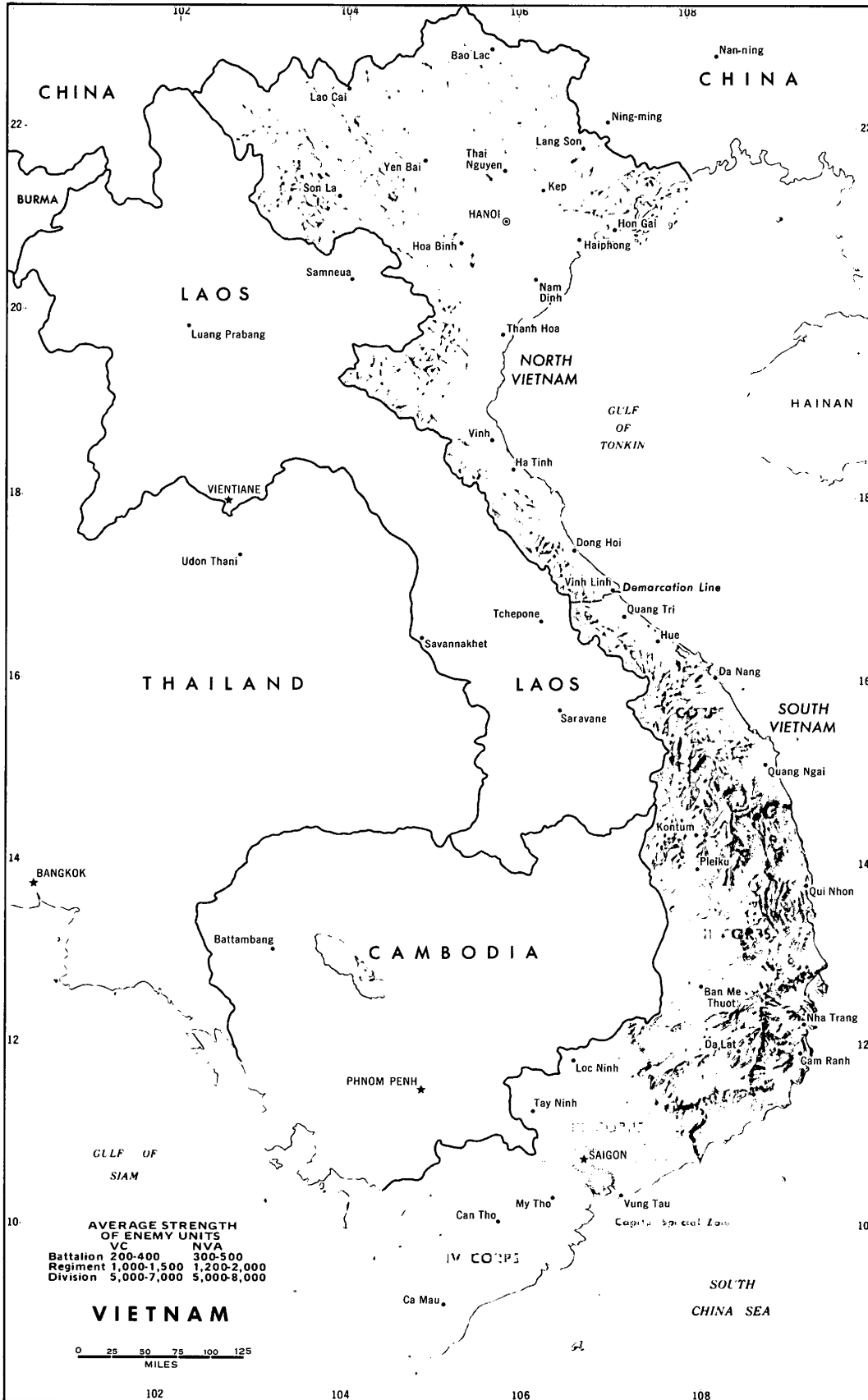


The President's Daily Brief

3 June 1969



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

VIETNAM

There are hints from prisoners

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that another phase of intensified military action may begin soon this month throughout South Vietnam. Captured documents have also alluded to a new offensive in the works. Such an effort probably would follow the pattern of the "May action phase," which emphasized attacks against American forces and installations.

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Two North Vietnamese regiments, which have been refitting north of the DMZ since late last year, are now en route to the South through Laos. They seem likely to be headed for their former areas of operation in the northern two provinces, where they will pose an added threat to Hue and other allied targets there.

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MIDDLE EAST

As the Israelis charged last week, the Jordanians have indeed been showing more aggressiveness.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

the intensity of recent

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artillery duels was due partly to Jordanian assertiveness.

[Redacted]

Our embassy

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nevertheless notes a growing mood of fatalism in Amman: a feeling that hostilities are inevitable and that perhaps the Jordanian Army will give a good account of itself this time.

* * *

Tapline, the US company whose pipeline was blown up by terrorists Friday, is sending a representative to Tel Aviv to discuss repairs with Israeli authorities. The Israelis give every indication, however, of being very sticky indeed. Tel Aviv's semiofficial Hebrew Maariv gives the impression that the government will not permit reopening of the line without guarantees from both Tapline and the Arab governments that similar sabotage will not occur in the future.

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EUROPE

The French Communist Party's call for its followers to abstain on the next round of the elections is out of character, and we have no authoritative reading on the reasons for it. We suspect that party leaders decided that much of the Communist vote would go to Poher on the second round no matter what they said; moreover, they could not very well declare for either candidate, having already asserted that choosing between Poher and Pompidou was like choosing between the plague and cholera.

Two other possible considerations occur to us. Moscow may have told the party to order an abstention in hopes of helping Pompidou, who is quite obviously the Soviet choice. On the other hand, it is also possible that the French party hierarchy is hoping to deflate what will surely be Pompidou's campaign theme for the next two weeks: that Poher can only win with Communist support. If the Communists officially declare hands off, Pompidou's theme will fall flat--and many Communist voters will vote for Poher anyway.

Perhaps the most important variable in the next round will in fact be the abstention rate. Poher seems more vulnerable than Pompidou on this score, since even before the Communist announcement the voters he needs from the left may have been getting pretty jaundiced about the choices before them in the final runoff. Nothing is certain in the present state of French politics, however, and both candidates will doubtless be spending much of their time trying to get their reluctant followers to the polls.

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

There is nothing significant to report.

II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

There is nothing significant to report.

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