

The President's Daily Brief

22 June 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LATE ITEM
ECUADOR

A late report from the Associated Press states that President Velasco of Ecuador has assumed dictatorial power. [REDACTED]
It is also reported that the army has begun a roundup of leftist leaders and that paratroopers have occupied university campuses.

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on *Page 1*.

Communist forces have captured another government guerrilla base in southern Laos. (*Page 3*)

Ecuador [redacted] (*Page 4*)

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Arab leaders are meeting in Libya. (*Page 5*)

Cambodia



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CAMBODIA

Phnom Penh dispatched five army battalions by road yesterday to reinforce battered government defenders at Kompong Thom. Although there was no major attack on the city on the night of 20-21 June, the Communists continue to control areas east and south of the city. An intercepted Cambodian Army message claims that all light, water, and power facilities in the city are now inoperative. Communist prisoners captured at Kompong Cham say they were assigned to a North Vietnamese Army regiment, which is now located east of Kompong Thom. The prisoners probably are members of the Viet Cong 275th Regiment. They also said the regiment is a unit that specializes in attacking heavily populated areas.

Captured enemy documents indicate that the Viet Cong 275th Regiment was reorganized and split into two regimental-sized units on 15 June. Personnel for one battalion of the 275th were recruited from Cambodian Communist insurgents and local Vietnamese. The documents also state the 275th is now carrying out the "first phase" of guerrilla warfare in Cambodia, and coordinating closely with psychological and propaganda activities in accordance with COSVN plans against the Lon Nol regime.

Another major Communist push against the provincial capital of Kompong Cham is under way, with the enemy making ground and artillery attacks on the city. Two battalions of Khmer Krom troops at Tonle Bet town, on the east bank of the Mekong opposite Kompong Cham, are also under attack by sizable Communist forces supported by artillery fire. Elements of the Viet Cong 9th Division apparently are involved in these attacks. Press reports indicate the ferry at Kompong Cham is not operating, and all roads surrounding the city have been cut by the Communists. South Vietnamese Army units are no longer operating near Kompong Cham.

In Prey Veng Province, 100 enemy troops attacked a South Vietnamese Army battalion just north of the provincial capital on 20 June. Elements of the Viet Cong 271st Regiment are believed to be operating in that area.

(continued)

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Intercepts show that several important elements of the Communist B-3 Front have recently moved from the central highlands area in South Vietnam to positions that threaten the government's two remaining posts in the northeast, Labansiek and Bokheo. The headquarters of the North Vietnamese 24th Regiment was located a few miles east of Labansiek on 20 June, and a battalion from the Communists' 95B Regiment was several miles south of the town. Previously, a battalion of the North Vietnamese 24th Regiment and two battalions under B-3 Front control had been spotted moving into this general region.

* * *

The US Embassy in Taipei reports that the Chinese Nationalists are prepared to send immediately to Cambodia those military items for which US concurrence is not required; in addition, Taipei has requested US approval to provide Cambodia with M-14 rifles, M-60 machine guns, and backpack radios.

The deputy chief of staff of the [redacted]

[redacted] that on 16 June the Chinese Nationalist ambassador there informed Prime Minister Thanom that Cambodia had tentatively accepted Taiwan's offer to provide it with sufficient light and medium equipment for two divisions, but that thus far Phnom Penh had not made the necessary arrangements to receive them. Thanom told the ambassador that he would urge Lon Nol to send representatives to Taiwan to work out the details.

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The second problem broached by the ambassador was transportation of the equipment, including weapons, from Taiwan to Cambodia. Thanom suggested shipping the material either through Kompong Som (Sihanoukville) and then overland to Phnom Penh, or through Bangkok and then by rail or truck to the Cambodian capital. He also said he would ask for US help to transport the material.

[redacted] moving the material to Phnom Penn via Bangkok because this route was more secure and less likely to be detected by Western journalists in Cambodia.

