



The President's Daily Brief

27 April 1970

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Hanoi announced this morning that an Indochinese "summit conference" was held late last week. (Page 1)

[Redacted] Cambodia [Redacted] (Page 2)

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As Communist troops in Laos continue to regroup, government forces are taking advantage of the respite from heavy combat to improve their defenses in the Long Tieng - Sam Thong sector. (Page 4)

On Page 5, we discuss recent developments in the Thai insurgency situation.

[Redacted] China [Redacted] (Page 6)

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The recent increase in Egyptian military activity will force Israel into difficult decisions. (Page 7)

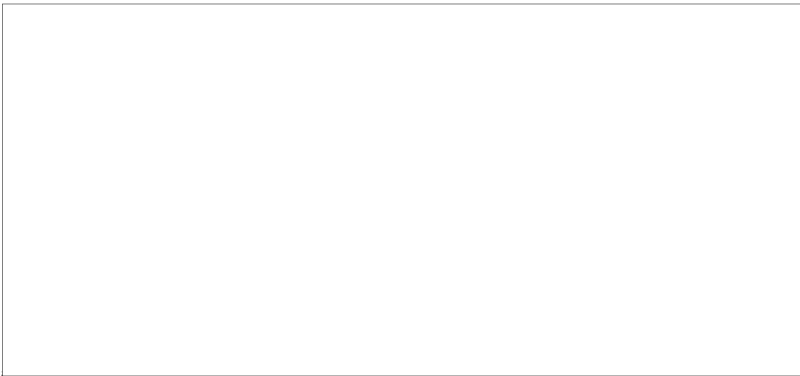
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INDOCHINA

Hanoi announced this morning that a "summit conference of the Indochinese peoples" was held on 24 and 25 April in the "Lao-Vietnam-China border area." The primary business of the conference--apparently the first of a series--was to beat the drums for Sihanouk and condemn US "aggression" in Indochina, according to preliminary information. The meeting may presage the creation of an Indochinese peoples' front and perhaps Sihanouk's eventual return to Cambodia as well. Further comments on this development will be made after study of the full text of Hanoi's statement.

