



*The President's Daily Brief*

27 May 1972

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The major fighting in South Vietnam has been around  
Kontum and north of Hue. [REDACTED]

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The President's visit to Moscow has received exten-  
sive coverage in Polish media, but since 19 May  
nothing has been published about his visit to Warsaw.  
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VIETNAM

The Communists mounted a heavy, tank-led assault on Kontum City on 26 May, but the South Vietnamese, aided by air strikes, drove them back. Government troops spent the rest of the day clearing sappers from the city's airfield, and by late afternoon were conducting limited clearing operations outside of town.

Most of the North Vietnamese 320th Division has shifted south, away from Kontum City, although one of its regiments may still be involved in the fighting north of town along with elements of the 2nd Division. The shift puts units of the 320th in position to aid other enemy forces currently blocking the government's effort to reopen Route 14 between Pleiku and Kontum. It will also give the division a chance to recover from the heavy losses it apparently suffered north of Kontum.

The Communists also attacked with tanks and infantry along the My Chanh River defense line north of Hue. One enemy spearhead nearly captured a key bridge on Route 1, but the South Vietnamese have now driven this force back.

President Thieu has asked the South Vietnamese senate to postpone the debate and vote on his request for emergency decree powers until sometime after 29 May. A pro-government senator has told US Embassy officers that the President has agreed to accept an amendment that would limit his decree power to specific fields, including defense and the economy. This move, however, appears to have produced only a few extra votes for the bill, and its passage remains in doubt.

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NOTES

Poland-US: Polish media have given extensive coverage to President Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union. Although emphasis primarily is on a factual recitation of each day's events, commentary has stressed the working nature of the visit and the summit's contribution toward world peace. Since 19 May, however, there has been no mention of the President's visit to Warsaw. His itinerary in Warsaw has not been published, presumably because the Poles wish to avoid large crowds.

West Germany: A group of anarchist students, the "Baader-Meinhof Gang," claims responsibility for most of the recent bombings in West Germany and says they were gestures of support for the "revolution" in Vietnam. The gang, which now calls itself the "Red Army Faction," promises more action against US installations on 2 June, the anniversary of the founding of the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government. The Bonn government, which has been trying to round up this group for two years, is taking special precautions to guarantee the security of the NATO ministerial meeting in Bonn on 30 and 31 May.

Peru-Cuba: Peru has called a special OAS meeting for 31 May. The Peruvian delegation intends to propose a formal study of whether Cuba still poses a threat to the hemisphere. No matter what the OAS decision, Peru is expected to proceed thereafter with the reestablishment of diplomatic ties with Cuba.

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