



The President's Daily Brief

3 April 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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

Only 1,800 fresh North Vietnamese troops were detected in the infiltration system during March. (*Page 2*)

Heavy fighting has been noted on a hill overlooking enemy supply routes from the Plaine des Jarres in Laos. (*Page 3*)

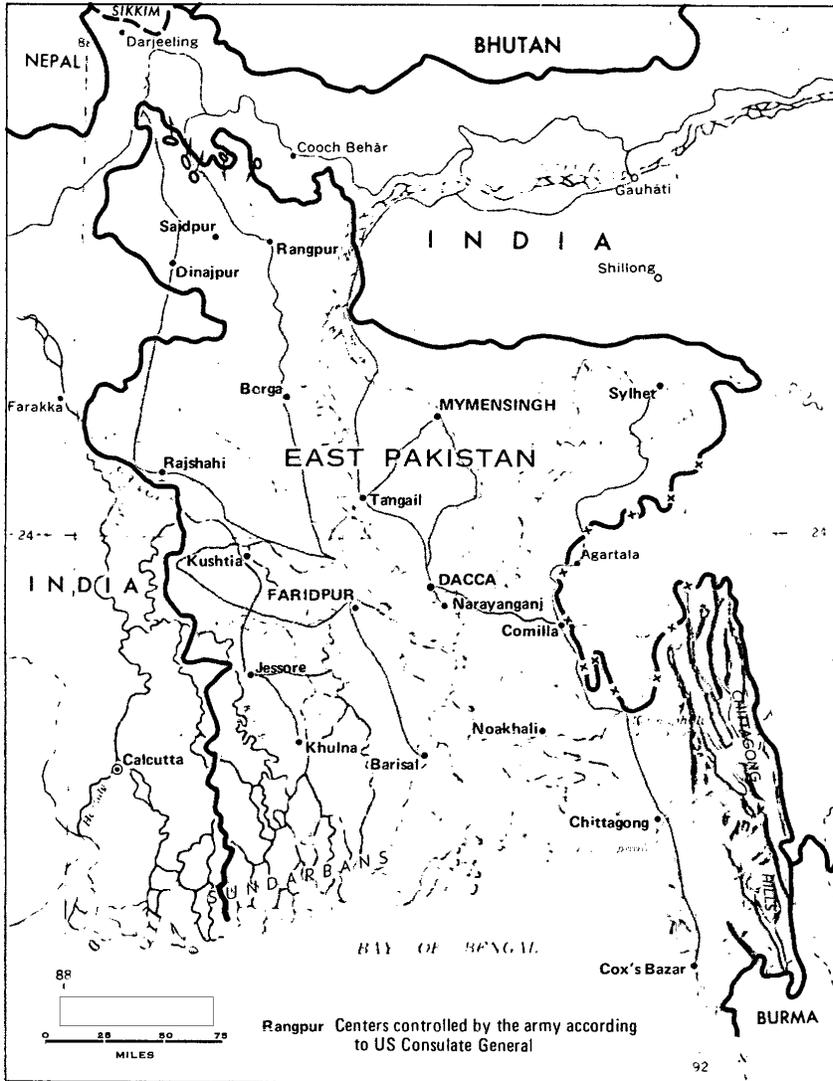
Six infantry and two artillery regiments are now operating within a 12-mile radius of Chup in Cambodia. (*Page 4*)

A small army unit in northern Thailand near the Laos border was ambushed by an insurgent force of 100 earlier this week. (*Page 5*)

Clashes in Jordan continue as seven Arab countries prepare to meet in Cairo today. (*Page 6*)

Party conservatives are trying to build up their strength in Czechoslovakia before the party congress in May. (*Page 7*)

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PAKISTAN

The army controls a number of population centers but little of the countryside, according to the US consul general in Dacca. Central government control of Dacca and Narayanganj is a fact, [redacted]

[redacted] the consulate [redacted] estimate that Chittagong is held by the army. The central government, according to the consul general, probably has also maintained itself in Khulna, Rangpur, Saidpur, Comilla, Sylhet, Dinajpur, and Jessore. Apparently reliable press reports, however, continue to indicate that the city of Jessore, as opposed to the nearby military cantonment, has been taken by East Pakistanis.

