

Approved For Release

25X1

2008/11/03 :

CIA-RDP85T00875R001000090

Dec

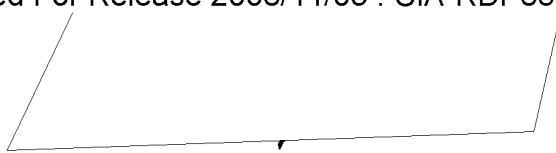
Approved For Release

2008/11/03 :

CIA-RDP85T00875R001000090

completed

Top Secret



25X1



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Developments in Indochina

State Dept. review completed

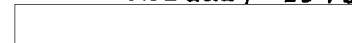
Top Secret

25X1



127 25X1

21 February 1973



Page Denied



25X1

DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA

(Information as of 1500)

Page

SOUTH VIETNAM

1

Foreign Minister Lam hopes to talk with the North Vietnamese in Paris next week about establishing mail service and permitting family visits. The government finally moved a convoy over Route 14 to Kontum City. A new COSVN directive spells out political talks for Communist cadre in the coming months. The government is reluctant to allow refugees to return to lands now under Communist control.

LAOS

5

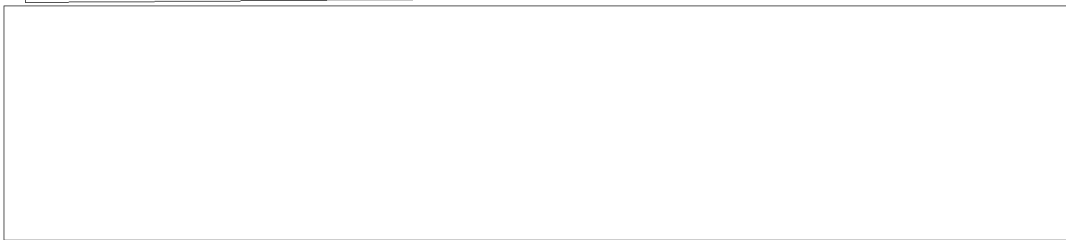
The cease-fire goes into effect on 21 February and within the next month the country should have a new provisional government. There is no major fighting on the eve of the cease-fire.

CAMBODIA

7

The government intends to send a former defense minister to Paris to monitor the international conference. The insurgents are keeping up the pressure against several key highways.

25X1



25X1



25X1

25X1

SOUTH VIETNAM

Before departing from Saigon on 20 February, South Vietnamese Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam told Ambassador Bunker that he hopes to open talks with the North Vietnamese while in Paris for next week's international conference. Lam said he would broach the subject of establishing mail service between the North and South and of permitting family visits. The Saigon press is also carrying reports that Lam will meet with Viet Cong Foreign Minister Binh, allegedly to try to sell her on a proposal to make Singapore or Djakarta the site of the political talks that are to be held between the two South Vietnamese rivals under the Paris agreement.

25X1

The War

A South Vietnamese military convoy of 68 trucks carrying ammunition, diesel fuel, and gasoline reached Kontum City over Route 14 late on 20 February, losing only four trucks en route. Province officials are claiming the road is now under government control, with only isolated sections being contested. Elsewhere in the country, no significant military action has been reported.

25X1

A New Directive From COSVN

The Viet Cong's Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) reportedly has issued a new directive that stresses the importance of political tasks over military activities in the cease-fire period.

25X1

post - cease-fire "Directive 2" issued in late January relegates military forces to a secondary and defensive role in support of the coming "political struggle." The document also indicates that the Communists intend to participate in national elections in accordance with the cease-fire agreement.

25X1

21 February 1973

25X1

25X1

[REDACTED]

A primary task in the initial stage of the cease-fire period is, according to the directive, to strengthen the communist grassroots political position. As outlined in the document, the steps to accomplish this are standard communist tactics. Cadre are to concentrate on rebuilding their infrastructure, step up proselyting efforts against government troops and officials, conduct extensive propaganda campaigns to proclaim the Communist "victory," and motivate the people to participate in mass rallies against the Saigon government. Initially, cadre are to concentrate their efforts in areas the Communists control, then spread out to the "belt areas" that surround the major population centers where neither side has firm control, and "eventually" move into the cities themselves. With the progression of political operations from the rural to the urban areas, the Viet Cong are to increase their emphasis on the use of legally documented clandestine cadre. COSVN apparently envisages, in the early stages at least, a large undercover network operating in the cities, while a more exposed group of cadre perform their varied tasks in the countryside.

25X1

The directive [REDACTED] does not rule out military action. In fact, it specifically warns cadre not to rely solely on "political struggles" to accomplish their tasks. Armed forces should be employed "in local actions to support the mass movement when necessary" and "to stop enemy provocations." To this extent special attention will be given to local guerrilla forces "both in their number and their effectiveness." COSVN feels that because these units are closer to the people, they will bear the brunt of the responsibility for eliminating "tyrants" that try to disrupt the "mass movement."

