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SECRET

No. 0297/71
13 December 1971

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

INDIA-PAKISTAN: The Indians are preparing for their final assault on Dacca. (Page 1)

POLAND: Party leader Gierek has received a strong mandate to translate his general policy objectives into concrete programs. (Page 5)

CAMBODIA: The Communists are maintaining the military initiative in the Phnom Penh area. (Page 7)

YUGOSLAVIA: President Tito has cracked down on Croat nationalists. (Page 8)

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES · US: French opposition to a formal negotiating mandate for EC-US trade talks will delay negotiations. (Page 9)

UN-CYPRUS: Consideration of a six-month extension of the mandate of the UN force in Cyprus will probably lead to contentious debate in the Security Council. (Page 10)

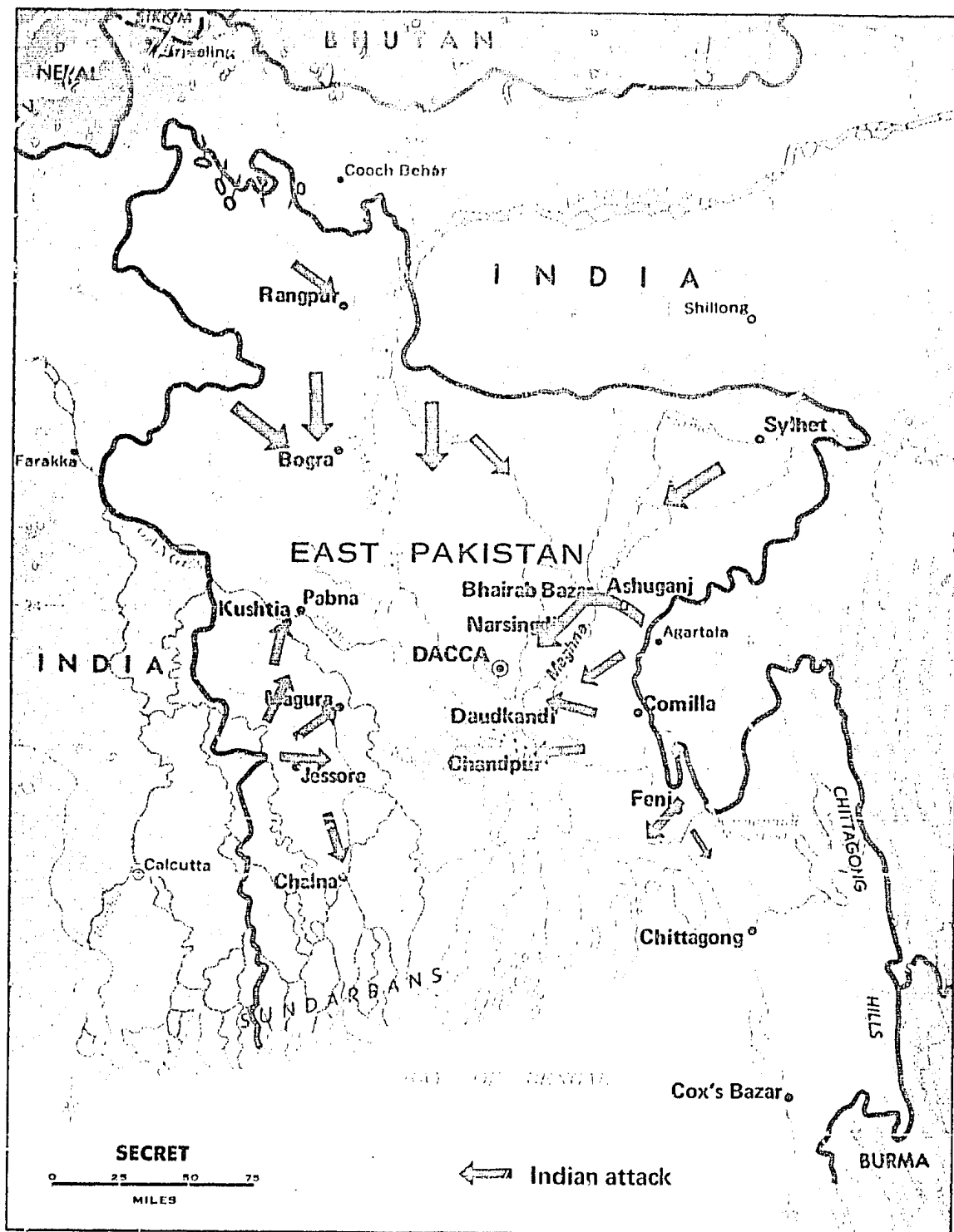
USSR: Brezhnev reappears (Page 11)

