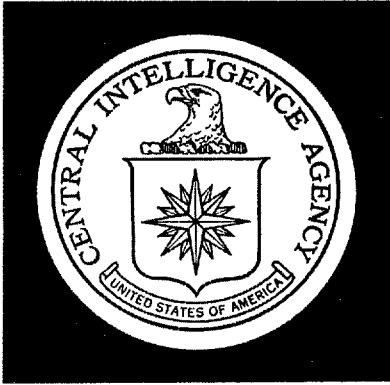
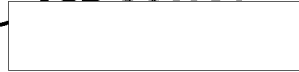


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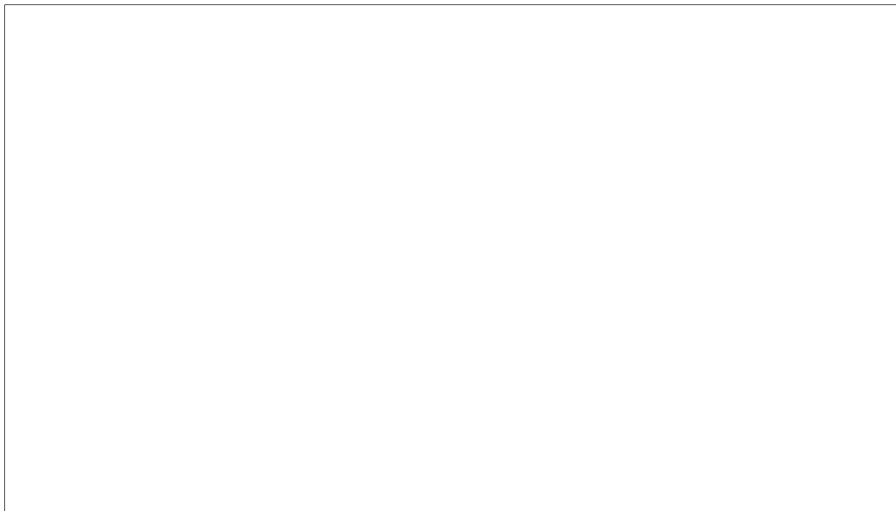
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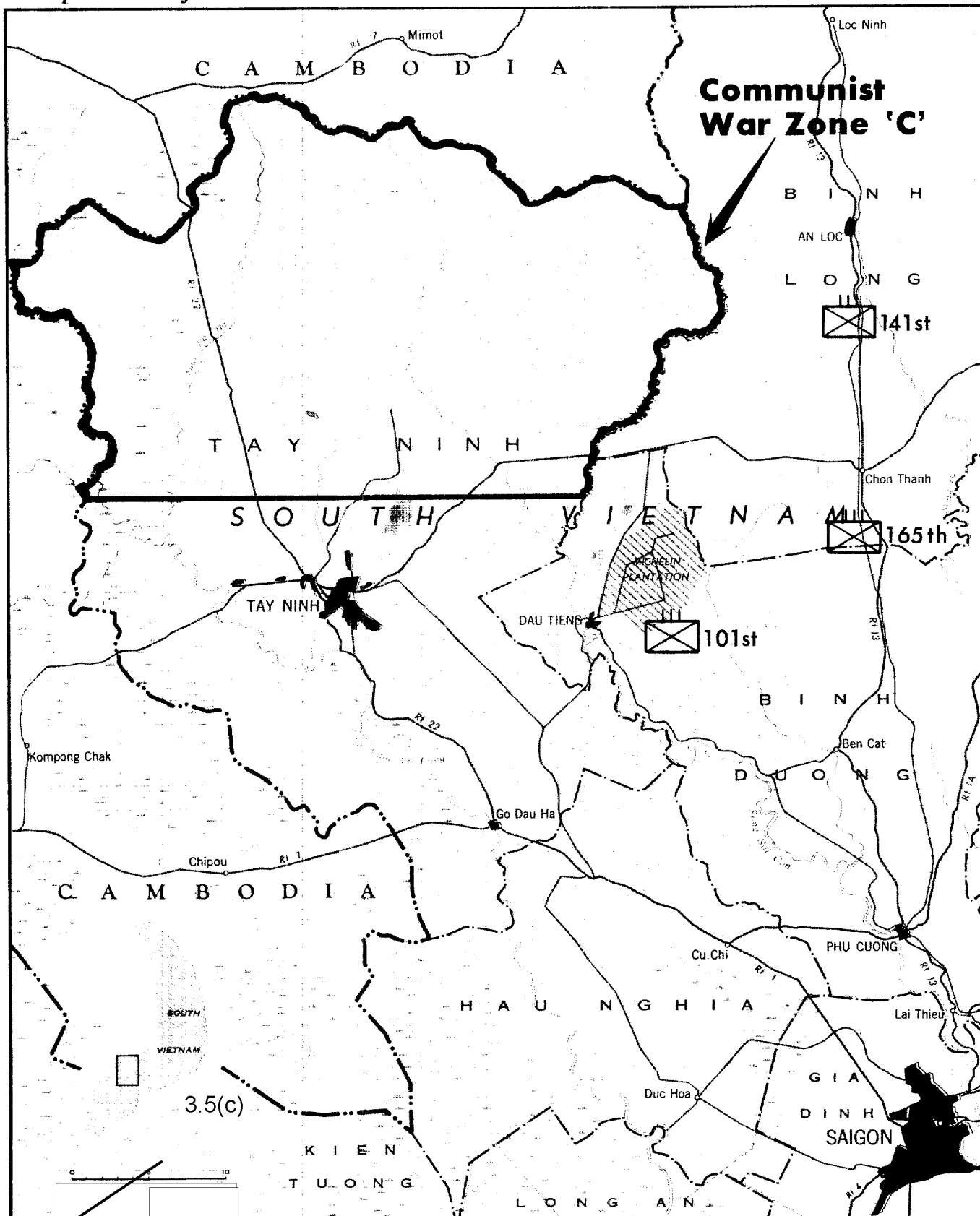
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Disposition of NVA 7th Division



