



The President's Daily Brief

11 May 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Communists are keeping up the pressure on Cambodian Government forces in a number of areas.
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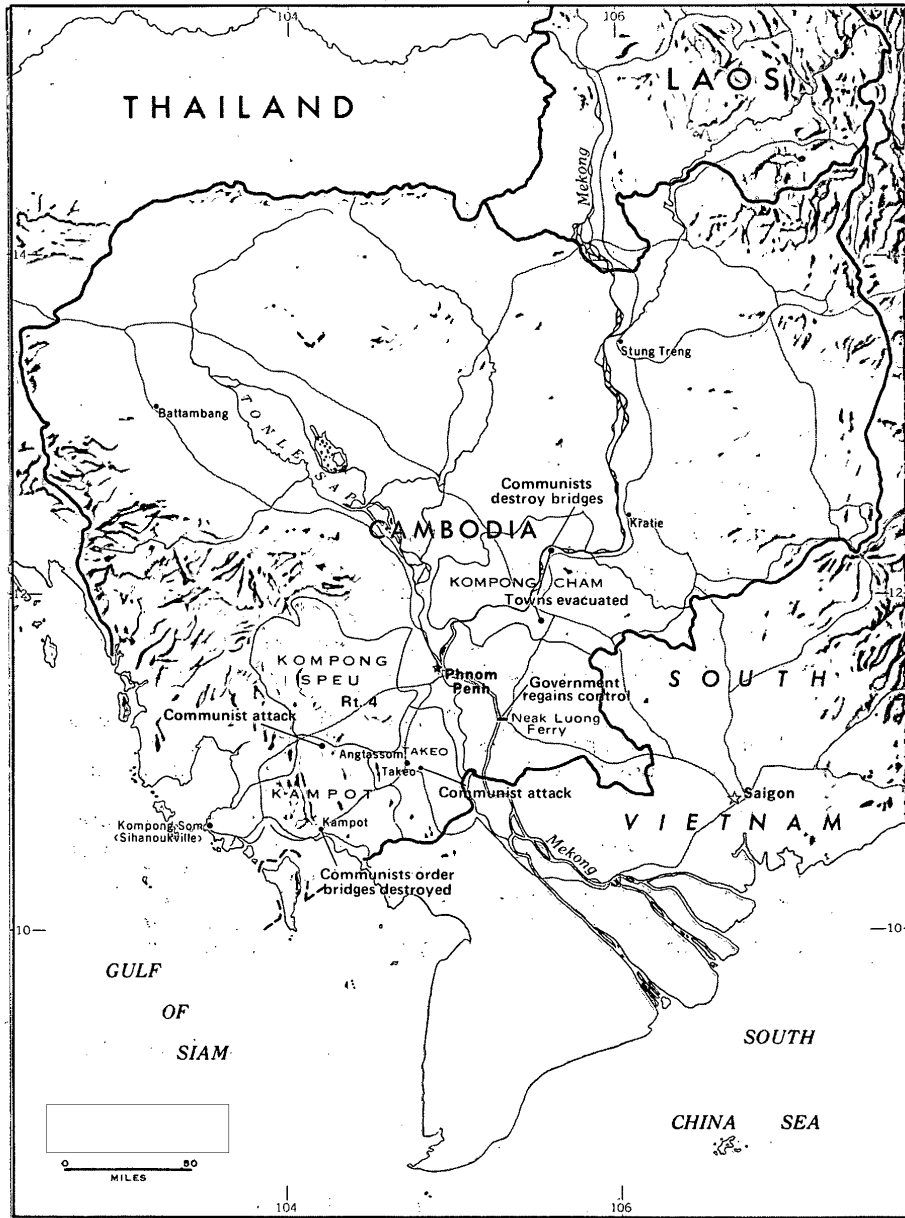
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The weekend saw little fighting in Laos, but this respite did little to ease the government's bad case of the jitters. (Page 3)

North Vietnamese Party First Secretary Le Duan has finally left Moscow for home. (Page 4)

The chiefs of government and perhaps the defense ministers of the Warsaw Pact states are likely to assemble in Warsaw on 15 May. (Page 5)

Cambodia: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

An intercepted Cambodian Army message reports that the provincial capital in Takeo Province came under an all-night attack on 10 May. Government forces in Takeo town and in the nearby town of Ang-tassom have been harassed by enemy elements for over a week, and recent reports have indicated that both towns are surrounded. On 9 May an estimated 500 Communist troops were reported to be regrouping just south of Takeo in order to cut main roads leading to the town.

