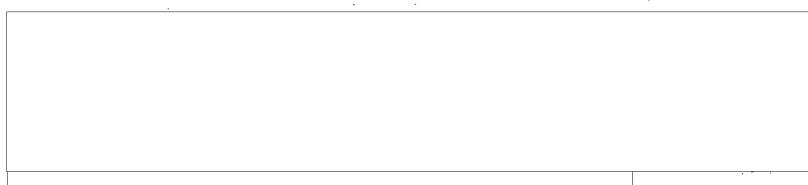


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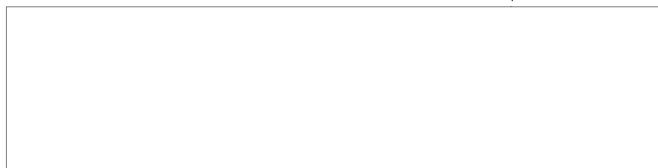
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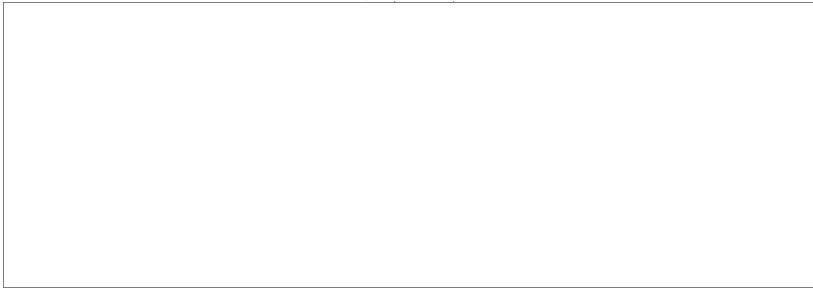
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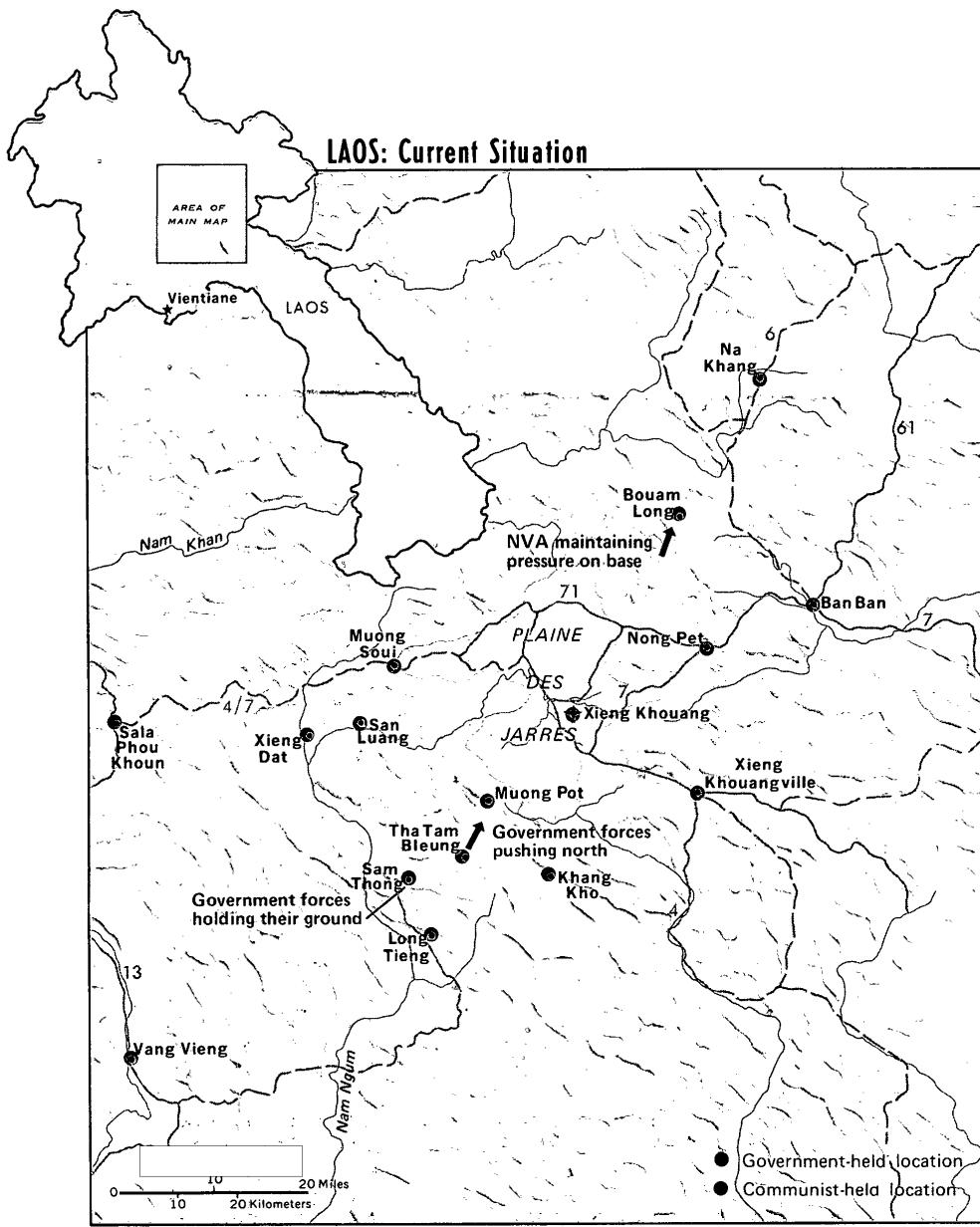


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

Only minor skirmishing was reported yesterday in the Sam Thong area, but the government's position there remains precarious. On 12 April government forces repulsed an attack by an estimated two North Vietnamese battalions. Vang Pao's forces are still holding the Sam Thong airstrip as well as the surrounding valley, but the enemy commands the high ground to the north.

Government forces have begun pushing north of Tha Tam Bleung. Advance elements have called in air strikes on a large enemy troop concentration near Muong Pot, and other government troops sweeping to the east have uncovered a sizable enemy cache of long-range rockets. The Communists remained active in the area between Tha Tam Bleung and Long Tieng, however, and overran at least one government hilltop position overnight.

Interrogation of a recently captured North Vietnamese private underscores some of the problems that have beset the Communists in northern Laos during the past few months.

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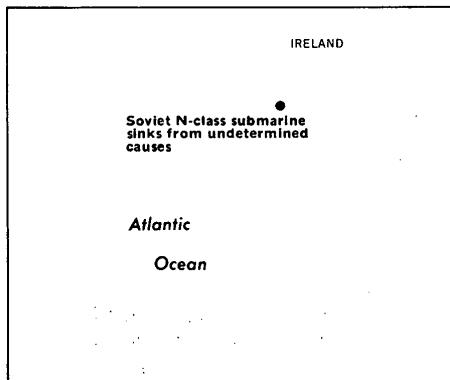
He claims that continuous combat has taken a heavy toll of the battalion's experienced troops and that it now consists mostly of trainees and a few experienced officers.

In spite of these troubles, the battalion is still an effective fighting force. Two of its companies occupied part of Sam Thong early in April before being driven off. The battalion also may have been involved in the latest round of attacks against the base.

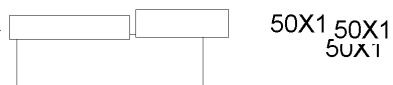
The Communists are maintaining pressure against the government base at Bouam Long, north of the Plaine des Jarres. The base and its surrounding outposts remain under heavy weapons and artillery fire as elements of the North Vietnamese 312th Division continue to close in.



N-class Nuclear-Powered Torpedo Attack Submarine



Operational units 14
Armament 32 torpedoes
Maximum submerged speed ... 30 knots



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

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USSR: In Moscow late yesterday, TASS announced that the Soviet Navy will conduct exercises--code-named OKEAN--in the Atlantic and Pacific.

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USSR: [redacted] press reports that a Soviet N-class nuclear-powered attack submarine sank from undetermined causes about 400 miles southwest of Ireland on 12 April. The crew apparently was saved by nearby Bulgarian and Soviet merchant ships before the submarine went down. Thus far there has been no public announcement by the Soviets. Two years ago a G-class diesel submarine sank in the Pacific, the only other known loss in recent years.

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USSR: [redacted]

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Panama: General Torrijos has suggested that, to set the stage for canal treaty negotiations, the US could demonstrate its good will by making certain economic concessions, such as granting Panama the use of areas and facilities within the Zone. In a talk with Ambassador Sayre, he also asked whether Panamanian President Lakas could meet with President Nixon to work out an agreement on procedures and guidelines for negotiations. Although Torrijos no doubt sees significant political advantages in any economic benefits he can obtain, his suggestions may only be an opening position.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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SOVIET LEADERSHIP

We continue to search the Soviet scene for clues to the situation within the politburo. Reliable evidence on this matter remains extremely limited, but our general sense of the situation is that the collective leadership will have trouble getting through 1970 intact.

The central problem remains the state of the Soviet economy. Its sluggish growth continues to pre-occupy the Soviet leaders, who can no longer doubt that the technological gap between the USSR and the West is growing. This winter has provided an acute contrast between US Apollo successes and meat shortages in Soviet cities. At the same time, the leadership has few unambiguous successes to offset this record. Neither in relations with China and Eastern Europe nor in their dealings with the non-Communist world can they show great gains. Only in the competition in strategic weaponry can they claim to have improved the USSR's position, and even here pending US weapons programs threaten to wipe out their gains. The preparations for the Lenin centennial have had a hollow ring, and a new category of "Leniniana" political jokes is making the rounds of the population.

All the signs indicate that the party continues to reject the Western diagnosis that the Soviet-style command economy, while well suited for the tasks of industrial development, cannot cope effectively with the further demands of the current technological revolution. A series of timid reforms addressed to this problem has now run its course without bringing the hoped-for efficiency. In the conservative Moscow climate, however, this record has served to bring such reforms into disrepute rather than to commend bolder proposals. The difficulty is at bottom political; Czechoslovakia is read as an object lesson in how modern approaches to economic management quickly bring into question the Communist Party's monopoly of power.

This is the final year of the current five-year plan, and basic targets should long since have been decided for the next five-year period, now less than eight months away. Decisions on allocations are always contentious matters for Soviet leaders. Some of them, in addition to taking part in the policy-making collective, have executive responsibility for one or another sector of the economy. Success or failure in these fields can have a decisive effect on their careers. All have a rough approximation

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

of political "constituencies" on whom they depend for political support--regional leaders and/or such interest groups as the military or heavy industry. The lagging economy means that some hard infighting is necessary to protect each group's interest.

The politburo that faces these problems is an aging one--the oldest member is 71, the majority are in their 60s, and nearly all have recurring health problems. If we are right in our sense of increasing tension, then medical accident can play a major and unpredictable role in changing the alignments.

At the moment, the strongest position appears to be that of Brezhnev, who has escaped the ills to which flesh is heir this winter. So far as we can determine, none of the personnel changes--announced or merely rumored--of recent weeks has damaged his position, and several of them may have strengthened it. If politburo shifts are made in the next few months, we would expect him to have the major hand in them. He might move against the economic administrators headed by Kosygin as a means of blaming them for the faltering record of growth. The naming of the two provincial leaders, known to hold conservative economic views, to posts in Kosygin's bailiwick, even though planned since last fall, can be read in this light. Or Brezhnev might strike out against Shelepin, the perennial younger challenger (51) who seems to have been unable to protect one or two of his supporters in the recent reorganization of the propaganda apparatus.

Politburo changes engineered by Brezhnev would probably have little early effect on Soviet policy. Even now his is the strongest voice in this area, and if he disposed of one or a few of his colleagues, the consequences for decision-making would be minimal. Effective economic reform would stand even less of a chance, and, in view of Brezhnev's attentiveness to the military, the Soviet position on SALT might harden, although we doubt that it would be reversed. But the caution which is the hallmark of post-Khrushchev Soviet policy is characteristic of Brezhnev himself, and he apparently harbors no radical projects which a loosening of the bonds of collectivity would free him to launch.

The present leaders' combination of age, inertia, and rigidity, however, makes them vulnerable and imparts a special importance to the next party congress. That convocation, already overdue and now rumored for late fall, provides the occasion against

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

which all the current leaders must calculate their maneuvers. A new central committee will be elected at that meeting, and this poses a test of strength for each member of the politburo. The membership of the central committee registers, to an important degree, the positions of the top leaders and fixes them for the next phase of politics. The younger political leaders might decide loyally to await their turn--Polyansky appears to have adopted this posture--or they may be too impatient for that. Indeed, maneuvering in anticipation of the congress could precipitate major top-level changes well in advance of that event.

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15 April 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

15 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In South Vietnam, the Communists are maintaining the momentum of their spring offensive. (Page 1)

Cambodian military units in the eastern border provinces have suffered further setbacks. (Page 2)

Communist forces in Laos are moving to neutralize recent government gains southwest of the Plaine des Jarres. (Page 3)

Chinese road construction activity in Laos seems centered on completion of already begun segments, rather than expansion of the network. (Page 4)

North Vietnamese [redacted] (Page 5)

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On Page 6 we discuss Brezhnev's recent speeches.

Soviet [redacted]
 Egypt. (Page 7)

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Iraqi troops [redacted] Jordan. (Page 8)

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Cuba's policies toward the US and Latin America have been reaffirmed. (Page 9)

The Hungarians have unaccountably canceled their Lenin centennial celebrations. (Page 10)

The Revolutionary Council in Libya is debating its policy toward the United States. (Page 10)

At Annex, we discuss the over-all situation in Indo-china as we think it appears to Hanoi.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM

Maintaining the momentum of their spring offensive, enemy sapper and infantry forces continue to penetrate and overrun allied field positions. Two more outposts in the upper delta, one manned by South Vietnamese regulars and another by territorial forces and armed civilians, fell in recent days with losses of more than 100 dead and wounded. In the highlands, Communist troops temporarily seized several small outposts around the Dak Pek Special Forces camp, and other allied positions located just below the Demilitarized Zone have been heavily shelled.

The Communists appear to be having some success following the military guidelines spelled out by General Giap and other North Vietnamese leaders during the winter.

Stressing the use of sapper and guerrilla forces in surprise attacks, the enemy has been able to deal the allies a number of tactical setbacks while limiting his own losses.

It is still too early to assess the full impact of the enemy's spring offensive, but heavy South Vietnamese casualties could badly damage the morale of the army and the government. It also appears that the pacification program has been stalled in a few provinces because of the increased fighting.

The South Vietnamese nonetheless can point to a few brighter spots. They are successfully defending the Special Forces camps in the highlands, a number of elite government units have again performed well in contacts with the enemy, and much of the recent fighting has been confined to the more remote regions well removed from the major population centers.

* * *

At Annex, we discuss the over-all situation in Indochina as we think it appears to Hanoi.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



98215 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

On 13 April heavy Communist attacks forced government defenders at the Krek army garrison in Kompong Cham Province to abandon their post. Viet Cong troops in that general area are building up their forces and have gained control of at least one section of Route 7. They have also destroyed bridges and put roadblocks on other sections of this road, effectively severing the government's lines of communication. Government reinforcements, including elements of three battalions, are being sent to the area.

In the neighboring province of Mondolkiri, the Communists apparently have captured a border outpost. The provincial military command has asked for reinforcements. Farther south, in Svay Rieng Province, [redacted] the Viet Cong made four brief but unsuccessful surprise attacks on the town of Prasot on the night of 12 and 13 April.

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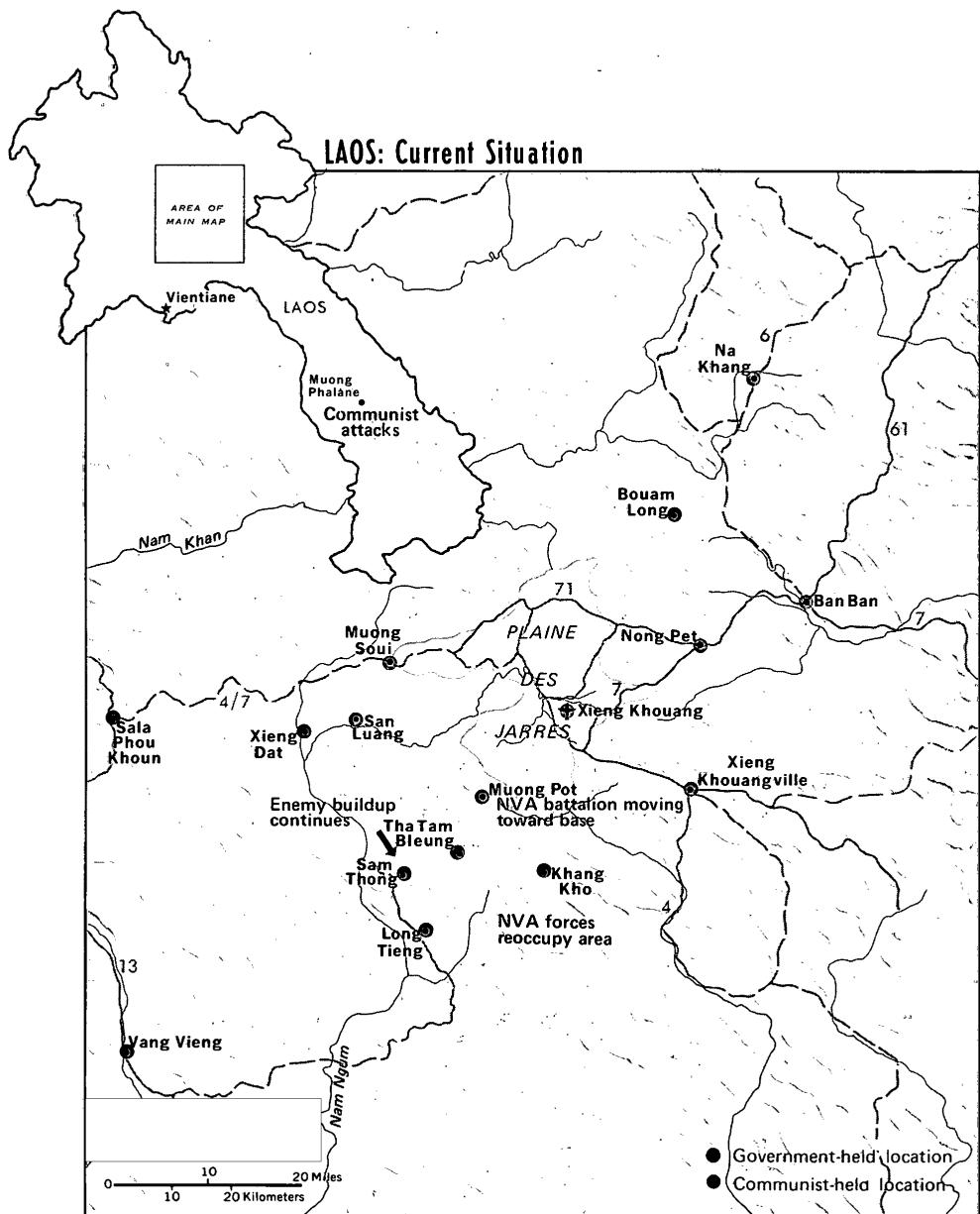
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Citing Vietnamese Communist attacks, Prime Minister Lon Nol announced on 13 April that the government now will accept all unconditional foreign aid from all sources. He indicated that such aid could include arms.

Phnom Penh may believe that this appeal will induce non-Communist and neutralist Asian nations to be more forthcoming, at least in political terms, with positive support. Lon Nol did not call for foreign troops, but unlike his earlier public comments on foreign aid, he did not specifically rule out such a possibility.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



98216 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

The Communists are moving to neutralize recent government gains southwest of the Plaine des Jarres. Over the last few days, the enemy has pushed back into the region between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung. One important government hilltop position has been overrun, and several enemy battalions are closing in on other key positions in the area. There also appear to be new enemy troop movements near Sam Thong, which came under renewed ground attack yesterday.

A North Vietnamese battalion is moving toward Tha Tam Bleung, which was recaptured by Vang Pao's guerrillas last week. Enemy control of the Tha Tam Bleung area had greatly facilitated operations southward against the Long Tieng - Sam Thong sector.



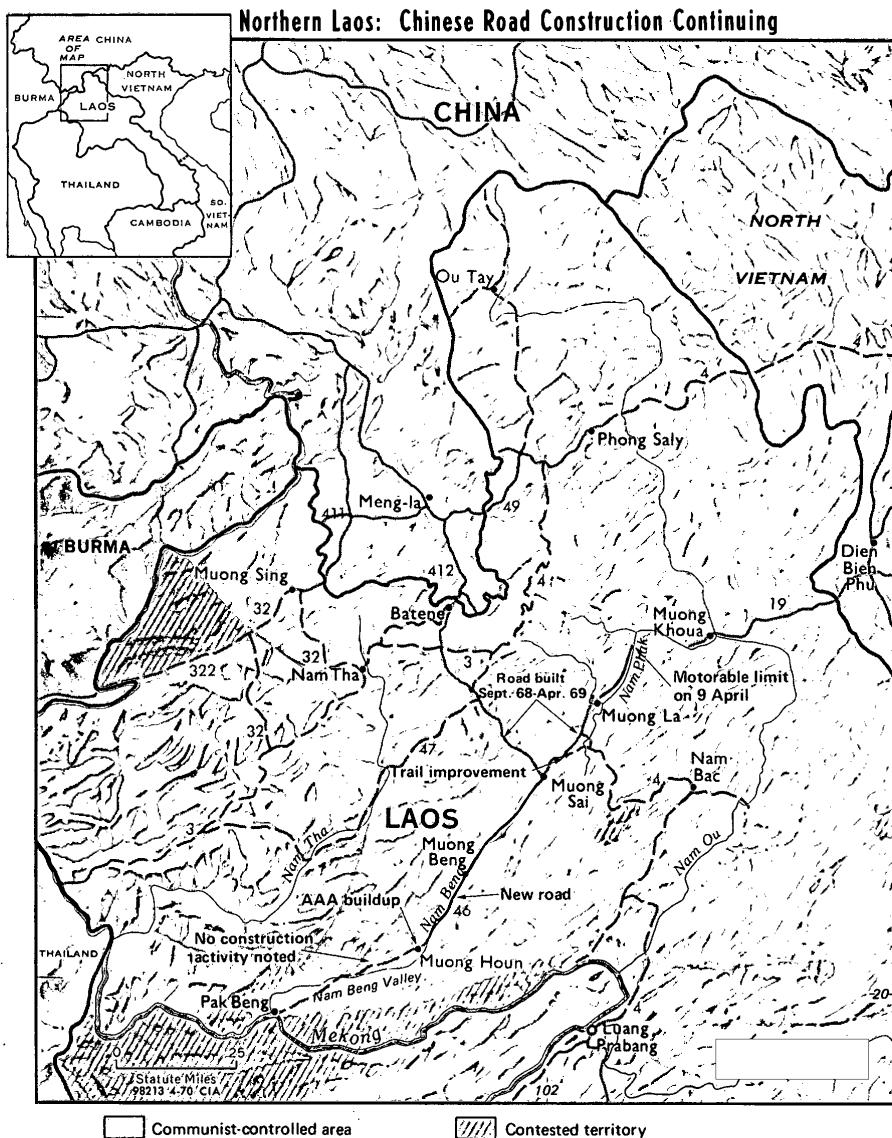
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In central Laos, two North Vietnamese battalions on 13 April overran several government positions southwest of Muong Phalane, a village on the western edge of the enemy's infiltration corridor.