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CAMBODIA



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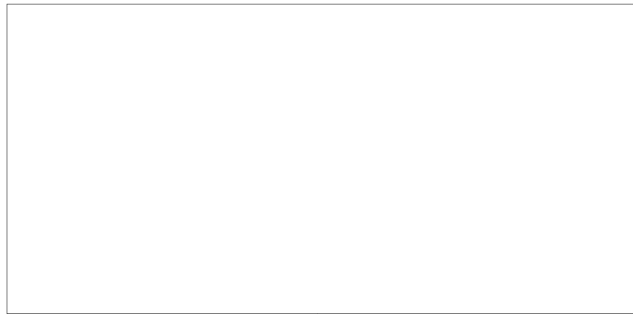
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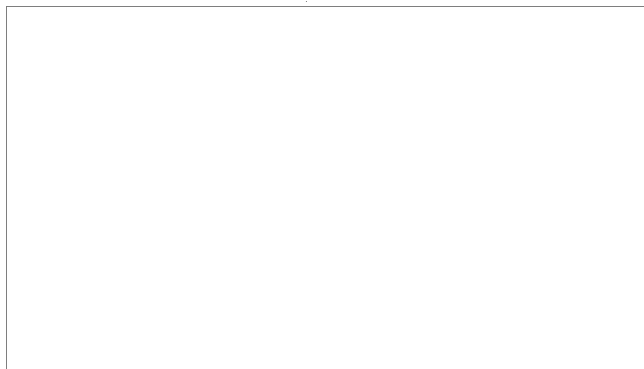
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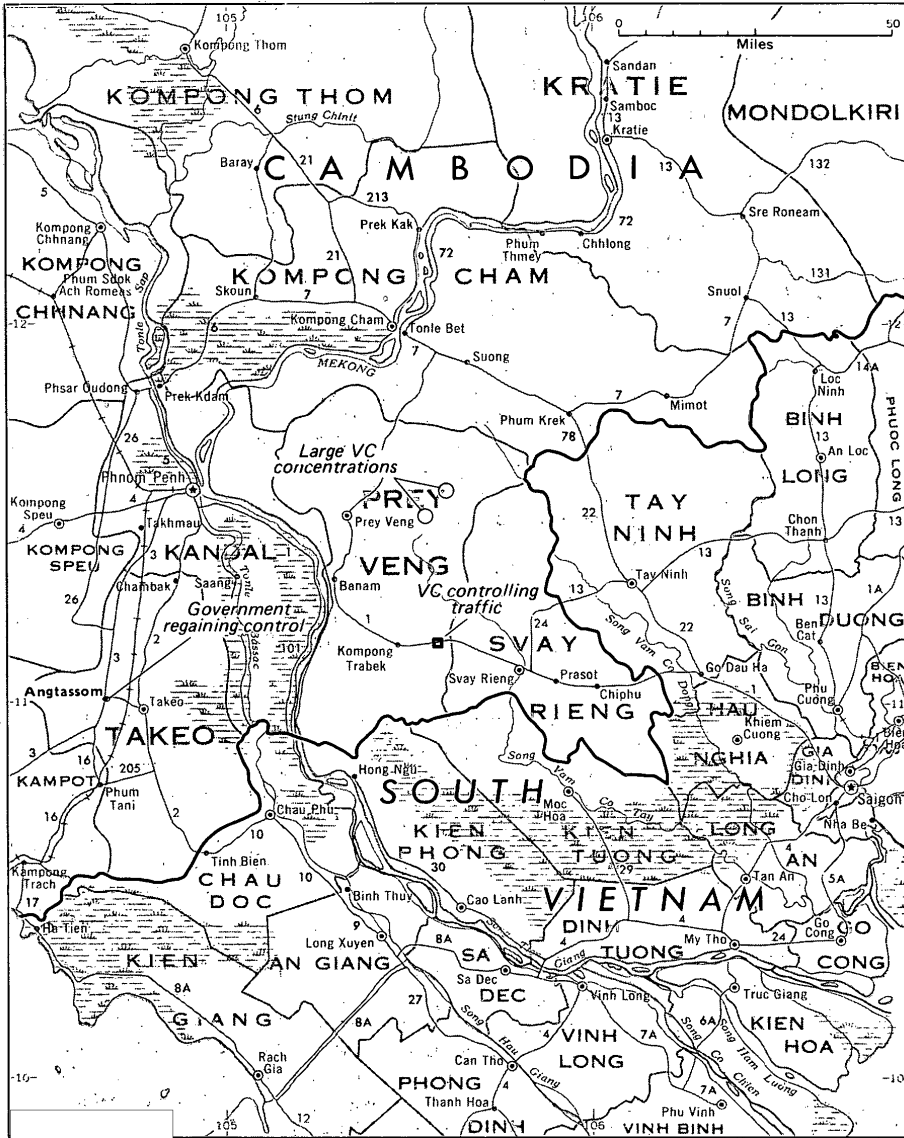
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Cambodia: Current Situation