There has also been a rise in Communist activity in Kompong Cham Province. In the past few days the Communists have destroyed several bridges and engaged in a series of skirmishes with government units. Moreover, local reports of increased Communist infiltration in the province apparently caused government forces to abandon two more towns on 8 May.

In the southwest, the Communists are becoming more active in Kompong Speu Province. On 9 May a force of several hundred attacked a road-work camp near Route 4, destroying several pieces of road-maintenance equipment. In addition, communications intelligence indicates that unidentified elements of the North Vietnamese 95th Regiment recently were ordered to destroy bridges around the capital of Kampot Province. This is the first sign of any military activity by a Communist main force unit in this area.

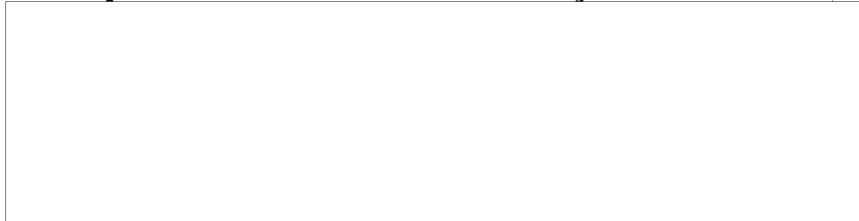
Communist forces suffered a setback of their own, however, when South Vietnamese Marines regained control over the Neak Luong ferry south of Phnom Penh yesterday in the face of light enemy resistance.



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In Peking, Sihanouk has hinted that his return to Cambodia is being postponed. During a television interview Friday, he said that his "resistance fighters" had told him to wait for "better political and diplomatic conditions" before he joins them.



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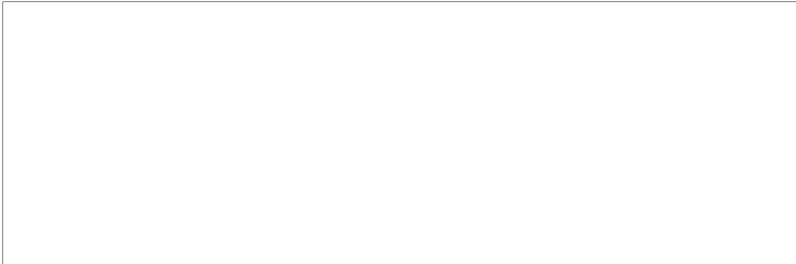
SOUTH VIETNAM - CAMBODIA