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With monsoon rains due in about two months, the consulate believes there is a possibility the army will find itself marooned in a series of strongpoints around the province during the summer and will have difficulty supplying some of them.

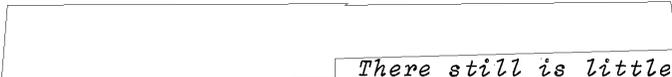
Officials at the consulate general also feel there are indications that the army may be thinking of starving the East Pakistanis into submission. Even if this is not the goal, a situation in which the army controlled major ports and transportation centers and the East Pakistanis the countryside could have grave effects on the welfare of the population.

The Pakistanis apparently do not intend to allow any further thinning-out flights by foreign military aircraft. Instead they have proposed that British, French, and US nationals use Pakistan International Airlines planes. Two flights a day would operate to Karachi from 4 April through 7 April, with a total capacity of 1,256. An estimated 750 Americans are expected to participate in the airlift and the UK has responsibility for nearly 800 more persons.

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NORTH VIETNAM

Only about 1,800 fresh North Vietnamese troops--nearly all of them bound for southern South Vietnam or Cambodia--were detected in the infiltration system during March.

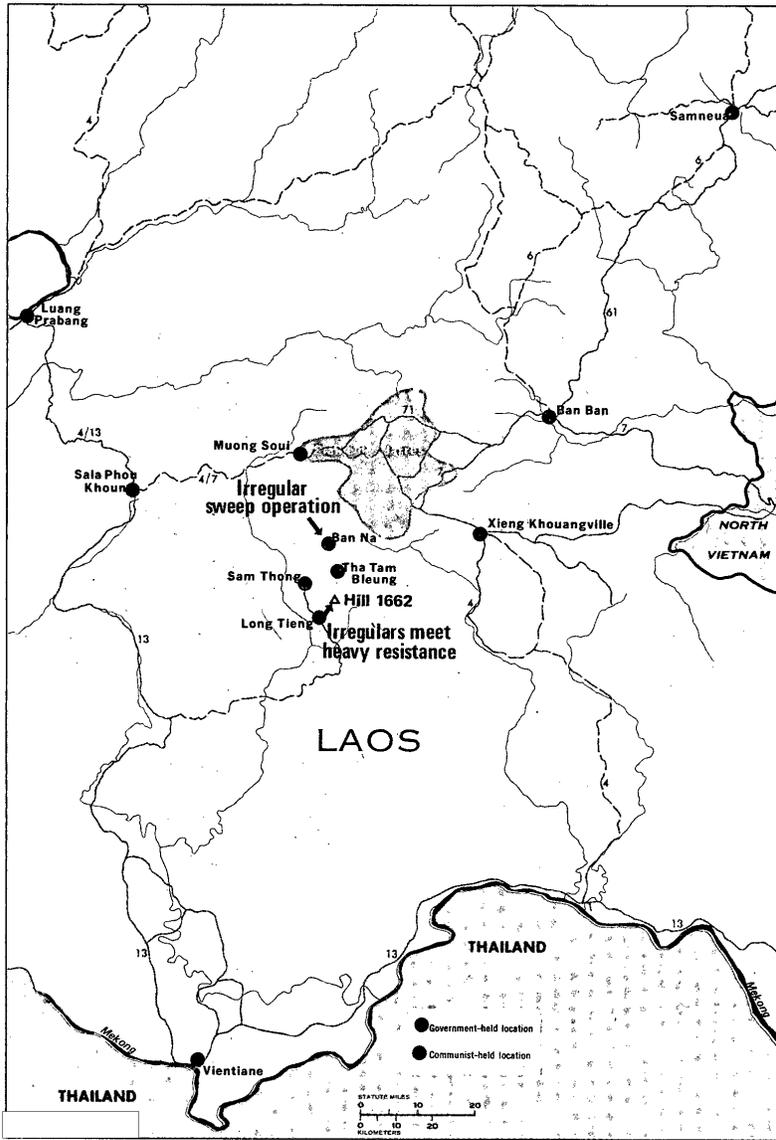


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There still is little or no exploitable infiltration data from the head of the system in North Vietnam or from other stations along the northern part of the trail, where until January most infiltrators were detected, and some troops could have slipped through undetected. The available evidence suggests, however, that the March total--as well as similar low totals from January and February--is a generally accurate reflection of the infiltration flow.

