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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

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# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*



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\*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Chief of State Thieu claims that he has not yet decided whether to be a candidate for president.

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Thieu professed that his abiding interest was in getting the South Vietnamese military establishment on a professional footing, and that he would continue in political office only if it were forced on him. He also said, however, that despite the fact that he has made no attempt to garner political support, people from all major political groups have been urging him to seek the presidency.

Thieu took some pains to review his qualifications for the office and suggested that he might be the best person available to reconcile differences between military and political elements. He also disparaged the qualifications and electoral chances of other possible candidates, although he did not mention Premier Ky.

Thieu claimed that he will not make a firm decision until the new constitution is promulgated.

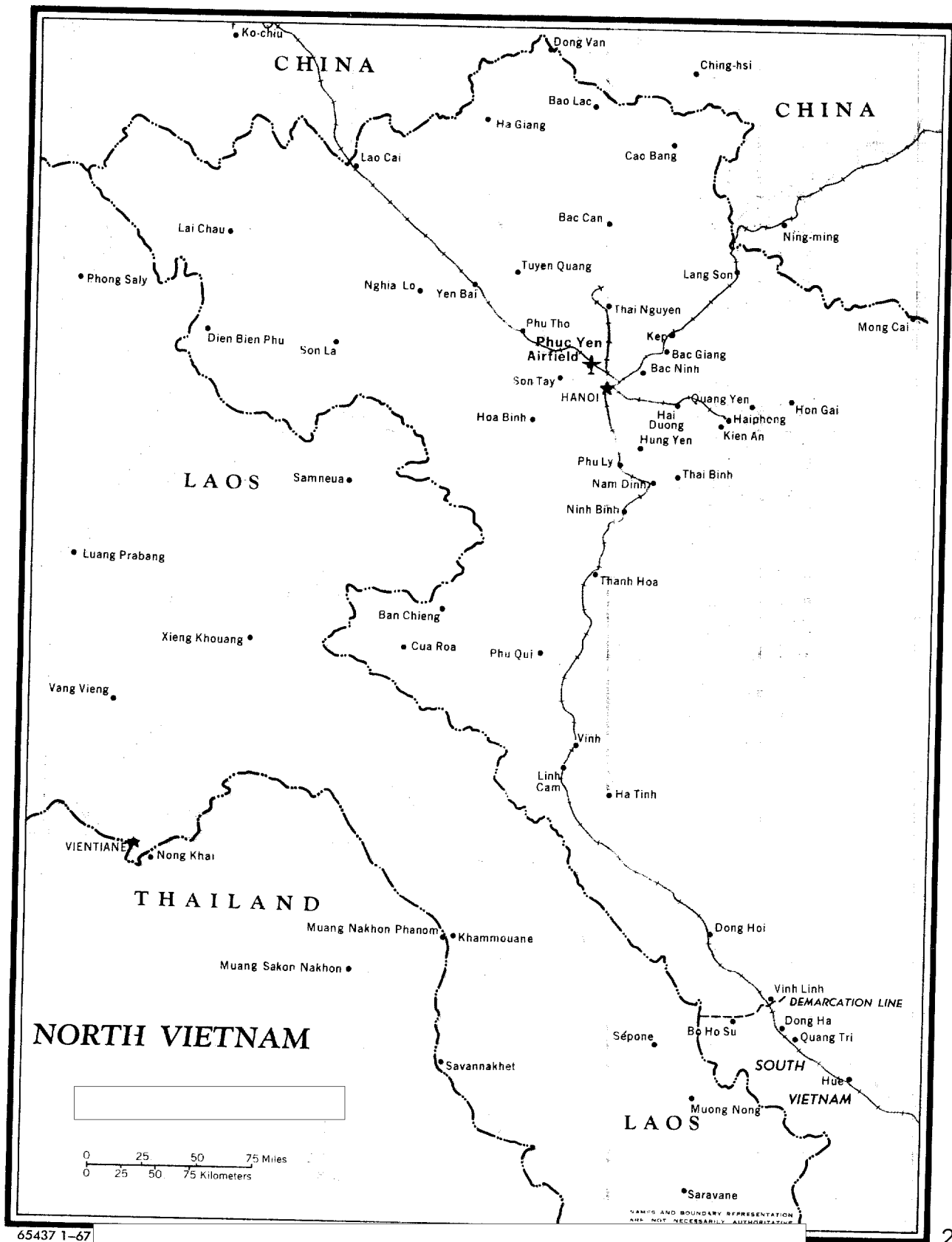
The Constituent Assembly is scheduled to begin debate today on the draft constitution. Assembly and Directorate representatives are continuing to meet in an effort to amend certain articles in the draft which the government opposes. Although no substantial progress has been made on key points of contention, there are reports that the assembly delegation is proving amenable to at least some of the changes suggested by the Directorate.