These actions significantly increase the threat to the village, whose defenses had already been weakened by the sending of several battalions of government regulars to the Long Tieng area. The attacks may be in response to government operations into the infiltration corridor.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

Chinese road builders appear to be concentrating on finishing road segments already under construction rather than expanding the network further during this dry season. Aerial photography [redacted] shows that the road extending south of Muong Sai has not progressed beyond the point it reached some two months ago--one mile north of Muong Houn. The Chinese apparently are trying to put the segment under construction between Muong Sai and Muong Houn in all-weather condition before the rainy season begins in early June.

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Although no construction activity was noted south of Muong Houn, there has been a significant increase in antiaircraft artillery sites immediately north of the village.

The buildup is near a ford crossing the Beng River, suggesting that the Chinese may plan to construct a bridge at this location in coming months. A similar strengthening of air defenses occurred prior to bridge construction at other key points.

The road under construction northeast of Muong Sai toward Route 19 is now motorable 14 miles past Muong La, according to photography of late March. The rugged terrain appears to be the major obstacle to more rapid construction in this area.

Recent photography also shows that trails east of Muong Sai are being widened, but no construction equipment was noted in the area.

This suggests that, if the Chinese intend to build a road to the Lao Communist headquarters at Nam Bac, they may wait until the next dry season.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NORTH VIETNAM

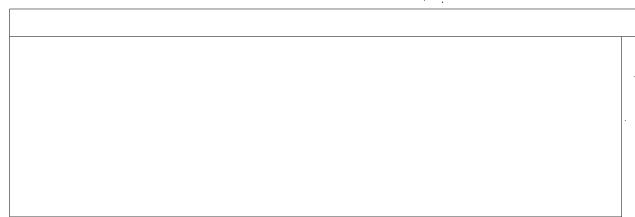


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**USSR**

Party boss Brezhnev's pre-eminence has once again been underscored in connection with ceremonies related to the Lenin centennial. The speeches he delivered in Kharkov on 13 and 14 April were given extensive publicity in most, if not all, of the Soviet media. Moreover, Pravda's account yesterday of his visit to a factory, where he is said to have talked with workers and dispensed advice, seemed to stress his personal interest in local problems. Coverage of the other leaders' participation in similar ceremonies elsewhere in the USSR, however, is likely to approximate Brezhnev's and thus maintain the image of collective leadership.

In his statement on foreign policy, Brezhnev made his first public reference since the beginning of SALT to an arms agreement, saying that one is possible provided that the US is as reasonable as the USSR on this subject. It marked Moscow's most authoritative endorsement of the talks. He said that the USSR would welcome a "sensible" agreement and would do its utmost to make the talks "useful." He warned of Moscow's determination to prevent anyone from achieving "military superiority over the USSR," thereby serving notice that the Soviets intend to talk from a strong position in Vienna. Having made this point, however, the Soviets might believe themselves to be on more solid ground should they choose to be flexible when talks resume.

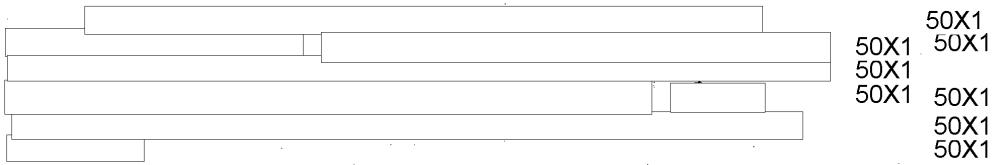
Brezhnev's remarks on the economy were limited to a familiar recital of the country's ills. He identified the short-run difficulties as the severe weather and "complications in the international situation"--probably the Sino-Soviet border dispute, possibly also Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, and the Middle East--which "imposed a certain additional load on the Soviet economy."

He also acknowledged the more serious, long-run difficulties as "problems connected essentially to our growth," such as the need for more efficient use of production capacity. Brezhnev also noted the lag in the introduction of advanced technology. In actuality, although it is effectively employed in the space and defense industries, it usually fails to percolate down to the civilian economy. He gave no hint of change in the timid reforms that thus far have failed to improve the administration of research or to encourage managerial efficiency and innovation.

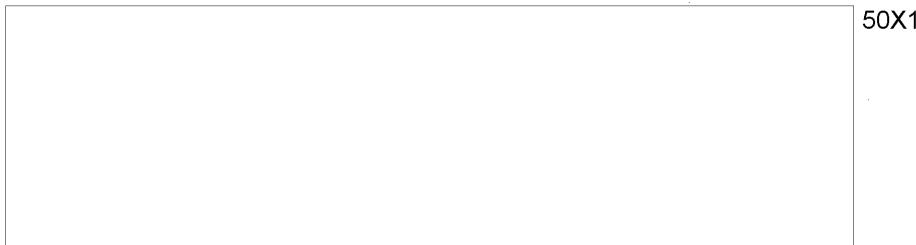
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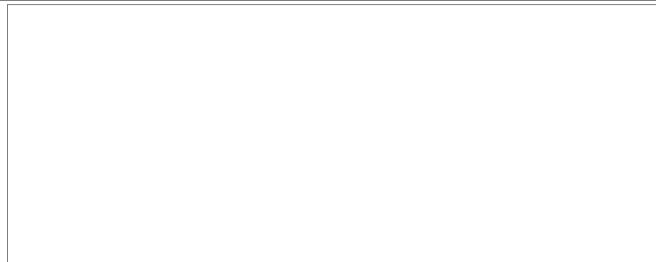
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IRAQ-JORDAN

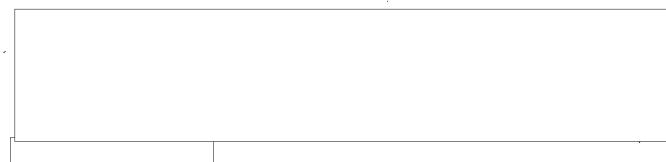


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The Iraqi forces in Jordan carefully stood aside during last February's confrontation between the Jordanian Government and the fedayeen, although they routinely furnish the fedayeen with arms and other support. Husayn cannot be certain that Iraq's hands-off policy will continue, however. He may well be more chary of future attempts to crack down on the fedayeen, who are already reported to be largely disregarding the "settlement" arrived at last February.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CUBA

Cuba will continue to support revolutionary liberation movements in Latin America and will also grant asylum to any refugee militant seeking it. At a recent luncheon at the UN, Cuban minister Carlos Rafael Rodriguez rejected the possibility that his government might rejoin the Organization of American States but said it considered Cuba's reintegration into the Latin American community on other terms another matter. He indicated, however, that Cuba would not be prepared to change its policies in return for acceptance in the hemisphere.

Rodriguez indicated his government was considering the US proposals for a bilateral agreement on the hijacking of aircraft. He reaffirmed, however, that Havana has no interest in using the contacts on this issue as a wedge for the development of official relations with the US.

All this means that Cuba's policies toward the US and Latin America have not changed. Rodriguez' pronouncements are the first made for foreign consumption by a high-ranking Cuban official in some time. He probably meant to answer recent proposals by some Latin American leaders for reconsideration of Cuba's continued isolation from the Latin American community.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Hungary: The Hungarians have unaccountably canceled their Lenin centennial celebrations planned for 18, 21 and 22 April. A Foreign Ministry spokesman called Ambassador Puhan yesterday to inform him that because of "an administrative problem" there would be no celebrations. There is no evidence of a serious problem in Budapest, but it is likely that only one of an unusual nature could precipitate such a move. There is as yet nothing to indicate that other East European capitals have taken similar steps.

Libya: Ambassador Palmer believes that the question of whether or not to maintain relations with the United States is currently being hotly debated in the ruling Revolutionary Command Council. The issue is so clouded by pro-Arab and anti-Israeli ideology, as well as by domestic political factionalism, that it is difficult to predict whether it will ever come to a head, or how it would be resolved if a vote were taken. We think that a decision will probably be put off at least until after US forces complete the evacuation of Wheelus Air Base, scheduled for 30 June. The only immediate issue which the Libyan Government might seize upon as a pretext for breaking relations would be the request for additional F-5 aircraft originally sought by the monarchy and still wanted by the new rulers.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**HANOI LOOKS AT INDOCHINA****A
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Hanoi has called Le Duc Tho home from Paris, perhaps for some kind of strategy review. We have attempted in the following paragraphs to consider how the Communists might now see the situation in Indochina.

The picture before Hanoi is mixed. There are new dangers, but also new opportunities. How, for example, should the Communists play their cards in Cambodia? Phnom Penh has not bowed to Hanoi's bluster, and the Communists seem reluctant to risk settling the issue by force alone. Their growing military and subversive pressures may keep the Cambodians at bay, but the problem of South Vietnamese attacks on Communist sanctuaries is likely to grow, and no resumption of supplies through Cambodia is in sight. Hanoi has the raw military assets to march on Phnom Penh and reinstall a Sihanouk government. If this could be accomplished swiftly and neatly, Hanoi might find itself enjoying all the advantages that a Communist Cambodia--or at least one beholden to the Communists--could confer on its long-term effort in South Vietnam.

But although such a move might be swift, it probably would not be neat. The Communists could find themselves riding a new tiger--perhaps a civil war in which they had the strongest military forces, but which was beyond their capabilities to contain or to bend to their advantage. At this point, the Communists must make their calculations around one significant unknown. They cannot be sure how the US would react; in a Cambodia dominated by the Communists the US would be freer to bomb or to sustain a guerrilla force, and at relatively small political cost.

Even if Hanoi assumes that the US would seek to avoid entanglement, Communist assets now targeted mainly on South Vietnamese objectives would be diverted, if not expended. This could leave the Communists thrashing about in Cambodia while their main effort in Vietnam languished. (One of our fundamental assumptions is that the main arena for the Vietnamese Communists is in Vietnam, and that their tactics in Laos and Cambodia are largely shaped by the requirements of the Vietnam struggle.)

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

The choices Hanoi faces in Laos are less painful. The immediate question is how much more effort to put into the current offensive before the rains take their toll and the fighting washes away for another season. By retaking the Plaine des Jarres and offering a new proposal for a settlement, the Communists have substantially improved their military and political position. Now that their offensive has lost momentum, to get much more than this--in particular to get rid of the threat from Vang Pao's guerrillas--may call for more effort than they are willing to expend on what is, like Cambodia, still a sideshow.

In South Vietnam, the Communists recently launched another window-rattling spurt of military attacks, and they seem bent on maintaining a higher level of activity than they have for nearly a year. In some ways they have cause for satisfaction: allied casualties are up sharply; the war is once again in the headlines; and they have shown that accounts of steadily declining Communist fortunes are incomplete at best.

But unless an increased military effort can be sustained, the setbacks dealt the allies are not likely to last very long or run very deep. Moreover, flashy displays of military prowess can be costly in terms of the manpower and material resources the Communists need for the lower key military, political, and subversive tactics they hope will pay off over the long haul. These efforts already show some signs of blunting the momentum of allied progress in the countryside and thus improving the longer-term outlook for the Communists. It seems almost certain that some members of the Hanoi leadership, especially those who also argue that more attention must be devoted to tidying up the situation in the North, are reluctant to undercut these long-term efforts by chasing after more spectacular but less durable results now.

Nevertheless, Hanoi may conclude that something new is called for. In Laos, the Communists could decide that the extra effort required to emasculate the threat from Vang Pao's forces is necessary to prevent a repetition of last year's Communist retreat from the Plaine. If Communist military attacks in South Vietnam seem to be shaking the confidence of the government there and undermining the

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

premises of the Vietnamization program, Hanoi might decide to keep up the pressure there for some time, even if the costs are high. Hanoi could also reason that increased military action in South Vietnam is one of the best ways to dampen Saigon's enthusiasm for going after Communist forces in Cambodia.

The likeliest locale for more military pressure by the Communists may be Cambodia, where their decisions probably hinge on how much they are squeezed by the current situation. We are confident that if the pinch from South Vietnamese border operations becomes intolerable, the Communists will move more forcefully against Cambodia, but we cannot judge the limits of their tolerance.



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A whole new approach by Hanoi, involving the use of some of the diplomatic cards it has long held but has always been unwilling to play, is also a possibility. This might, for example, take the form of a qualified acceptance of the French proposal for international consultation on Indochina, or perhaps some Communist counterproposal. Hanoi might perceive many advantages in moving the conflict in Southeast Asia into a broad diplomatic arena, not the least of which would be the hostility this notion generates in Saigon.

The main argument against this course is a telling one, however. Any encouragement the Communists give to diplomacy at this stage almost certainly would appear to reflect weakness and lack of resolve to stay the course. Fear on this score has long inhibited the North Vietnamese and hamstrung their diplomatic tactics.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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In our view, the leadership situation in North Vietnam also suggests that bold new military or political initiatives from Hanoi are unlikely. The post-Ho leadership is not in perpetual deadlock, but we believe the repercussions of earlier policy setbacks and continuing disagreement over basic issues will limit Hanoi's willingness to embark on new military or political adventures. From time to time we think we can detect voices in the Communist hierarchy calling for new or different tactics, but we see little evidence of these being translated into action.

On balance, then, we think that Hanoi is not ready to add any really new ingredient to the current situation in Indochina. In Laos, the Communists probably are looking forward to a rainy season devoted largely to holding on to what they have now. In South Vietnam, they seem to have settled some time ago on taking the long road back by riding out more American troop withdrawals and trying to get themselves in a position to exploit future opportunities. The forces at work in Cambodia are too complicated and unpredictable to guess with assurance how the Communists may move next, but they probably are still banking on pressuring the new government into an accommodation that will avoid any need for extreme measures.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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The President's Daily Brief

16 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

16 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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Cambodia

(Page 1)

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In South Vietnam, the student protest seems to be spreading. (Page 2)

The situation in Laos is discussed on Page 3.

Former president Bosch may further snarl politics in the Dominican Republic if he returns there today. (Page 4)

King Husayn of Jordan hopes that Assistant Secretary Sisco's visit can take place as scheduled. (Page 5)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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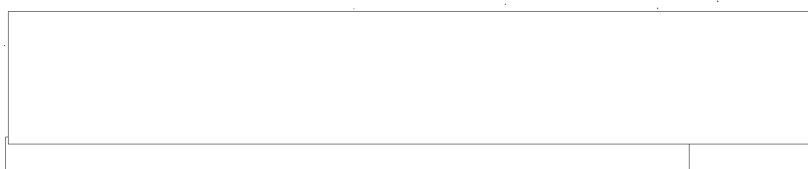
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

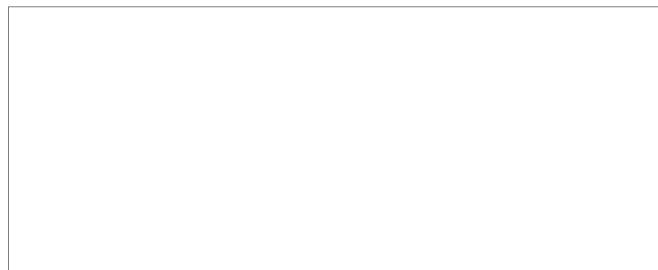


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Intercepted army messages reveal that the Viet Cong are still attacking border outposts, and that a "considerable" number of Communist troops are crossing the border and moving north in Kandal Province. Phnom Penh's growing apprehension about these developments was reflected in a 15 April communiqué calling for the organization of "partisan groups" to defend the country against the Vietnamese Communists.

The government, meanwhile, has done little to control the wave of anti-Vietnamese hysteria that is evidently sweeping Cambodia. Atrocities against the large Vietnamese community there will hurt Phnom Penh's efforts to win international support and sympathy and will hamper improvement of relations between Saigon and Phnom Penh.

In yesterday's Annex, we assessed some of the factors that will affect how far the Vietnamese Communists would go in putting military pressure on Cambodia. Anti-Vietnamese pogroms, if they continue, would be an added impetus toward tougher measures.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

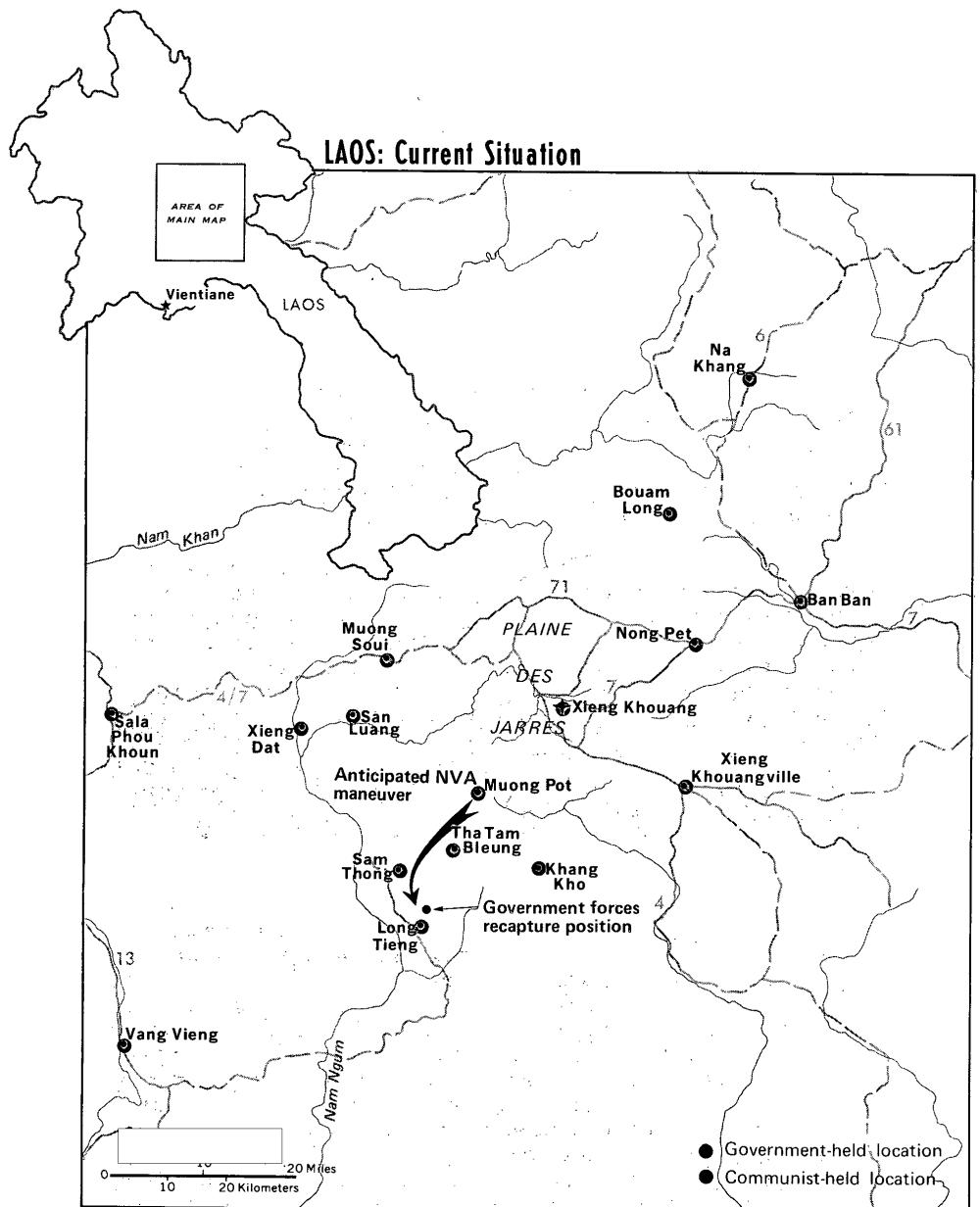
SOUTH VIETNAM

Though still small, the student protest appears to be growing. Saigon University strikers have been joined by their fellows in Hue and Can Tho. Students from several Saigon high schools have been demonstrating in sympathy, and some of the city's Buddhist students now are getting involved. So far, the militants have been unable to mount more than minor demonstrations, which led to small clashes with police. The government's refusal to heed students' calls for the release of their arrested colleagues seems to have led to still greater demands. These include abolition of the military court that will try 21 students as Viet Cong agents. Conviction of the 21 is likely to lead to further escalation of the protesters' fury.

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On the military front enemy forces appear to be preparing for another surge of coordinated attacks later this month. Intercepted messages and captured documents all refer to a second phase of the recent assaults. The next round may come between 20 and 25 April.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

The Communist buildup southwest of the Plaine des Jarres continues, but no significant new fighting has been reported.

US advisers are concerned that enemy forces infiltrating southward from the Plaine are making an end run around the 5,500-man defense force deployed in the region between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung. They fear that this maneuver might enable the Communists to isolate the guerrilla redoubt at Sam Thong and to drive a wedge between the Long Tieng garrison and the bulk of its defenders. Vang Pao is redeploying some of his troops against this possibility.

* * *

On the political front, the initial Communist reaction to Premier Souvanna's letter to Pathet Lao leader Souphanouvong has been broadcast by the Laotian "patriotic neutralists." The full text of the broadcast is not yet available in Washington, but the excerpts in hand contain denunciation of the proposals. They are described as a "trick" designed to avoid settlement of the Laotian problem. The broadcast cited the Pathet Lao's five-point proposal of 6 March as "a correct and reasonable solution to the Laotian question."

A more authoritative Communist statement should be forthcoming in the next few days, and it may give some indication whether the Communists are willing to open talks despite the wide difference between their proposal and Souvanna's response.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Former president Juan Bosch may return today from three years of self-imposed exile, in time to complicate President Balaguer's bid for re-election on 16 May. Bosch, the leader of the major opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party, had been slated to arrive in Santo Domingo yesterday, but the government avoided granting permission to land the plane. Bosch still commands popular attention and large numbers of people were in the streets yesterday attracted by his pending arrival. Confused shooting broke out between army troops and the crowds; one person was dead and several wounded before it was over. Whether this will affect Bosch's decision to return is unknown; he has reneged on similar plans in the past.