TURKEY: New government (Page 11)

SENEGAL-CHINA: Diplomatic ties (Page 12)

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SECRET



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SECRET

SECRET

[INDIA-PAKISTAN: In East Pakistan, the Indians are getting ready for their final assault on Dacca, while on the western front neither side has made significant gains.

Indian troops continue to move toward Dacca from the Ashuganj - Bhairab Bazar crossing point on the Meghna River northeast of the city. The Indians report that these troops have captured the town of Narsingdi some 25 miles from Dacca and have moved beyond it to within 18 miles of the capital. Press reports state that Indian units have also crossed the Meghna at Daudkandi 22 miles southeast of Dacca. Approximately 5,000 Indian paratroopers reportedly were airdropped somewhere north of Dacca to help clear the way for the forces advancing from the northeast, but there is no evidence to support New Delhi's claim that its troops are already fighting on the outskirts of the city. Meanwhile, Indian planes reportedly resumed bombing the Dacca airport over the weekend following a pause during which some 400 foreigners were evacuated by air to Calcutta.

The Pakistanis probably now have between 30,000 and 40,000 men in Dacca, including those who have fallen back to the city from other areas. The Indians have roughly 60,000 men in three divisions moving toward the city from all directions, with at least as many more in reserve near East Pakistan's borders. How energetically the Pakistanis will resist in Dacca remains to be seen. Pakistan's military commander in the province, General Niazi, reportedly is determined not to surrender, and at least some of the Pakistani forces in the capital appear to be digging in and planning to fight to the last. Other units, however, are reported to be disorganized and demoralized, and may not put up much of a fight. There have been reports of scattered hit-and-run attacks against Pakistani forces within the city by guerrilla elements, but no general uprising appears to have occurred as yet.]

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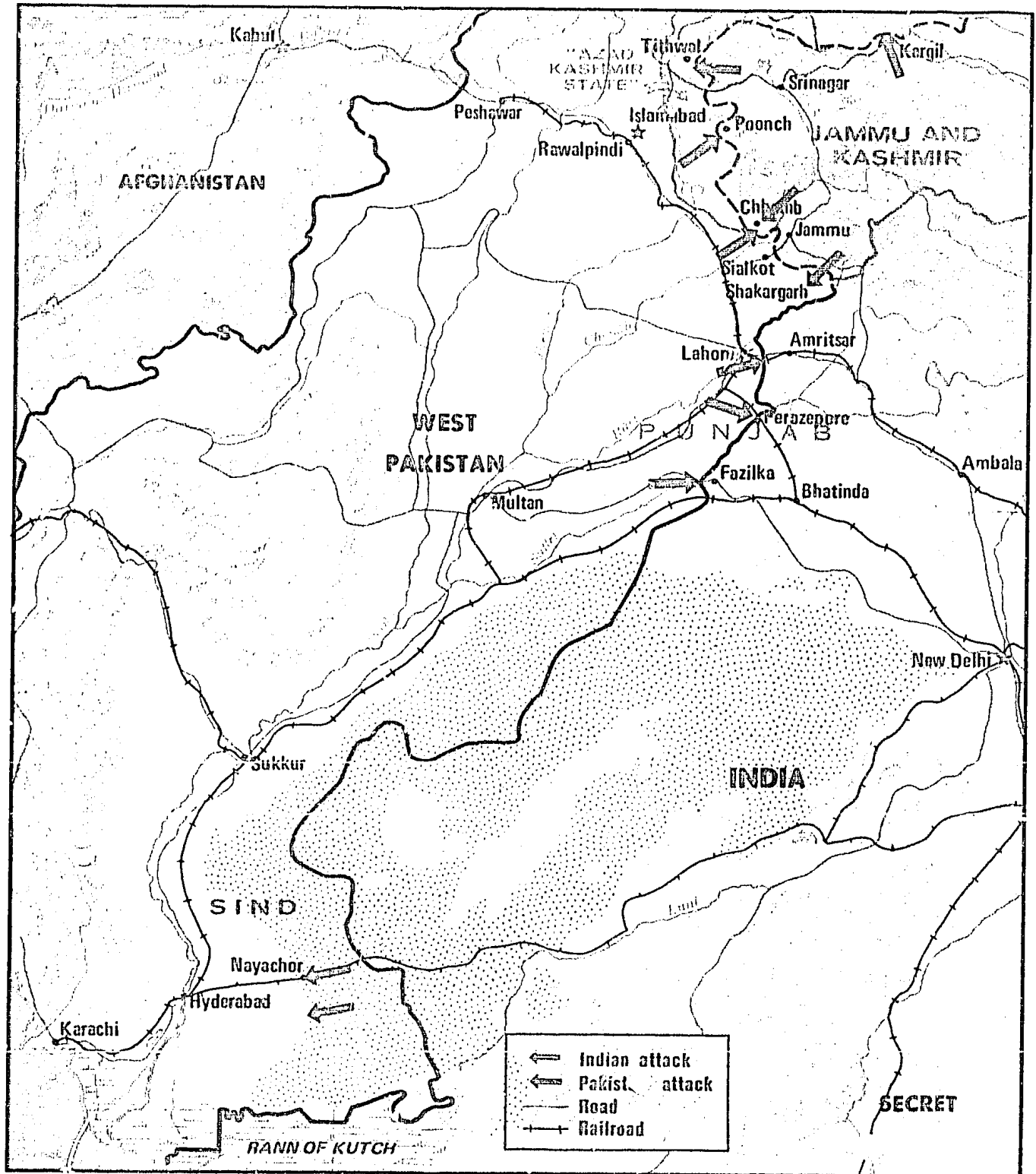
13 Dec 71

