

The President's Daily Brief

September 17, 1974

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Exempt from general
declassification schedule of E.O. 11652
exemption category 5B(1)(2)(3)
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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TURKEY

Prime Minister Ecevit will ask his Republican People's Party today to ratify his decision to resign and thereby end the coalition with the right-wing National Salvation Party. Ecevit told a press conference yesterday that if the party supports this move, he will formally submit his resignation to President Koruturk and seek new elections.

Referring the matter to the party is a mere formality, but it gives Ecevit more time to plan his next move, and even to reconsider if prospects for forming a new government appear doubtful. Ecevit's break with the National Salvation Party seems final this time, but he has drawn back from the brink on at least one other occasion since the fragile alliance was formed last January.

A collapse of the coalition would not automatically bring about elections. If Ecevit wants to take advantage of the increased popularity he has gained from his actions regarding Cyprus, he will have to find support for new elections outside his own party in parliament. A majority vote is needed to call elections before those scheduled for 1977, and opposition parties would probably be reluctant to risk losing seats in the national assembly.

Ecevit's other options include forming a minority government or another coalition. He would presumably find it as difficult to obtain support for a minority government as he would for calling elections. Suleyman Demirel has already said his Justice Party--the major opposition group--would vote against a minority government.

Ecevit may attempt to form a coalition with the small right-of-center Democratic Party. Such a coalition would give Ecevit the needed majority in parliament, but the two parties would have to overcome significant ideological differences. There are rumors that the Democratic Party has already agreed to join a coalition or to support a move to call elections.

If Ecevit formally resigns, the present government will continue to serve on a temporary basis until a new one is formed. An interim government would assure continuity, but it would lack the necessary support in parliament to approve new programs. It took Ecevit three months to put together a coalition after the indecisive elections in October 1973.

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USSR

The Soviets may be starting to deactivate silos for the SS-8 intercontinental ballistic missile. This is the first sign that Moscow intends to deactivate silos for older missile systems.

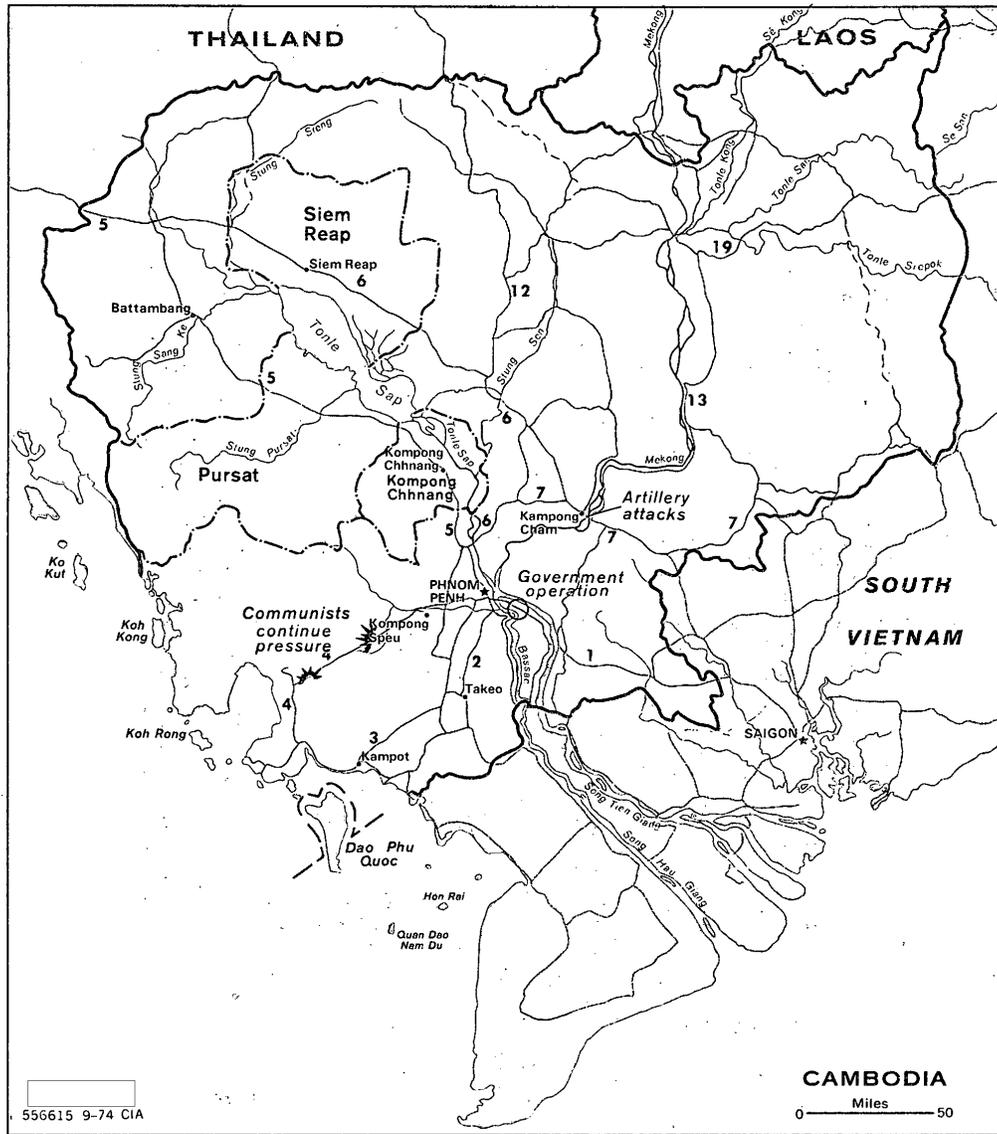
[redacted] the SS-8 complex at Omsk [redacted] shows that the missiles have been removed from all three of the silos there and the doors have been left open. Several silo components have been removed and are stacked nearby. Nothing done so far, however, would prevent reinstallation of the missiles and return to operational status.