Bosch has bitterly disowned the concept of representative democracy in Latin America in the wake of his ouster by the military in 1963 and the landing of US forces in 1965. His most recent pronouncements suggest he would favor his radicalized party's participation in the forthcoming election only as a tactic designed to advance the "coming revolution." So far, the party intends to abstain. Bosch has said he is not running.

The Dominican military would strongly oppose him if he decided to run. If he returns, the moderate opposition parties are likely to keep him at arms length, while they continue their negotiations with Balaguer on the ground rules for the election.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Jordan: King Husayn hopes that the visit of Assistant Secretary Sisco can take place as scheduled. He has asked Ambassador Symmes to assure Sisco that he would still be welcome in Jordan tomorrow and that he would be safe. The king avoided answering several questions, however, about whether the anti-US demonstrations led by the fedayeen would be allowed to continue. Last night, however, the fedayeen called for an end to demonstrations and instead urged a 30-minute peaceful strike on Friday. Husayn implied a fear that cancellation of Sisco's visit would be touted as a considerable victory for the fedayeen and could weaken even further Husayn's position as master of his own house.

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USSR-Egypt:

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Hungary: Hungary's party central committee unexpectedly met today.

This strengthens our suspicion that something may be seriously amiss in Budapest. The meeting probably is concerned with the same problem which caused cancellation of the Lenin anniversary celebrations.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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17 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

17 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

There are some suggestions that the Communist powers may be moving toward a new initiative for a conference on Indochina. (Page 1)

In Laos, the Communists are becoming more active [redacted] in Cambodia there has been little military activity reported along its border with South Vietnam. (Pages 2 and 3) 50X1

Juan Bosch was upstaged in his return to the Dominican Republic yesterday by the accord reached between President Balaguer and the opposition parties. (Page 4)

Bolivian President Ovando's problems are outlined on Page 5.

Chancellor Brandt and his entourage seem generally well pleased with their talks in Washington. (Page 6)

[redacted] Soviets [redacted] 50X1
[redacted] (Page 6) 50X1

In Colombia, it still looks like a close race in the presidential election Sunday. (Page 7)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

INDOCHINA

Soviet Ambassador to the UN Malik appeared to be testing the diplomatic atmosphere in his remarks in New York yesterday. Without saying that the USSR would join with the UK in calling for a Geneva-like conference, Malik noted that the Soviet Union was "paying the closest attention" to the recent French proposal for such a meeting.

This formula jibes with [redacted] Soviet comments that seemed to give the French proposal tacit support. His suggestion that "only a new Geneva conference can bring about a correct solution and a relaxation of tension in the Indochina peninsula," however, appears to carry Moscow beyond its previous public position. It may foreshadow some move to substitute a larger conference for the unproductive Paris talks.

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This more positive Soviet position almost certainly has been coordinated with Hanoi. Moscow has been most reluctant to get too far ahead of the North Vietnamese on questions of this nature. Le Duc Tho has been in the Soviet capital consulting with the Russians for the past six days, and other Vietnamese are due to join him in time for the forthcoming Lenin centennial.

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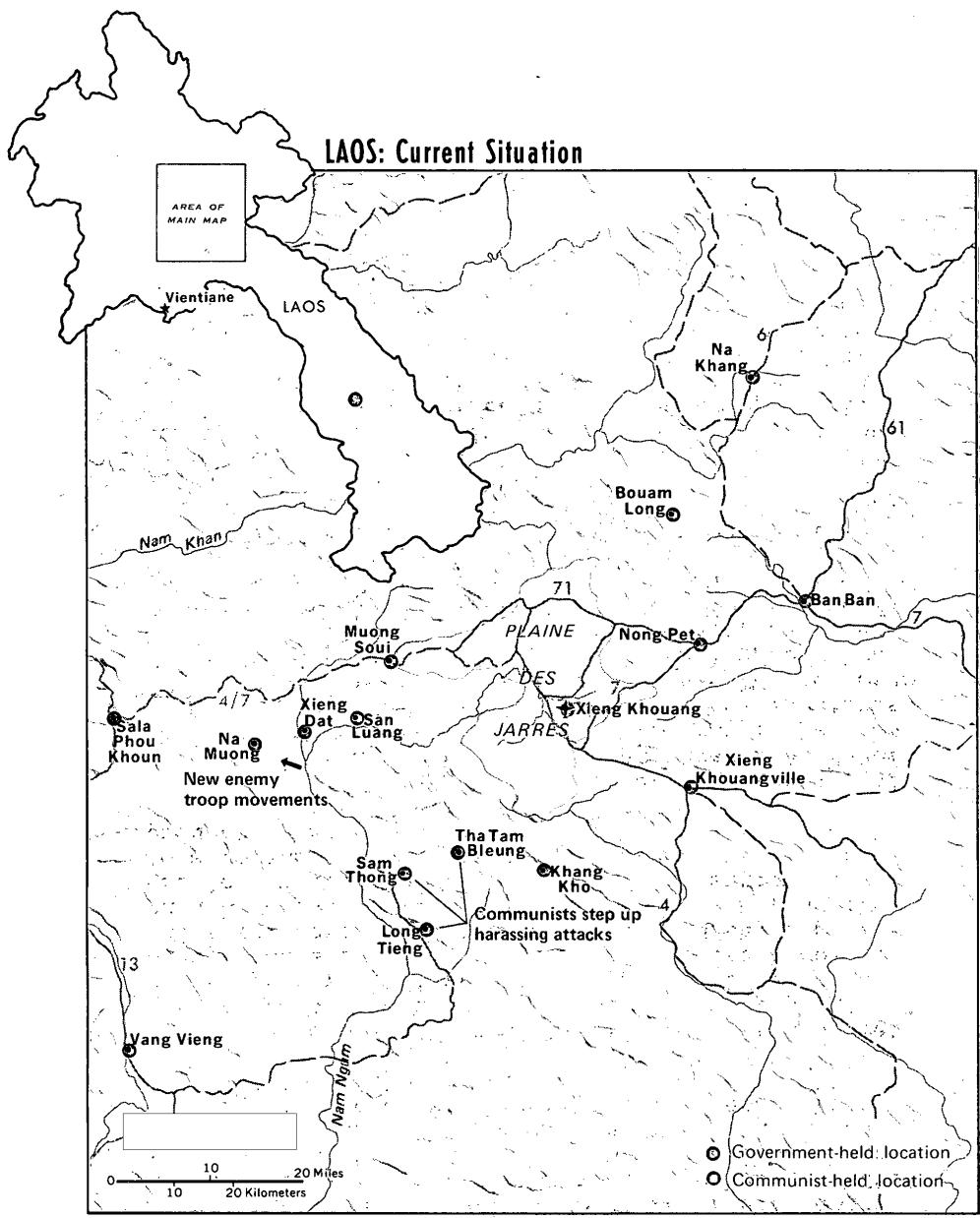
One of these may be Le Duan. [redacted] the party first secretary may be en route to Moscow. Two North Vietnamese aircraft flew to Peking on 14 April.

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[redacted] Chou En-lai met one of the planes and hustled a passenger away in his private car without the usual Chinese arrival fanfare. The passenger could have been Le Duan, but in any case, whoever it was had an opportunity to explore the question of a possible new conference initiative with the Chinese.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

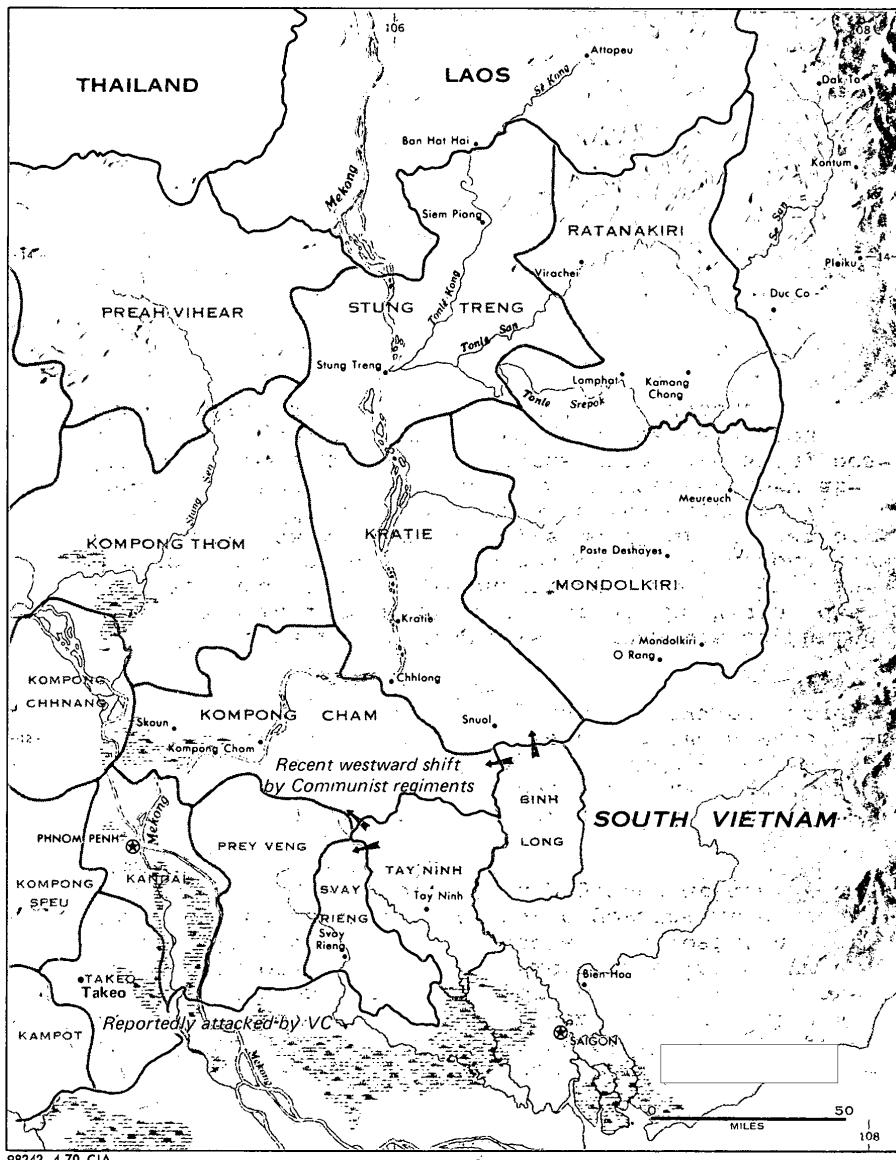
LAOS

Long Tieng came under enemy mortar fire yesterday, forcing a temporary closure of the airstrip. The nearby government base at Sam Thong was also shelled, and one of its supporting outposts was attacked and overrun by North Vietnamese infantrymen. In addition, guerrilla defenders of a position just north of the recently recaptured government base at Tha Tam Bleung beat off a sharp ground attack by a company of enemy regulars.

Vang Pao is not sitting still in the face of this growing North Vietnamese buildup. Plans are under way to saturate the entire sector with company-sized patrols which will have artillery and air support readily available to them.

In the meantime, Communist forces are beginning to operate in larger numbers west of the Plaine des Jarres. Analysis of communications intelligence indicates that as many as two new enemy battalions have moved into the Na Muong area, some 20 miles west of the Plaine and just a few miles south of Route 7. Their presence suggests that the Communists may attempt to drive government forces from this area, possibly as a prelude for a move into the Sala Phou Khoun area, where Routes 7 and 13 intersect.

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The press reports that several hundred Viet Cong troops attacked the town of Takeo, some 40 miles south of Phnom Penh, yesterday. There is as yet no confirmation, but if the report is true, it would be the first Communist attack on a provincial capital. Otherwise, little activity was reported along the border. Government forces are continuing to withdraw from border positions, and jittery Cambodian officials are reporting some Communist activity deeper inside the country, but so far this is unconfirmed.

Several Vietnamese Communist regiments have filtered across the border into Cambodia recently. This better enables the Communists to defend their base areas from Cambodian harassment or to attack Cambodian border posts. The deepest confirmed penetration has only been about 12 miles, however, suggesting that the Communist posture is still largely defensive.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Two people are reported to have been killed and several wounded in an incident in Santo Domingo between police and crowds awaiting Juan Bosch's arrival yesterday. Otherwise Bosch's return was unaccompanied by the fireworks some had expected. In fact it was overshadowed by the agreement reached between President Balaguer and the opposition parties ending the latter's threatened boycott of the presidential elections on 16 May.

As part of the accord, Balaguer temporarily resigned last night, as did Vice President Lora. Both men are candidates. President of the Supreme Court Ruiz Tejada, a respected political neutral, will assume provisional control over the government. The agreement permits Balaguer to reassume power on 22 May, by which time the election results presumably will be validated, or at any time in the interim should there be a threat to public order.

Bosch's plans now that he is back are none too clear. He has expressed no interest in public office, and in any event, the deadline for filing is past. His party--the major opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD)--apparently is still planning to abstain from the elections.

What Bosch and the PRD might do is to work toward a tactical alliance supporting another party's candidate. The other parties, however, although willing enough to cash in on PRD support at the polls, are likely to hold Bosch himself at arm's length. They are well aware that Balaguer would like nothing better than associate the opposition in the public's mind with Bosch's extremist image. Balaguer had little trouble defeating Bosch in a two-man race four years ago.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

BOLIVIA

President Ovando will have his hands full in the next few weeks trying to maintain governmental stability in the face of military restlessness and pressures from radical students. His task will be all the more difficult because in many cases he will have to deal with rumors and innuendo rather than with insoluble problems.

The military high command has been swept by rumors of impending changes, and is especially edgy about one that claims that Commander of the Army Miranda, a popular general, is one of 40 top officers to be reassigned. [redacted] 50X1 notes that, true or not, the currency given this particular rumor, and the adverse reaction to it, have caused considerable loss of confidence in Ovando and may be the beginning of the final rift between the President and the military.

The military leaders are also concerned about Ovando's apparent permissive attitude toward spreading student disruptions and toward growing labor problems. The government's mild reaction to recent student violence has not placated the student radicals, but it has left the military itching to restore law and order.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Romania - Warsaw Pact: [redacted]

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[redacted]

West Germany: Chancellor Brandt and his entourage seem generally well pleased with their talks in Washington. In private conversations with US officials in Bonn, however, Brandt's aides have professed some misgivings over the dialogue on the chancellor's eastern policy. His personal assistant, Wolf-Dietrich Schilling, claims, for instance, that Brandt got the impression the US is being deliberately cautious in its endorsement of *ostpolitik* and is skeptical of its chances for success. On another matter of prime interest, Brandt is described as being heartened by assurances of our intention to maintain a strong military presence in Europe beyond 1971.

USSR: [redacted]

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[redacted]

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(continued)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Colombia: As we noted in The President's Daily Brief of 6 April, the presidential election will be on Sunday. We still expect a photo finish between the government's candidate, lackluster

Misael Pastrana, and [redacted]

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Gustavo Rojas Pinilla. Pastrana appeals to most educated voters, a rather small group in Colombia, and he benefits from the National Front's political machine in rural areas. Rojas Pinilla derives his strength from some elements of the military and police,

[redacted] and from the poor in the cities, who recall the munificence of his self-aggrandizing public works projects.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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The President's Daily Brief

18 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

18 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

[redacted] Cambodia. (Page 1)

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In Laos, both sides are still holding back. (Page 4)

The fedayeen are capitalizing on the new squabble
between Jordan and the United States. (Page 4)

Guatemala [redacted]

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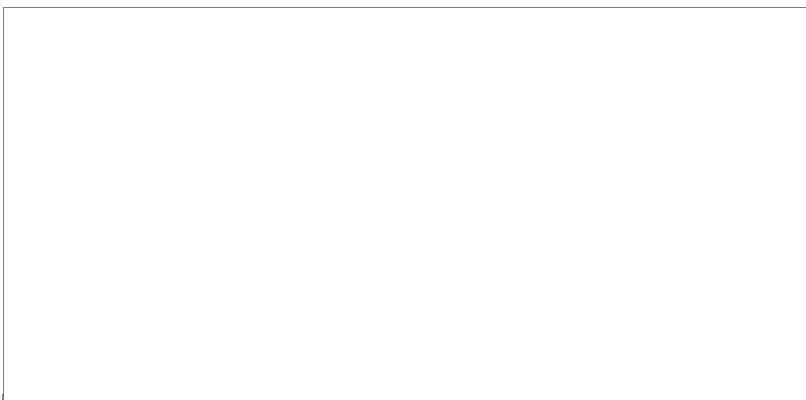
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[redacted] (Page 4)

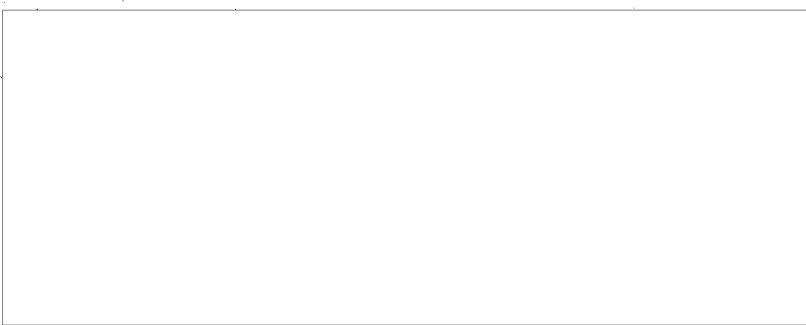
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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CAMBODIA



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There are signs that the Vietnamese Communists along the border are suffering from temporary shortages, but once they adjust their logistics pipeline along the trails from Laos, they probably will be adequately supplied. The government's statements during the past week indicate that it now is taking a much more serious view of the military threat posed by the Communists.



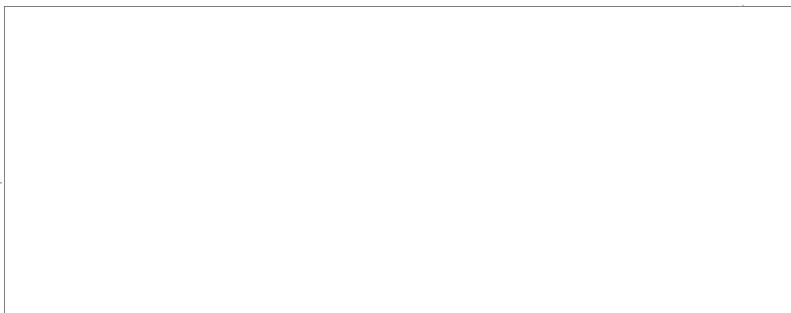
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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Both the French and the Japanese are treating Cambodia's appeal for military aid with considerable reserve. The French ambassador in Washington said on 16 April that Paris does not intend to increase military assistance to Cambodia over last year's program or to speed up deliveries already planned. In Tokyo, a foreign official has said that no decision would be made on aid to Cambodia until after mid-May.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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Cambodian Army units have reported little new Communist offensive activity. According to press reports, Cambodian soldiers killed more than 100 Vietnamese civilians being held in a detention camp in Takeo Province.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Laos: There was little significant ground action around the Long Tieng area yesterday, although a strategic highpoint some eight miles north of Vang Pao's headquarters changed hands several times before government forces finally took it and held it. Elements of the North Vietnamese 312th Division may be joining the battle for Long Tieng, perhaps as replacements for elements of the 316th. It is still too early to say if these developments portend a major shift southwestward in the division's area of operations.

Jordan-Lebanon: The fedayeen are using Assistant Secretary Sisco's Middle East tour as an occasion to challenge the authority of the governments of Jordan and Lebanon. The cancellation of Sisco's visit to Amman is generally regarded as a blow to the King's prestige, one which publicly calls into question his ability to control the fedayeen. In Lebanon, Interior Minister Jumblatt has decided not to interfere with Palestinian-organized demonstrations being staged in connection with Sisco's scheduled visit there. The precarious truce between the fedayeen and the Lebanese security forces could be ended by forceful government measures to prevent disorders similar to those in Amman.

Guatemala: 50X1
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Two more political assassinations occurred this week--the victims were both minor functionaries in President-elect Arana's party.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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The President's Daily Brief

20 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

20 April 1970

ILLEGIB

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Reports of active Communist military elements in several eastern Cambodian provinces are a matter of increasing concern in Phnom Penh. (Page 1)

In Laos, the Communists moved additional reinforcements into the Long Tieng area over the weekend. (Page 3)

Reports of atrocities against Vietnamese in Cambodia have further complicated President Thieu's problems with students and Buddhists in Saigon. (Page 4)

Moscow and Peking have had their most biting exchange of polemics since the Peking talks began. (Page 5)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



98249 4-70 CIA

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**CAMBODIA**

Fragmentary reports indicate that Viet Cong, North Vietnamese, and indigenous Communist elements have been active in almost every province of eastern Cambodia during the past several days. For the most part, these actions appear to be part of the continuing effort to protect and expand Communist bases along the border. There are fresh signs, however, of increased Communist activity farther westward, well away from the border bases. These may be a precursor of a new effort to keep Cambodian security forces tied down to defensive positions in the interior.

The heaviest action was located in Kandal and Takeo provinces south of Phnom Penh. According to Cambodian commanders, an army battalion guarding a Mekong River post was "annihilated" only 20 miles south of the capital. We cannot confirm this engagement but if true it is the closest probe to Phnom Penh since the Communist offensive began. Farther south, the Communists on 18 April once again raided the provincial capital of Takeo, knocking out a bridge and cutting the rail line that runs from the town down toward Kompong Som (formerly Sihanoukville).

Renewed fighting was also reported in Svay Rieng Province, where South Vietnamese forces have been raiding Communist bases on Cambodian soil almost daily. The Cambodian commander in the area has told South Vietnamese officers that the Communists are moving supplies and base facilities deeper into Cambodia. He fears that they will soon attack Svay Rieng town and has asked for additional South Vietnamese ground and air attacks. He claimed that he was acting with the full authority of leaders in Phnom Penh.

To the north, Communist penetrations as far west as the Mekong River have been reported. These actions appear to involve only small Communist elements, [redacted]

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

The military developments of the past several days apparently have greatly alarmed the diplomatic community in the capital.

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[redacted] The ranking French military adviser in Cambodia, General Vieil, has told Chargé Rives that he believed an all-out Communist offensive would occur within a month.