Central Intelligence Bulletin

1

SECRET

SECRET



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SECRET

Elsewhere in East Pakistan, a few pockets of Pakistani resistance remain, but these are likely to fall rather quickly once Dacca has been taken.

The two top officials in the Bangla Desh government-in-exile, Acting President Syed Nazrul Islam and Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmad, have already gone to Jessore with a contingent of guerrillas and newsmen, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] an interim Bangla Desh capital may be set up either there or at Pabna. [REDACTED] factional differences within the Bangla Desh exile government have sharpened, with the rest of the cabinet criticizing Ahmad for being willing to make too many concessions to India. [REDACTED]

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For some time there have been differences between the majority of the cabinet, which is comprised of moderate, middle-class Awami League politicians, and the more leftist members of the Bangla Desh movement, including Ahmad. The moderates dominate the exile government, but the leftists appear to have strong ties with both New Delhi and Moscow and will probably have significant influence in the new state. There is also another crop of potential leaders--the younger men who have been carrying out the guerrilla struggle within East Pakistan--who can be expected to play an important role. The political and ideological orientations of these men are believed to vary widely, however, and it is not clear how they will affect the policies of the new country.

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On the western front, advancing Indian forces in West Pakistan's Sind Province apparently have begun to encounter stronger Pakistani resistance as

13 Dec 71

Central Intelligence Bulletin

3

SECRET

SECRET

[they approach the more populated areas. Heavy fighting has been reported near Nayachor, some 30 miles from the border. If Nayachor falls and the Indians press on toward Hyderabad, the Pakistanis may have to move forces from farther north down to the Sind in order to prevent the Indians from cutting off Karachi from the rest of the country. In the north, fighting continues with no major advances by either side. Both sides claim limited success in the Chhamb and Sialkot sectors, but each admits it is encountering strong resistance.

India's bombing of military targets in West Pakistan's major cities appears to have tapered off, at least for the time being. Late on 11 December the Pakistani radio was reporting that there had been no air attacks on any West Pakistani airfields for 24 hours. In Karachi, oil storage facilities continued to burn, although no new air strikes were reported there over the weekend. The Pakistanis made some weekend raids against Indian airfields in Kashmir and northwest India, but the Indians claim that the damage was minimal.

