



The President's Daily Brief

14 April 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

We report the latest military developments in South Vietnam on *Page 1*.

Moscow has apparently decided to demonstrate more open support for the North Vietnamese. (*Page 2*)



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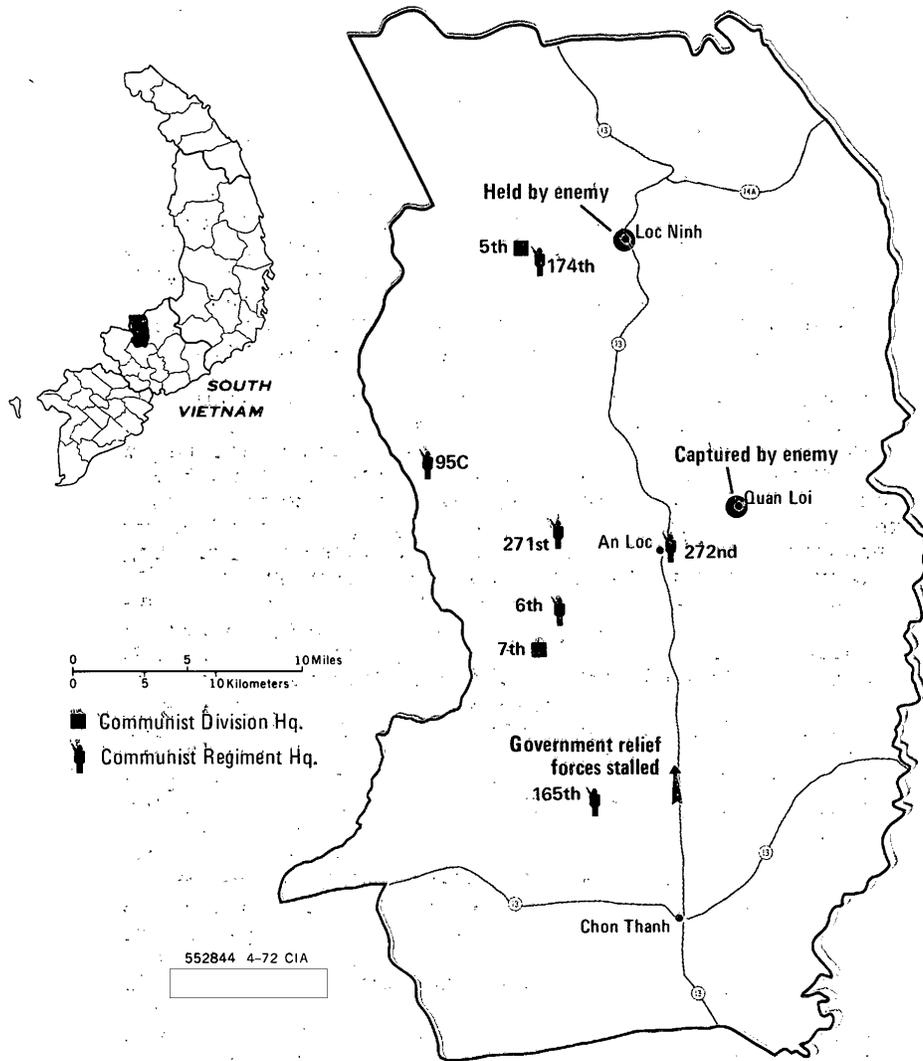


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Sudanese President Numayri faces a threat from pro-Egyptian exiles, including the defense minister he ousted in February. (*Page 4*)

Chancellor Brandt is expressing confidence over the prospects for ratification of the Eastern treaties. (*Page 5*)

BINH LONG



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SOUTH VIETNAM

Heavy allied air strikes appear to have stalled the Communist push at An Loc, but the situation remains critical. Yesterday the Communists occupied most of the northern part of the Binh Long provincial capital. Government troops still hold the southern part, and reinforcements from the South Vietnamese 21st Infantry Division are being flown in by helicopter. A relief force that includes other elements of the 21st is still stalled on Route 13, some ten miles to the south.

Intercepts suggest the Communists are willing to commit virtually all their available main forces in northern MR-3. Two infantry division headquarters and six regiments have been detected in Binh Long, and two other regiments and another division headquarters could also be present. The infantry is being supported by large concentrations of artillery and armor, apparently including T-54 tanks--North Vietnam's heaviest armored weapon.

In the delta province of Kien Tuong, the North Vietnamese 88th Regiment is increasing the pressure on outposts. Clandestine sources indicate that four such outposts have been abandoned, four more are under siege, and many of the Viet Cong units in the delta are under orders to go on the offensive. Elements of the 88th, augmented by a Viet Cong unit, have moved within 12 miles of the provincial capital.