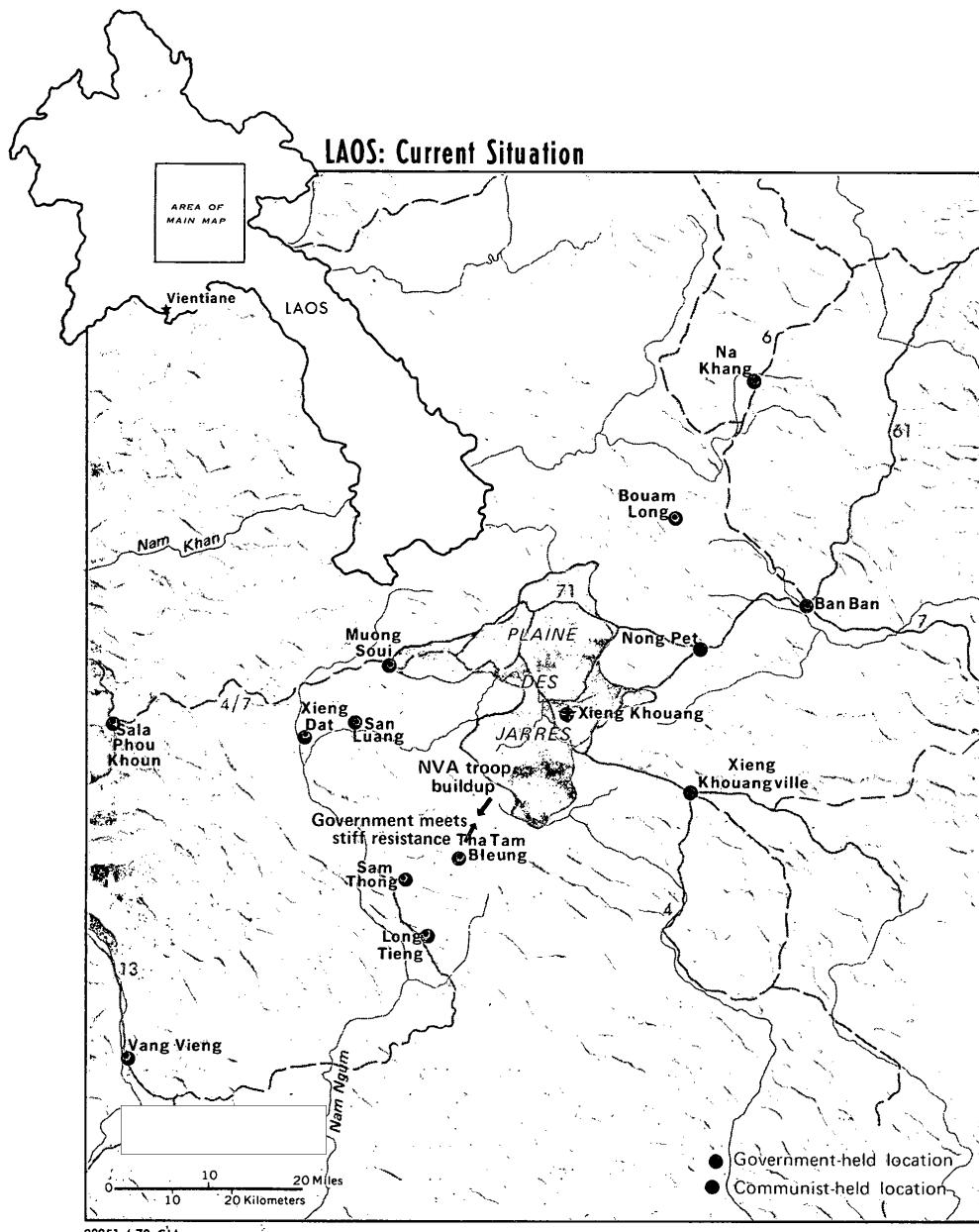
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For their part, the Cambodian leaders on 17 April issued an obscurely worded directive to all units, asking them to prepare for "total war," and begin organizing "partisan" bands. Cambodian strategic thinking has long postulated a reversion to guerrilla war in the face of a Vietnamese attack. In another sign that the leaders in Phnom Penh are feeling the heat,

[redacted] to arrange for the deployment of South Vietnamese irregular forces into Takeo Province.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



98251 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

There was little change in the situation around Long Tieng over the weekend, although the Communists did move in additional reinforcements. Another battalion-level radio terminal associated with the North Vietnamese 312th Division was identified, bringing to three the number of terminals that have moved south of the Plaine in the last week. Government forces operating out of Tha Tam Bleung are running into stiffer enemy resistance.

Despite these further signs of a possible renewed enemy push in the weeks to come, the Communists do not seem ready yet to mount a major drive against Long Tieng. Some of the fresh units are coming in to replace rather than augment troops of the 318th Division, which has carried the burden of the fighting in the Long Tieng area. Intercepts indicate that the enemy's main concerns right now are to bring in additional supplies and to evacuate the wounded.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM

Pressures are building up on the Thieu government to do something about the anti-Vietnamese pogrom in Cambodia. Students and Buddhists, already disaffected with the government, took to the streets over the weekend protesting the atrocities and demanding that action be taken to redress the situation. Local political leaders and trade unionists joined them yesterday for memorial services held at the An Quang Pagoda, long a center for antigovernment activity. The oppositionist National Salvation Front released a communiqué signed by nearly 100 politicians appealing for UN intervention.

The Thieu government clearly recognizes the need for action, but at the same time it has been anxious not to roil the Cambodians to the point where prospects for improved relations might be jeopardized. So far the middle course it has tried to steer has not been very productive.

The Cambodians have not yet responded to a South Vietnamese offer to send an official delegation to arrange for repatriation of Vietnamese refugees. [redacted]

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The government may soon have to do better, or be confronted with more serious opposition than anything it has faced in recent months. This will be especially so if the students and allied dissidents choose to use this emotional issue as their principal weapon against Thieu.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

The deep-seated disagreements between Peking and Moscow have bubbled to the surface on the eve of the Lenin centenary celebrations. In a lengthy commentary on 17 April, the Chinese blasted the Brezhnev leadership as "fools" on the "brink of their downfall," and ridiculed the ideological theses published last December in commemoration of the Lenin centennial.

This is the strongest Chinese indictment of the Soviet leadership since the Peking talks began. In addition to discrediting the Soviet anniversary celebrations, the Chinese probably launched this bitter personal attack in reply to Brezhnev's strong public charge on 14 April that Chinese "provocations" were jeopardizing progress in the Peking talks.

The Chinese commentary may also be related to Sino-Soviet maneuvering on the exchange of ambassadors. By attacking the ideological theses at this time, Peking may be indirectly voicing objection to the new Soviet ambassador-designate to Peking, Vladimir Stepakov. As former head of the Soviet Propaganda Department, Stepakov probably shared responsibility for the publication of the theses.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Soviet Bear D Naval Reconnaissance Aircraft



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Unrefueled range - 9250 nm

Mission radius - 4600 nm

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

USSR: Two Bear D aircraft--the naval reconnaissance version of the TU-95 heavy bomber--landed in Havana, Cuba.

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Their mission probably was to provide reconnaissance support for units participating in the worldwide Soviet naval exercise "Okean."

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Hungary: The Hungarian celebrations of the Lenin centennial are proceeding according to plan despite earlier indications--reported in The President's Daily Brief of 15 April--that they were to be canceled. It now appears that the Hungarians misrepresented the withdrawal of US Ambassador Puhar's invitation as cancellation of the events. Budapest now claims that the diplomatic corps is being excluded from the events because they are party and not government celebrations. The Bulgarians have ignored this distinction, however, and invited the US Ambassador to attend yesterday's festivities in Sofia.

Jordan: Public security officials figured largely in the cabinet reshuffle announced yesterday by King Husayn. The new deputy premier, defense minister, and director of security may have earned their promotion during the hard-nosed negotiations in the recent settlement with the fedayeen. The minister of interior and the director of security were removed, perhaps as scapegoats for the attacks on the US Embassy last week.

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The President's Daily Brief

21 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

21 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Judging from Madame Binh's statement in Paris yesterday, the Vietnamese Communists, although stopping well short of outright rejection of the French proposal for talks on Indochina, are approaching it with a considerable degree of circumspection. (Page 1)

In Cambodia the fighting goes on, mostly to the disadvantage of the Lon Nol government. (Page 2)

The Thieu government seems to be adopting a more conciliatory policy toward two groups--the students and the Cambodian minority. (Page 4)

Soviet industrial production for the first quarter is 8.9 percent greater than in the first quarter of 1969. (Page 5)

Supporters of former dictator Rojas Pinilla in Colombia are already beginning to cry foul as the ballot counting proceeds at a leisurely pace. (Page 6)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

INDOCHINA

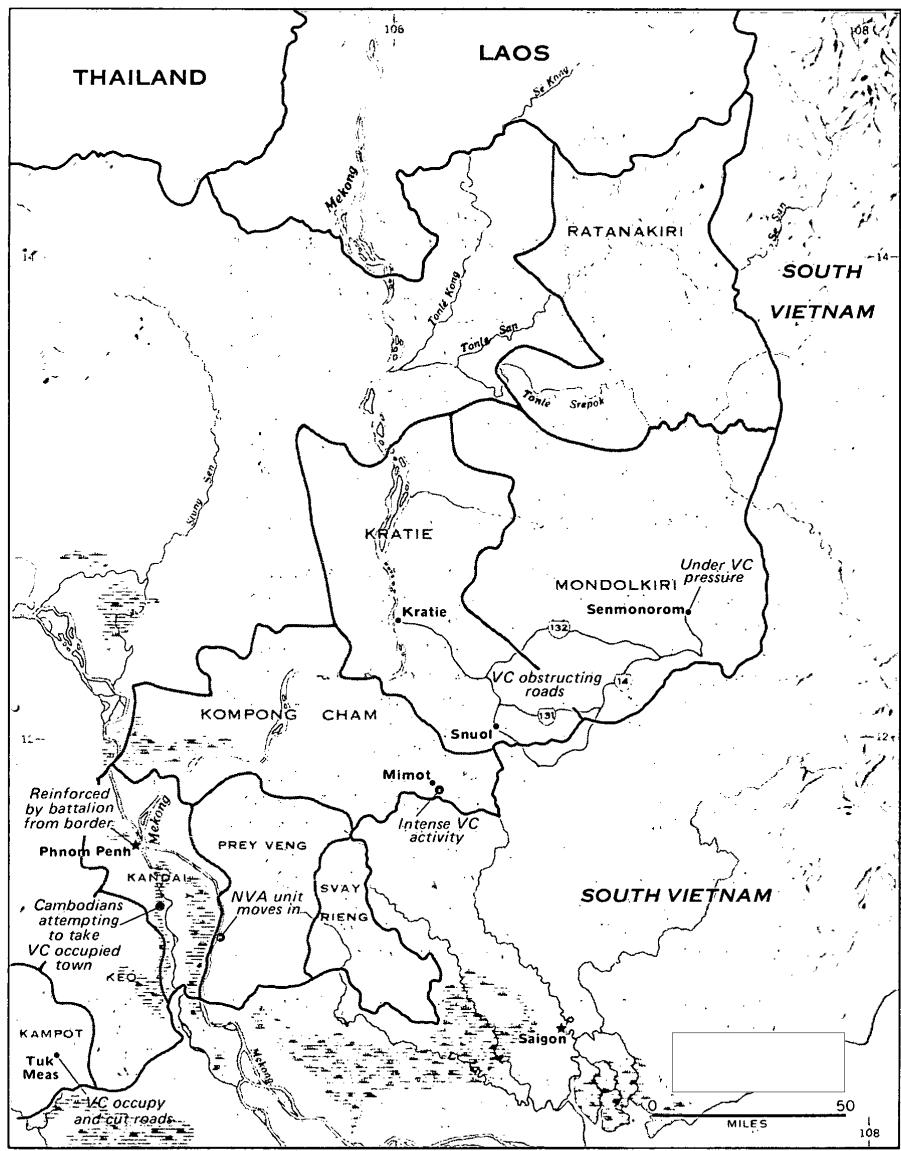
The Vietnamese Communists are keeping their options open on France's recent proposal for talks on Indochina. Madame Binh, the Viet Cong "foreign minister," told newsmen in Paris yesterday that because of US "aggression" in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, the French proposal "in these conditions cannot settle" Indochina's problems. She added, "We think that if the French Government wants to contribute to restoring peace in Indochina, it should contribute to ending American aggression and guaranteeing the people of Indochina their rights."

This statement seems to conflict with Soviet Ambassador Malik's more positive comments last week on the French initiative. Viewed in conjunction with his later "clarification," however, Malik's statement does not seem too far from Madame Binh's. Malik's first aim may have been to make clear the Communists' interest in the idea of regional talks; having accomplished this, he then backtracked in order to keep from wedging the Communists too closely to the notion. Madame Binh followed with a statement which fell well short of outright rejection but which made it clear that the initial Communist bargaining position would be tough indeed.

The balance of the evidence suggests, therefore, that the Vietnamese Communists are still seeing how much mileage they can make by encouraging political and diplomatic activity on Indochina as a whole. Madame Binh's statement merely provides an index of the caution with which they are moving. They are not likely to move much faster in coming weeks, both because the course they have set contains a good many inherent dangers and because they are almost certain to have trouble bringing militants such as the Chinese along with them.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



98261 4-70 CIA

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The fighting goes on in several parts of the country. Four government battalions are trying to drive the Communists out of the river town they occupied yesterday, about 18 miles south of Phnom Penh. The government, to strengthen its defenses around the capital, has pulled back a battalion that had been fighting near the South Vietnamese border in Svay Rieng Province.

The withdrawal of Cambodian units from the border areas may indeed be one aim of recent Communist feints south of Phnom Penh.

Farther south in Kampot Province, Communist elements two days ago occupied a town and blocked several nearby roads. In Prey Veng Province, a 200-man North Vietnamese unit occupied a district headquarters Sunday, according to a Cambodian Army intercept.

The government's position in Mondolkiri Province, on the northeastern border, also appears to be deteriorating. Dependents are being airlifted from the provincial capital following recent Communist attacks against border outposts.

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The Communists seem to be having some success recruiting among the indigenous population. There are several reports indicating the Communists are arming villagers, including ethnic Cambodians. One such report, from the police chief in Kompong Cham Province, claims that the Communists are rapidly extending their control over the population along the border southeast of Mimot town. He reported they were murdering loyal peasants, securing foodstuffs, and destroying public buildings and the houses of civil officials.

* * *

President Thieu has reiterated that he recognizes the danger of moving too aggressively against Communist base areas in Cambodia.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY



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South Vietnamese units have been making generally shallow raids across the Cambodian line almost daily since late March. One of the biggest battles to date, however, took place yesterday just across from the northern delta, resulting in some 140 Communists and 20 South Vietnamese soldiers killed. So far, it appears that the South Vietnamese raids into Cambodia have disrupted enemy base areas and operations, but it is not clear that many Communist units have been seriously hurt.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM

The trial of 11 students, begun yesterday, has been suspended pending a decision by the Supreme Court on whether the military tribunal has jurisdiction in the case. Ten other students accused of disturbing public order were provisionally released before the trial was suspended.

It will be recalled that the role of the military tribunal has been a highly contentious issue, especially since Tran Ngoc Chau's trial. Postponement of the student trial was doubtless prompted by the government.

In another move to ease tensions, the Thieu government is trying to arrange passage of new legislation restoring special minority status to ethnic Cambodians living in South Vietnam. 50X1

[redacted] this is part of a deal under which Cambodian monks, who have been agitating sporadically since last November, have promised to desist from further demonstrations. 50X1

In addition to solving a troublesome domestic problem, settlement of its dispute with the Cambodian monks would put the Thieu government in a better position to make representations with the Lon Nol government over treatment of the Vietnamese minority in Cambodia.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

Soviet industrial production in the first quarter of 1970 was 8.9 percent greater than in the first quarter of 1969, and labor productivity was better than last year by 7.9 percent. These figures indicate a relatively large increase in output despite an unusually small growth in industrial employment.

Soviet panegyrists are sure to claim the improvement is a result of the current campaign to tighten labor discipline and to intensify supervision and workers' efforts. The real reason, however, is that 1969 was so bad it makes 1970 look better than it really is.

* * *

The production schedule of the Fiat plant in the USSR has become the subject of a high-level difference of opinion. In Moscow last week, the minister of the Soviet automobile industry, Aleksandr Tarasov, issued a very pessimistic statement about Fiat's ability to meet its 1970 production schedule--30,000 cars. In Rome, almost at the same time, Fiat's assistant general manager, Vincenzo Buffa, claimed that a handful of cars has already been produced, that about 1,500 will be turned out before summer, and that the year's plan will be met.

Presumably, both men have access to the same data. At this point, we cannot tell whether Tarasov is underestimating or Buffa is overestimating. Tarasov might believe that he will look better in December if he leads his peers to expect less than they will get. Buffa, of course, has to be optimistic in order to keep his job.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

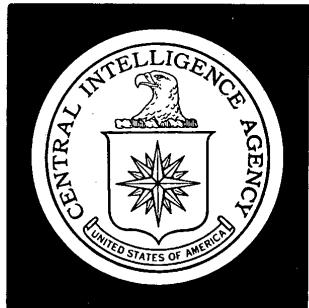
NOTES

Canada: The overwhelming support given Trudeau's Arctic pollution control bill by press and parliament demonstrates the satisfaction many Canadians feel about tweaking Uncle Sam's nose. The only complaint from the opposition is that the government did not go far enough toward establishing Canadian sovereignty over all the waters of the Arctic archipelago.

Colombia: Demonstrations in Bogota in favor of presidential candidate Rojas Pinilla were broken up by troops yesterday, but there is a possibility of further disturbances. Rojas' followers fear the government is manipulating Sunday's election returns in favor of National Front candidate Misael Pastrana who, according to the latest figures, leads by a slim margin; the final tally may not be available before Sunday. Although there have only been minor incidents thus far, the government may declare a state of siege to prevent further disorders.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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The President's Daily Brief

22 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

22 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Cambodian Government, lacking significant political support and military prowess, may not be able to stave off collapse. (Page 1)

Hanoi seems to be preparing to launch a new political front for all of Indochina. (Page 3)

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(Page 3)

Soviet and Chinese propagandists are trading insults again. (Page 5)

Lenin's centennial in Moscow brings out all the leaders. (Page 6)

North Vietnamese in Laos are building up stockpiles in an effort to beat the rain. (Page 7)

Trinidad's Eric Williams is recovering from his original panic, but his prestige may have suffered permanent damage. (Page 8)

Continued uncertainty about the result of the Colombian election increases the likelihood of violence. (Page 9)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

Recent Viet Cong attacks within 20 miles of Phnom Penh and evidence of low-level Communist activity in the Cambodian interior have sparked rumors in the capital that the Communists intend to attack the capital or at least bring it under a virtual siege. The French mission appears to be the major source of such predictions, closely followed by US reporters, who have been shocked at the ineptness of Cambodian security forces. There are few outward signs of crisis in the capital, however, and no evidence that the Cambodian leadership fully shares in this gloomy assessment.

Communications intelligence has not yet spotted any main force Viet Cong or North Vietnamese units moving westward into the Cambodian interior from their regular operating zones along the border. Thus the harassments south of Phnom Penh and along the Mekong River could be activities of rear area security elements or of recently formed groups of Vietnamese cadre and indigenous Cambodian elements.

Developments during the past several days make it abundantly clear that Cambodian forces are no match for the Communists. If only a limited number of main force Viet Cong or North Vietnamese units move westward out of their border bases, they could, in conjunction with indigenous and other forces already operating in the interior, overrun most of eastern Cambodia, including Phnom Penh, in a matter of days. The Communists probably could retain enough troops in their bases to hold off South Vietnamese forces. However, such an operation would run certain military and political risks, which the Communists may believe are unnecessary under present circumstances.

(continued)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

The woeful performance of Cambodian units against even such relatively limited pressure as they have faced up to now, and the fact that the Lon Nol regime has been unable to gain significant political or military support from other countries may encourage the Communists to believe that they can force Lon Nol and Sirik Matak out without taking the risks involved in actually moving troops into Phnom Penh. The isolation of the capital from the eastern portions of the country, increased pressure in the countryside, and the capture of some provincial capitals might cause Lon Nol's support within the army to crumble. Under such circumstances, many of the elements who were only lukewarm supporters of the previous regime might join a move to return Sihanouk as the "savior" of the country.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NORTH VIETNAM

Over the past few days we have noted several indications that Hanoi is getting ready to launch a new political front for all Indochina. The clearest sign is contained in an intercepted COSVN directive of 27 March which in so many words called for the fostering of a "United Cambodian Front leading to the formation of an Anti-American Indochinese People's Front." [redacted]

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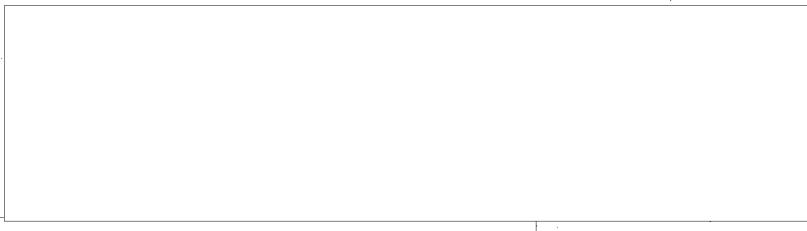
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

In a lengthy, authoritative editorial commemorating the centenary of the birth of Lenin, Peking yesterday issued a particularly virulent indictment of the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet leadership. For the first time in six months, the Chinese directly blasted the Soviets over the border problem, accusing Moscow of encroaching on Chinese territory and making nuclear threats against China.

This attack culminates a series of Chinese denunciations designed to discredit the Soviet leadership on the eve of the widely touted Lenin centenary celebrations. At the same time, it clearly reflects China's unwillingness to remain silent in the face of Moscow's continued sharp attacks against China over the past few months. During a speech in Moscow yesterday, for example, party chief Brezhnev pointedly blamed Peking's "anti-Socialist" and "nationalistic" policies for the continuing Sino-Soviet dispute. The Chinese editorial also suggests that fundamental disagreements over border problems continue to block progress at the Peking talks.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**USSR**

The opening of the Soviet celebration of Lenin's centennial yesterday was the first time in more than four months that all the members of the Soviet Politburo appeared together. Brezhnev again held the spotlight, delivering his fourth major televised speech in the past ten days.

