



*The President's Daily Brief*

*11 January 1972*

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In north Laos, Long Tieng continues to receive 130-mm. artillery fire, and some irregular positions at nearby Sam Thong have been abandoned. (Page 1)

U Nu's insurgent followers are once again active along the Tenasserim coastal strip of southeast Burma. (Page 2)

[redacted] General Torrijos now intends to drag out the Panama Canal negotiations [redacted] (Page 3) 25X1 25X1

A comment on the death of former Chinese foreign minister Chen I appears on Page 4.

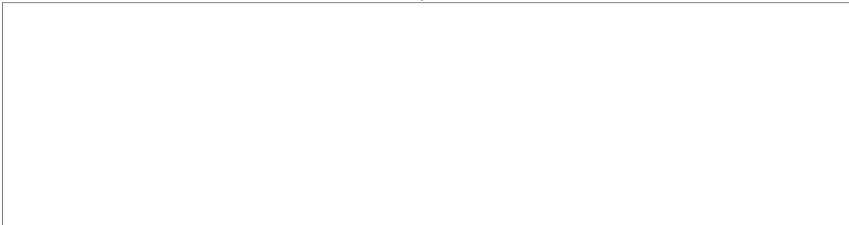
Syria [redacted] (Page 4) 25X1 25X1



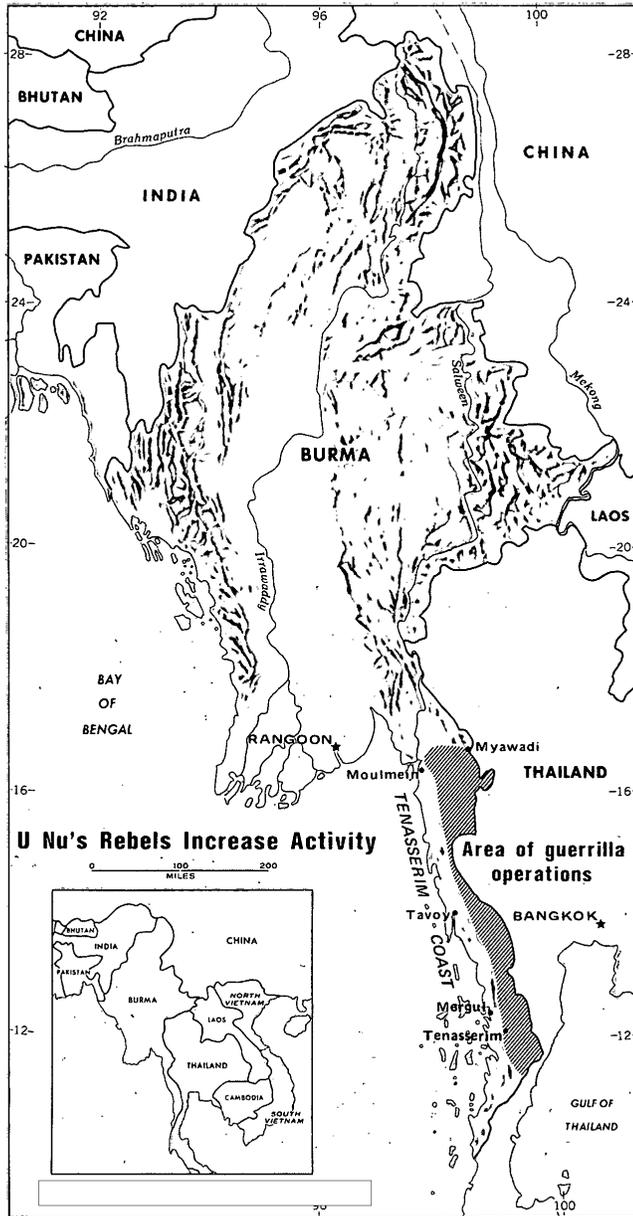
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LAOS

Elements of an irregular battalion manning positions near the Sam Thong airstrip abandoned them yesterday under fire. Some of these troops deserted and took off in the direction of Long Tieng. This withdrawal leaves a newly established fire support base in an exposed position with only a small Lao Army screening force to protect it. Other irregular units are in the area around Sam Thong and could still move to regain the abandoned positions. Elsewhere in the Long Tieng area, probes and shelling attacks were reported at most irregular positions, and some positions east and north of Tha Tam Bleung were lost yesterday. Long Tieng itself has been hit by 130-mm. artillery fire on 8, 9, and 10 January, but has sustained only limited damage.



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BURMA

Insurgents associated with former prime minister U Nu are beginning to roam more freely in groups of 50 to 200 men in the border districts of southeast Burma. On 3 January the rebels overran a Burmese Army outpost near the town of Tenasserim and apparently still hold it.

*The insurgents have clearly recovered from their military reverses of last summer when the Burmese claim to have driven them back toward their bases across the border in Thailand. Their new aggressiveness is weakening the army's tenuous hold on the interior of the Tenasserim coastal strip, and local commanders admit that security outside the district towns is poor. Nonetheless, it is questionable whether U Nu can expand his insurgent activity much beyond the Thai border region. Despite his personal popularity with many Burmese, and the fact that his resistance movement has been in existence for two and a half years, most of his military support still comes from some 3,000 ethnic Karen and Mon dissidents. His relations with them are marred by traditional distrust between these tribes and the Burmans.*

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PANAMA

General Torrijos intends to drag out the Canal negotiations in the belief that the US considers the Canal a wasting asset, and will eventually give Panama everything it wants.

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*Torrijos' desire to keep the talks going through August suggests that he is under no pressure to conclude a new treaty, and*

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NOTES

China: The death of former foreign minister Chen I does little to change the present power equation in Peking. Chen had been in semi-disgrace since late 1968, and has not acted as foreign minister since that time. The official announcement of his death, however, indicates that a posthumous rehabilitation has taken place: all of Chen's titles, including the foreign ministry post, were listed. This speaks well for the present standing of Chou En-lai, who attempted to defend Chen throughout the Cultural Revolution, and who would presumably benefit most from Chen's restoration to grace.

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Syria-USSR:

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