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Only limited numbers of SS-8s were put in service. There are nine silo launchers and ten launch pads for the missile.

The SS-8 and SS-7 are Moscow's two oldest operational ICBMs; both of them were put in service in the early sixties. Over the past three years, 17 above-ground SS-7 sites--each containing two launch pads--have been in a reduced state of readiness; we no longer consider them operational. These pads were not dismantled in accordance with the procedures agreed to by the SALT Standing Consultative Commission, however, and they could be restored to operational status in a short time.

The Soviets still have 90 operational launch pads for the SS-7; they have not altered the 66 silos where SS-7s are installed.



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CAMBODIA

The major government operation south-east of Phnom Penh, which began in late August, has stalled completely. Although Cambodian army troops initially pushed back the insurgents, government forces have now lost the initiative, and the Communists have moved their units into blocking positions.

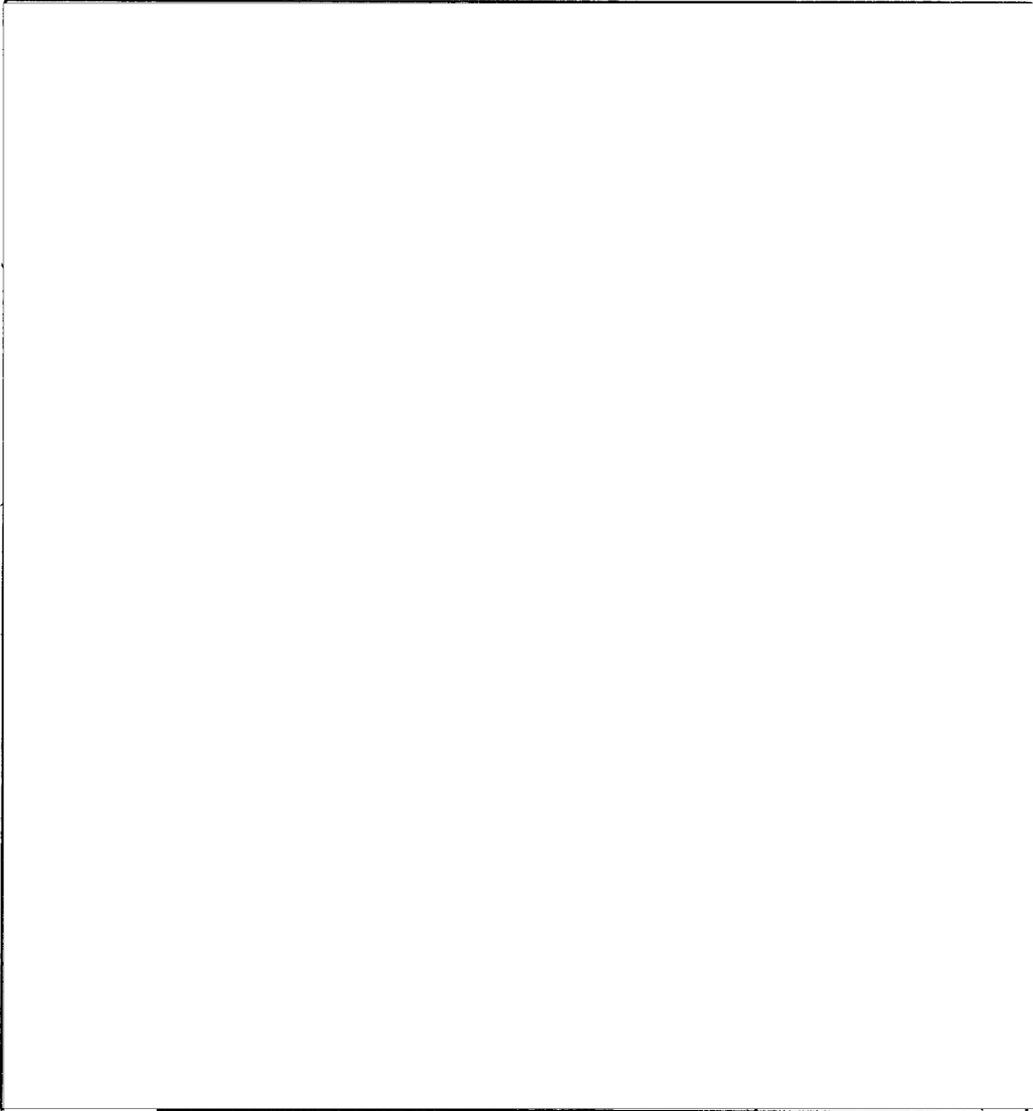
The poor performance is the result of flooding, caution on the part of government commanders, and the withdrawal of some units for rest. There is little prospect for any break in the stalemate in the near future. Moreover, the operation has not gained the favorable publicity that government leaders hoped would benefit their cause at the UN.

In other parts of the country, fighting continues to seesaw. Government forces have launched clearing operations around several widely separated provincial capitals. The most successful of these efforts have been conducted in Siem Reap Province, where the government has increased its territorial holdings significantly, and in Kompong Chhnang and Pursat provinces, where over 20,000 civilians have been freed since early August.

The Communists are maintaining pressure on government defenses along Route 4 southwest of the provincial capital of Kompong Speu. In the past few days, they have hit Kompong Cham City with artillery fire for the first time in nearly a year. The shellings against Kompong Cham are probably an effort to keep government units tied down; there is little evidence that the Communists are planning any major ground attacks against the city.

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France - Indian Ocean: The French navy is sending another squadron of ships to the Indian Ocean next month. The aircraft carrier Clemenceau will be accompanied by a frigate, a destroyer, and two oil tankers. The move presumably reflects continuing French concern that the Indian Ocean not be left solely to US and Soviet domination. In April of this year, Paris sent a squadron of three ships to the Indian Ocean for a cruise of about six months. The carrier-led force apparently will replace the squadron now on patrol, suggesting that Paris intends to maintain an increased naval presence in the Indian Ocean.

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