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South Vietnam: Some Communist main force units apparently hope to evade major contact with allied forces sweeping northern Tay Ninh Province.

Nine battalions of US and South Vietnamese troops began Operation YELLOWSTONE in Tay Ninh last week. Their mission involves sweep operations against Communist War Zone "C" and the construction of Special Forces camps and an advance artillery position.

Probably in anticipation of such operations, most of the 6,100-man North Vietnamese 7th Division has relocated in recent weeks from Tay Ninh to positions in Binh Long and Binh Duong provinces. The Communists may also hope that their new positions will facilitate harassment of allied rear areas. Such actions would be intended to impede the concentration of allied forces in Tay Ninh.

North Vietnam: Hanoi has broken its silence regarding recent Vietnam-related activities at the United Nations by issuing a sharply worded denunciation of US efforts to bring the Vietnam problem before the Security Council.

The unyielding attitude of the North Vietnamese was spelled out in an authoritative article in the party daily, Nhan Dan, on 12 December. The article stated that the US was up to its "old tricks" and reiterated Hanoi's long-standing view that the "UN has no jurisdiction whatsoever to settle the Vietnam problem."

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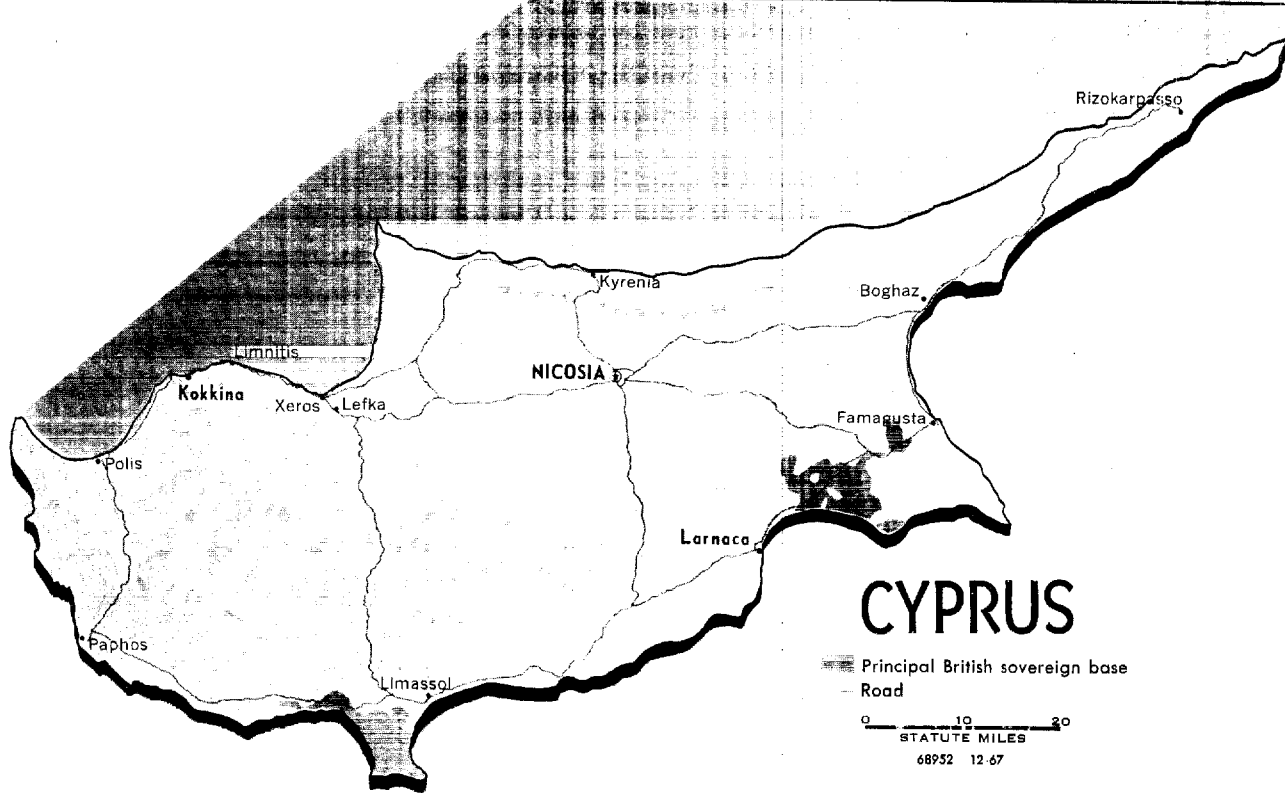
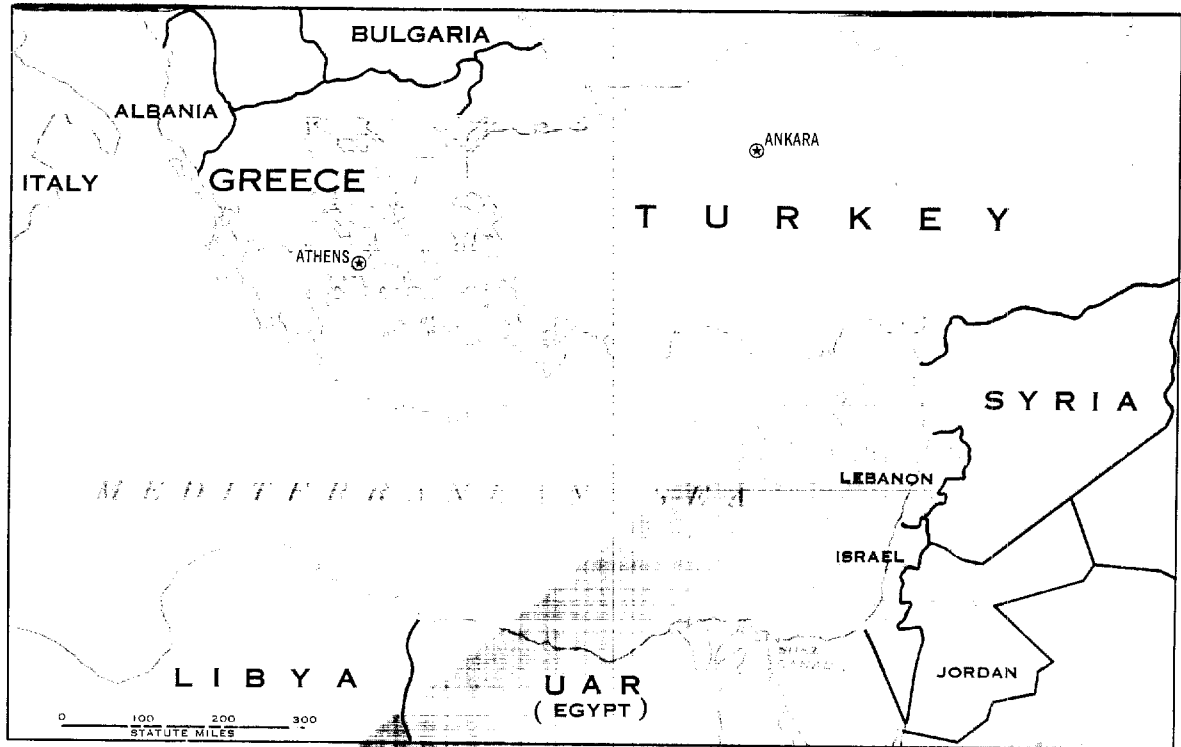


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Cyprus: New trouble may develop as efforts get under way to carry out troop withdrawals and to "normalize" relations between the Greek and Turkish communities.