Premier Ky arrived in Canberra today to begin an eight-day tour of major cities in Australia and New Zealand. Leftist demonstrations are expected in both countries but are likely to be especially troublesome in Australia. Elaborate security precautions are being taken to forestall possible violence.

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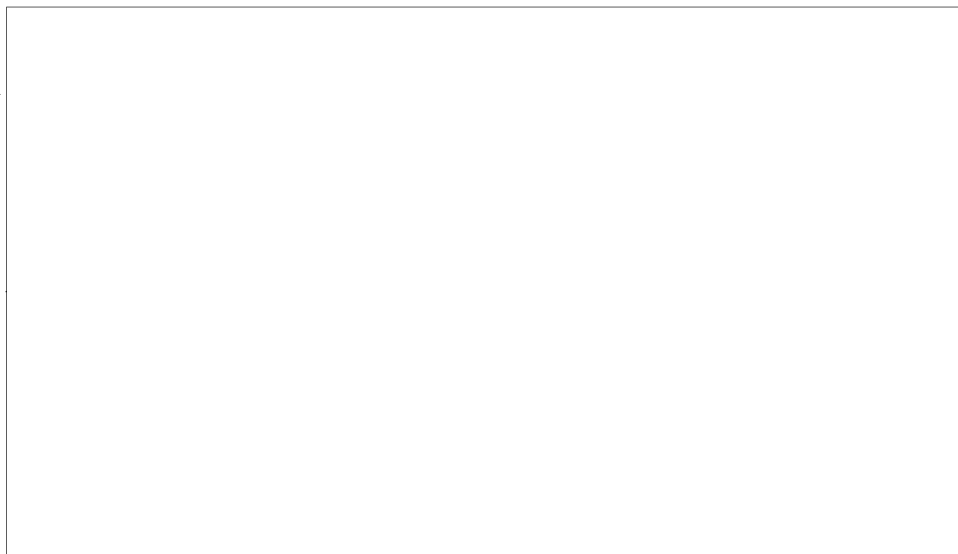
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18 Jan 67 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN Map

Military Situation in South Vietnam: No significant fighting has been reported in the past 24 hours.

Allied forces are continuing to sweep the Iron Triangle area in Operation CEDAR FALLS, but the enemy is still avoiding large-scale engagement. The number of Communist casualties continues to rise, however, as a result of minor skirmishes and US air strikes and now stands at 495 killed and 78 captured. US losses thus far are 52 killed and 260 wounded.  
(Map)



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Communist China: Regional opposition to Mao may be growing.

In recent days fourteen regional radio stations have imposed a blackout on local news and, except for weather reports, are only rebroadcasting programs originated by Peking. Local news has not been broadcast in Nanking, apparently a stronghold of anti-Mao forces, since about 7 January. The blackout spread to other cities after Peking made a strong appeal--rebroadcast repeatedly by nearly all regional stations on 12 and 13 January--to rally behind Mao against his opponents. The blackout on local reporting suggests that these cities, like Nanking, are experiencing serious disturbances.

The 12-13 January appeal from Peking was repeated in even stronger terms in a Red Flag article released on 15 January, which said that Mao's opponents were powerful, dangerous, and "hysterical," and that the "most fundamental" task ahead was to "wrest power" from them.

The Red Flag article declared that the army is "infinitely loyal" to Mao--a hollow assertion in view of the mounting evidence that Mao mistrusts many top military leaders. The latest military man to come under Red Guard poster attack is Tang Ping-chu, editor of the Liberation Army Journal and a member of the army's Cultural Revolution (purge) Group announced last week.