The low rate for the past three months can be explained in part by the demands imposed on the North Vietnamese rear services system by Operation Lam Son 719. A more important reason, however, may be that Hanoi had substantially completed its dry-season infiltration effort by the end of last year. About 75,000 troops have moved south since last September, compared with 57,000 in the 1969-70 dry season.

The North Vietnamese are unlikely to close down the infiltration system completely this coming wet season, as they did in 1969 and as they were beginning to do in 1970 until events in Cambodia forced a change in plans. Infiltration thus is likely to pick up before long and then continue at an increased though still modest rate over the next few months.



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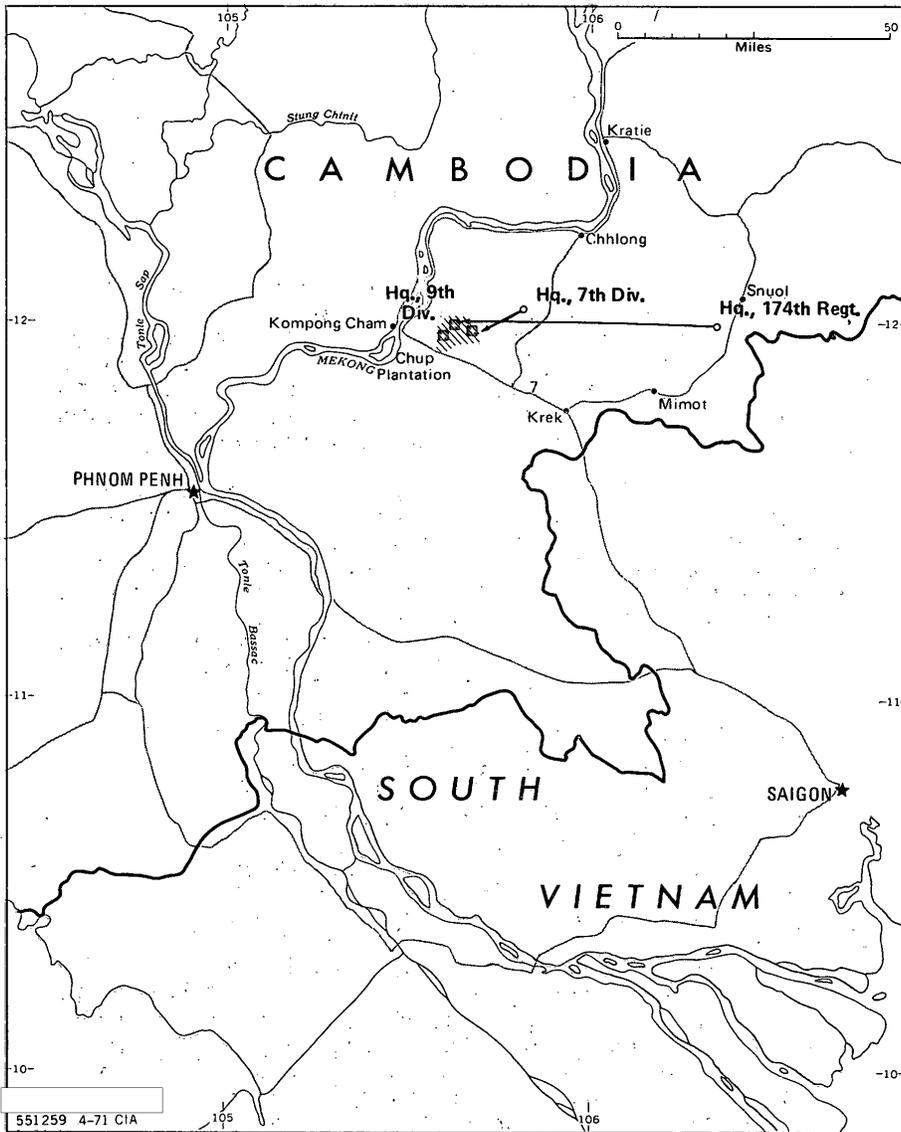
LAOS

Two of Vang Pao's irregular battalions, comprising some 650 men, moving northeast from Long Tieng have had two days of heavy fighting trying to oust Communist forces from Hill 1662, a key point overlooking enemy supply routes from the Plaine des Jarres. An irregular company is moving to reinforce these battalions, and tactical air strikes and artillery fire are being used to press the drive.