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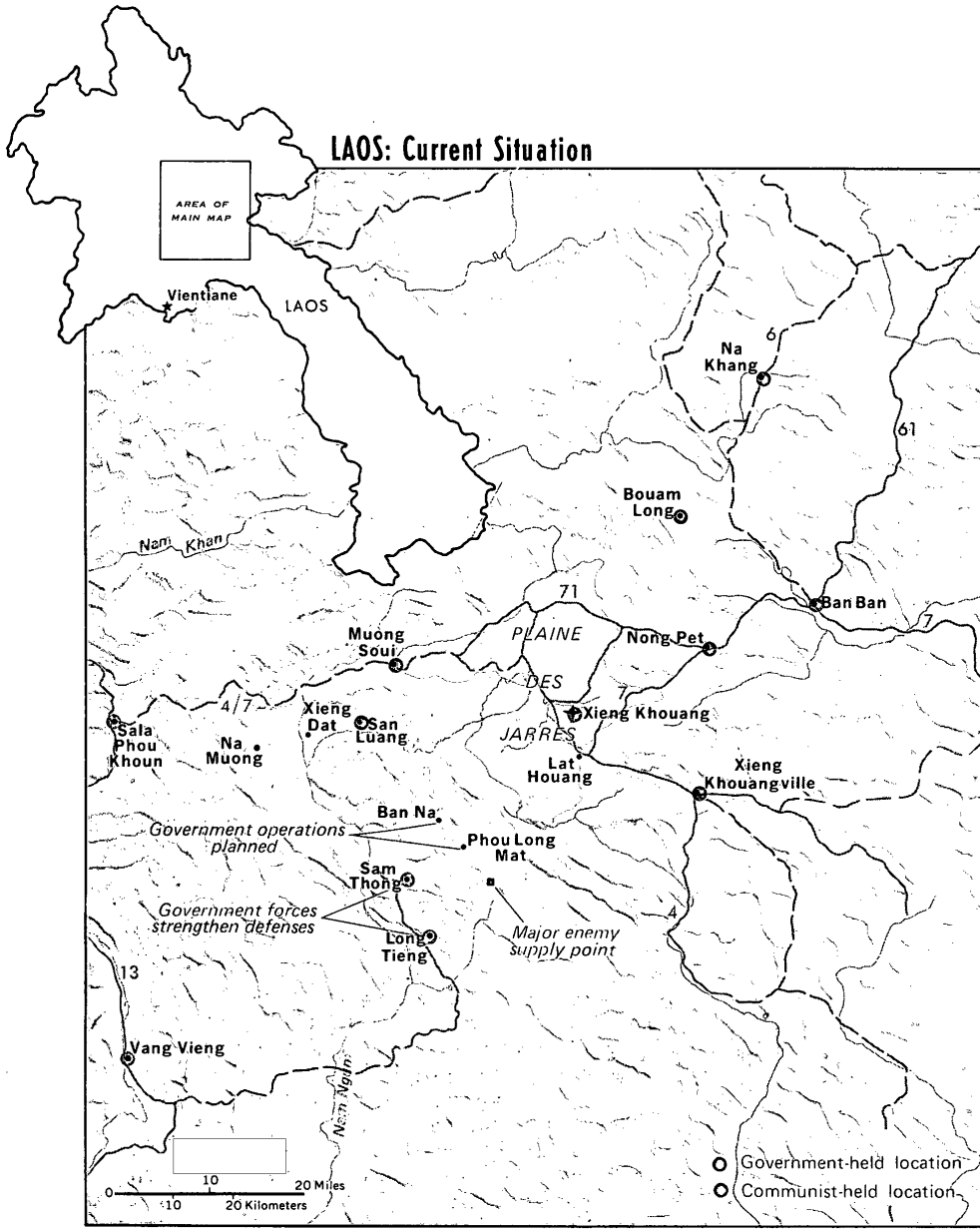
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Communist military activity in Cambodia continues in the southern and southeastern provinces, but no significant new Viet Cong attacks have been reported there or elsewhere. Cambodian paratroops apparently are regaining control of the town of Angtassom in Takeo Province, 45 miles south of Phnom Penh, after several days of heavy fighting. On 25 April, an intercepted army message indicated that "several thousand" Communist troops were concentrated in different areas in central Prey Veng Province, but gave no further details. Another message reported that on 25 April 100 Viet Cong were controlling highway traffic on Route 1 near the border of Prey Veng and Svay Rieng provinces.

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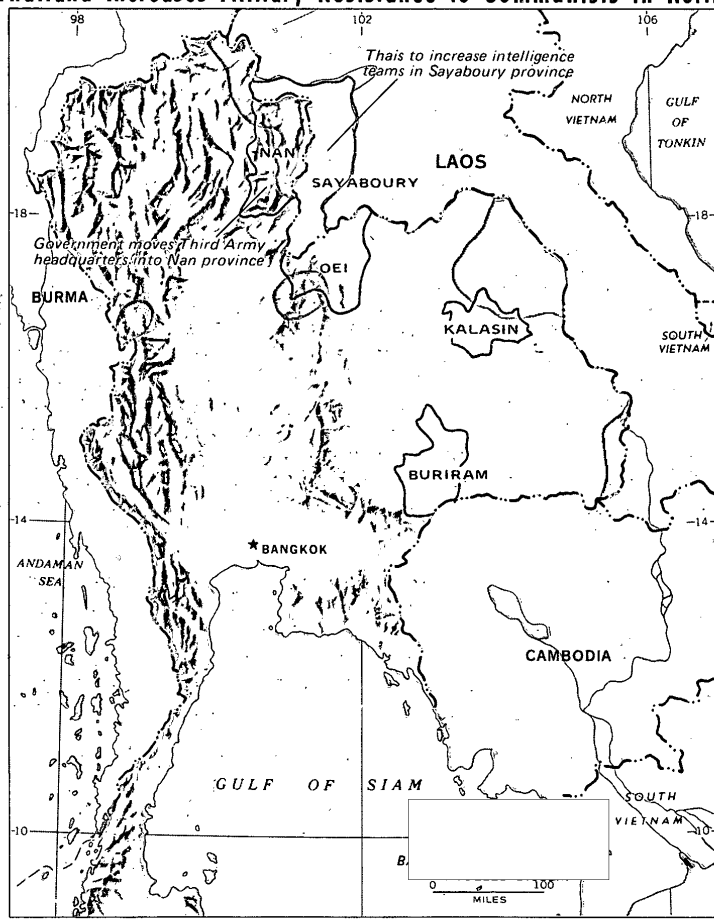
LAOS