* * * *

A five-man Soviet delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov is in New Delhi for several days of consultations. An Indian spokesman said that his government would be discussing with Kuznetsov the question of Soviet recognition of Bangla Desh, but according to US officials in Moscow there are no indications that the Soviets are on the brink of recognizing Bangla Desh. A Soviet Foreign Ministry official remarked on 9 December that Soviet recognition did not yet appear imminent, and an Indian official in Moscow voiced a similar belief. However, the establishment of a Bengali government in Bangla Desh--even on an interim basis--would increase the pressure on Moscow for early recognition. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

13 Dec 71

Central Intelligence Bulletin

4

SECRET

SECRET

POLAND: Party leader Edward Gierek received a strong mandate at the sixth party congress to translate his general policy objectives into concrete programs.

The congress dedicated the party to Gierek's consumer-oriented policies, and most of the leaders it elected will support Gierek's attempts to reform Polish society. The congress did not produce a definitive program, but in his closing address Gierek said that the new central committee would soon meet to work out details. In addition to overhauling the planning and management of the economy, Gierek wants to refashion the educational system and develop a new labor code. A revised trade union law and new constitution are also included in Gierek's planning.

Gierek promised that all these programs would be aired publicly during the parliamentary elections which, he said, should be held in 1972, one year early. To date, Gierek's innovations have been designed to improve the lot of the average Pole and to convince him that he will benefit from a unified and efficient operation of the country. Nothing was said at the congress to suggest that the limitations on individual liberties and freedom of expression will be relaxed.

The party leadership elected at the congress has a progressive, modern flavor compared to its predecessors, and can be expected to attack Poland's problems in a vigorous manner. Several of the men who played an important role in consolidating Gierek's power over the military, secret police, and farm production were advanced in the party order, indicating Gierek's continued political strength. The party changes suggest that a shake-up in the government apparatus may also be in the offing.
(CONFIDENTIAL)