Intercepts suggest that North Vietnamese forces have begun to concentrate to the northeast and east of Long Tieng in the past two weeks. There now appear to be elements of at least seven Communist battalions in this vicinity. The irregular operation could serve to delay or defer any major ground assault on Long Tieng from the northeast.

About 1,100 other Meo irregulars are conducting a sweep operation toward Ban Na from the northwest in an effort to relieve North Vietnamese pressure on that artillery site. So far this operation has met little resistance and has turned up a number of abandoned enemy positions, suggesting that at least some of the Communist units in this area have shifted to the east.

The government effort to push back Communist units around Luang Prabang is moving forward slowly, and some high ground positions northeast of the royal capital have been reoccupied. An irregular task force of a thousand men trying to move up Route 4 north of the royal capital is still stalled by enemy resistance, however.



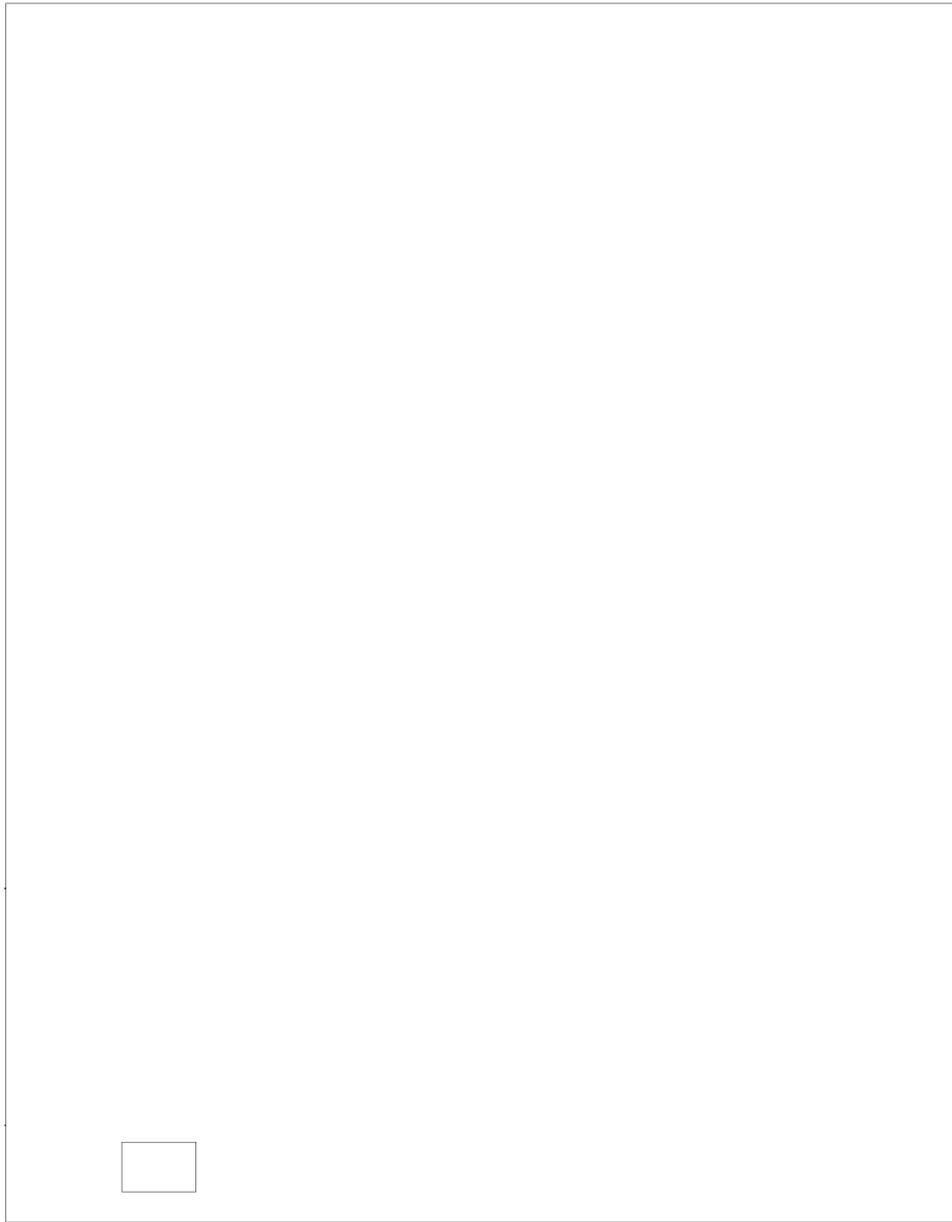
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CAMBODIA - SOUTH VIETNAM

During the past week the headquarters of the Communist 7th Division has moved to the eastern edge of the Chup plantation, while the headquarters of the 9th Division has moved deep into its interior. A regiment of the 5th Division has also relocated to the Chup area, and is now on the plantation's northern edge. These shifts raise the number of enemy units operating within a 12-mile radius of Chup to six infantry and two artillery regiments.

The Communists have frequently moved their main-force units rapidly in and around Chup during the course of the two-month-old South Vietnamese offensive. Some of these moves during this period were clearly designed to defend against ARVN actions, while others were for purposes of rest and resupply. The current moves could be related to this pattern. They also raise the possibility of increased enemy combat action.



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THAILAND

Early this week a small Thai Army unit providing security for a road construction crew in north-eastern Nan Province near the Lao border was ambushed by an insurgent force estimated by local police at 100 strong. Ten government troops and two highway workers were killed. Most of these casualties occurred when fire from either a rocket or grenade launcher hit the fuel tank of an armored personnel carrier. Earlier in March the insurgents in this same general area used a 60-mm. mortar to turn back an army operation, killing eight government troops.

Chinese Nationalist irregular forces operating under Bangkok's direction in adjacent Chiang Rai Province have also found the going increasingly difficult. After some initial successes at the outset of operations late last year, the irregulars--partly because of a lack of support from Bangkok--have been sitting in isolated base camps under continual harassment from the insurgents.

The government is faring little better in the tri-province area of north-central Thailand. On 1 April, for example, a three-truck troop convoy was ambushed west of Lom Sak, with one soldier killed and 13 wounded.

The northern insurgents' tough resistance to government probes indicates the high value they place on maintaining a foothold in their border redoubts. They evidently are better armed now than at any other time since their movement began in early 1967.

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JORDAN

Clashes between the fedayeen and government forces continued yesterday with intermittent firing throughout Amman. The government claims that northern border towns had been fired on from Syria

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A rash of incidents in scattered parts of the country late Thursday and early Friday morning included the blowing up of a refinery pipeline.

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The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) appears responsible for many of the incidents.

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Seven Arab countries have agreed to Cairo's call for a meeting to discuss the situation, but Jordan will not attend. The representatives, presumably on the ambassadorial level, are expected to gather in the Egyptian capital today. A number of these countries are continuing their propaganda attacks on King Husayn, and the Cairo-based Fatah radio has issued a set of demands, including a call for the ouster of Premier Wasfi Tal and other "renegade" elements.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The Supreme Court on Thursday overturned the legal rehabilitation in 1969 of an elderly victim of the Stalinist purges in the 1950s. This decision followed by only a week the court martial of a former lieutenant general who had been a leading liberal official under Dubcek in 1968. Both the court and the military establishment are controlled by conservatives anxious further to discredit the liberals.

The action by the Supreme Court may be an opening move by the party conservatives to reverse the numerous rehabilitations approved by the Dubcek regime and continued, albeit at a slower pace, under Husak. Rehabilitations, affecting as they do the financial and social standing of the individual as well as his family, are one of the few remaining vestiges of Czechoslovak liberalism.

These judicial actions, therefore, are aimed at undermining Husak's attempts to reconcile the party and ex-liberals while avoiding a direct attack on him. In this way the conservatives are seeking to build strength prior to the Czechoslovak party congress scheduled for May and to recruit support. All of this is heaping the pressure on Husak, though there does not appear to be a move under way to unseat him at this time.

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