The new directive is similar to information previously reported [REDACTED]

25X1

[REDACTED] It is, however, one of the more comprehensive and complete accounts at the COSVN level of plans and tactics being passed to cadre that has yet been obtained. [REDACTED]

25X1

25X1

21 February 1973

25X1

Refugees--A Potential Dilemma

Since last April, over 1.5 million people throughout the country have left their homes as a result of fighting in their area. Most of these refugees fled from the heavy combat during the enemy's spring offensive last year, but an estimated 238,000 more have been forced to flee their homes since the surge in fighting that accompanied the cease-fire. Of the 1.5 million, possibly as many as 650,000 either returned to their homes after the fighting in their areas subsided, or found temporary shelter with friends and relatives. Another 627,000, most of whom were displaced by the spring offensive, are still living in government-supported camps. To date, there are no reliable figures to show how many of the 238,000 new refugees have entered the camps since the cease-fire began. Tentative assessments by the South Vietnamese Ministry of Social Welfare indicate that of the estimated 238,000, most will probably return home soon after the fighting has lessened.

With a few exceptions, reports over the past months have shown that the government has gone to considerable effort and expense to house and feed the refugees. So far, there have been few instances of refugees trying to leave the camps, but as news of the cease-fire has spread, there are reports that a growing number are beginning to express an intention to return home.

While the government obviously would like to be rid of the need to support large numbers of refugees, it is understandably reluctant to let people return to some homelands that have come under at least partial influence of the Communists. Recent instructions from Saigon have ordered camp officials to restrain anyone who tries to leave the camps to return to areas where the government has not re-established control.

21 February 1973

The Communists, clearly aware of the refugees as a potential source of additional population in areas they influence or control, have maintained a strong propaganda program aimed at trying to encourage the people to leave the government camps. Such efforts so far have apparently met with only limited success.

25X1

21 February 1973

25X1

LAOS

The military aspects of the comprehensive peace agreement signed on 20 February between the government and the Lao Communists call for a bombing halt and an in-place cease-fire effective midnight Washington time on 21 February, the withdrawal of all "foreign troops" within 60 days of the formation of a new provisional coalition government, and an exchange of prisoners "regardless of nationality." The implementation of these measures will be supervised by the International Control Commission--using the 1962 Geneva Accords as terms of reference--and by a mixed commission made up of government and Lao Communist representatives.