The conflict apparently continues in Shanghai which has been in the throes of a political struggle for weeks. On 17 January, Shanghai radio broadcast a cryptic announcement that "rebel" forces had just seized the city's radio and television stations. It is not clear to whom these "rebels" are responsive.

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The situation is also unclear in Canton. On 16 January, Canton radio broadcast an "urgent notice", attributed to 28 "rebel" organizations, making routine professions of loyalty to Mao and his policies and denouncing unnamed bourgeois reactionaries in the local party apparatus. The notice, however, lacked the vitriolic tone of announcements made in cities where genuinely pro-Mao "rebels" appear to have taken over propaganda media, and may have been issued by local party forces posing as pro-Mao "rebels." The Canton notice denied "curious rumors" that leading figures of the Cultural Revolution Group in Peking were coming to Canton. Last weekend, travelers from Canton to Hong Kong reported that the city was plastered with posters stating that Madame Mao was coming to Canton to preside over a rally to denounce Tao Chu.

These rumors may reflect plans to attack Tao in his own political stronghold where he ruled for years as party boss in the Central-South Region. Tao ranked fourth in the new hierarchy until he was denounced, virtually without warning, by Madame Mao and other leaders around the turn of the year. Tao last appeared in public on 29 December and may have fled to Canton.

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**Cambodia:** The government of Prime Minister Lon Nol is taking an increasingly active role in the day to day conduct of affairs.

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Lon Nol has made important decisions in recent weeks without first clearing them with Chief of State Sihanouk. Such action by a Cambodian prime minister is virtually without precedent during the past several years.

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[redacted] Sihanouk, who has heretofore made decisions on even the most trivial foreign policy matters, was particularly disturbed that the Lon Nol government issued a communiqué on an alleged US attack against the Cambodian village of Bathu in late December without first consulting him. He also characterized the tone of the communiqué as too mild and excessively "diplomatic."

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The government's desire to assume greater responsibility in part reflects the personalities and broad experience of Lon Nol and his cabinet ministers. It may also be symptomatic of a reluctance on the part of the Phnom Penh elite to be bound by Sihanouk's leftist policies--with which they have long been unsympathetic--and to put up with the excesses of Sihanouk's autocratic rule.

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Sihanouk is now in France on an oft-postponed rest cure. His abrupt departure on 6 January has prompted rumors in Phnom Penh that he may have left under duress, but these appear to be without foundation. Before his departure, Sihanouk indicated that the Lon Nol government would be held responsible for solving long-standing domestic problems. In the past, Sihanouk usually took such a line when he was considering a change in personnel. Thus, a shuffle in government posts might occur following his return.

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West Germany - France: Kiesinger's talks with De Gaulle last week restored a positive tone to Franco-German relations, but only touched on major political differences.

In Bonn's view, the most significant immediate accomplishment was the French promise to put in a good word for Germany with East European countries with which Bonn is trying to establish diplomatic relations. France also agreed to try to discourage the Afro-Asian countries from using this German initiative as an excuse to recognize East Germany.

The agreement reached to form a joint working group to explore further cooperation in industrial, scientific, cultural, and military fields is potentially important. Increased military cooperation, however, probably will be limited by German-American arms arrangements and by Bonn's financial problems.

Both the Germans and the French acknowledge differences on key political problems--such as British entry into the EEC, the future of NATO, and relations with the US. Despite the improved atmosphere, the "harmonization" of Franco-German foreign policies envisioned in the 1963 friendship treaty remains a distant goal.

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France-UK: Paris is trying to justify its opposition to Britain's joining the EEC by playing up the problems involved.

Maurice Schumann, prominent parliamentary spokesman for the Gaullist line, has cited agricultural policy as a major problem which Britain must resolve before entering. He argued that the British would have difficulty in accepting the EEC's agricultural policy unless they devalued sterling. The UK could avoid this problem, he observed, by agreeing to associate with the EEC in the industrial field only.

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The French reference to a positive-sounding alternative, such as a treaty of association, indicates Paris' concern over the possible consequences of another "political" veto of Britain's bid.

