



*The President's Daily Brief*

27 February 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

27 February 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The North Vietnamese continue to take soundings on allied intentions at the Paris peace talks. (Page 1)

Enemy plans to launch a new phase of the "winter-spring" campaign in South Vietnam are discussed on Page 2.

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The military situation in Laos, [Redacted] and plans for a world-wide anti-US day are noted on Page 6.

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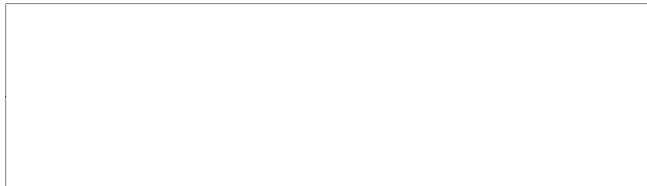
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VIETNAM

Le Duc Tho's remarks at a Paris tea party, as provided the US delegation by Chicago newsman Milton Freudenheim, suggest that Tho is starting to play his hand by lobbying through the press for a high-level replacement for Ambassador Lodge. According to Freudenheim, Tho said that he and Xuan Thuy "may have to go home" if Lodge is not replaced, but that if Washington sends a replacement and otherwise shows that it is "serious," then he and Thuy would return to the conference table.

*Tho's comments seem designed to reinforce Soviet Counselor Oberemko's assertion on the 17th to deputy chief of mission Robert Blake that Tho was staying on in Paris in hopes that "sincere" talks could be started.*



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*We also note the Saigon delegation's claims that the other side has indirectly approached it regarding allied intentions in Paris. These claims, if they prove out, indicate that the Communist probing effort in Paris is fairly broad and comprehensive. Taken together, all the feelers strengthen our belief that Tho has more in mind than just getting a replacement for Lodge. They offer no solid clues of how much he ultimately hopes to accomplish or how he plans to move, however.*

Cyrus Eaton, meanwhile, was to have met with Tho last night. We have not heard yet what transpired.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

A new phase of the Communists' "winter-spring" campaign seems imminent. Documents and intercepts show that in III Corps a period of greater activity is to begin soon and run through 7 March. In the northern provinces, too, Communist units have radioed instructions for their subordinates to get set for action. In the case of Quang Nam Province, the "accelerated phase of activity" is to commence on the night of 1-2 March and is to be followed by a "continuous and uniform attack for five to seven days."

*The increase in enemy shellings in the Mekong Delta on the night of 25-26 February may actually have marked the beginning of the new phase. Field commanders are allowed some leeway in adjusting their timetables to local circumstances.*

*The Communists probably feel themselves under considerable pressure to make some show of strength at a time when South Vietnamese optimism is growing. We would expect them, however, generally to restrict themselves to shellings, limited ground actions, and urban terrorism.*

*In recent months, the Communists have had difficulty in bringing off "high points" of this kind.*



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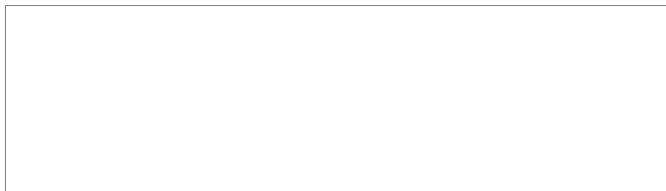
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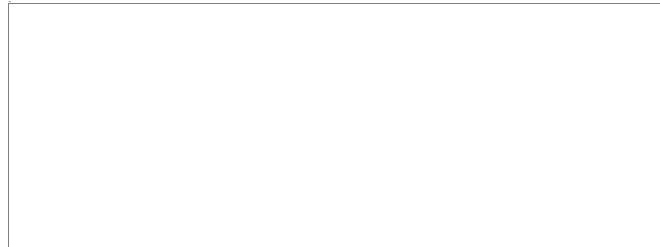
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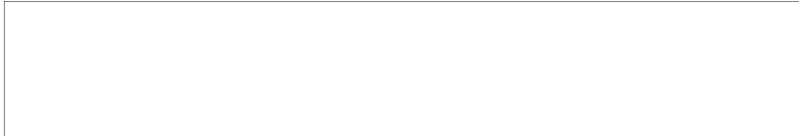
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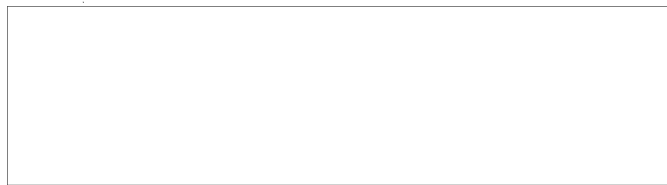
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**PANAMA**