Brezhnev chose to deliver an assessment of the USSR's current situation rather than a theoretical discourse on Leninism. He noted that the Soviet party's 24th Congress "is at hand" and revealed that the long-awaited five-year plan is "nearing completion." He attacked the economic planners, however, injecting a partisan note into the festivities. He also offered a routine warning about the danger of "bourgeois ideology," and commented that the task of improving living conditions cannot be accomplished "at one go." Brezhnev also promised that the military's needs will not be shortchanged, but he gave no indication that the USSR is about to accelerate military development.

Brezhnev broke no new ground on foreign policy. Speaking to the present condition of world Communism, he warned of the growing dangers posed by nationalism and by "right and left opportunism." Proponents of these deviations came in for firm criticism. On other world issues, Brezhnev's remarks were stale and uninspired.

Except in Yugoslavia, East European observances were held earlier so that the leaders could journey to Moscow. All of them are there except Tito, who sent a substitute as a mark of his disapproval of present Soviet policy toward Yugoslavia. Like Tito, Romania's Ceausescu, prior to going to the USSR, vigorously excoriated the "Brezhnev doctrine," objecting by implication to Moscow's "great power chauvinism and hegemonic tendencies."

Hungary's Kadar was considerably milder, but quoted Lenin to the effect that blind imitation of Soviet models could lead to errors. Celebrations were low key in other places, although in East Germany the ceremonies took on a special character because party chief Ulbricht is the only surviving Communist leader who knew Lenin personally.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

Additional North Vietnamese logistic units concerned with the movement of supplies into northern Laos have been identified. One rear services unit in North Vietnam has shipped a large quantity of food to north Laos within the past week.

It is possible that the Communists are trying to build up their stockpiles for an all-out push against Long Tieng before the heavy rains expected early in June. The relatively low level of Communist military activity around Long Tieng over the past several weeks, together with the recent movement of elements of the 312th Division southwest of the Plaine, suggest that the Communists are husbanding resources for a larger effort.

The Long Tieng airstrip came under rocket attack again on 20 April. There was little damage, and the government's resupply effort apparently was not affected. The accuracy of these attacks is improving, however. In the latest shelling, two rockets narrowly missed a weapons warehouse, and another impacted on the main aircraft parking ramp.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

TRINIDAD

Prime Minister Eric Williams has been under the gun for several weeks, and his increasing concern that black power activities might lead to serious disorders seemed confirmed yesterday when he received reports of a mutiny in his Defense Force.

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[redacted] the 30
to 50 insurgents still at large are well armed and are a formidable force for the island's loyal security forces to handle.

Williams has lost much of his political capital by his inept handling of the unrest that has been building up. Much of the unrest stems from economic problems and labor union militancy as well as the black power campaign. Moderate political leaders are now disappointed in Williams. The opposition probably believes it can continue to exploit black power themes.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

COLOMBIA

The government has declared a state of siege in order to deal more effectively with the disgruntled followers of Rojas Pinilla, but vigorous demonstrations continue in major cities. Rojas and his party are keeping the demonstrators stirred up by charging that National Front candidate Pastrana gained his late lead by a fraudulent vote count.

The charges of fraud are based on suspicion rather than evidence, and in fact were anticipated before Sunday's polling began.

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23 April 1970



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

23 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hanoi has now surfaced its plan for an all-Indochina political front. (Page 1)

In Cambodia, the Communists are maintaining their military pressure in widely separated areas of the eastern provinces. (Page 2)

A recent Communist directive in South Vietnam suggests that enemy forces will continue their recent pattern of activity, with emphasis on attempts to frustrate the allied pacification program. (Page 4)

The situation in Trinidad is discussed on Page 5.

In Colombia, the state of siege imposed Tuesday night has been successful in preventing major disorders. (Page 6)

[redacted] So-
viet [redacted] Page 7.

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There has been little change in the military situation in Laos. (Page 7)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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NORTH VIETNAM

[redacted] Hanoi is working on a new political front embracing all Indochina. Politburo member Truong Chinh, in a speech on 21 April at the Lenin celebrations in Hanoi, surfaced the subject. He said the new front would include Viet Cong, Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese representatives, as well as followers of Sihanouk, and that one of its purposes would be to topple the Lon Nol government.

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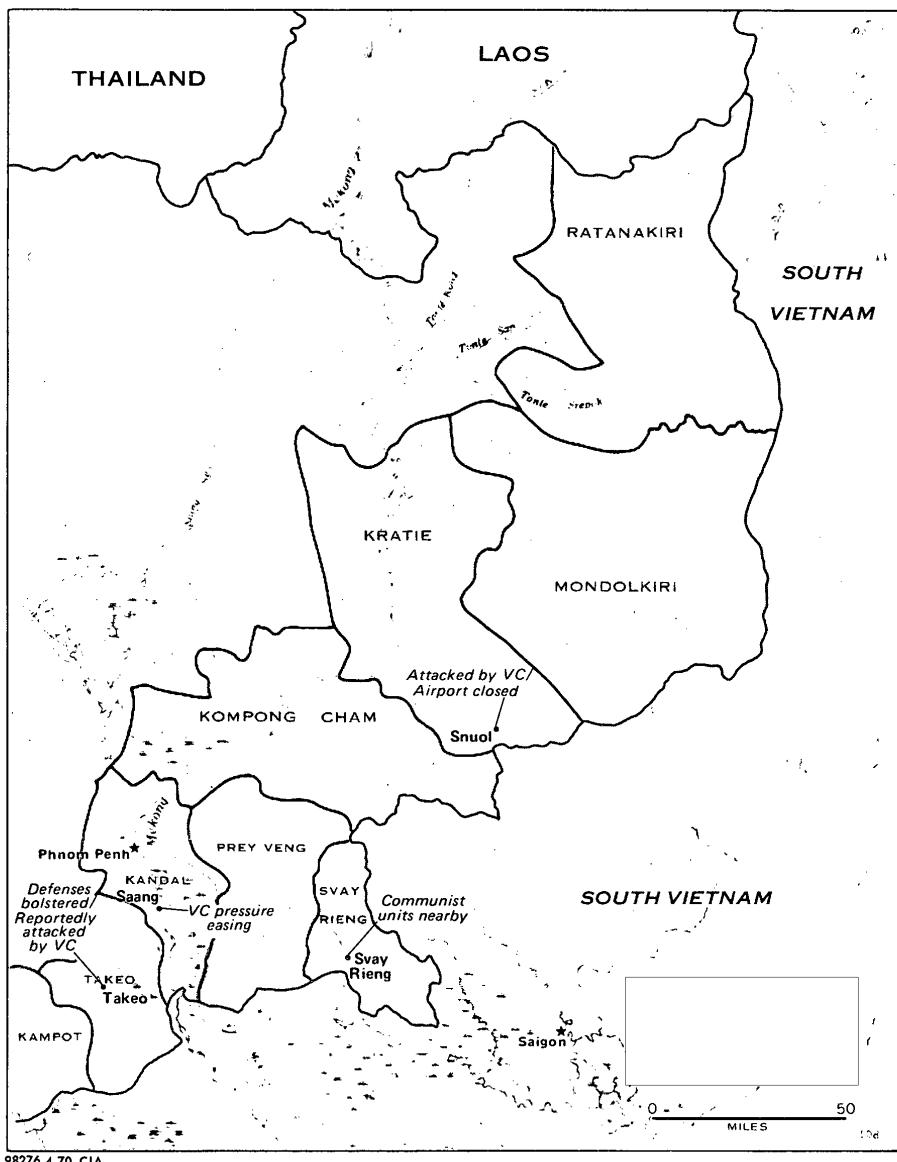
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Truong Chinh said that at least initially the Communists intend to use the new front to promote their established policies for a political settlement in each of the three countries. He declared it would work in support of the political programs already tabled for each country by its pro-Communist faction--the ten points of the Viet Cong, the five points of the Lao Patriotic Front, and Sihanouk's five-point proclamation of 23 March.

A detailed platform for the front has not been announced, but it will certainly focus on a demand from all three groups for a total US disengagement from the entire Indochina area. Hanoi probably hopes to use the front to foster an impression of widespread opposition to US involvement in the area, and cover up its own involvement in Laos and Cambodia.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

Communist military pressure continues in widely separated areas. The garrison at the town of Snuol in Kratie Province was attacked by Viet Cong elements yesterday, according to an intercepted Cambodian message. This is the first direct attack on Snuol town, although the Communists have been closing roads into the area since last week.

A Cambodian Army spokesman claims there has been fresh action in the provincial capital of Takeo, which has been under periodic Communist harassment. Takeo's defenses have been strengthened by the arrival of some 1,000 ethnic Cambodian troops detached from the South Vietnamese Army.

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Viet Cong pressure near the river village of Saang south of Phnom Penh appeared to be easing yesterday. Government troops were advancing on the outskirts of the town, meeting little resistance from withdrawing Communist elements. Farther south, Communist reconnaissance units have been spotted near Svay Rieng town.

In a broadcast from Peking on 22 April, Sihanouk reiterated appeals to Cambodians to join his "people's struggle" and claimed that some local administrations already have been established in the countryside in the name of his "Government of National Union."

On 21 April Sihanouk broadcast a statement from Peking to the Cambodian people that he would soon convene a "congress" of his supporters as a necessary step before setting up his "government." He did not indicate where or when such a congress would be held.

The statement tends to confirm other signs that Sihanouk is having considerable difficulty finding enough supporters to establish a fairly respectable government-in-exile, and that he is having trouble keeping respected Cambodian figures in his entourage. The statement does demonstrate, however, that Sihanouk is not ready to

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throw in the towel. It also refers to a new communique' that will be signed by Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian elements in several weeks. This probably will be related to the new Indochina front which Hanoi is forming.

* * *

Government leaders from non-Communist Asian countries are considering how they might best assist the Lon Nol government. [redacted]

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[redacted] These countries appear anxious to explore all diplomatic and political approaches to the problem before they consider military assistance.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

There is further evidence that the Communists in South Vietnam see the frustration of the allied pacification program as a main task. A recently intercepted COSVN directive addressed to Communist commands in the III Corps region admits that the program is "decisively contesting" for the allegiance of the people and spells out the requirement to organize and mobilize the hamlets and villages. The directive stresses the need to involve the masses in a much broader insurgent movement. More conventional military activity is still important, COSVN says, but it should be used as an effective "lever" supporting the revolution and "not a substitute" for mass agitation and political action. The directive also calls, in pep talk fashion, for continuous pressure against the allies over the next several months--including some main force assaults--with a concurrent buildup of strength for future contingencies.

The latest COSVN directive, together with the pattern of recent enemy activity, suggests that the fundamental military line laid down by Defense Minister Giap and other North Vietnamese leaders last winter still holds and will continue to guide enemy actions during the summer months. Since late last year, Communist sappers, guerrillas, and artillerymen have made many attacks on government pacification forces, but most of the enemy's large units have avoided sustained combat. At the hamlet and village level, Communist political cadres and propagandists seem to have become more active in conjunction with the increased attacks.

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TRINIDAD

The government reports that about 30 mutinous army troops surrendered yesterday to loyalist forces; others, in still undetermined numbers, are holding out in the Teteron Bay area north of Port of Spain. The administration twice postponed meetings with the rebel faction in a play for time, but talks apparently got under way yesterday afternoon. A rebel spokesman indicated, without elaboration, that the mutineers had put forward certain proposals.

Small arms and ammunition purchased from the United States arrived in Trinidad last night. The government has requested aid from several Caribbean countries, and Venezuela is reported to have readied air force and navy units for possible assistance.

Port of Spain police were hard pressed at times yesterday to maintain control in the capital, as bands of looters and arsonists roamed the streets. Three persons were reported killed in the sporadic disorders, and a dusk-to-dawn curfew was again imposed last night. Labor strikes that had been threatened did not materialize, however.

Two US ships, including the helicopter carrier Guadalcanal, are scheduled to reach their holding positions off Trinidad early this morning; others in the group are to arrive late tonight. A British frigate was due in the area last night.

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COLOMBIA

The state of siege imposed Tuesday night is working. It has prevented major disorders, and the military appears to be in full control at present.

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[redacted] At last count Pastrana's lead was over 50,000 votes.

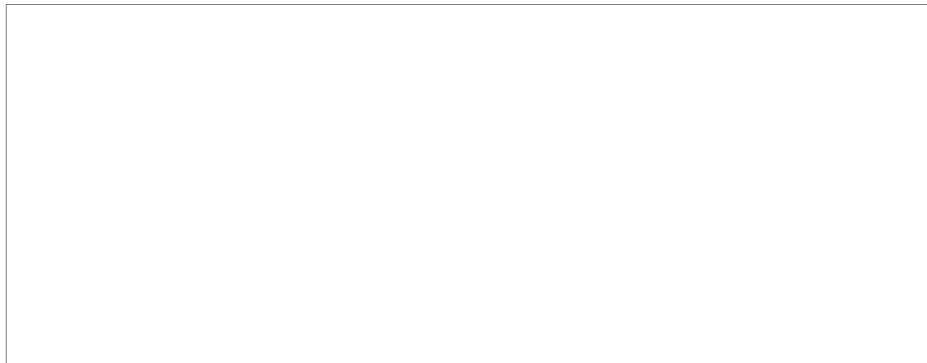
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Rojas has considerable support among the lower ranks of the military, and it is possible that soldiers in the streets will refuse to obey orders to stop large-scale demonstrations for Rojas, especially if the use of weapons is required. Large-scale violence is not expected until after the announcement of final returns on Sunday.

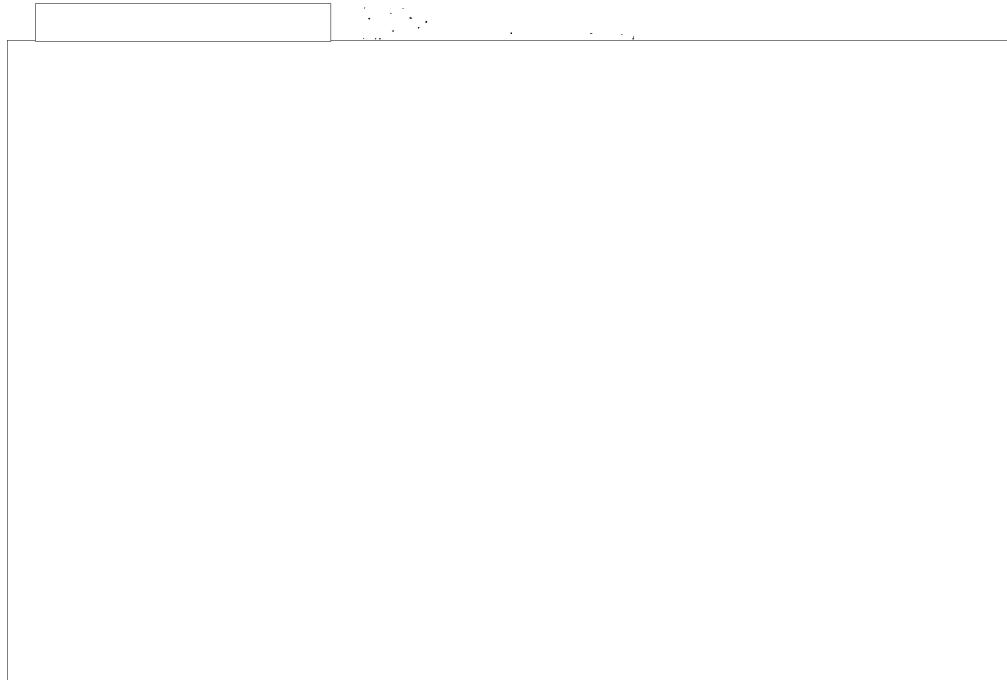
Two Communist guerrilla attacks on army patrols in outlying areas earlier this week have further complicated the situation.

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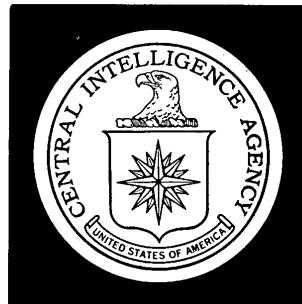
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Laos: The military situation in the Long Tieng area remains quiet. To the north, enemy forces appear to be increasingly concerned over government efforts to push into their staging areas. They recently have mounted several unsuccessful attacks against such activity in the vicinity of the government base of Tha Tam Bleung.

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The President's Daily Brief

24 April 1970



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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

24 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on *Page 1*.

The Israelis are convinced that the Soviets are playing a large role in the air defense of Egypt.
(*Page 3*)

A Soviet diplomat is dropping hints that the USSR has developed some surprising concessions for arms control verifications. (*Page 4*)

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Panama [redacted] 50X1

(*Page 5*)

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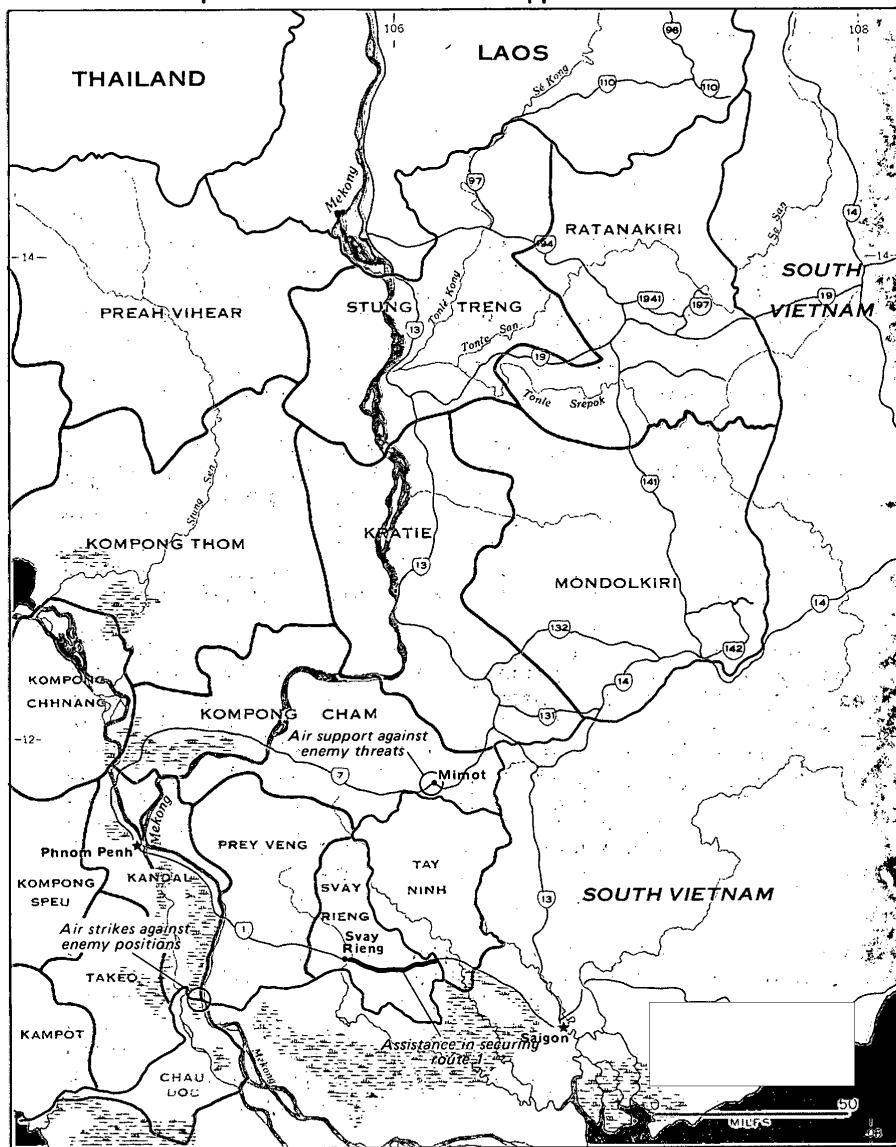
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Cambodia Requests South Vietnamese Support



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CAMBODIA

The Communists continue to claim that their current actions in Cambodia are for relatively limited purposes.

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[redacted] the Communists yesterday attacked a military regional headquarters in the town of Mimot near the South Vietnam border. Details on the attack are not known [redacted]

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[redacted] The situation in other areas was quiet.

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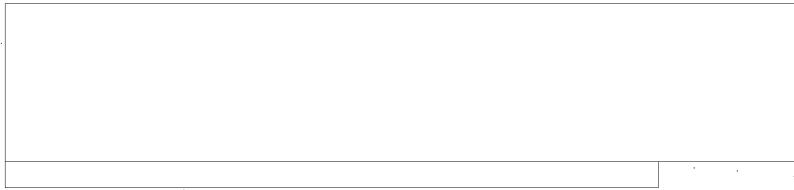
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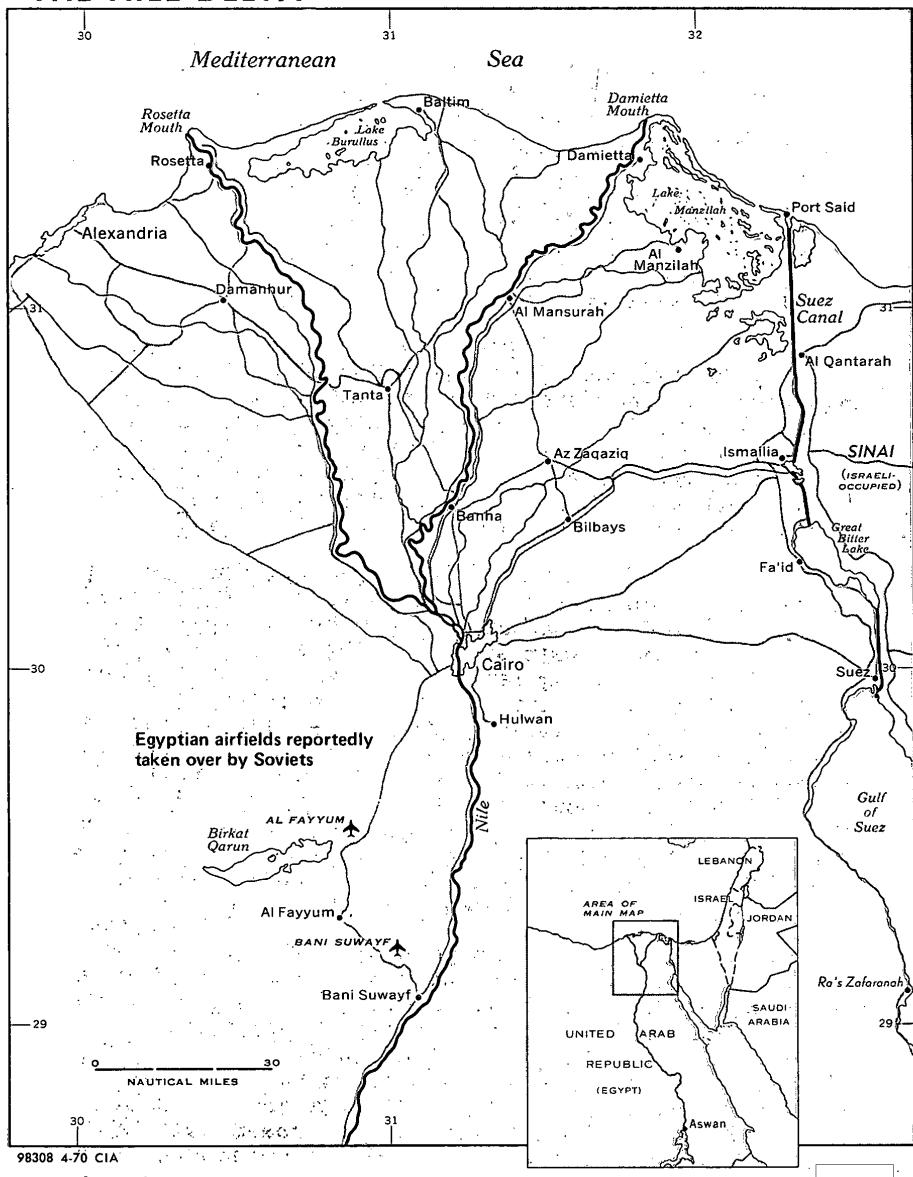
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ISRAEL-USSR-EGYPT

[redacted] that he believes two major Egyptian air-fields located about 50 nautical miles south of Cairo have been taken over by the Soviets and that Soviet pilots conduct all defensive missions south of Hulwan.