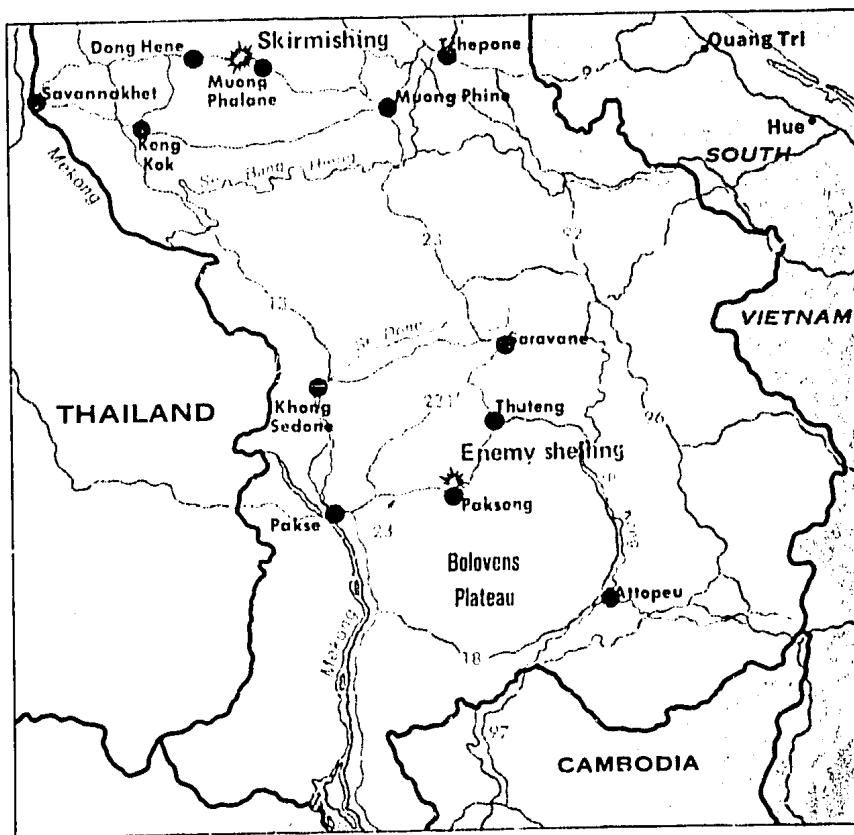
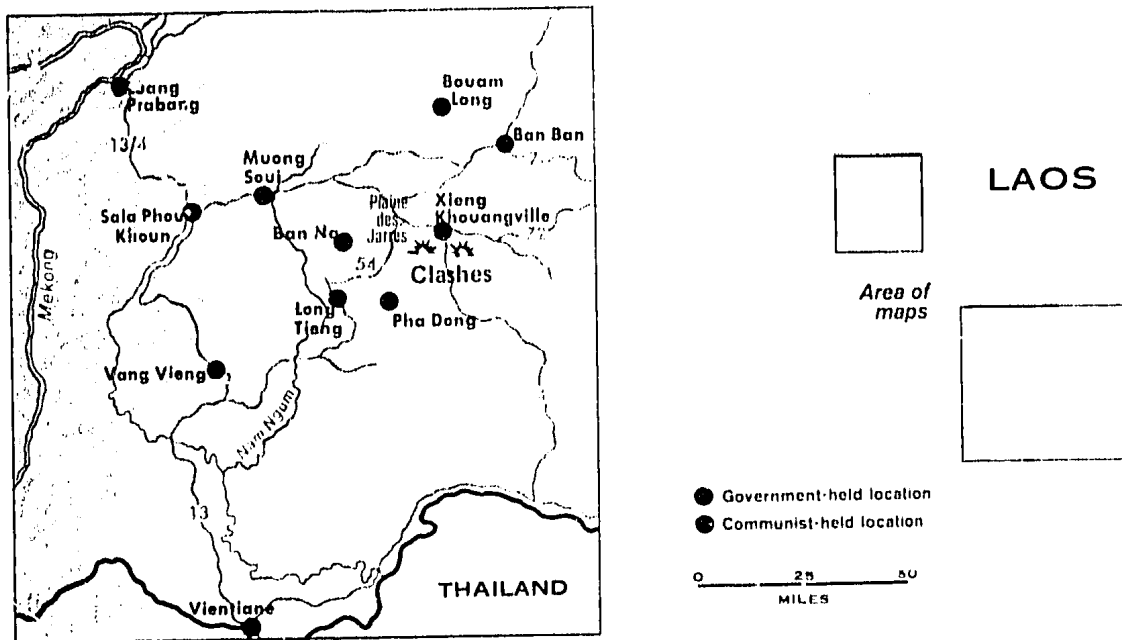
On the political side, the agreement provides for the formation of a provisional government within 30 days--by 23 March--to be composed of an equal number of ministers from each side plus two others mutually agreed upon. There apparently will be no deputy prime ministers in the new government. A political consultative council, with equal representation from the two sides, will advise the new government and will assist in establishing procedures for the election of a new National Assembly. No specific date for the new elections was mentioned in the agreement.

The comprehensive nature of the agreement came as a surprise to Souvanna's cabinet. Lao Communist leader Souphanouvong on Sunday proposed a relatively simple interim cease-fire arrangement which would have allowed Souvanna more time to overcome rightist objections to the terms of a political settlement reached during private sessions. The rightists were particularly opposed to an even split of cabinet portfolios with the Communists. In initialing the more comprehensive settlement, Souvanna presented a fait accompli to the rightists.

25X1

21 February 1973

25X1



25X1

554166 2-73 CIA

25X1



The Military Situation

Communist units in the central panhandle on 20 February continued to skirmish with elements of an eight-battalion irregular force just west of Muong Phalane. No positions changed hands, and neither side seemed ready to mount any large-scale attacks.

To the south, enemy gunners on the Bolovens Plateau shelled irregular positions around Paksong, but government troops succeeded in clearing the last small enemy unit from the southern part of the town.



25X1

In north Laos, Communist units near the Plaine des Jarres on 20 February engaged elements of a 700-man irregular force on a ridge overlooking Route 4 near Xieng Khouangville--but most of the irregulars held their ground. Southwest of the Plaine, elements of the North Vietnamese 174th Infantry Regiment have been informed of the impending cease-fire and have been warned to be prepared to counter last-minute government efforts to take additional territory.

