

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 6 January 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
6 JANUARY 1967

1. North Vietnam

A Hanoi broadcast today accused "some Western radios and newspapers" of releasing "tendentious commentaries" on Harrison Salisbury's account of his interview with Pham Van Dong. The radio went on to say that it was authorized to state that Pham Van Dong "actually told Mr. Salisbury that the four-point stand of the North Vietnamese constitutes the basis for a settlement."

This formulation is the standard one used by the Vietnamese all along. Its emphasis here seems intended to discount the impression that Pham Van Dong's remarks signaled a softening in Hanoi's terms. By attributing the "tendentious" commentaries to unnamed sources, Hanoi avoided casting aspersions upon Salisbury himself.

2. Laos

Communist troops, including substantial numbers of North Vietnamese, struck in battalion strength at a forward government base in northern Laos this morning. At last report, the Na Khang base was still in friendly hands, but the air strip was lost to the enemy. More on the military situation in Laos is at Annex.

3. West Germany

Willy Brandt is now comfortably settled in his new saddle and the Foreign Ministry has begun a cautious series of moves aimed at the establishment of diplomatic relations with Eastern European governments.

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4. Dominican Republic

Internal squabbling has flared up again in Juan Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party as he continues his peaceful sojourn in Western Europe. Several prominent former party officers are now defying the present radical party leadership by accepting jobs with the Balaguer government. One result may well be the early formation of a rival party by the moderates now leaving Bosch's party.

Disarray is also growing among the Communist and pro-Communist parties. There were three such parties during the 1965 revolution. Now there are five.

5. Macao

The beleaguered Portuguese governor has capitulated to still more Communist demands. These are supposed to be the "final" ones, but that remains to be seen.

6. Israel

Tel Aviv has publicly warned Syria against further "encroachments" along the border. So far, there have been no casualties in this area, though small fire fights have become almost a daily affair.

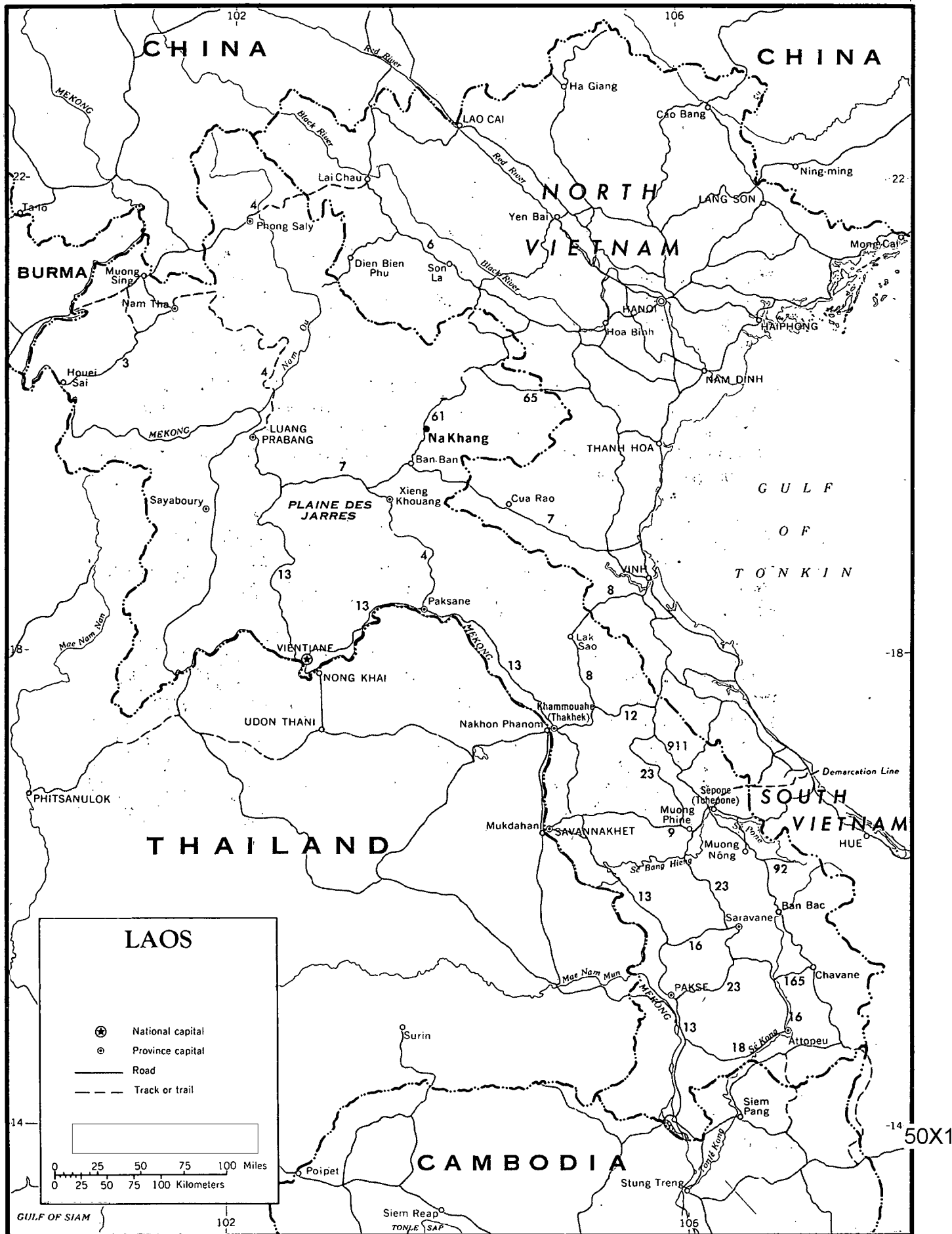


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ANNEX

The War in Laos

The attack on Na Khang today signals another enemy effort to clear the government's guerrillas from the northern part of the country. This is now an annual effort timed with the end of the rainy season. Like most of the fighting in Laos, however, the results are rarely conclusive.

At about this time last year, for instance, this same base came under fire--and was eventually overrun. It was retaken, however, after only a few weeks. We doubt that the Communists could hold on much longer this time.

All the same, other Communist strikes are likely to take place in the north at any time. Attacks have already been reported north of Na Khang; several government positions were overrun there earlier this week.

To the south in the Laos panhandle, military movements so far this season have been light. Our roadwatch teams report considerably fewer trucks going south than last year at this time. The reasons for this are not altogether clear, but an unusually long rainy season is probably a factor. In any case, the amount of work being done on the roads indicates that they will shortly be in heavy use again--perhaps above the level of 1966.

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