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[redacted] there are "Russian fighter squadrons" in Egypt in addition to the 80-100 Soviet pilots conducting flight training with Egyptian units. He is "ready to conclude" that the Soviets are in the process of taking full responsibility for the air defense of certain areas of Egypt.

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In support of his theory, [redacted] cites several recent operations conducted by Soviet pilots in response to Israeli actions. On April 18th, eight Soviet-piloted late-model MIG-21s chased two Israeli photoreconnaissance aircraft from the vicinity of Al Fayyum to within a few miles of the western shore of the Gulf of Suez. On the 20th, Soviet aircraft conducted defensive patrols south of Hulwan between the Nile and the Gulf while the Israelis were bombing the north end of the Suez Canal. Finally, on the 22nd, while the Israelis flew a patrol along their side of the median line of the Gulf, the Soviets flew a parallel patrol over Egypt a few miles inland from the Gulf.

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[redacted] says this Soviet support accounts for the increased aggressiveness of the Egyptian Air Force in recent weeks. The Israelis have not been deterred by these signs of greater Soviet activity,

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SALT

Before the Vienna talks opened, Yuly Vorontsov, chargé d'affaires in the Soviet Embassy here, dropped two small hints that the USSR might at some point change its position on verification.

During a conversation on SALT last month, Vorontsov told a State Department officer that, in connection with an unspecified subject before the Geneva Disarmament Committee, Moscow had studied some "surprising" possibilities for verification on national territory.

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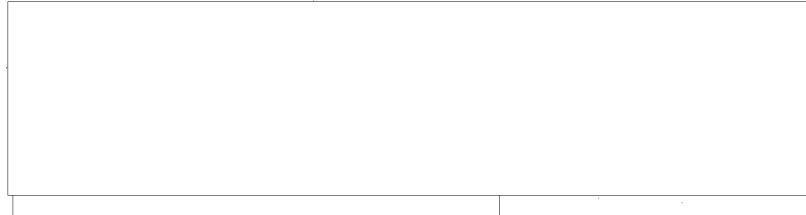


It is unclear why Vorontsov is taking this line, but the fact that he has dropped the same hint at least twice suggests that he is acting on instructions. It is conceivable that the USSR is prepared to offer some concession on verification. If so, it is likely to fall well short of US proposals for detailed adversary on-site inspections and, given the slow pace at which Semenov is unveiling the Soviet position at Vienna, will probably not be forthcoming soon.

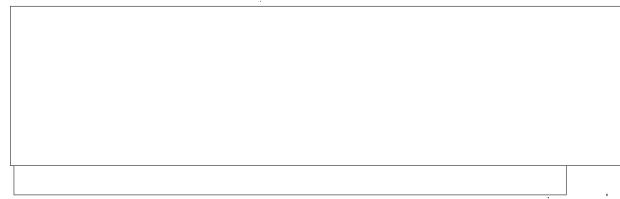
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PANAMA



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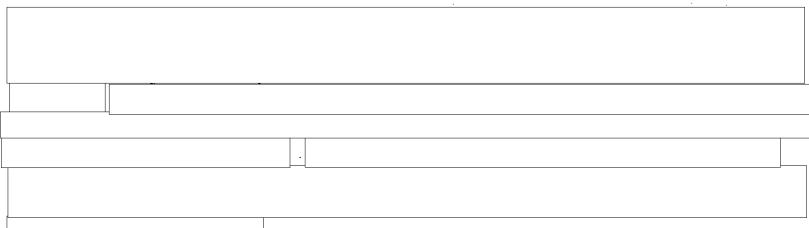
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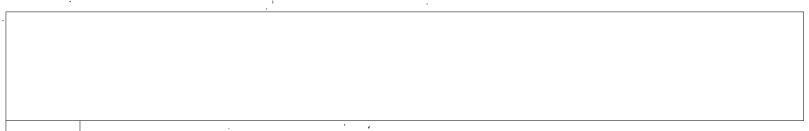
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NOTES

European Communities: Formal adoption of the EC financing regulations early this week has helped clear the way for membership negotiations with Britain and other applicants. The French had made it clear that they would not agree to the opening of membership negotiations, which are scheduled for June or July, until the financing question was settled. [redacted]

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USSR: [redacted]

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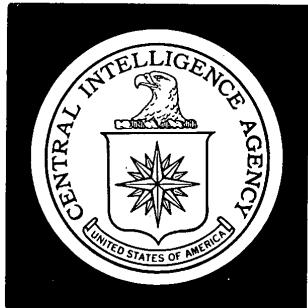
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Trinidad-Tobago: Negotiations between the government and rebel spokesmen are continuing. Prime Minister Williams told Ambassador Symington yesterday that although he is disposed to continue the talks, neither he nor any of his cabinet is willing to meet all of the rebels' demands which include the release of all detainees and a general amnesty for the military mutineers. Williams said that a hard core of about 40-50 dissidents remain at large. Williams now appears confident and apparently is playing for time to put his forces in the strongest possible position if the rebels are not willing to surrender on the government's terms.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

25 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Cambodia

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In Paris, hints that Xuan Thuy and Madame Binh, the Viet Cong's chief delegate, may be going home soon provide further indication of the declining importance--at least over the near term--the Vietnamese Communists seem to attach to the talks as a forum for developing their terms for a settlement in South Vietnam. (Page 3)

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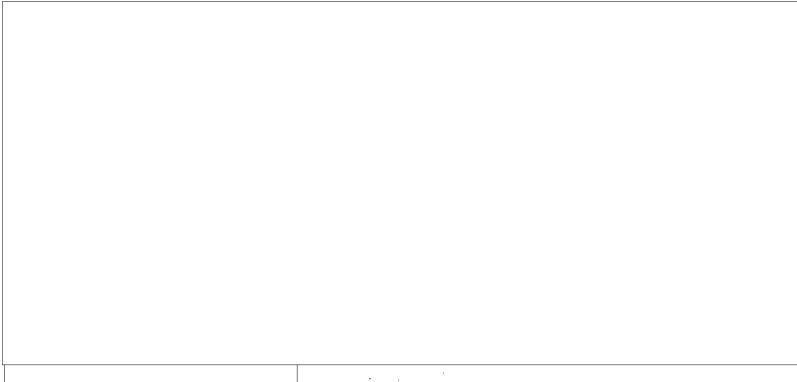
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In the Caribbean area, shelling yesterday by the Haitian coast guard did little damage either to Duvalier's palace or to his power position. Trinidad's Prime Minister Williams, on the other hand, may have suffered irreparable political damage from concessions he has had to make to ease tensions.
(Page 5)

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

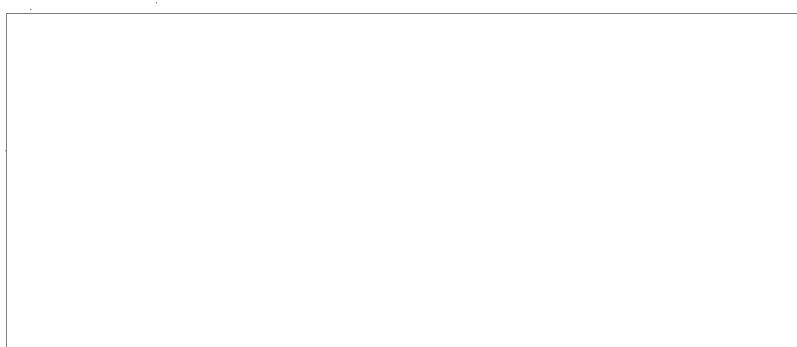


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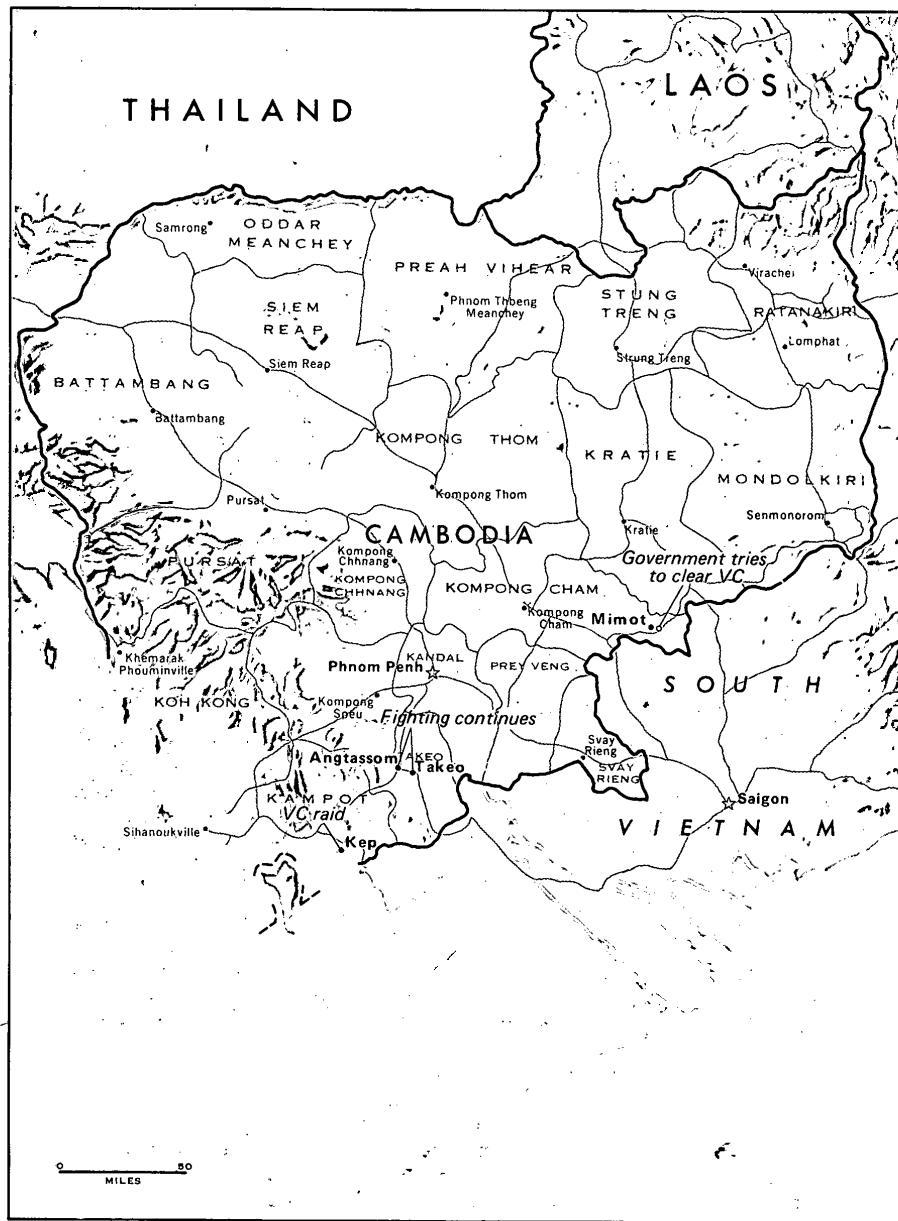
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Cambodia: Current Situation



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Meanwhile, some new Viet Cong attacks have been reported. The government claims that a small Communist force made a hit-and-run attack on the coastal resort of Kep, on the Gulf of Siam, on 24 April and destroyed several government buildings. Some fighting continues to be reported near Takeo town and at last report the government had still not cleared Communist forces from the village of Angtassom between Takeo and Phnom Penh. On the eastern border, government reinforcements are trying to clear Viet Cong forces from the area around the town of Mimot, in Kompong Cham Province, which was hit by South Vietnamese air strikes on 23 April.

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NORTH VIETNAM

Following Thursday's session of the Paris talks, Communist spokesmen hinted that both Hanoi delegation head Xuan Thuy and Viet Cong chief delegate Madame Binh will soon be going home.

Le Duc Tho, the high-level "adviser" to the North Vietnamese delegation, left for Hanoi earlier this month, and Ha Van Lau, the other principal delegate for the North Vietnamese, has been absent since mid-February. Should Thuy and Binh also depart, leaving no high-level Communist personalities connected with the talks, it would suggest that Hanoi has decided to shelve the talks--at least over the near term--as a forum for promoting Communist terms for a settlement in South Vietnam.

The Communists might have good reason to do this. New opportunities for more effective pressure on the US have developed recently outside of Vietnam. The Communists may have concluded that increased military pressure in Laos and Cambodia and the specter of a wider war is a more effective way of eroding allied negotiating firmness than any course presently open to them either in Paris or South Vietnam.

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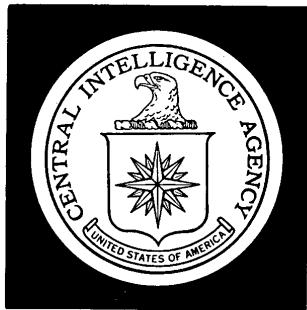
Haiti: The coast guard mutineers led by the commandant, Colonel Cayard, have been unable to attract essential army support. Cayard would thus seem to have little choice but to flee into exile, unless he is foolhardy enough to attempt a landing. The sporadic shelling yesterday from Cayard's three coast guard cutters did little damage to Duvalier's palace. Equally ineffectual were the strafing attacks on the ships by the government's lone P-51.

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Trinidad: Tension in Port of Spain is subsiding. The government and the army mutineers seem close to a settlement of the brief insurrection. The political costs to Prime Minister Williams of the events of the past few days have been high, however. Difficult days are ahead for him.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

27 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hanoi announced this morning that an Indochinese "summit conference" was held late last week.
(Page 1)

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(Page 2)

As Communist troops in Laos continue to regroup, government forces are taking advantage of the respite from heavy combat to improve their defenses in the Long Tieng - Sam Thong sector. *(Page 4)*

On *Page 5*, we discuss recent developments in the Thai insurgency situation.

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The recent increase in Egyptian military activity will force Israel into difficult decisions. *(Page 7)*

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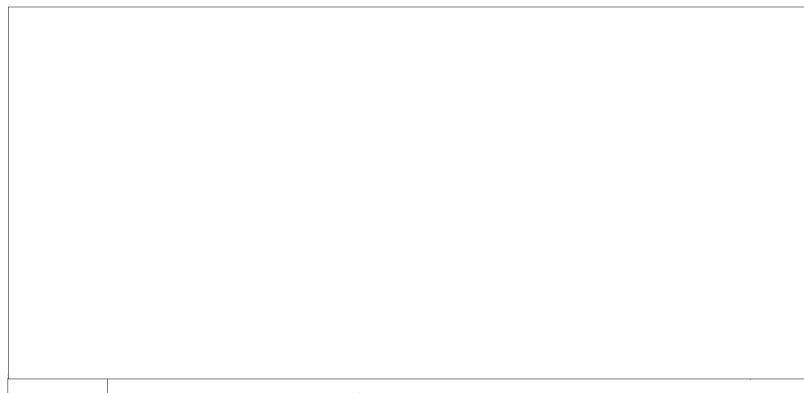
INDOCHINA

Hanoi announced this morning that a "summit conference of the Indochinese peoples" was held on 24 and 25 April in the "Lao-Vietnam-China border area." The primary business of the conference--apparently the first of a series--was to beat the drums for Sihanouk and condemn US "aggression" in Indochina, according to preliminary information. The meeting may presage the creation of an Indochinese peoples' front and perhaps Sihanouk's eventual return to Cambodia as well. Further comments on this development will be made after study of the full text of Hanoi's statement.

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CAMBODIA



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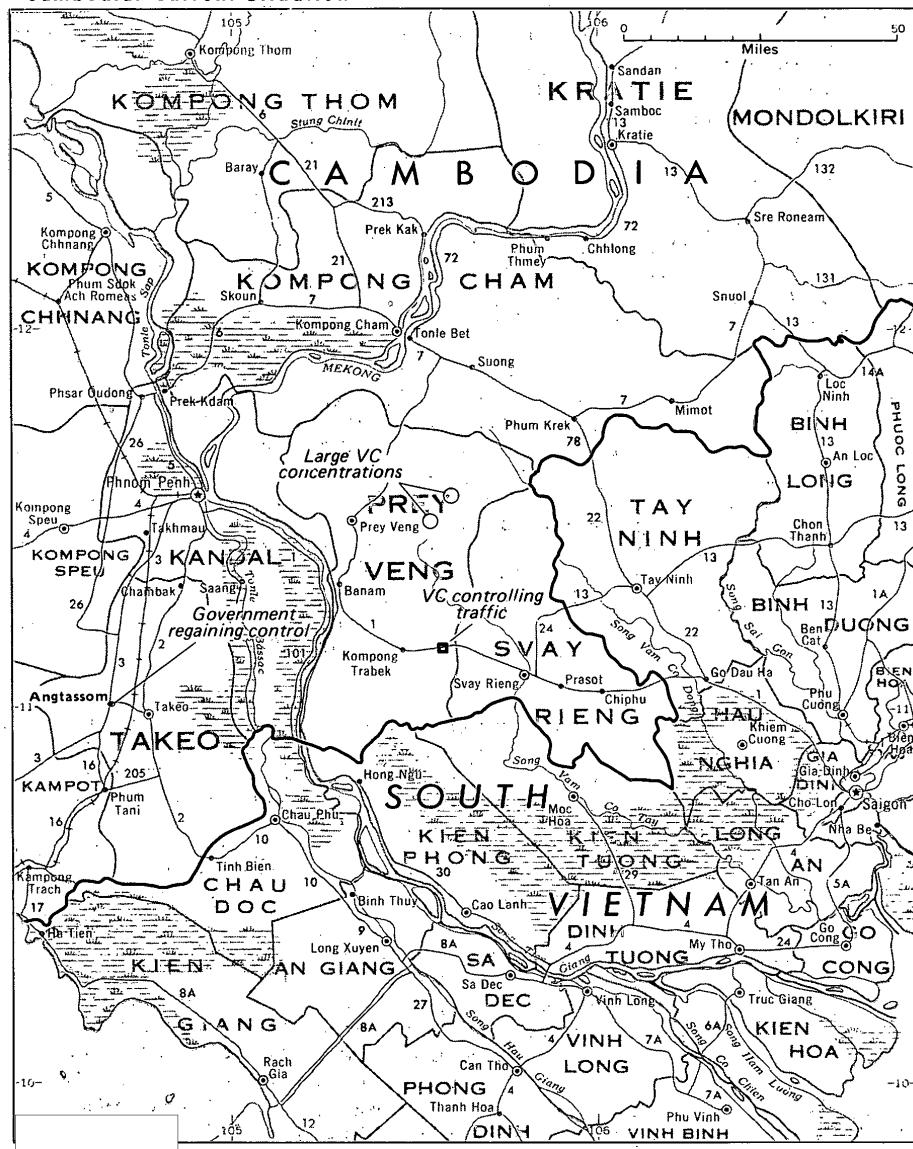
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Cambodia: Current Situation



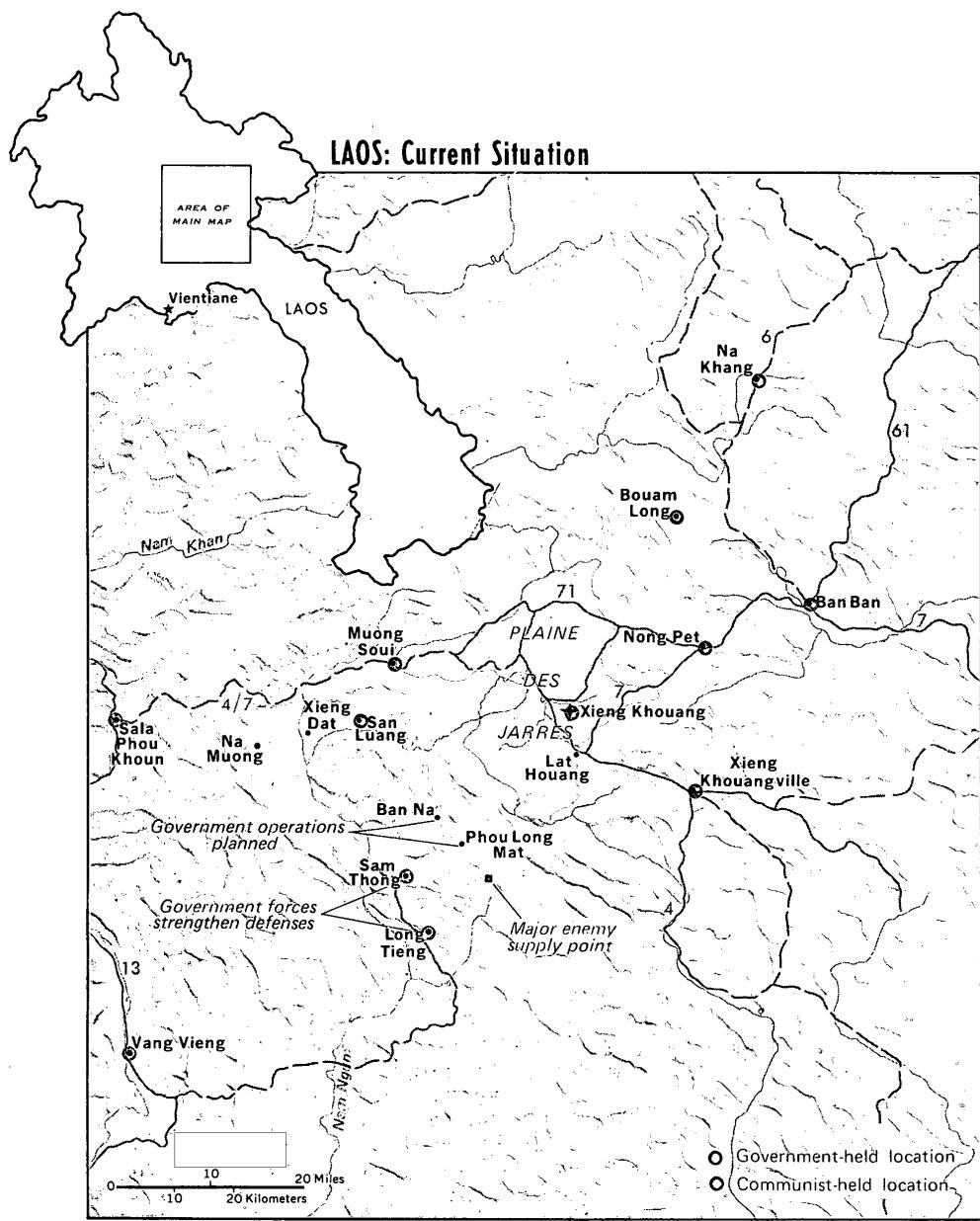
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Communist military activity in Cambodia continues in the southern and southeastern provinces, but no significant new Viet Cong attacks have been reported there or elsewhere. Cambodian paratroops apparently are regaining control of the town of Angtassom in Takeo Province, 45 miles south of Phnom Penh, after several days of heavy fighting. On 25 April, an intercepted army message indicated that "several thousand" Communist troops were concentrated in different areas in central Prey Veng Province, but gave no further details. Another message reported that on 25 April 100 Viet Cong were controlling highway traffic on Route 1 near the border of Prey Veng and Svay Rieng provinces.