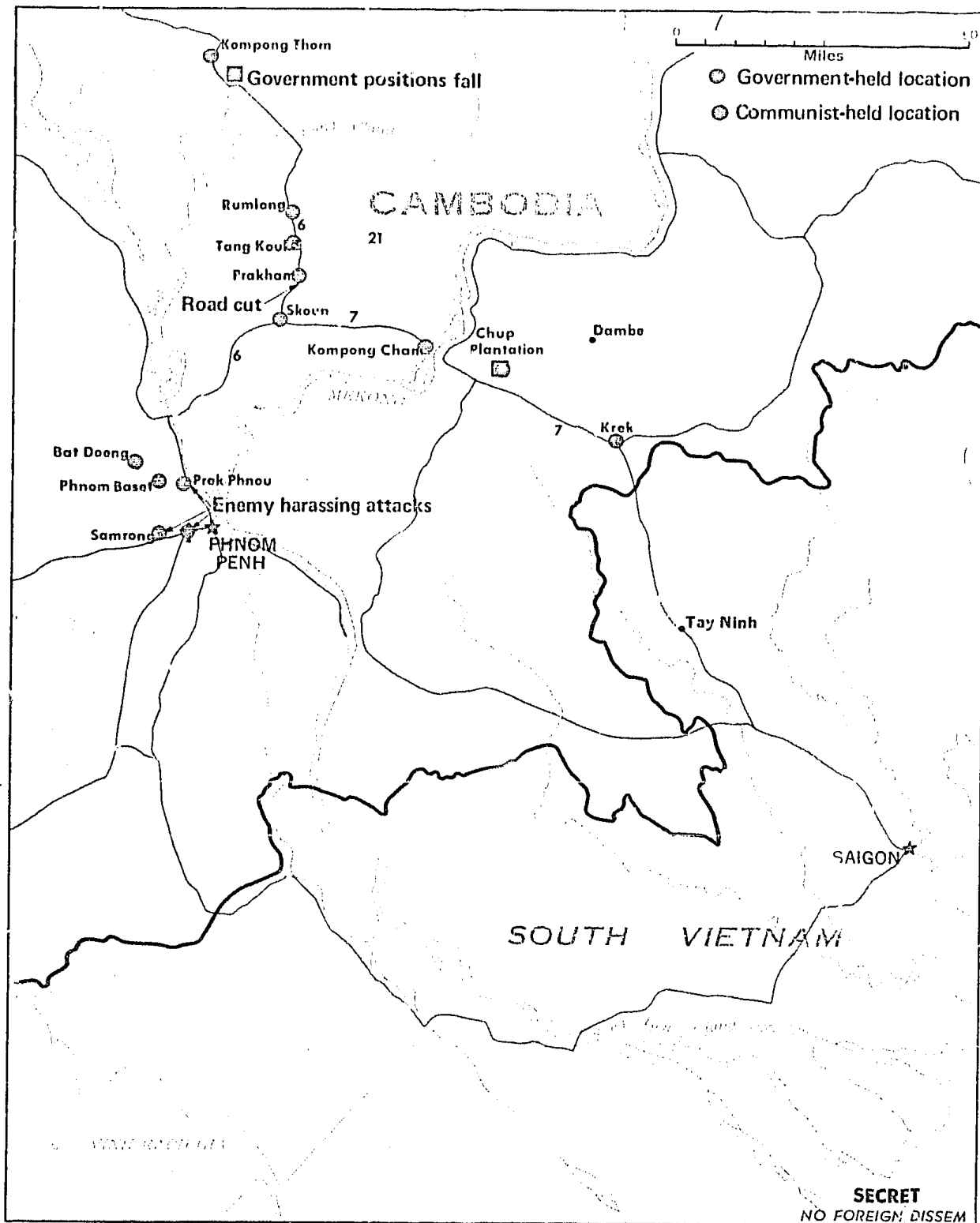
13 Dec 71

Central Intelligence Bulletin

5

SECRET

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CAMBODIA: The Communists are maintaining the military initiative in the Phnom Penh area.

Enemy forces inflicted another setback on government troops over the weekend by capturing Phnom Baset, 12 miles northwest of the capital. Two of the four Cambodian battalions defending that position quickly retreated toward the town of Prek Phnou at the outset of the Communist attack. The other two battalions held their ground, but soon withdrew under orders to a new position several miles farther east. Their present status is unknown, however. Phnom Baset reportedly has been the target of heavy US air strikes.

The Communists also hit Phnom Penh's airport with five 122-mm. rockets on Saturday night and, at the same time, carried out harassing attacks against the village of Samrong--some four miles west of the airfield--and against Prek Phnou, a few miles outside the city's northern perimeter. No casualties or serious damage were reported in those actions. Government clearing operations south and well west of the capital have thus far made no significant contact with the enemy.

On the Route 6 front, belated Cambodian reports indicate that the Communists overran four small government defensive positions several miles southeast of Kompong Thom town on 9 December. To the south, on the same day, enemy mines caused extensive damage to a section of Route 6 a few miles below Prakham. Until repairs are made, it will be difficult to move supplies up the roadway to Cambodian units at Tang Kouk.

In eastern Cambodia, some sharp fighting occurred over the weekend during the course of a planned South Vietnamese withdrawal from the Dambe sector. Losses on both sides reportedly were high. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

13 Dec 71

Central Intelligence Bulletin

7

SECRET

SECRET

YUGOSLAVIA: President Tito has cracked down hard on Croat nationalists.

Yesterday Croat party boss Dabcevic-Kucar and her three proteges--Miko Tripalo, Pero Pirker, and Srecko Bijelic--resigned at a republic party plenum. All the deposed leaders accepted some degree of responsibility for a lack of vigilance in handling recent student protests against the subordination of Croat economic interests to federal programs. However, they firmly denied Tito's charge that they were in collusion with hostile Croat emigres abroad. About 14 student nationalist leaders were arrested on Saturday, and Tito has personally suspended a Croat general, Janko Bobetko, for undermining public trust in the party and army.

In spite of Dabcevic-Kucar's leniency toward the students, she was able to restore order within the student community. Now that Tito has taken such harsh measures, a new round of student trouble may develop. At least one peaceful student demonstration occurred yesterday in support of Dabcevic-Kucar and Tripalo.

The new, as yet unnamed, Croat party leadership will find it difficult to restore the Croats' confidence in the federal leadership and Tito's confidence in Croatia. Tito's stern actions against such a wide range of Croat leaders underscore the serious dimensions of the threat to Yugoslav unity posed by Croat nationalism. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES - US: French opposition to a formal negotiating mandate for EC-US trade talks almost certainly means that negotiations will not begin this week, as the US had wished.