No significant fighting developed over the weekend as enemy forces continued to regroup while awaiting completion of the major resupply effort under way in northern Laos. One battalion and a division headquarters authority of the North Vietnamese 316th Division recently shifted northeastward out of the Long Tieng area to the vicinity of Lat Houang on the Plaine des Jarres. Their former missions in the Long Tieng area will probably be assumed by elements of the North Vietnamese 312th Division which, in the last few weeks, have moved southward off the Plaine to within striking distance of Vang Pao's headquarters.

Government forces, meanwhile, are taking advantage of the temporary hiatus in large-scale enemy activity to strengthen and consolidate their defenses in the Long Tieng - Sam Thong sector. Four 105-mm. howitzers are being airlifted from Long Tieng to Sam Thong to improve that garrison's fire-support capability. In addition, Vang Pao is moving several battalions to staging areas in preparation for a new round of offensive operations northeast of Sam Thong in the Ban Na - Phou Long Mat region.

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Thailand Increases Military Resistance to Communists in North



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Area of insurgent activity

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THAILAND

There have been a number of guerrilla incidents in the past two weeks. The major threat is still in the north, where the Communists' tribal guerrilla forces continue to erode the government's presence along the Lao border. The guerrillas have besieged several army outposts, forcing the evacuation of at least one, with a number of government casualties. The guerrillas have also shot down two of Bangkok's scarce helicopters.

The army has taken several steps to counter this pressure. In addition to heavy use of air and artillery strikes, the northern headquarters of the Third Army has moved into Nan Province.

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In the northeast, clashes with Thai Army units continue, but they appear to result largely from government initiatives. Much of the activity in the northeast has occurred outside of traditional guerrilla operating areas, with insurgents in Loei, Buriram and Kalasin provinces showing particular aggressiveness.

Although the Communists' highly-touted Thai People's Liberation Army is a long way from developing the military forces it would need for a sustained campaign, the recent activity adds credibility to its claims of having at least limited influence in most northeast provinces.

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COMMUNIST CHINA

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EGYPT-ISRAEL

During the past nine days, Cairo has made a number of air and ground attacks against Israeli positions in occupied Sinai. Egyptian aircraft have been employed with unusual frequency, including a rare strike last Saturday deep into Sinai by IL-28 light bombers. Ground action along the Suez Canal has also increased recently, and Egypt has reported that it carried out two commando raids against the Israelis yesterday.

In spite of losses incurred--90 Egyptian aircraft have been downed since the 1967 war--Cairo believes it must continue to demonstrate its opposition to the Israeli occupation of Sinai. Israeli air raids into Egypt, particularly those causing civilian casualties, increase the pressures on Nasir to act. The recent introduction of the Soviet-operated SA-3 air defense system into Egypt probably has contributed to Cairo's bravado by providing what it believes are areas of at least partial sanctuary from Israeli reprisals.

The Israelis are now faced with the problem of trying to discourage or curtail Egyptian military activity while attempting to avoid a direct confrontation with Soviet forces in Egypt. Tel Aviv is very reluctant to allow the Egyptians to hide under any form of Soviet umbrella, but at the same time it is hesitant to risk the losses that might result from attacks against these protected areas.

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NOTE

Colombia: Aside from minor terrorist incidents, the country remains calm. Further violence could occur, however, as an aftermath of the contested presidential elections of 19 April. The National Electoral Registry has not yet released final returns, but unofficial figures give National Front candidate Pastрана a lead of some 66,000 votes over former dictator Rojas Pinilla.

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