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**\*Chile:** The Senate yesterday denied President Eduardo Frei permission to leave the country to visit the US in February.

The vote, unprecedented in Chilean history, saw the conservative National Party (PN) and the centrist Radical Party join the Communist-Socialist Popular Action Front (FRAP) to defeat the government. Frei's Christian Democratic Party could muster support only from a few independents. The opposition called the trip "injurious to national dignity," with the PN adding that the invitation was "unacceptable interference in Chilean internal policies."

The Senate vote provoked a mass cabinet resignation in protest at the "affront" to the executive, but Frei refused to accept the resignations. Frei is certain to view the Senate's action as a grave insult.

The vote will prevent Frei from visiting the US, unless he should decide to resubmit the request. It is not clear at this point if Frei is willing to involve himself in a donnybrook with Congress that could further embarrass his administration.

The vote demonstrates the extent of antigovernment sentiment in the Senate. Frei will continue to face harassment as long as Socialist Salvador Allende, the pro-Castro leader of FRAP, is Senate president.

As a precaution, all troops in Santiago have been ordered to report to their units. A pro-Frei demonstration has taken place in the capital. [REDACTED]

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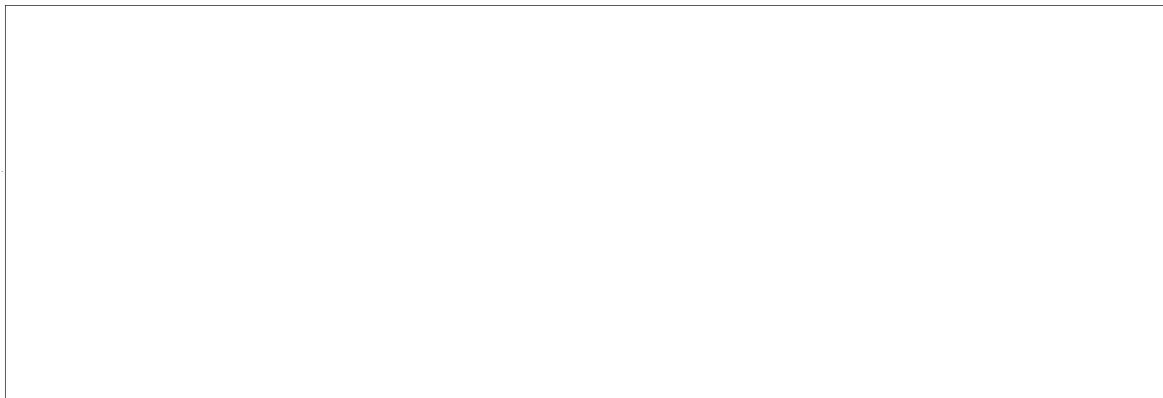
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Israel-Syria-Jordan: The Israeli-Syrian border has been quiet since each side accepted U Thant's proposal for an emergency meeting of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission. Although the chief of the UN Truce Team is trying to arrange such a meeting, Israeli Premier Eshkol repeated his government's earlier threat to take "deterrent" action if the UN and "the world powers" do not restrain Damascus. A shooting incident yesterday on the Israeli-Jordanian border does not appear to be related to the current Israeli-Syrian confrontation, but will add to tension in the area. 

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Communist China: Foreign Minister Chen Yi is apparently planning to visit several African countries next month including Tanzania, Congo (Brazzaville), Guinea, Mali and Egypt. The Mali Government has been informed that Chen will discuss new Chinese aid to that country. No senior Chinese leader has visited Africa since Chen's trip in September 1965. Peking probably hopes to recoup its recent losses in Africa and to allay African concern over the cultural revolution. 

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Indonesia: Foreign Minister Malik carried the anti-Sukarno campaign a step further yesterday by publicly asking the President to resign. Malik's plea is unlikely to sway Sukarno, who has shown no disposition to make his opponent's job easier by voluntarily stepping down. The regime's recent decision to depose Sukarno, rather than merely to nullify his power, still appears to involve no specific plan or timetable. General Suharto continues to insist that only legal means be used to remove the President. [REDACTED]

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