At the EC Council meeting on 11 December, French Foreign Minister Schumann argued that the willingness to begin immediate negotiations expressed earlier this month at the Group of Ten meeting in Rome was not a "community commitment." Schumann stressed that currency realignment--including devaluation of the dollar--should precede any EC trade concessions. He reportedly reacted favorably, however, to the substance of what the EC Commission had proposed as negotiating points.

Most of France's partners favor immediate adoption of a negotiating mandate for the Commission. However, they are said to believe the US "has been pressing too hard" on the trade issue and that it was impossible to expect negotiating results in time for the resumption in Washington of the Group of Ten financial talks at the end of this week.

Although the meeting on 11 December adopted a declaration of intent to begin trade negotiations "as soon as possible," the permanent representatives of the Six in Brussels are not likely to finish preparing a formal mandate until 15 December at the earliest. Their discussions will be based on the detailed recommendations which the Commission had submitted to the Council. These proposals--outlining a few EC concessions but also suggesting US reciprocity in the trade field--could require considerable deliberation among the Six, and the US Mission in Brussels thinks it probable that negotiations with the US can begin no earlier than next week.

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13 Dec 71

Central Intelligence Bulletin

9

SECRET

SECRET

UN-CYPRUS: Contentious debate is likely when the Security Council meets today to consider a six-month extension of the mandate of the UN force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Secretary General Thant has recommended another renewal of the mandate, which is due to expire on Wednesday. He has also advocated greater involvement of the Council in the search for a solution to the intercommunal tensions on the island. In that connection he has noted that his proposal for talks among representatives of the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Greece, Turkey, and the UN has not made much headway. At issue are the precise roles to be played in the negotiations by the "outside" elements, i.e., Greece, Turkey, and the UN. Nicosia, Athens, and Ankara are in agreement that a UNFICYP presence remains essential at this time.

Although an extension of UNFICYP's mandate is probable, Security Council agreement is likely to prove more difficult to secure than heretofore. For some time there have been signs of increasing frustration, especially among the seven nations contributing troops to UNFICYP, over the deficits run up in the peacekeeping operations. Some maintain that the ensured prolongations of the UN presence have eased pressures on the parties to resolve the intercommunal problem. Consequently, several of the seven have at the least been thinking about reducing their commitments. (CONFIDENTIAL NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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NOTES

USSR: Soviet party chief Brezhnev reappeared at the Polish party congress on 11 December after a three-day unexplained absence from the proceedings. Brezhnev dropped out of sight on 7 December and rumors in Warsaw say he returned to Moscow for a politburo session. Soviet Premier Kosygin, claiming to be suffering from the flu, had cut short his trip to Norway on 7 December and returned to Moscow. Most of the other politburo members were in Moscow on 8 December for a meeting of the Russian Republic's Supreme Soviet. If the politburo did convene, the chief topic was probably the Indo-Pakistan war, and the decision to send Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov to New Delhi may have been taken at that time. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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TURKEY: Prime Minister Erim announced his new government Saturday, but it still must receive a vote of confidence from Parliament. Approval should not be difficult to obtain, however, because parliamentary representation in the cabinet has been increased and the government's reform program remains basically the same as that approved last April. Although the comprehensive economic, social, and administrative reforms in the program will continue to spark debate in Parliament, the make-up of the new government should facilitate the compromise necessary to promote acceptable legislation. All of the cabinet posts directly related to the reform program, except for the Ministry of Education, have been filled with non-politicians. Although some of the more liberal members of the officer corps may be dissatisfied with the extent of the reforms, this government would seem to have a better chance of success than either of its predecessors. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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SENEGAL-CHINA: Senegal and Communist China have agreed to establish full diplomatic ties, according to a joint communiqué. Senegal also announced its recognition of the mainland government as the sole legal representative of the Chinese people. The move was foreshadowed in October when Senegal switched its position in the UN to support the admission of Peking and expel the Nationalists. Although Senegalese President Senghor remains deeply suspicious of the Communists, he reluctantly concluded these moves were necessary to bolster Senegal's image as a "progressive" country and to ensure that it would not be among the last of the African states to establish relations with Peking. (SECRET)