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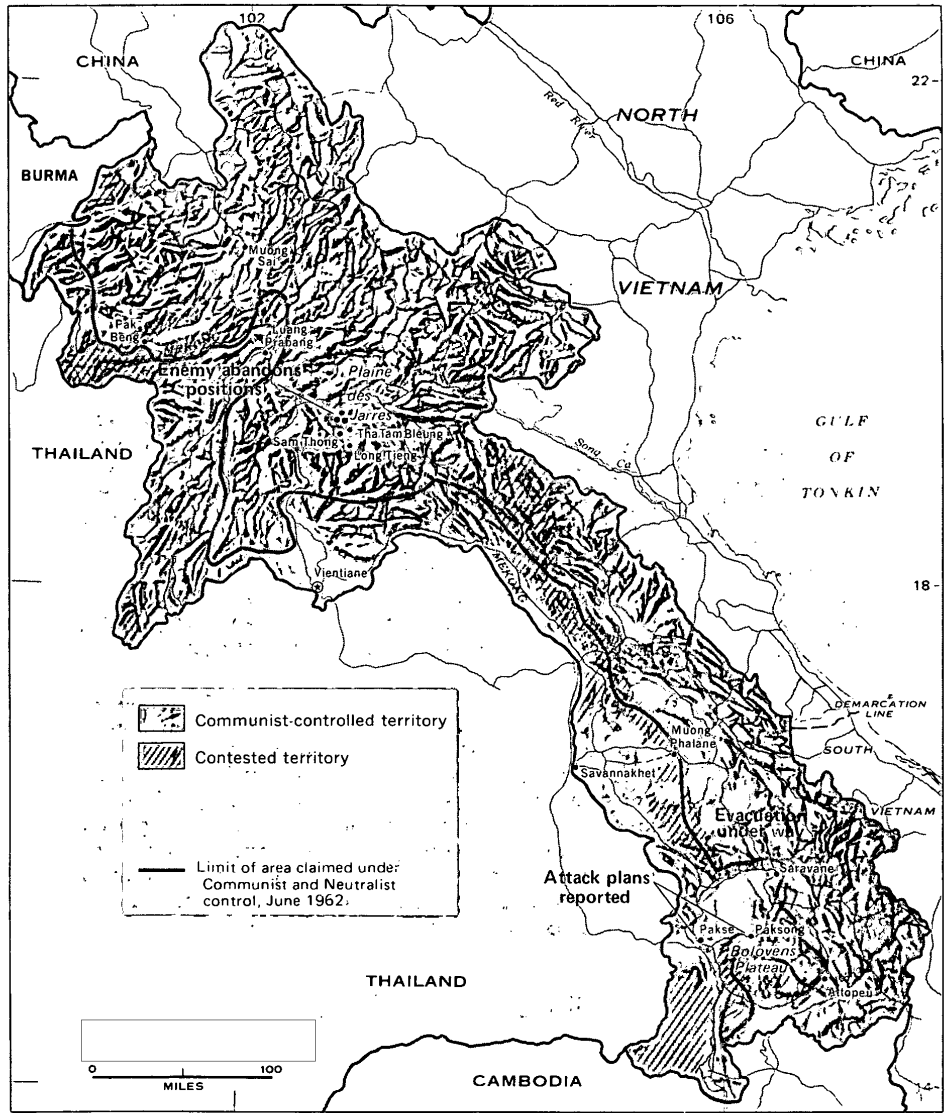
The communications of the various
staffs under COSVN still reflect some disarray, but
they are becoming more active and are resuming some
routine functions.

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Laos: Current Situation



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LAOS

There was little military activity over the weekend, but Lao officials are still extremely nervous about the possibility of enemy attacks on Saravane and other key points in the south. Prime Minister Souvanna has asked in writing for US assistance in evacuating about 4,000 Lao dependents from Saravane. An initial batch of 500 was flown out yesterday.

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it is estimated that the Communists do have upwards of 1,000 troops in the area. The government garrison at Saravane numbers less than 600.

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Pakse will be hit again soon. The most recent attack on 1 May did little physical damage, but it certainly contributed to the government's bad case of the jitters about enemy military intentions in the south. Government irregular troops have reoccupied the main guerrilla base near Attoupeu, but the regular army battalion that decamped, allowing the Communists to take the base on Saturday, is still to be heard from.

In the north, the position around Long Tieng continues to improve. Government forces have found two unoccupied company-sized bivouac sites north of Sam Thong and what appears to be a battalion headquarters northwest of Tha Tam Bleung.

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NORTH VIETNAM

Party First Secretary Le Duan is on his way home from Moscow after three weeks of consultations. He received no new public gestures of support from his hosts, and TASS referred to conferences with Brezhnev as "an exchange of opinions." That phrase is frequently used as a euphemism for talks that produce no results.

Hanoi must have considered the mission very important--Le Duan is the Party's top man, and no ordinary errand could have kept him away during the past three hectic weeks. The minimal treatment TASS gave Le Duan's departure suggests that the consultations may not have produced results satisfactory to both parties.

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WARSAW PACT

At a dinner in Warsaw on Friday night, the

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that the chiefs of government of the Pact countries would meet in Warsaw on 15 May to celebrate the Pact's 15th anniversary. The Pact countries may also send their defense ministers, and "important developments" can be expected.

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We believe such a meeting is a logical sequel to the meeting of CEMA, the Bloc's economic organization. It will be held in Warsaw three days earlier, and will be attended by the chiefs of government. We can only speculate about what could be done at the Pact meeting. The anniversary commemoration is expected, of course, but the leaders might also issue a statement on the proposed Conference on European Security. The defense ministers in particular might attempt to upstage the NATO ministers who are to meet later this month.

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