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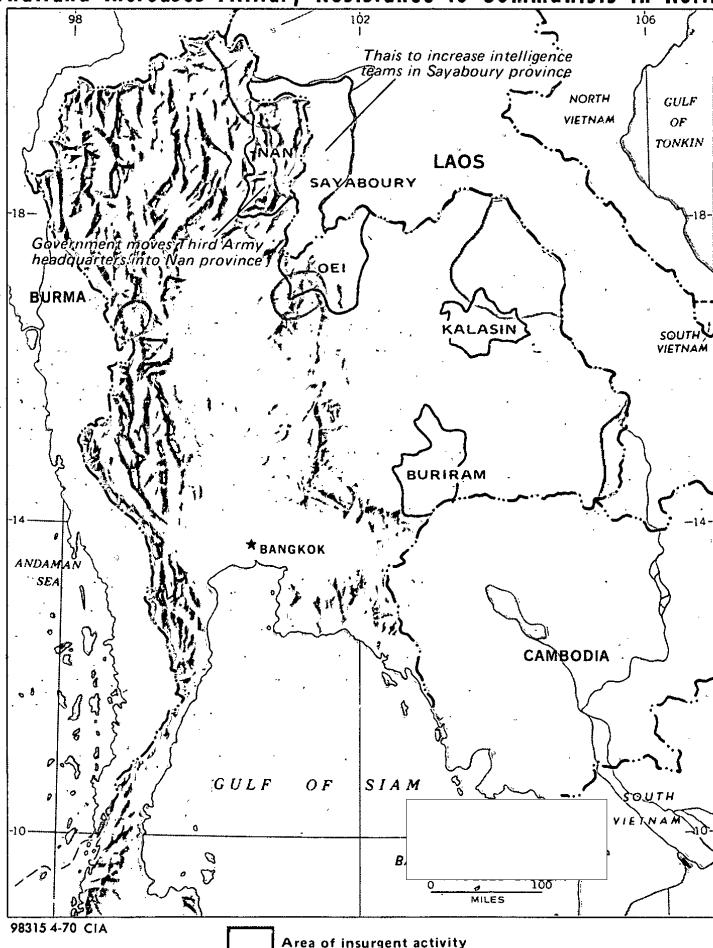
LAOS

No significant fighting developed over the weekend as enemy forces continued to regroup while awaiting completion of the major resupply effort under way in northern Laos. One battalion and a division headquarters authority of the North Vietnamese 316th Division recently shifted northeastward out of the Long Tieng area to the vicinity of Lat Houang on the Plaine des Jarres. Their former missions in the Long Tieng area will probably be assumed by elements of the North Vietnamese 312th Division which, in the last few weeks, have moved southward off the Plaine to within striking distance of Vang Pao's headquarters.

Government forces, meanwhile, are taking advantage of the temporary hiatus in large-scale enemy activity to strengthen and consolidate their defenses in the Long Tieng - Sam Thong sector. Four 105-mm. howitzers are being airlifted from Long Tieng to Sam Thong to improve that garrison's fire-support capability. In addition, Vang Pao is moving several battalions to staging areas in preparation for a new round of offensive operations northeast of Sam Thong in the Ban Na - Phou Long Mat region.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Thailand Increases Military Resistance to Communists in North



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THAILAND

There have been a number of guerrilla incidents in the past two weeks. The major threat is still in the north, where the Communists' tribal guerrilla forces continue to erode the government's presence along the Lao border. The guerrillas have besieged several army outposts, forcing the evacuation of at least one, with a number of government casualties. The guerrillas have also shot down two of Bangkok's scarce helicopters.

The army has taken several steps to counter this pressure. In addition to heavy use of air and artillery strikes, the northern headquarters of the Third Army has moved into Nan Province.

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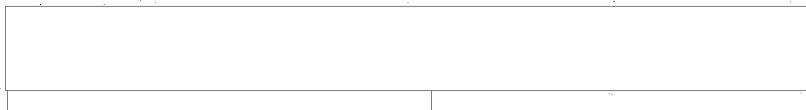
In the northeast, clashes with Thai Army units continue, but they appear to result largely from government initiatives. Much of the activity in the northeast has occurred outside of traditional guerrilla operating areas, with insurgents in Loei, Buriram and Kalasin provinces showing particular aggressiveness.

Although the Communists' highly-touted Thai People's Liberation Army is a long way from developing the military forces it would need for a sustained campaign, the recent activity adds credibility to its claims of having at least limited influence in most northeast provinces.

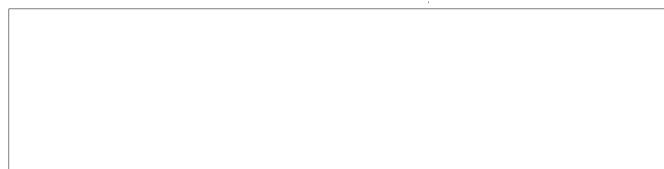
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COMMUNIST CHINA

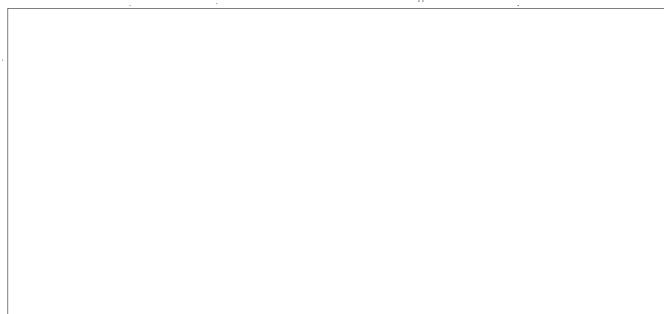


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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

EGYPT-ISRAEL

During the past nine days, Cairo has made a number of air and ground attacks against Israeli positions in occupied Sinai. Egyptian aircraft have been employed with unusual frequency, including a rare strike last Saturday deep into Sinai by IL-28 light bombers. Ground action along the Suez Canal has also increased recently, and Egypt has reported that it carried out two commando raids against the Israelis yesterday.

In spite of losses incurred--90 Egyptian aircraft have been downed since the 1967 war--Cairo believes it must continue to demonstrate its opposition to the Israeli occupation of Sinai. Israeli air raids into Egypt, particularly those causing civilian casualties, increase the pressures on Nasir to act. The recent introduction of the Soviet-operated SA-3 air defense system into Egypt probably has contributed to Cairo's bravado by providing what it believes are areas of at least partial sanctuary from Israeli reprisals.

The Israelis are now faced with the problem of trying to discourage or curtail Egyptian military activity while attempting to avoid a direct confrontation with Soviet forces in Egypt. Tel Aviv is very reluctant to allow the Egyptians to hide under any form of Soviet umbrella, but at the same time it is hesitant to risk the losses that might result from attacks against these protected areas.

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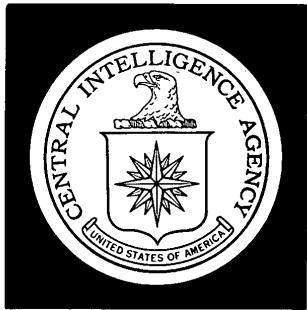
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTE

Colombia: Aside from minor terrorist incidents, the country remains calm. Further violence could occur, however, as an aftermath of the contested presidential elections of 19 April. The National Electoral Registry has not yet released final returns, but unofficial figures give National Front candidate Pastrana a lead of some 66,000 votes over former dictator Rojas Pinilla.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

28 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Communists continue to apply military pressure on the new Cambodian Government. (Page 1)

Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik's proposal for a conference on Cambodia has received encouraging support from several Asian nations. (Page 3)

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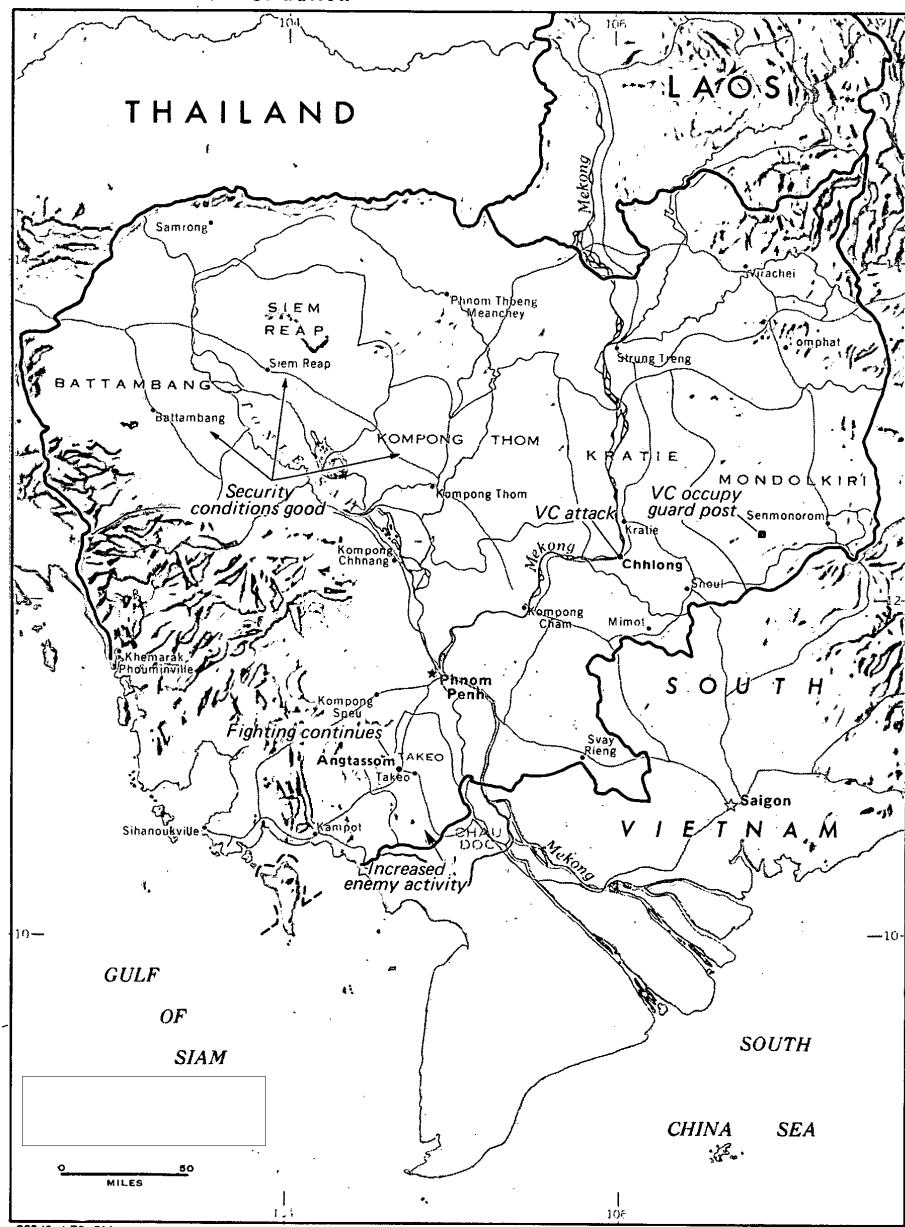


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CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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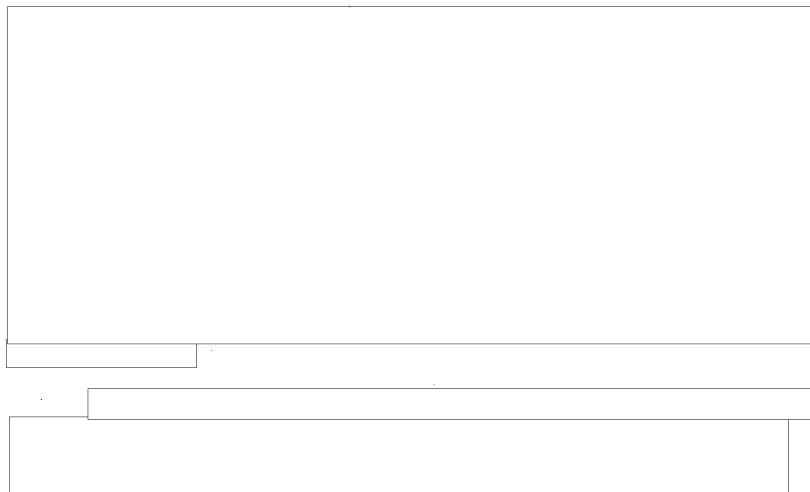
CAMBODIA

Communist attacks continue. A Viet Cong force of undetermined size attacked the town of Chhlong in Kratie Province on the night of 27-28 April. Communist elements recently have been forcing government units out of their positions south of Chhlong, and this attack appears designed further to limit government activities east of the Mekong River. In adjacent Mondolkiri Province, 200 Communist troops occupied a government guard post well to the west of the provincial capital.

A senior Cambodian official claims that the town of Angtassom in Takeo Province is back under government control, but some fighting apparently is still going on around the town. [redacted]

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The Communists gave Sihanouk star billing at last weekend's "summit conference" of Indochinese Communist luminaries. The conference was attended by delegations from North Vietnam's Fatherland Front, the Viet Cong's Liberation Front, the Pathet Lao, and Sihanouk's "Cambodian liberation movement."

(continued)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

North Vietnam Premier Pham Van Dong was one of the few government representatives at the meeting and the Communists may continue to use front organizations to deal with the problems of Indochina in the future. The conference concentrated on Cambodia, but concluded with pledges of solidarity and of mutual support in the respective wars in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam against the "common enemy."

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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ASIAN CONFERENCE ON CAMBODIA

Indonesia's effort to organize an Asian conference on Cambodia is gathering momentum. Djakarta's principal backers in the enterprise--Australia, New Zealand, and Thailand--are encouraging Foreign Minister Adam Malik to stage the conference within two weeks or sooner. Japan has shelved its own proposal for a meeting in order to support Malik's initiative. According to the Indonesian press, Malik has invited 21 states.

As now conceived by Malik, the conference would focus on the immediate problem of Cambodia, rather than on all of Indochina. It would call for a guarantee of Cambodian neutrality, prevention of external interference in its affairs, and reactivation of the International Control Commission. North Vietnam and China have already stated their opposition. The Soviet Union was not invited, but its public disapproval of the conference might tend to give such countries as India pause.

A major stumbling block in organizing a conference has been Malik's penchant for discussing ideas with the press before the necessary approaches had been made to most of the potential invitees. The questions of where the conference is to be held and who is to foot the bill are also still unresolved.

Although a conference would probably have little practical effect on Communist activities or strategy in Cambodia, it would give the Phnom Penh government a measure of political support that has been lacking up to now. Those Asian officials who have commented on Malik's proposal feel that whatever the effect of the conference on Cambodia, the fact of Asian initiative and follow-through is in itself worthy of support.

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The President's Daily Brief

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

29 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

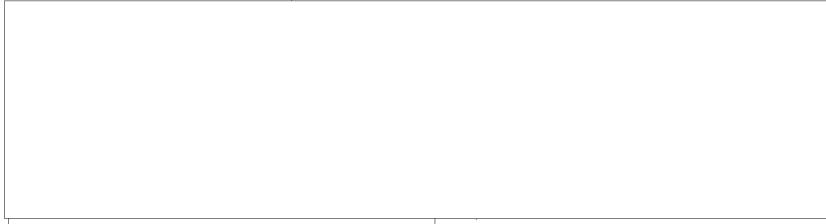
[redacted]	50X1
In Cambodia, Communist military activity has momentarily abated. (Page 1)	50X1
Recent satellite photography shows a new Chinese mis- sile that is larger than the MRBMs previously spotted. (Page 2)	50X1
[redacted] North Vietnam (Page 3)	50X1 50X1
The latest information on Soviet ICBM silo construc- tion is provided on Page 4.	
Italy is unenthusiastic about the Spanish-French scheme for a Mediterranean Pact. (Page 5)	
In Laos, some new skirmishing has been reported around the Plaine des Jarres, but it has not materi- ally altered the situation. (Page 6)	

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

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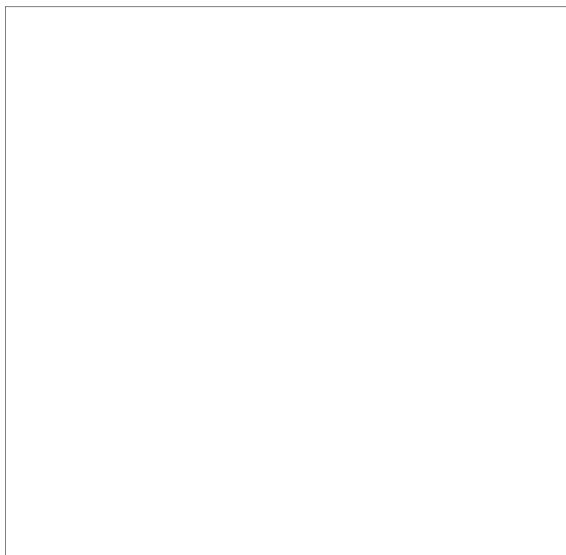
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Communist military activity has tapered off, but some fighting appears to be continuing around Angtassom town in Takeo Province. The press reports that government troops are being sent into Takeo and Kampot provinces to reinforce government positions and to clear roads recently blocked by the Viet Cong.

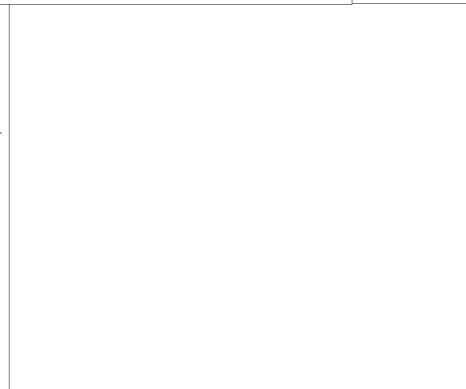
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Several of the governments planning to attend Adam Malik's conference on Cambodia, including Japan, Thailand, Australia, and New Zealand, are pressing Malik to hold a smaller advance meeting at the ambassadorial level to work out a draft communique. As things now stand, the larger session is to be held in Djakarta on 11 and 12 May.

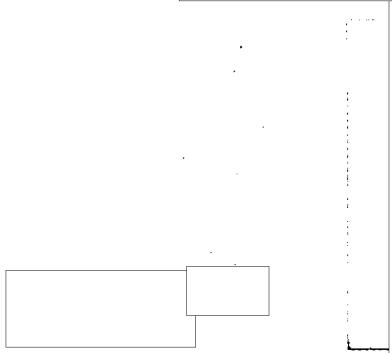
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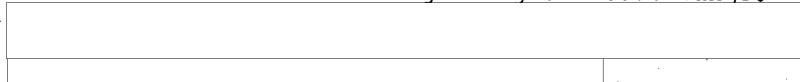
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

COMMUNIST CHINA

Satellite photography [redacted] shows a missile on a transporter-erector at the Wu-chai surface-to-surface missile launch site that is larger than the MRBMs seen at the Shuang-cheng-tzu test range.

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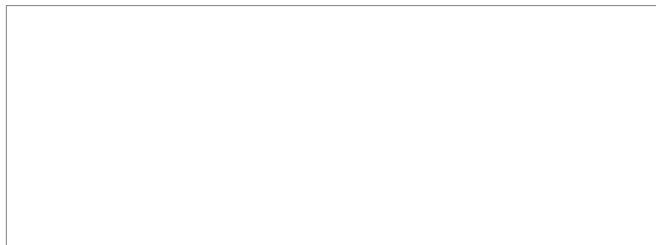
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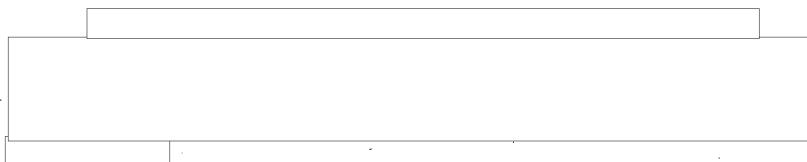
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**NORTH VIETNAM**50X1
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Total troop departures this dry season were only about 60,000, as compared with about 100,000 during last year's dry season. Over half of the 60,000 were destined for southern South Vietnam and the adjacent base areas in Cambodia.

Hanoi is still leaving itself the option of resuming the troop flow if events in southern Indochina require it. Recent intercepts indicate the Communists intend to keep their major logistical stations in the Laos panhandle open at least through May.