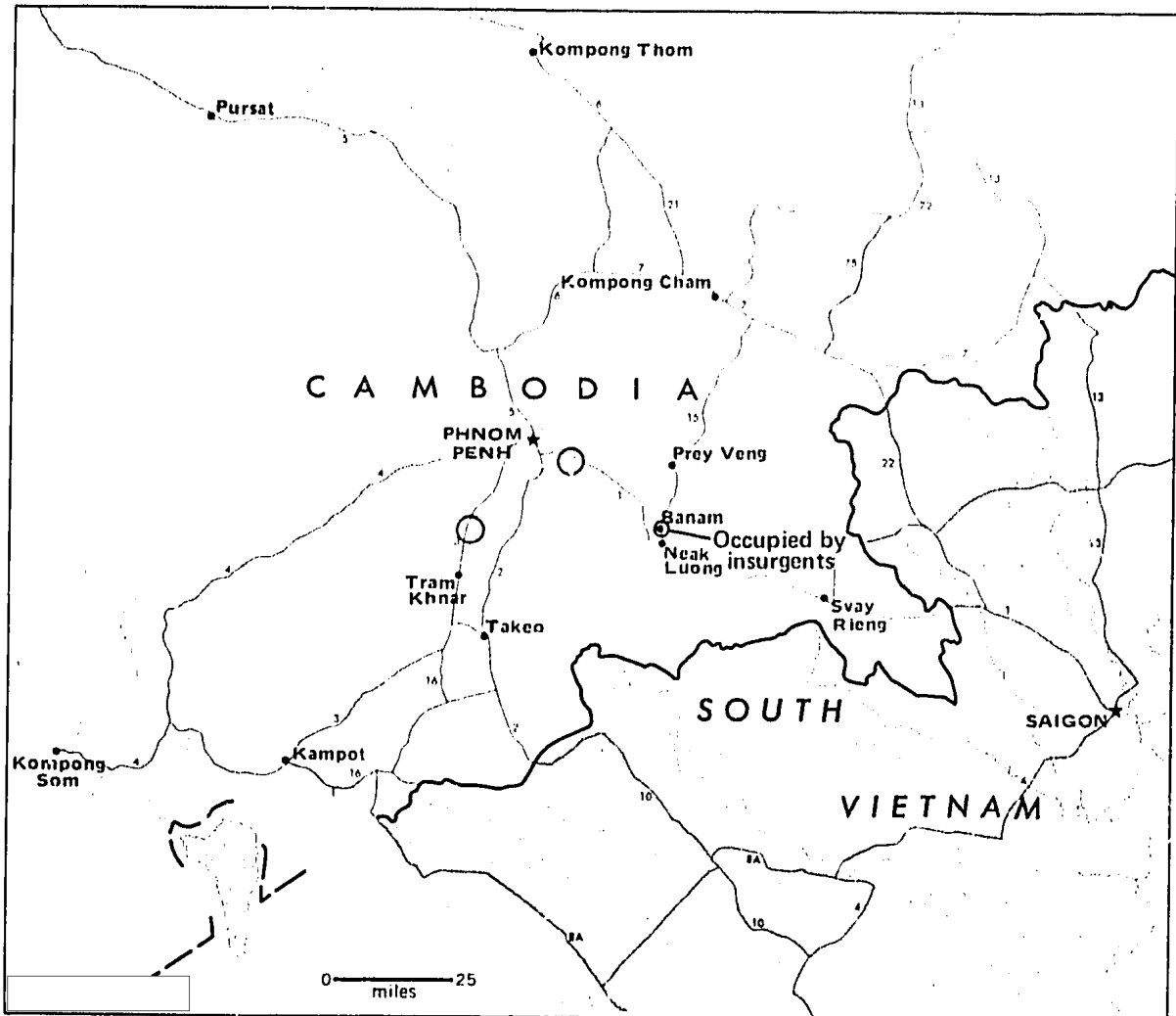


25X1

21 February 1973



25X1



25X1

554167 2-73 CIA

○ Insurgent interdiction

25X1

CAMBODIA

The Lon Nol government plans to send former defense minister Major General Sak Sutsakhan as an "unofficial observer" to the Paris Conference on Vietnam, according to the US Embassy in Phnom Penh. Sutsakhan will lobby for the reactivation of the International Control Commission (ICC) in Cambodia. As a first step toward this goal, he will circulate an official government memorandum which argues that the ICC's revival is essential to the maintenance of those portions of the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Accords that pertain to Cambodia. The memorandum will be passed only to the delegations in Paris of states with which Phnom Penh has diplomatic relations. China, North Vietnam, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam will not be contacted.

The Military Situation

25X1

Khmer insurgent forces east of the Mekong River are continuing to thwart government attempts to re-open Route 15. Two Cambodian battalions that were moving south along the Mekong toward the village of Banam were halted by insurgents on 20 February. Other government forces from Neak Luong are still stalled just south of Banam. The inept officer in charge of these forces apparently is largely responsible for the government's poor showing in this sector. Although the Cambodian Army chief of staff has tried to have the officer removed, President Lon Nol has insisted that he remain on duty until Route 15 is cleared.

West of the Mekong, government forces have finally made some progress clearing Route 1 between Phnom Penh and the river. At last report, only about two miles of the highway were still under insurgent control. Elsewhere, insurgent attacks on 20 February against several government positions on Route 3 temporarily closed a section of that highway about 25 miles south of Phnom Penh.

25X1

21 February 1973

25X1

Page Denied

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied