



*The President's Daily Brief*

26 May 1971

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

26 May 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

India [redacted]  
[redacted]  
Pakistan [redacted] (Page 1)

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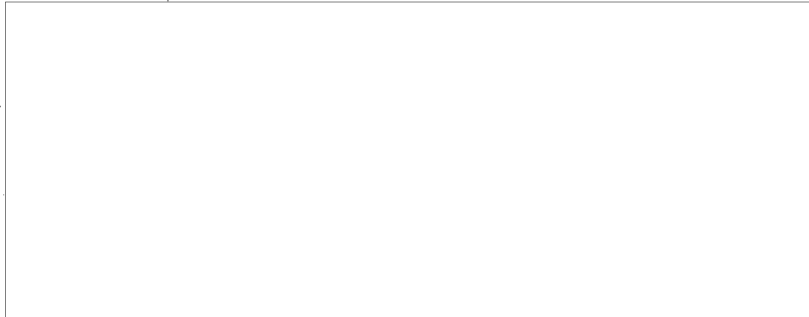
On Page 2 we review the military situation in Laos.

[redacted]  
USSR [redacted] and the Far East [redacted]  
Page 4.

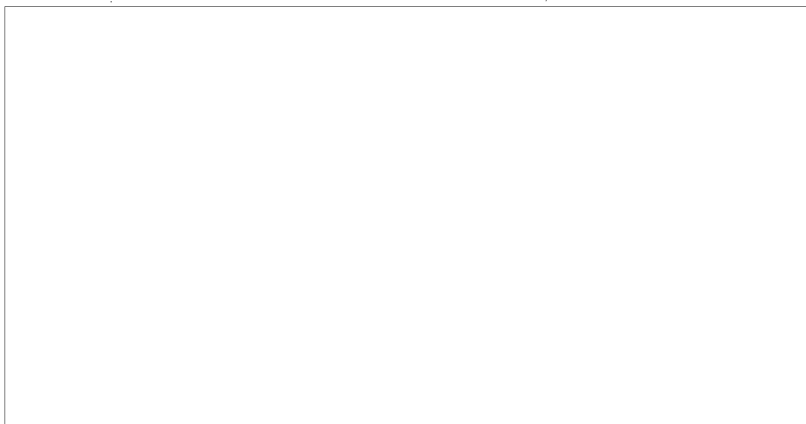
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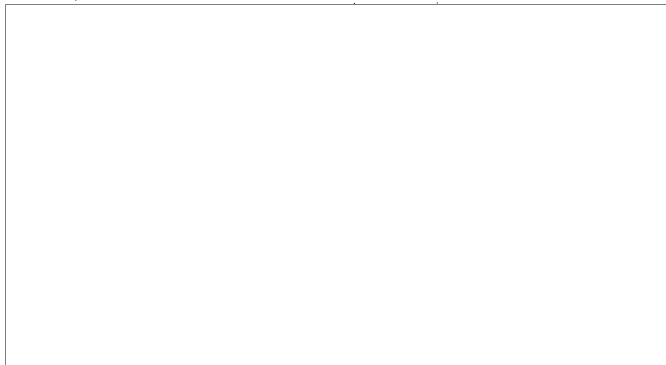
**INDIA-PAKISTAN**



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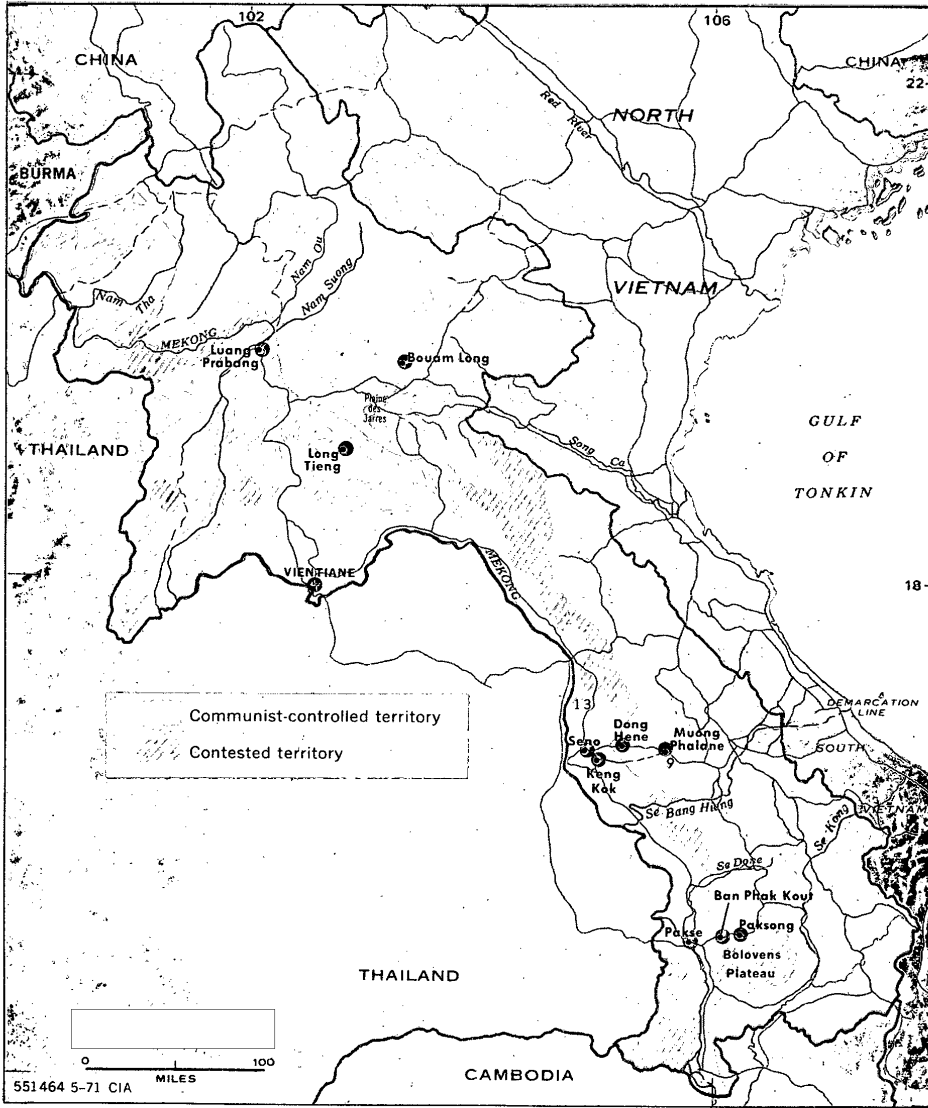


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# LAOS



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☉ Government-held location      ● Communist-held location

## FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

## LAOS

Government irregulars north and east of Paksong have made little progress in their efforts to recapture high ground positions. Regular forces retook the town of Ban Phak Kout to the west of Paksong over the weekend, but reports suggest that the North Vietnamese are bringing in additional units.

Morale in nearby Pakse--the second largest population center in Laos--is low, and many residents apparently believe rumors of impending Communist attacks. So far Lao civilian and military officials there have not exerted strong leadership

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Communist units in the Dong Hene - Muong Phalane area--two regiments plus independent combat and artillery battalions--continue to threaten government forces defending Seno, Keng Kok, and Route 13. The Communists, however, have yet to move in force toward Seno. One North Vietnamese unit--the 64th Regiment of the 320th Division--which was believed to be operating with Communist forces on Route 9, has returned to North Vietnam.

The military situation in northern Laos has eased during the past two weeks. Action around the Long Tieng complex has slackened, and there are continuing indications that some main-force North Vietnamese units are pulling back. The 316th Division, which has carried much of the fighting around Long Tieng for nearly two years, may be withdrawing. The headquarters of one of its two regiments, the 148th, has recently moved to an area east of the Plaine des Jarres, and at least two battalions of its other regiment, the 174th, have been shifted to the Bouam Long area.

*These battalions, together with an independent NVA regiment, probably are responsible for recent attacks on Bouam Long, the only major irregular base north of the Plaine des Jarres. The North Vietnamese may hope to tie down irregular units there and to forestall the use of the base to support raids against Communist supply lines near the Plaine during the rainy season.*

(continued)

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In the Luang Prabang area, government forces have reoccupied all of the ground lost during the Communists' dry season offensive north and east of the royal capital. The NVA 335th Independent Regiment, which was responsible for the offensive, appears to have overextended its supply lines and to have taken heavy casualties. It has now pulled back toward more secure base areas and will probably devote much of the rainy season to rest and refitting.

\* \* \*

Souvanna Phouma has said publicly that his government will not negotiate with the Communists while under military pressure. He reiterated his position that the government would neither bow to threats nor accept any bombing halt and cease-fire unless these measures were immediately followed by the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Laos. Souvanna has not, however, issued a formal rejection of the Communist proposal, and he appears to be using the press interviews to buy time and keep open his options for future talks with the Communists.

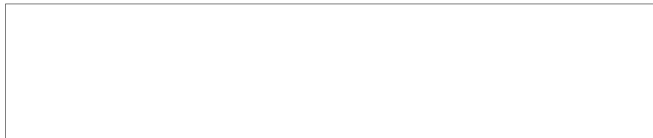
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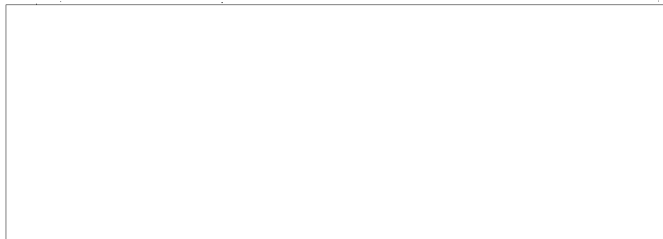
USSR - FAR EAST



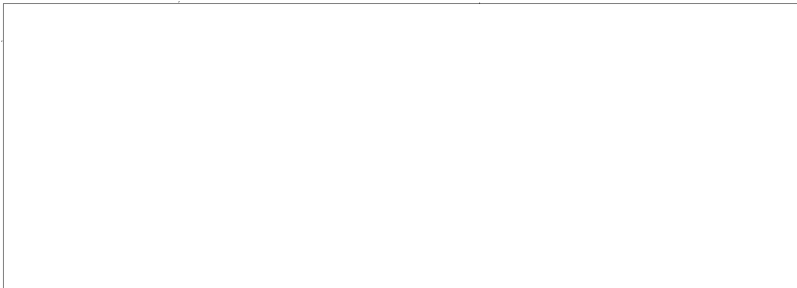
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NOTES

USSR: According to Pravda, Lunokhod-1 is nearing the end of its life after roving the surface of the moon for six months. The Soviets say this is more than double the life span they had originally expected. Its well-publicized operations came at a time when the USSR was having trouble with other space ventures, such as the Soyuz-10 with its docking problems and the first of the two recent Mars shots, which failed early in its mission. During its time on the moon, Lunokhod-1 has survived seven lunar days and nights, enduring variations of temperature ranging from 200 degrees below zero to 300 degrees above.

Argentina: The junta has approved the formation of a federal court with jurisdiction over subversive activities throughout Argentina, a move that should help allay military concern over the government's wishy-washy response to terrorism. More sweeping government changes, including a four-way breakup of the powerful Ministry of Economy and Labor, are expected in the next few days, according to the US Embassy. A scheduled speech by President Lanusse on Saturday, Armed Forces Day, may provide the occasion to announce any shake-up.



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