* * *

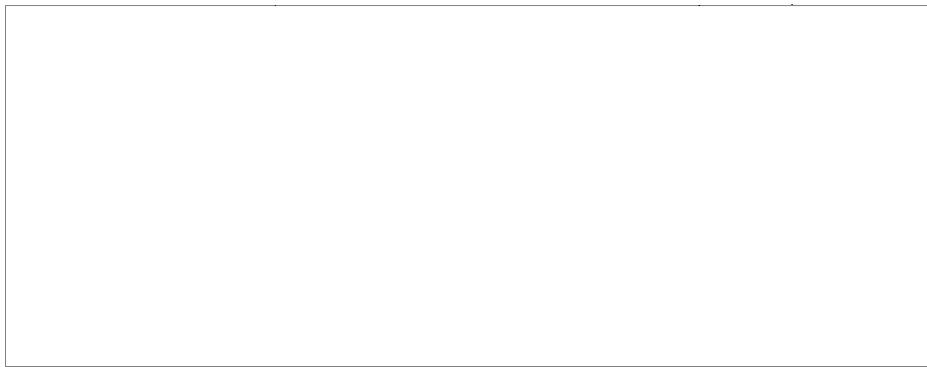
Madame Binh's announcement yesterday that she is leaving Paris is one more indication the Vietnamese Communists intend to put the talks on ice for the time being. It is not clear from her statement how soon she will be leaving

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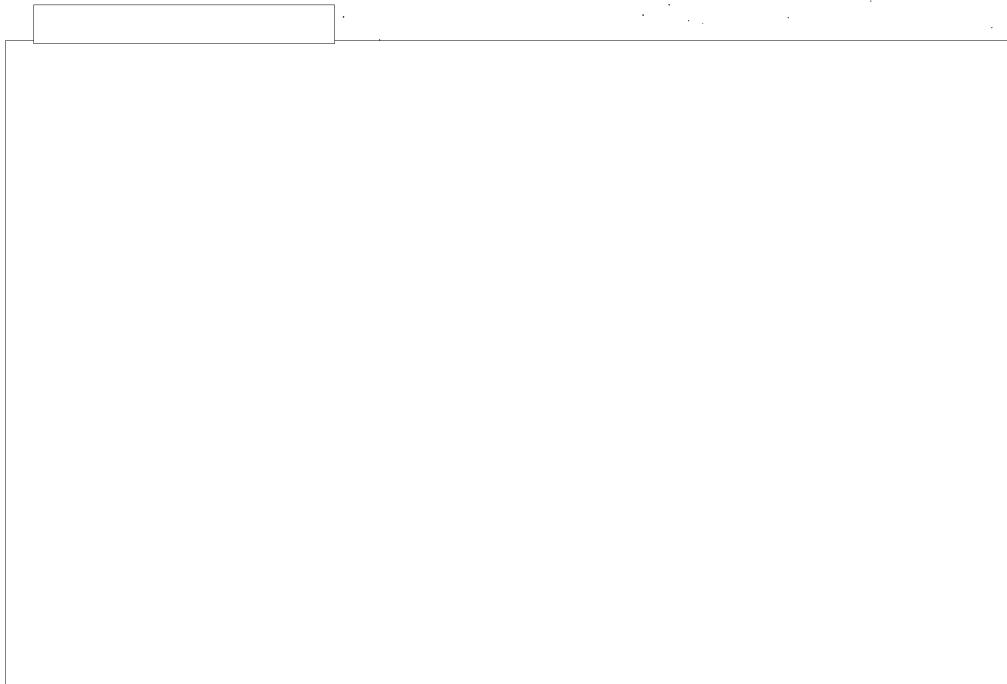
Her departure will leave Xuan Thuy, her counterpart in the North Vietnamese delegation, as the only high-ranking Vietnamese Communist official still in Paris. North Vietnamese spokesmen have hinted that he too may be leaving soon.

Madame Binh placed heavy emphasis during her press conference on the recent Indo-chinese "summit conference" and on the "mutual solidarity" of the region's three countries. This strongly suggests that the Vietnamese Communists think the greatest advantage in the immediate future is to be gained from combining military pressure with political action in the Indo-chinese context, rather than from new initiatives in Paris or any other international forum.

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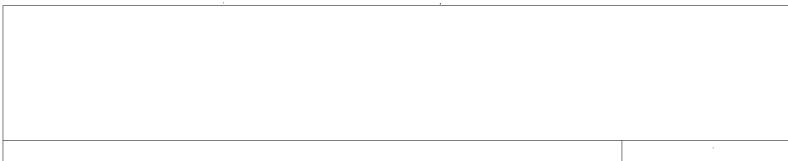
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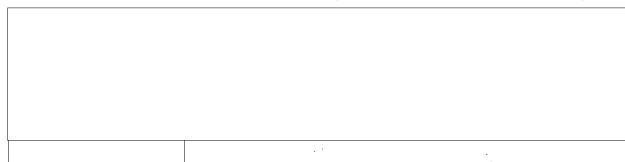
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

The latest satellite photography shows one new group of ten SS-11 silos under construction at the Yedrovo ICBM complex, one at the Pervomaysk IRBM complex, and one at the Derazhnya MRBM complex.



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MEDITERRANEAN

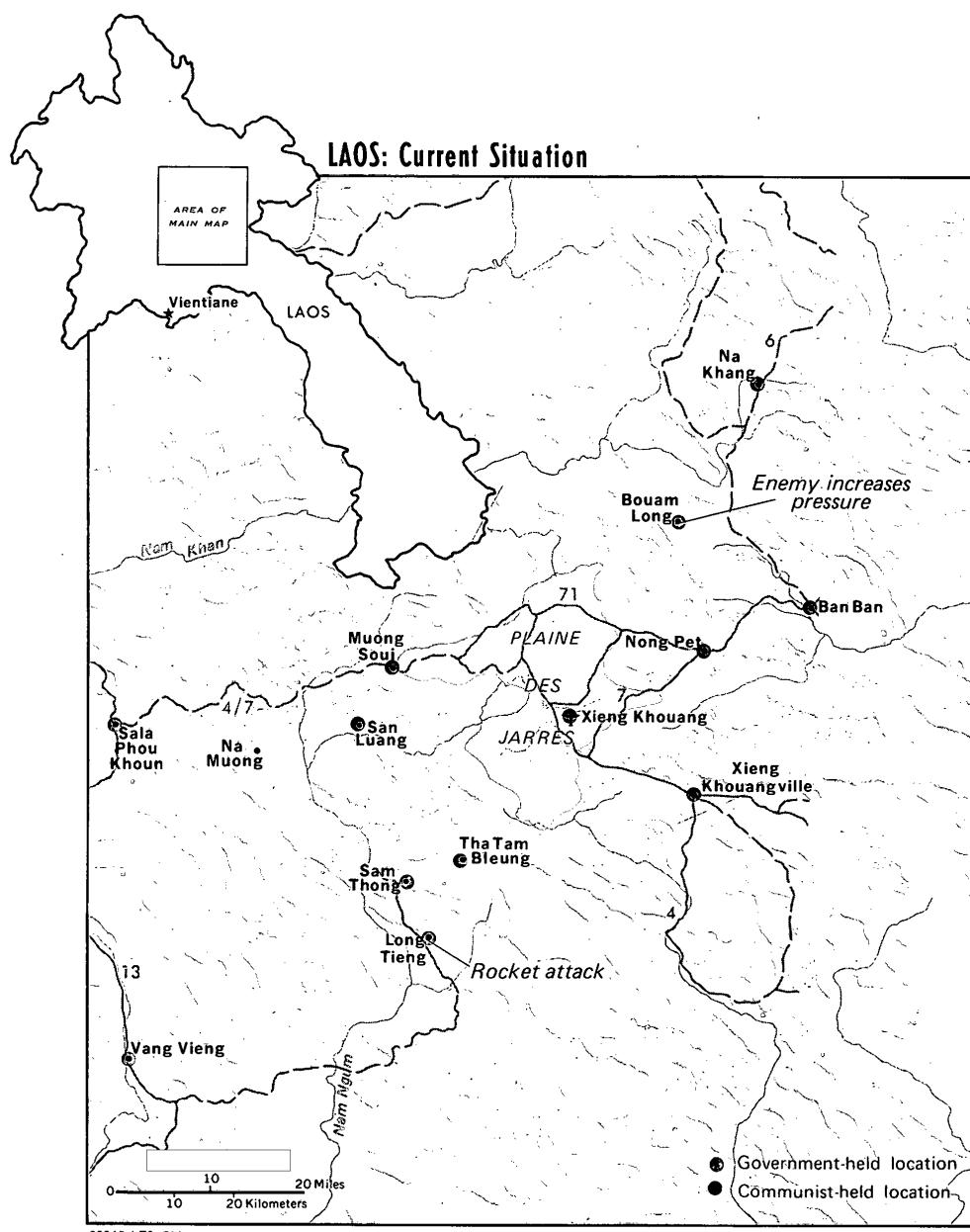
Roberto Ducci, a ranking official in the Italian Foreign Ministry, told a US Embassy officer last week that Rome saw little advantage in a tripartite Mediterranean pact with Paris and Madrid. Not only would the Italians find such close association with the Franco government politically unacceptable, but they do not believe that it is in the Western interest to divide the Mediterranean into Eastern and Western zones, as though the Eastern Mediterranean were lost to the Soviets.

France has been promoting the idea of a Mediterranean Pact of some sort ever since De Gaulle became president.

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NOTES

Laos: The situation remains essentially unchanged south of the Plaine des Jarres, although light enemy probes have been reported near Tha Tam Bleung and Sam Thong. Yesterday four 122-mm. rockets hit near the Long Tieng airstrip; no casualties or serious damage were reported. North of the Plaine, the Communists are intensifying the pressure against Bouam Long, but so far government losses have been light.

East Germany - West Germany: The two governments are expected to sign an agreement regulating and improving postal and telecommunications exchanges today. This should help the atmosphere for the next summit meeting between Chancellor Brandt and East German Premier Stoph at Kassel on 21 May.

Arab States - Fedayeen: Yet another fedayeen organization--the Popular Struggle Front--has targeted US facilities and enterprises. A spokesman hinted that his group may conduct terrorist attacks within the US. The Front has only two hundred or so members, but it has the capability of carrying out its threats. It was responsible for the bombing of the offices of El Al and Pan American airlines in Turkey last weekend.

Guyana: Prime Minister Burnham announced at a press conference last week that the government intends to hold discussions with the foreign-owned bauxite and sugar industries in order to ensure "local meaningful participation" in controlling these industries. He also said future concessions will require a minimum Guyanese participation of 51 percent. The total foreign investment in Guyana is somewhere between \$150 million and \$200 million. The US share is about \$55 million.

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

30 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Our assessment of the Cambodian situation appears on page 1.

The Communists in Laos have moved against targets in the south. (Page 3)

The second wave of the spring offensive is shaping up in South Vietnam. (Page 5)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

The military situation is far from settled but a number of things appear to be a good deal clearer than they were in the weeks immediately following Sihanouk's downfall. On the military front, the Communists have moved rapidly to drive Cambodian forces inland away from Communist border bases--this has now been largely accomplished--and they have created trouble for the Cambodians in the interior. This process is continuing and involves two kinds of activities. Communists have threatened or harassed a series of major Cambodian towns, among them Snoul and Mimot in the north, and Svay Rieng, Takeo, Kampot, and Kep in the south. Except for Mimot, all of these towns are still in Cambodian hands. In addition, Communists have harassed the major roads, rail lines, and waterways leading from Phnom Penh to the eastern region.

These actions could give the Communists control over a wide swath of Cambodian territory where they can get foodstuffs and recruits, where they can set up a Sihanouk liberation government, and finally where they can move their bases back away from now threatened border sanctuaries.

To date, although there has been some wavering in Phnom Penh, the Communists have not succeeded in shaking the resolve of the Lon Nol government. If anything, Lon Nol and Matak are more determined than ever. The prospect of US material assistance obviously has been extremely important.

It is significant, however, how much the Communists have achieved, at least in a tactical sense, with the expenditure of relatively few resources. Most significantly, the enemy has not used any of its main force units in operations in Cambodia since the fall of Sihanouk; the enemy has not needed them.

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The government military post at Mimot in Kompong Cham Province was taken by enemy troops on 27 April.

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[redacted] almost all of the government defenders were either killed or captured. Meanwhile, an employee of the French plantation at Mimot has told US officials that a fleet of 50 trucks and a substantial amount of Cambodian currency were left behind when the plantation was evacuated.

The region near the port city of Kampot came under Communist harassment for the first time yesterday. Few details are available, but the government claims fighting there is continuing. The action in the Kampot area is the most southwesterly extension of Communist military activity to date.

Recently available information indicates that the Communists have been attacking truck convoys between Phnom Penh and the provincial capital of Svay Rieng. One convoy was immobilized and another was forced to return to Svay Rieng on 26 April. The Communists also overran a government outpost six miles north of Svay Rieng on 27 April, suggesting that they may be closing in on the town itself.

The large-scale allied sweep operation launched into the "Parrot's Beak" area of Svay Rieng yesterday may compel some Viet Cong elements to move deeper into the Cambodian interior.

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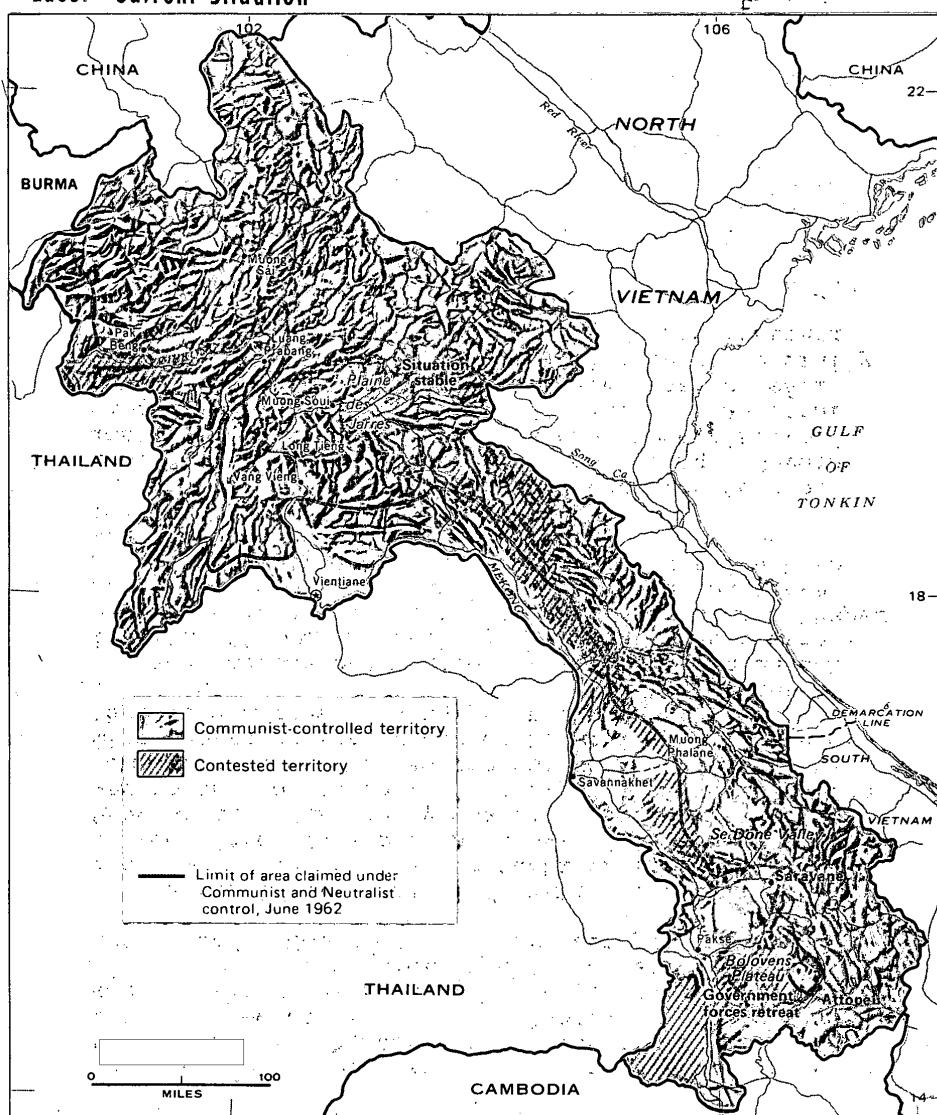
The long drawn-out fighting near the town of Angtassom in Takeo Province is continuing. Government forces apparently have removed Communist roadblocks between Angtassom and Phnom Penh.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Laos: Current Situation



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**LAOS**

[redacted], the commander of the 600-man government force in the provincial capital of Attopeu decided to abandon the town following a heavy mortar attack. Casualties were reported to be very heavy. One unconfirmed report states that the town had been attacked by a regimental-size North Vietnamese force but this may reflect the customary exaggerated claims of Lao army officers.

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Although the military importance of Attopeu is minimal, its loss will be a severe political and psychological setback to the government. Along with the city of Saravane, which is just northeast of the Bolovens Plateau, Attopeu has long figured prominently in the war of nerves in southern Laos. It has been attacked before, but the Communists have never made a substantial effort to capture it; they have clearly had the capability to do so, however.

There have been reports circulating in southern Laos for the past month that local Communist forces intended to break the lull in military activity in the panhandle.

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The Communists have not mounted a major offensive in this area of Laos since early 1968, when North Vietnamese forces recaptured the Se Done Valley and virtually surrounded the provincial capitals of Saravane and Attopeu. Major North Vietnamese elements withdrew from the Bolovens Plateau area during the last rainy season.

The attacks may have been designed to forestall any additional deployments of government forces from the panhandle to northern Laos. They could also have been the result of some breakdown in local arrangements which some of the regular army commanders in the Bolovens area have established with the Communists.

(continued)

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It is too early to determine whether the attack on Attapeu is the harbinger of an important shift in Communist strategy in Laos or represents only the kind of sporadic flareup that has occurred in the south in past years. At a minimum, it is a fresh reminder of the extreme fragility of the government's position in all of southern Laos, and of the relative ease with which North Vietnamese troops can move westward out of the infiltration corridor to strike at a time and place of their own choosing.

The military situation in the north has remained essentially stable during the past 24 hours.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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SOUTH VIETNAM

There are mounting signs that the second round
of the Communists' spring offensive will begin soon,
most likely during the first week of May.

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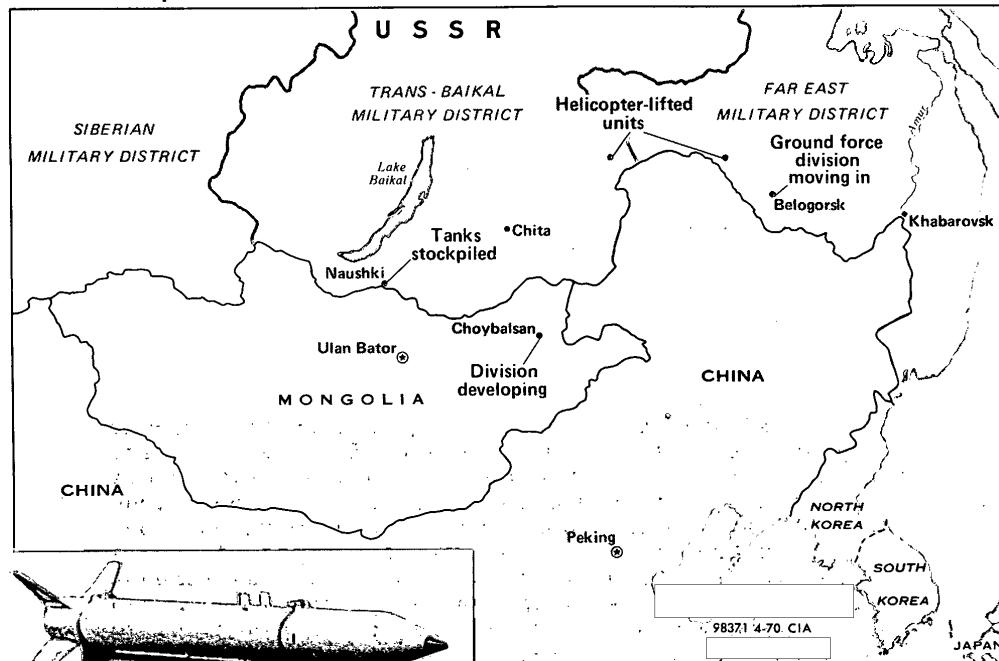
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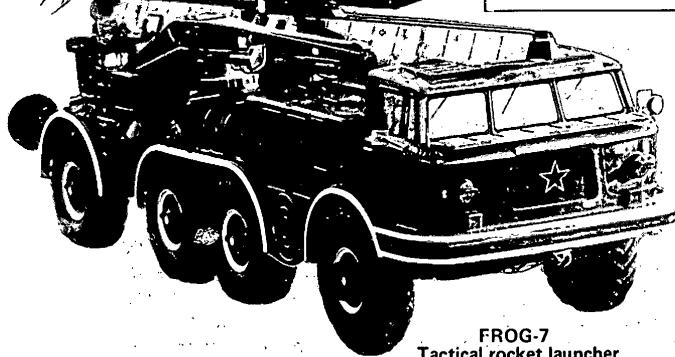
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Soviet Buildup Continues on Sino-Soviet Border



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NOTES

USSR-China: Recent satellite photography shows that the Soviets are continuing in a deliberate fashion to move men and equipment to the Sino-Soviet border. There were 277 tanks--almost enough for a division--seen stockpiled near Naushki, in the Trans-Baikal Military District. Division-level equipment and more than 650 tents observed at Choybalsan indicates that the number of divisions in Mongolia has been increased to three.

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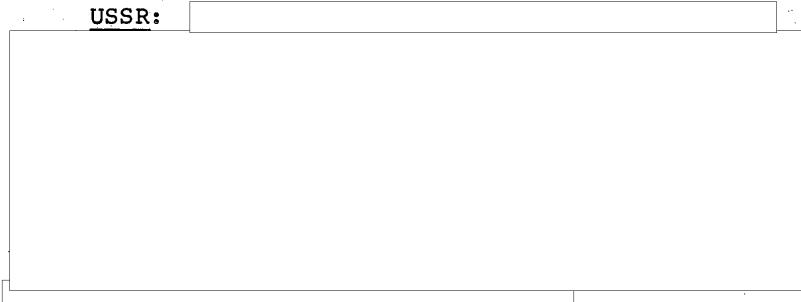


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