The troop withdrawal problem involves a difference in interpretation of key provisions of the agreement of 3 December which ended the immediate threat of Turkish military intervention on Cyprus. Athens is withdrawing the unauthorized Greek troops from the island, but is hedging on the question of Greek officers and noncommissioned officers assigned to the Greek Cypriot National Guard.

The Turks insist that all Greek military personnel in excess of the Greek contingent authorized by the 1960 London-Zurich agreements must leave the island. The problem is complicated because estimates vary widely on the number of Greeks serving with the National Guard and on the Turkish military personnel integrated into the Turkish Cypriot "fighters" organizations.

Cypriot President Makarios has pushed for the withdrawal of all non-Cypriot troops, except for the UN force, including the Greek officers with the guard and the legal Greek and Turkish contingents.

On Cyprus, Makarios' normalization program appears to be getting off to a slow start. The Greek Cypriots have offered to withdraw elements of the National Guard from advance positions and to abandon several forward military posts if the Turkish Cypriots agree to abandon their "first line" of defense in the southern city of Larnaca. This has been a particular sore point for the Greeks. These moves would then lead to a broader normalization program to include Nicosia and the northern Turkish enclave of Kokkina.

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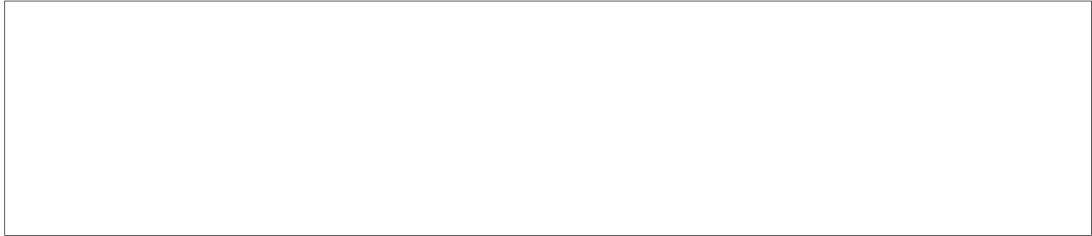
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The initial Turkish Cypriot reaction was negative, but the real decision is up to Ankara. If this limited normalization effort fails, the US Embassy in Nicosia believes a broader UN-sponsored pacification program would appear to have little chance. [redacted] 3.5(c)

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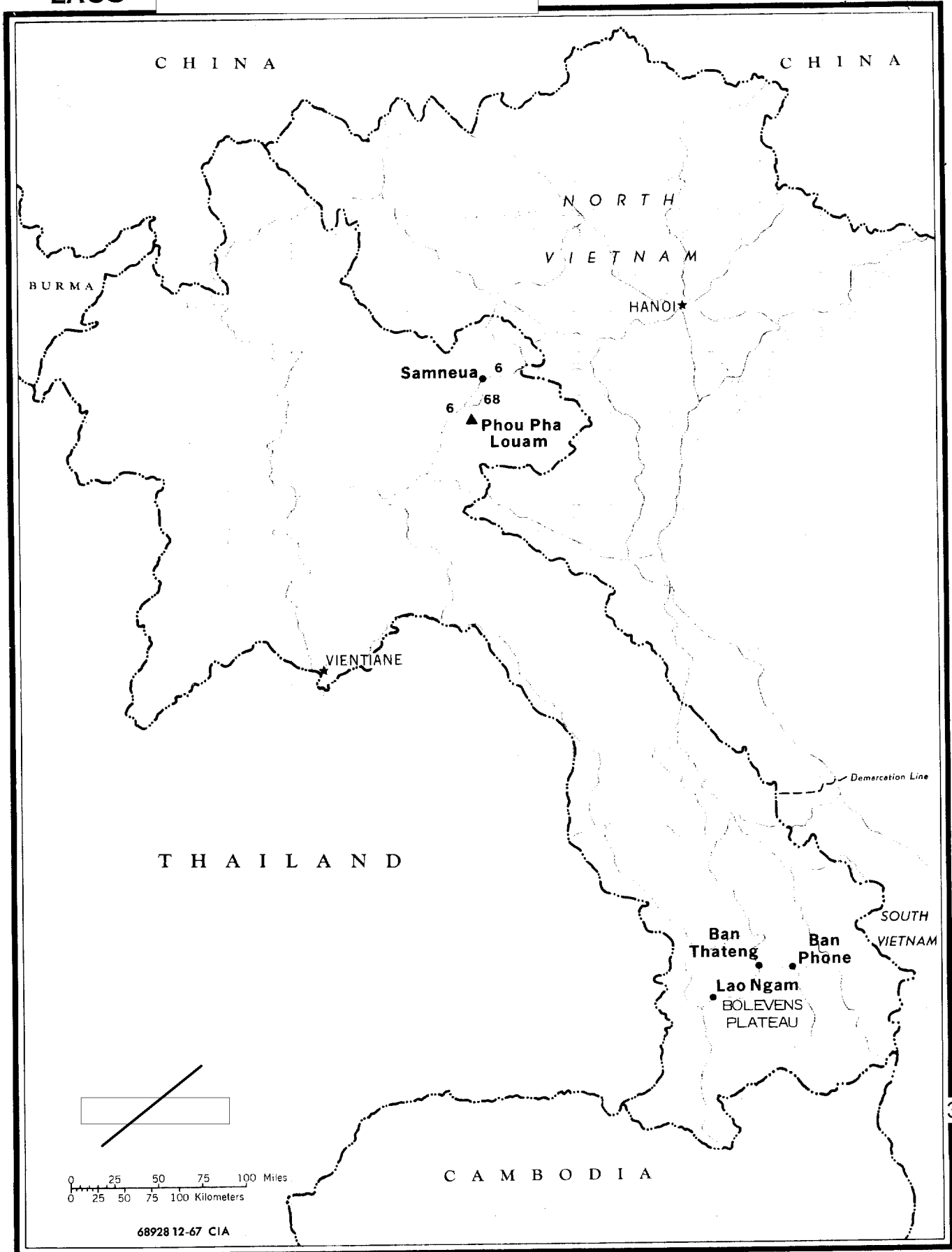
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LAOS



