



*The President's Daily Brief*

12 June 1969

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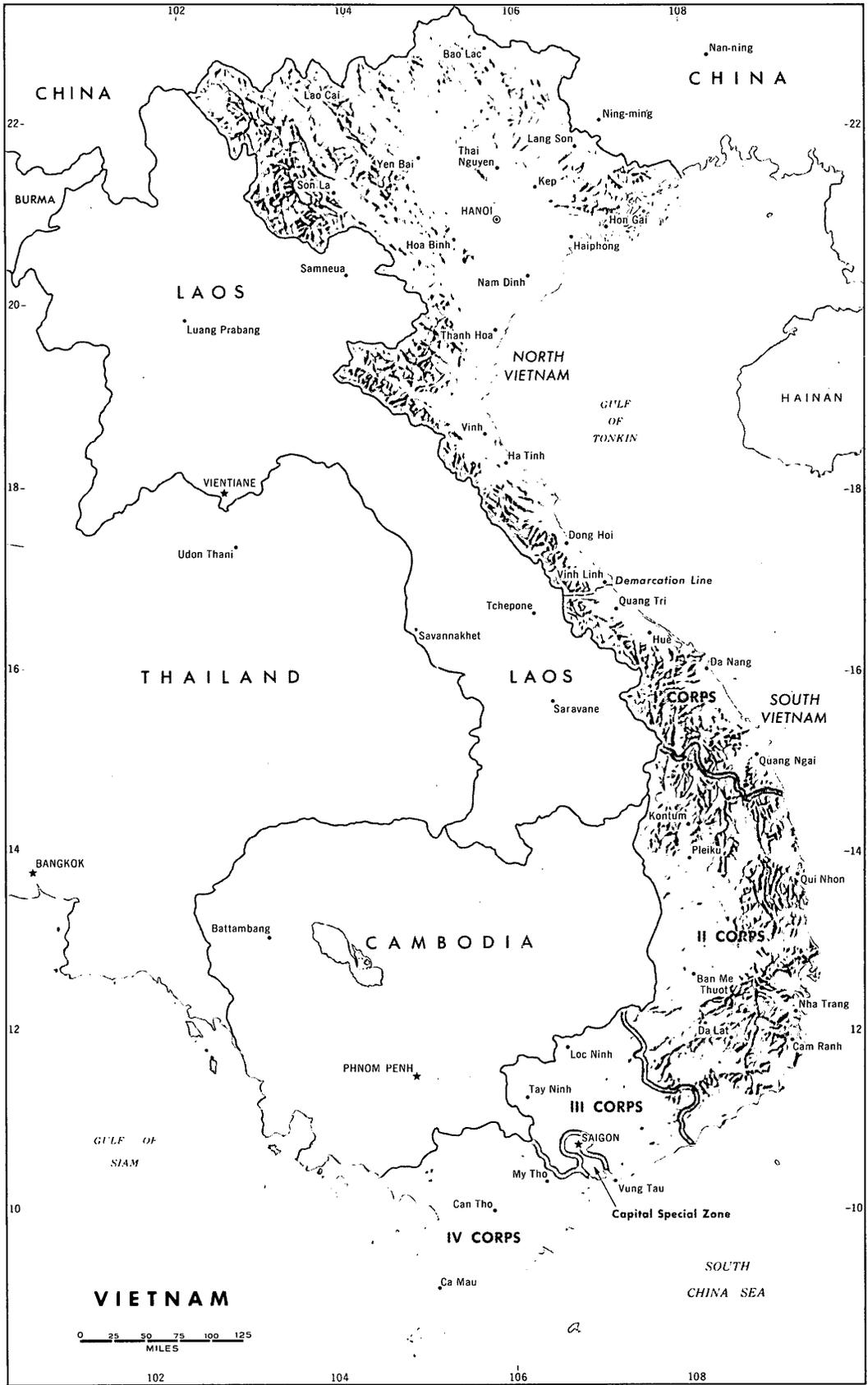
## I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

## VIETNAM

Further study of the namelist of the new Communist "Provisional Revolutionary Government" suggests that the Communists do not intend it to serve as a rallying point for neutralists and other non-Communists who oppose Thieu but had no stomach for the Front or the Alliance. The people named to the top spots in the new "government" are all well-known hard-core Communist-front professionals. On the other hand the powerless and faceless political hangers-on who for years have filled top positions in the Front and more recently in the Alliance have all been shunted aside into an "advisory council." The Provisional Revolutionary Government is clearly designed to be what it calls itself, a "revolutionary" government which has inserted itself as the South Vietnamese force to be dealt with on the Communist side of the table.

For openers, the PRG may well take as hard a line as Le Duc Tho did on 31 May on the subject of dealing with the GVN. The Communists may believe it is worth sticking to this line for some time in order to see how firmly the US is committed to backing Thieu. But if they find that their gambit fails to pay off in undermining the GVN, or in eliciting a favorable response from the US, they will almost certainly use it for other bargaining purposes.