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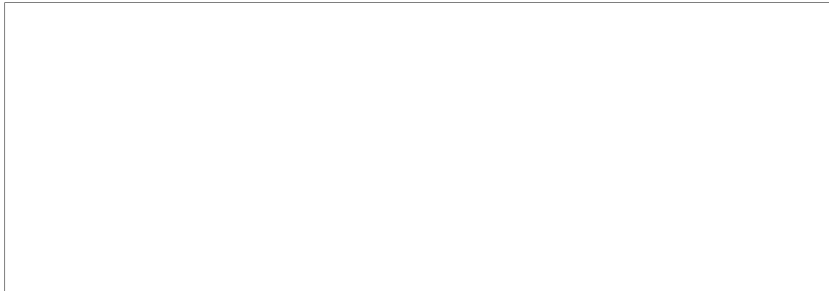
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NORTH VIETNAM - LAOS



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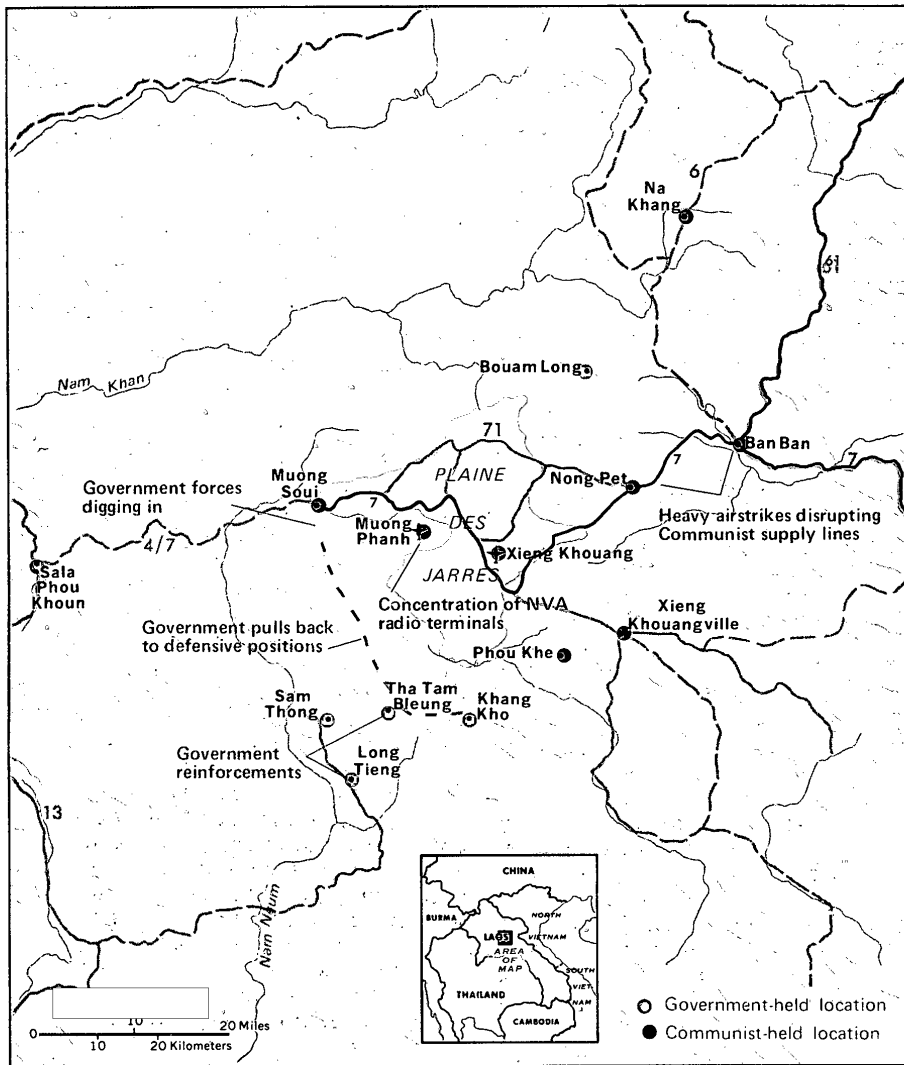
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### Government Preparing for New Communist Activity



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NOTES

Laos: General Vang Pao has strengthened government defenses south and west of the Plaine des Jarres in anticipation of a Communist thrust toward his headquarters at Long Tieng. Enemy troop disposition appears to be unchanged except for one North Vietnamese force of undetermined size that recently moved to the western edge of the Plaine near Muong Phanh airfield. The enemy's ability to move supplies over Route 7 to the Plaine will be a crucial factor in the timing of the next Communist move. A North Vietnamese support unit complained in a recent intercepted message that heavy air strikes and influenza were greatly hampering the transfer of supplies to the Plaine area.

Israel-Lebanon:

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Arab States: The World Peace Council and several other international organizations are trying to organize an international day of protest on 2 March against "American support of the Israeli aggressors."

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