



The President's Daily Brief

19 February 1970



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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Each side is blaming the other for the lack of progress in the Sino-Soviet border talks. *(Page 1)*

The Communists have posed a serious threat to the Laotian Government's command post on the Plaine des Jarres. *(Page 2)*

The recent anti-US demonstrations in the Philippines may have had official sanction. *(Page 3)*

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COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

Chinese officials in Peking have begun openly complaining to foreign diplomats over Moscow's intransigent attitude in the Peking talks and have recently charged the Soviets with increased "military pressure" along the border. [redacted]

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[redacted] Soviet commentary indicates considerable frustration and irritation over Chinese inflexibility in the border talks. Soviet propaganda continues to berate China's "war preparations"--particularly in the border areas-- [redacted]

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We have no new information of military clashes or provocative acts along the frontier. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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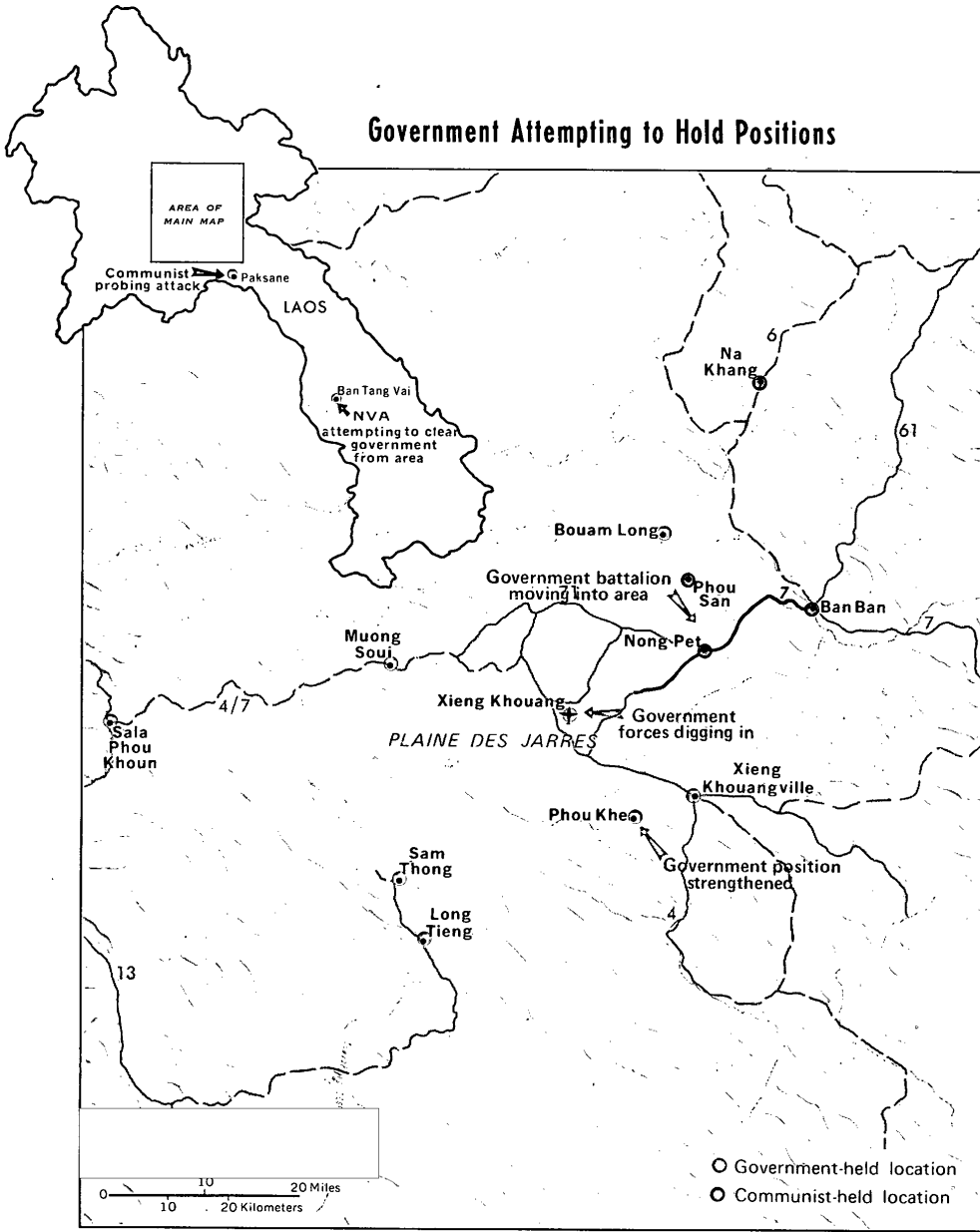
Despite the deadlock, both sides seem determined to continue the talks at the present level. [redacted]

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Government Attempting to Hold Positions



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LAOS

Early yesterday government forces at Xieng Khouang airstrip--the government's main command post on the Plaine des Jarres--rebuffed the second major assault in a week. Communist forces continue to move onto the Plaine, however, and now encircle the airstrip making it necessary to airdrop most of the supplies to the estimated 2,000 government troops defending the base.

Prior to the most recent attack, [redacted] every effort would be made to hold the airfield rather than fall back.

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[redacted] Vang Pao also plans to move a battalion to the Nong Pet area to harass the enemy supply system along Route 7.

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We continue to believe that the North Vietnamese are willing to accept whatever losses are necessary to overrun the base, a price the government's forces cannot afford. Possession of the airstrip is crucial to the control of the Plaine and the Communists apparently are committed to its capture.

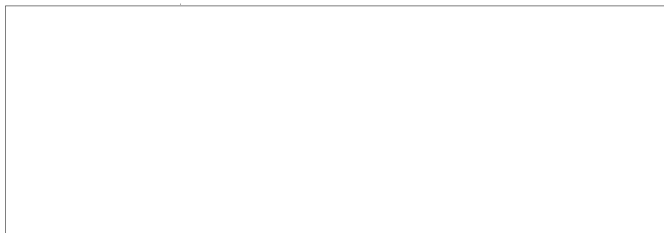
The enemy also is maintaining military pressure elsewhere in the country. In the northern panhandle government positions outside of Paksane continue to receive hit and run attacks and further south a North Vietnamese battalion has clashed with government forces in the Ban Tang Vai area.

The increased enemy activity in various parts of the country probably is intended to discourage the government from diverting too many of its troops to the Plaine area.

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PHILIPPINES

The disturbances at our embassy yesterday may have had official encouragement. Despite attempts by the leaders of an otherwise peaceful downtown student rally to head them off, some 200 to 300 radicals broke away and proceeded to the embassy. Manila radio stations--perhaps inspired by the presidential palace--all day had been predicting that the students would march on the embassy. The government knew the demonstrations were coming, but no Philippine security forces were on hand around the embassy. When the embassy asked for help, it was very slow in coming.



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NOTE

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[Redacted]

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