



The President's Daily Brief

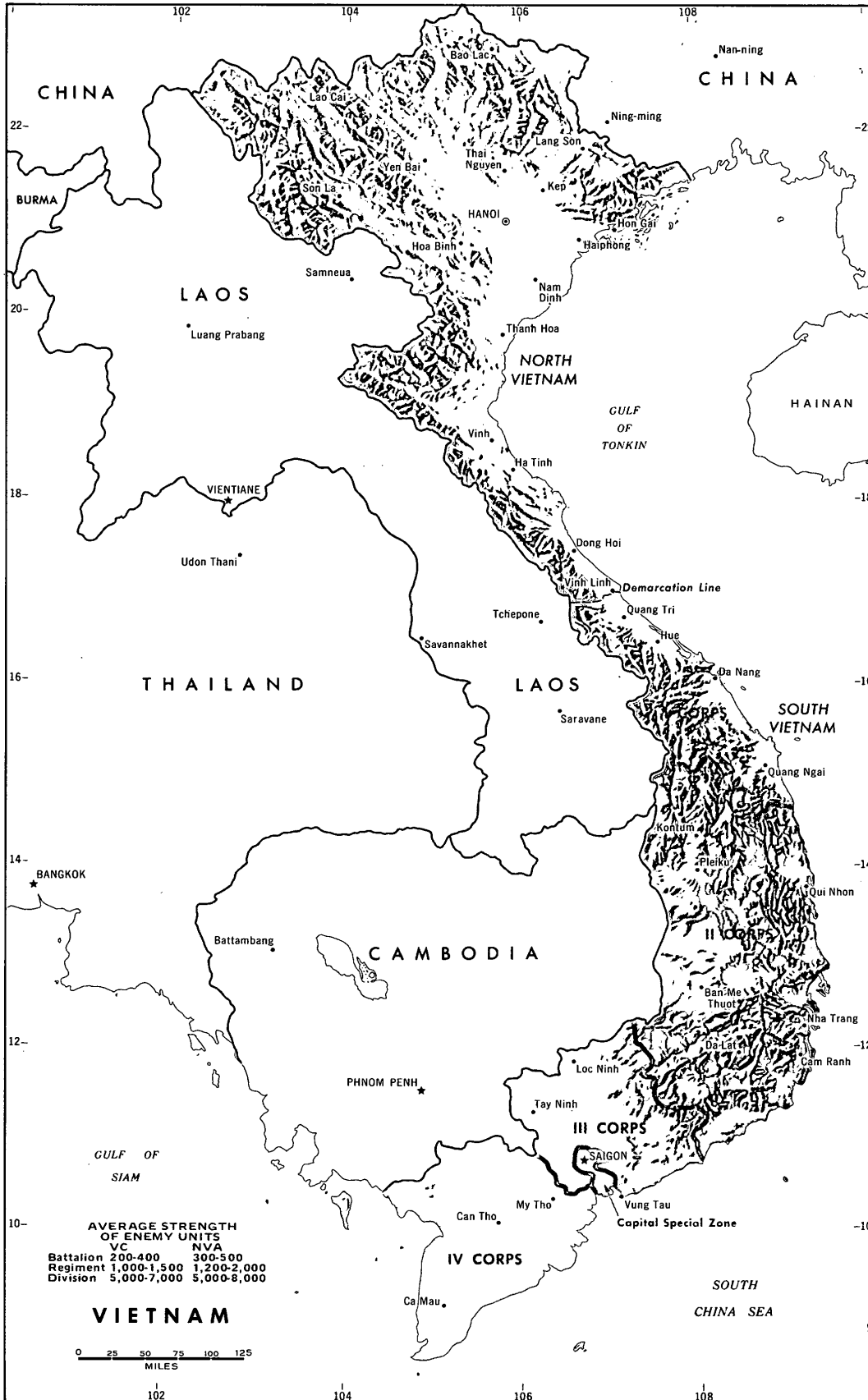
9 June 1969

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

VIETNAM

Communist shelling continued today at a somewhat reduced level from the three days previous. Heavy ground battles were fought over the weekend in the outskirts of Tay Ninh city and An Loc, 50 to 60 miles northwest of Saigon, near the Cambodian border. Still, the June "action phase" is less intense than the mid-May upsurge although it has followed a similar pattern.

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Initial reaction to the announcement of the impending withdrawal of US troops has come from Japan, Australia and New Zealand and is highly favorable. Prime Minister Holyoake of New Zealand and Australian Foreign Minister Freeth, visiting in Japan, made statements pointing out that the withdrawal shows that South Vietnamese troops have increased their capability to take over more responsibility. They did not promise any similar reduction in the Australian - New Zealand unit. The Japanese statement hoped the withdrawal would aid the Paris peace talks.

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

Moscow's decision to bring the China issue to the floor of the international Communist conference has made it clear that the meeting will be remembered primarily for its display of disunity.

Brezhnev, on Saturday, accused the Chinese leaders of preparing their people for war against the USSR, of supporting splinter groups in foreign Communist parties, and of thwarting "anti-imperialist" unity.

Those parties which support Moscow's line can be expected to endorse these remarks in their conference speeches. This will give the Soviets a condemnation of China for the record even if it does not appear in the formal document. By raising the issue in such stark terms, however, Brezhnev is challenging those parties which have sought to avoid condemnation of China, and some of these--particularly the Rumanian and Italian parties--will feel called upon to reply.

Some of the parties may actually walk out of the conference after giving their address. Others may remain but withhold their signature from the conference document, which reportedly is not yet fully agreed upon. Still others may follow the Australian party's lead and take the offensive on the Czechoslovakian invasion or other divisive issues in the Communist community.

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Meanwhile, Peking has agreed to send a delegation to meet with the Soviet representatives in Khabarovsk on 18 June to discuss navigation on the Sino-Soviet boundary rivers. The Soviets hope to confine the discussions to narrow technical questions, but the Chinese almost certainly will use this forum to raise larger territorial issues. This tactic caused the last such meeting--in 1967--to break down, and there is little prospect that the new talks will reach substantive agreement.

There is nothing significant to report on Europe and the Middle East.

II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

There is nothing significant to report.

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