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Laos: [The Communists have launched dry season offensives in widely separated areas of Laos.]

[The most significant attack occurred on 11 December at Lao Ngam in the southern panhandle, where an estimated two battalions of Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese troops overran the outer defensive positions and the base area of a three-battalion government force. According to preliminary reports, most of the base facilities were destroyed and the defenders suffered heavy casualties.

[] government forces recaptured the area yesterday, and fighting appears to have subsided for the present.] 3.3(h)(2)

[The attack at Lao Ngam is the first in the Bolovens Plateau area since friendly troops were driven out of Ban Phone and Ban Thateng last July. The action appears to be part of a campaign to counter government encroachments into the infiltration corridor. Permanent Communist occupation of the Lao Ngam area would significantly weaken the government's hold on the plateau and its over-all position in south Laos.]

[In the north, the enemy succeeded earlier this month in overrunning a guerrilla base at Phou Pha Louam, a staging area for friendly operations against Routes 6 and 68. Such bases have frequently changed hands during past offensives, and it is unlikely that the Communists can hold any of them for long, since improved weather during the current dry season will permit more timely air support of government troops.]

[There have been reports of substantial Communist supply movements in recent weeks, however, and it is possible that the Communists are planning a more sustained offensive effort in north Laos this season.]

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Communist China: The grain harvest has probably been good this year, but there are serious problems in collection and distribution of food.

According to Hsieh Fu-chih, a high official in the Cultural Revolution, 1967 grain output was nine to 10.5 million tons over 1966 and "better" than 1957, the year before the disastrous Great Leap Forward. Chou En-lai has recently claimed that 1967 grain production exceeded 1966 by five to six percent.

It is probable that the harvest in 1967 was larger than in 1966, given the generally favorable weather conditions this year. The most serious current problem, however, is not the size of the harvest, but government collection and transport of grain.

Disruptions in the transport system, especially the railroads, are again on the increase following a period of comparative calm. In addition, the weakening of the control apparatus, virtually dismantled in some localities, and the persistent unsettled conditions throughout the countryside have probably made it possible for peasants in many areas to keep more than normal amounts of grain for themselves. In fact, it appears very unlikely that the government will succeed in securing the share of grain it would normally have obtained.