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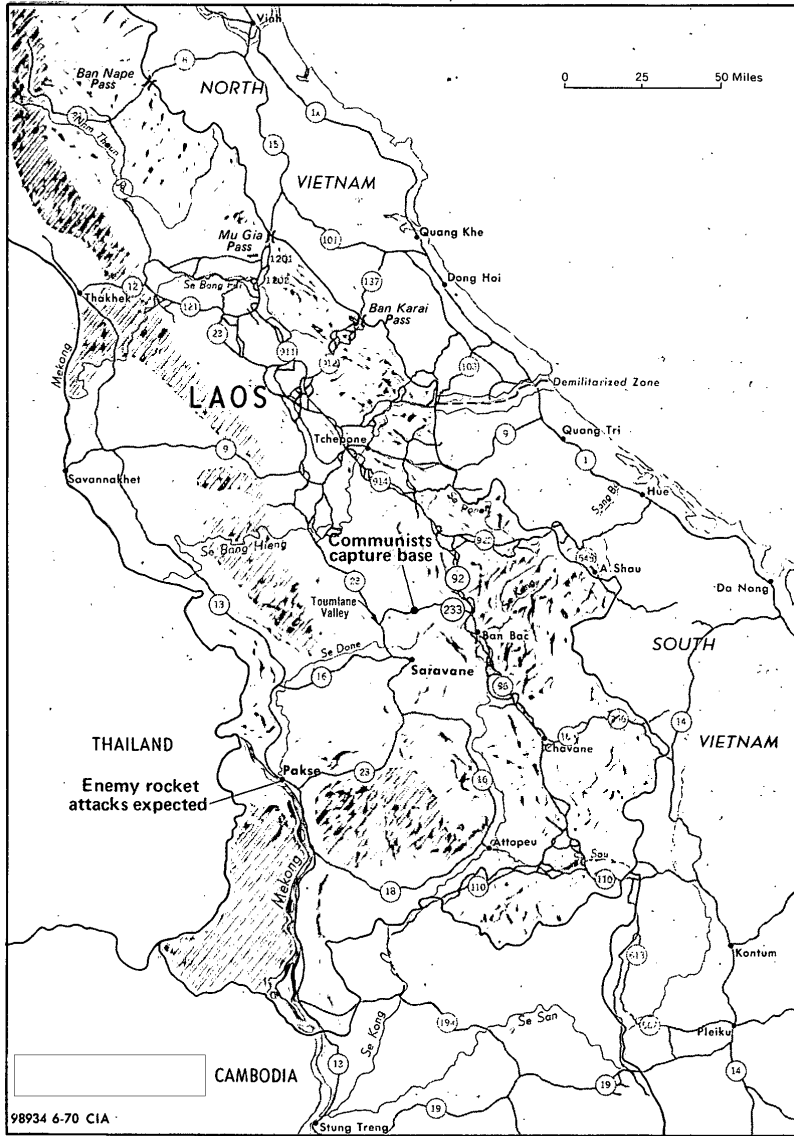
[redacted] would be amenable to any US transportation plan. He also indicated that Bangkok wanted to take possession of the Chinese Nationalist arms, equip Cambodians to be trained in Thailand with some of them, and "hold" the rest until Phnom Penh needed them. Thailand, he said, would also be "glad" to furnish a ship to move them to Bangkok, provided the Thai Government was reimbursed in full by the US.

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Communists Continue Pressure in Southern Laos



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LAOS

[redacted] a government guerrilla base some 15 miles north of the Communist-occupied provincial town of Saravane fell to enemy forces on 18 June. The base stands astride Route 233, which runs from Route 92 to the Toumlane Valley; if improved, Route 233 would offer the enemy another alternate infiltration route to the south. At least three other government bases in the Saravane area have been overrun by the Communists within the past week.

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The Communists may soon expand their operations further in this region. [redacted], enemy patrols have been selecting firing sites for rocket attacks against the Mekong River town of Pakse, the most important government stronghold in southern Laos.

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Southern leaders are becoming increasingly unhappy over what they consider to be Vientiane's inadequate response to the deteriorating military situation in their region. [redacted]

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[Redacted]

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NOTE

Arab States: Some leaders attending the current Arab conference in Libya are taking advantage of the gathering to promote their own interests. Nasir probably is trying to sell his ideas for a unified command structure, and undoubtedly will again make a pitch for more effective military coordination on Israel's eastern front to ease the pressure in the Suez Canal area.

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