Military Region 1 remains relatively quiet. Allied air and artillery strikes are causing some enemy morale problems, and Communist anti-aircraft units in northern Quang Tri Province are suffering from localized shortages of ammunition. Captured documents and intercepts nevertheless suggest that further attacks are imminent.

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USSR-VIETNAM

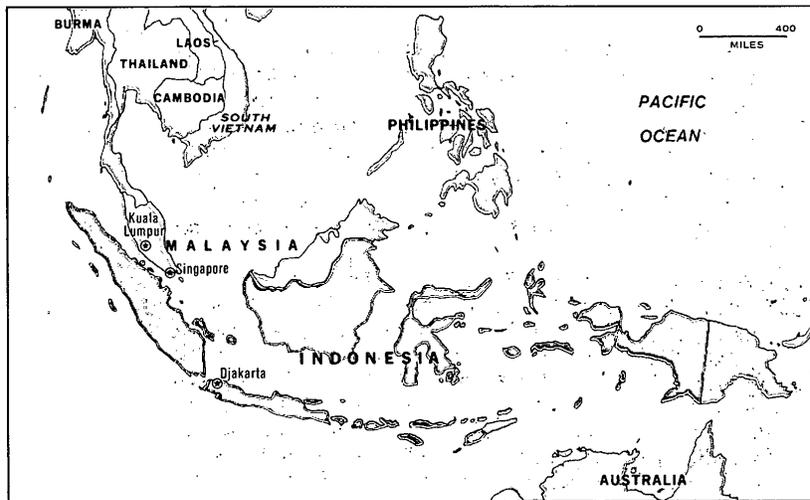
Moscow has apparently decided to demonstrate more open support for the North Vietnamese. TASS has announced that Soviet Defense Minister Grechko received North Vietnamese Ambassador Vo Thuc Dong yesterday to "exchange opinions on questions of Soviet - North Vietnamese cooperation." In talks which are described as having taken place in an atmosphere of "friendship and unanimity," Grechko is said to have conveyed to the Vietnamese Soviet wishes for "new successes in defending the freedom and independence of their motherland." TASS gives no indication that Grechko said anything about the offensive, the intensified US bombing raids over North Vietnam, or Hanoi's recent request for more support.

The publicly announced meeting was highly unusual and the North Vietnamese are undoubtedly pleased. The North Vietnamese probably also welcome Moscow's decision to put its propaganda apparatus into high gear in support of Vietnam. According to Radio Moscow, "massive rallies" were held yesterday in Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, and tens of other Soviet cities to "condemn the current expansion of American aggression in Vietnam" and demand its "immediate" cessation.

* * *

The North Vietnamese, for their part, reacted sharply to yesterday's strikes by B-52s and other aircraft on Bai Thuong airfield in the northern part of the North Vietnamese panhandle. According to Hanoi Radio, a Foreign Ministry spokesman charged that the use of the aircraft "to pour bombs and shells wantonly onto populated areas" had proved that "the US aggressors are even more barbarous than the Hitlerite fascists in the past."

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SUDAN

President Numayri is making a good start on carrying out last month's agreement to end the 17-year-old southern rebellion, but he still faces a threat from erstwhile domestic allies. Former defense minister Khalid Hassan Abbas, regarded as Egypt's man in Khartoum and once the second most powerful man in the regime, has been cooling his heels in Cairo since his ouster in mid-February.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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At this point, the danger to Numayri does not seem acute. If, however, Numayri continues to shrug off Egyptian advice and appears to be taking the Sudan too far outside the Arab nationalist mainstream--or should he become more openly anti-Soviet--President Sadat will try to press him back in line. [Redacted]

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NOTES

West Germany: Chancellor Brandt is now expressing confidence that parliament will ratify the Eastern treaties

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Following a month-long effort to reassert discipline in the two coalition parties, which have a nominal edge of 250-246 in the lower house, the government believes that only one parliamentarian is still wavering. The favorable public impact of the Easter visits to East Berlin and East Germany, along with other small concessions by Moscow and Pankow, may also have been a factor in reassuring waverers and contributing to the current optimism in Bonn.

Chile: The huge turnout for a peaceful opposition march on Wednesday exceeded the expectations of the four sponsoring political parties. The "democracy march," called to protest government encroachment on individual and economic liberties, drew mostly middle- and upper-class Chileans who strongly applauded former president Eduardo Frei's surprise appearance. The success of the demonstration should reinforce opposition efforts to take advantage of rising dissatisfaction with President Allende's Popular Unity government. Allende's supporters may be hard put to match the size of the crowd, as he has promised, in their own march next week.

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