This year Peking is again buying grain from abroad. The Chinese have just concluded a contract to purchase two million tons of wheat from Canada for delivery next year. Negotiations are also under way with France and probably will soon begin with Australia. [REDACTED]

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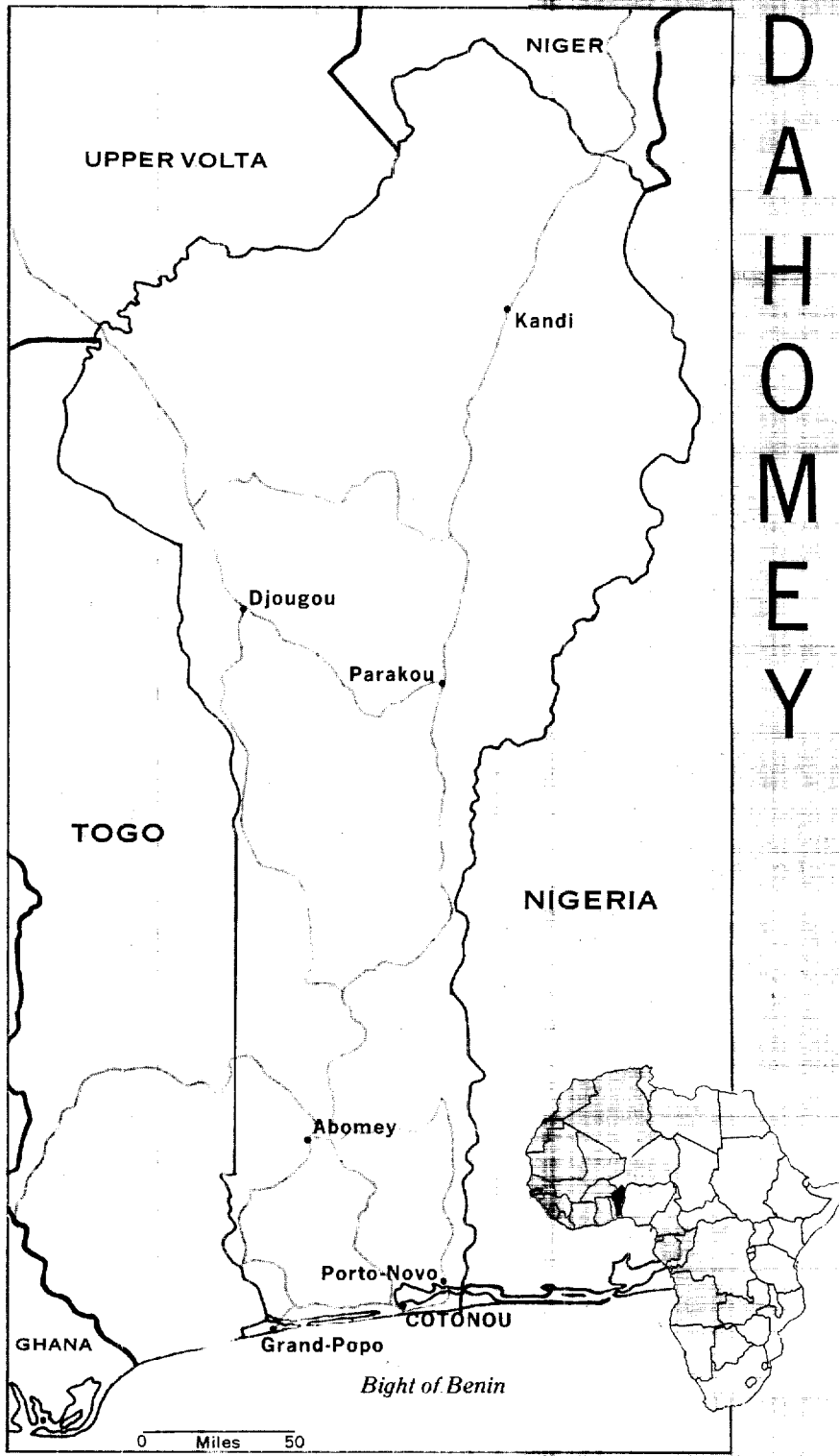
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Dahomey: [President Soglo has precipitated a major internal crisis within the shaky regime.]

[By a decree on 11 December General Soglo arrogated to himself direct control of the gendarmerie and the power to make military appointments. Both powers previously were held by the politically important army chief of staff, Colonel Alley. [redacted]

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[This latest flare-up coincides with a partially effective general strike that began on 11 December. Fifteen labor leaders have been arrested. Other union leaders have vowed to continue the strike until the jailed leaders are released and the ban on labor activity is lifted. The government, despite the current crisis, seems determined to crush the strike, by force if necessary. The unions are protesting a 25 percent "solidarity tax" and other austerity measures levied more than a year ago.]

[The government crisis has already begun to widen a regional split among army officers, and several civilian cabinet members appear ready to resign if Soglo does not rescind his decree. [redacted]

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