Some of the language in the Front's ten-point program strikes us as especially significant in this regard. The program lays out broad ideas for a settlement, at the heart



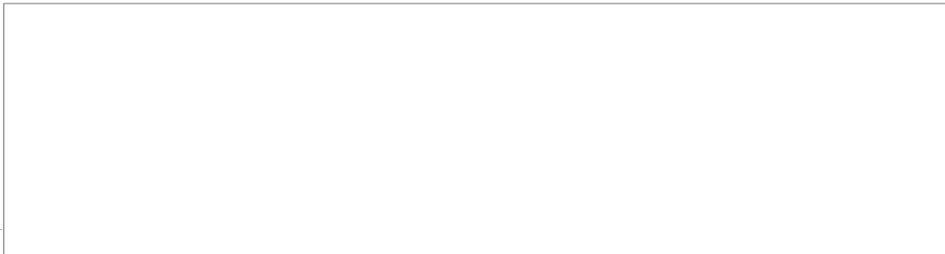
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of which is a "provisional coalition government" to be formed after a cease-fire and before new general elections. During this period, according to the ten points, "neither party shall impose its political regime on the people of South Vietnam." This language suggests that the Communists are not putting all their money on overthrowing the GVN or even on getting Thieu booted. It allows for the continued existence of both the GVN and the new Communist "regime" during such a period, with their conflicting claims to sovereignty still intact. It may mean that eventually the Communists will be willing to leave these claims unresolved for the transitional stage and to put them to the test of some form of elections. They may envisage some joint provisional executive agency, the members of which would be drawn from the PRG, the GVN and other "political forces." This executive would referee the elections.

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

The international Communist conference continues to bump shakily along with dissident parties challenging Moscow's position on China, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and points in the conference document.

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The speech by the Italian party representative yesterday was particularly critical of the invasion and anti-Chinese statements on the floor. He said his delegation was not willing to sign the document in its present form. Czech party chief Husak rebuked the Italians later in the session.

The speech of Rumanian party boss Ceausescu on Monday was moderate by comparison with the Italians. He did insist on Rumania's right to dissent and to be independent of Moscow. He hinted that he might not be able to sign the final document but said his delegation would not walk out.

Many delegations are said to be critical of the vague and haphazard methods of the meeting, and much work still must be done on the wording of the basic document. No decision has yet been reached as to whether the parties must approve the document in toto or will be allowed to abstain on some sections.

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MIDDLE EAST

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The French have now decided--subject, of course, to review after Sunday's runoff election--to supply arms to Lebanon after all. They say they will provide a gift of enough arms to equip two infantry battalions and will also grant a nine-month credit of \$1.6 million.

## EUROPE

A recent restatement by Pompidou of his foreign policy views showed a considerable degree of continuity with De Gaulle, especially in his emphasis on France's role as a leader in world affairs. The sharp edges were absent, however. Moreover, France's membership in the Atlantic Alliance was emphasized more than the General was wont to do.

Some specific points made in the speech are as follows:

--On relations with the US: France intends to maintain its alliances, particularly with the US, always its friend and ally. Peace in Vietnam would remove the last clouds from US-French relations.

--On rapprochement with the East: This policy will be pursued resolutely--especially with Moscow--and must take precedence over condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia because a policy of blocs will inevitably lead to conflict.

--On relations with Germany: France will remain faithful to this reconciliation but the cooperation will not be

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"privileged" (a term frequently used by De Gaulle) but "exemplary" (an example of cooperation for the rest of Europe).

--On Europe and enlargement of the Community: Move ahead with projects already under way; Pompidou expressed approval of the idea of enlargement but only after a meeting of the Six followed by discussion with "candidate states." (This could be interpreted as pointing toward a clearer but still distant prospect of UK entry, provided London would be satisfied with a good deal less than it wants.)

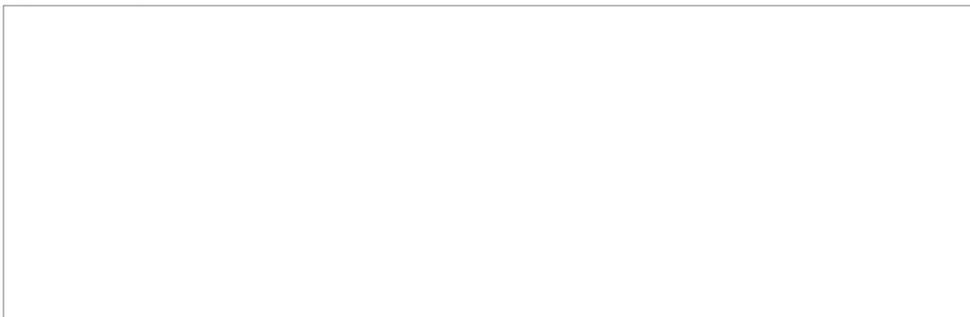
II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

CAMBODIA

Sihanouk's statement yesterday regarding a resumption of diplomatic relations with the US is another sign that despite the tortuous twists and turns he is determined to get Cambodia in a better position to play the US off against the Vietnamese Communists. We do not know what, if anything, prompted Sihanouk's latest volte face, but his reference to an exchange of chargés suggests that, at least for the moment, he intends to follow through.

We cannot, however, rule out the possibility that the announcement was made to strengthen Sihanouk's hand in current negotiations with Hanoi over the border problem. Although the full text of the press conference is not yet available, Sihanouk once again referred to "very disturbing" Vietnamese Communist encroachments in the border area.

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Sihanouk's reaction to recent press stories regarding US military actions in Cambodia, and how he solves the thorny question of recognizing the Viet Cong's new "Provisional Revolutionary Government," may reveal what game he is currently playing.

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