

The President's Daily Brief

21 March 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LATE ITEM: CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A Reuters dispatch from Prague states that Alexander Dubcek has been suspended from the Communist Party. Reuters cited the Czech paper, Rude Pravo, as the source of the information, which we can neither confirm nor deny at this time (0500 EST).

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Communist forces continue to advance in Laos. (Page 1)

Lon Nol seems to be attracting grass-roots support in Cambodia, but international acceptance may be slow in coming. (Page 2)

[Redacted] South Vietnam. (Page 3)

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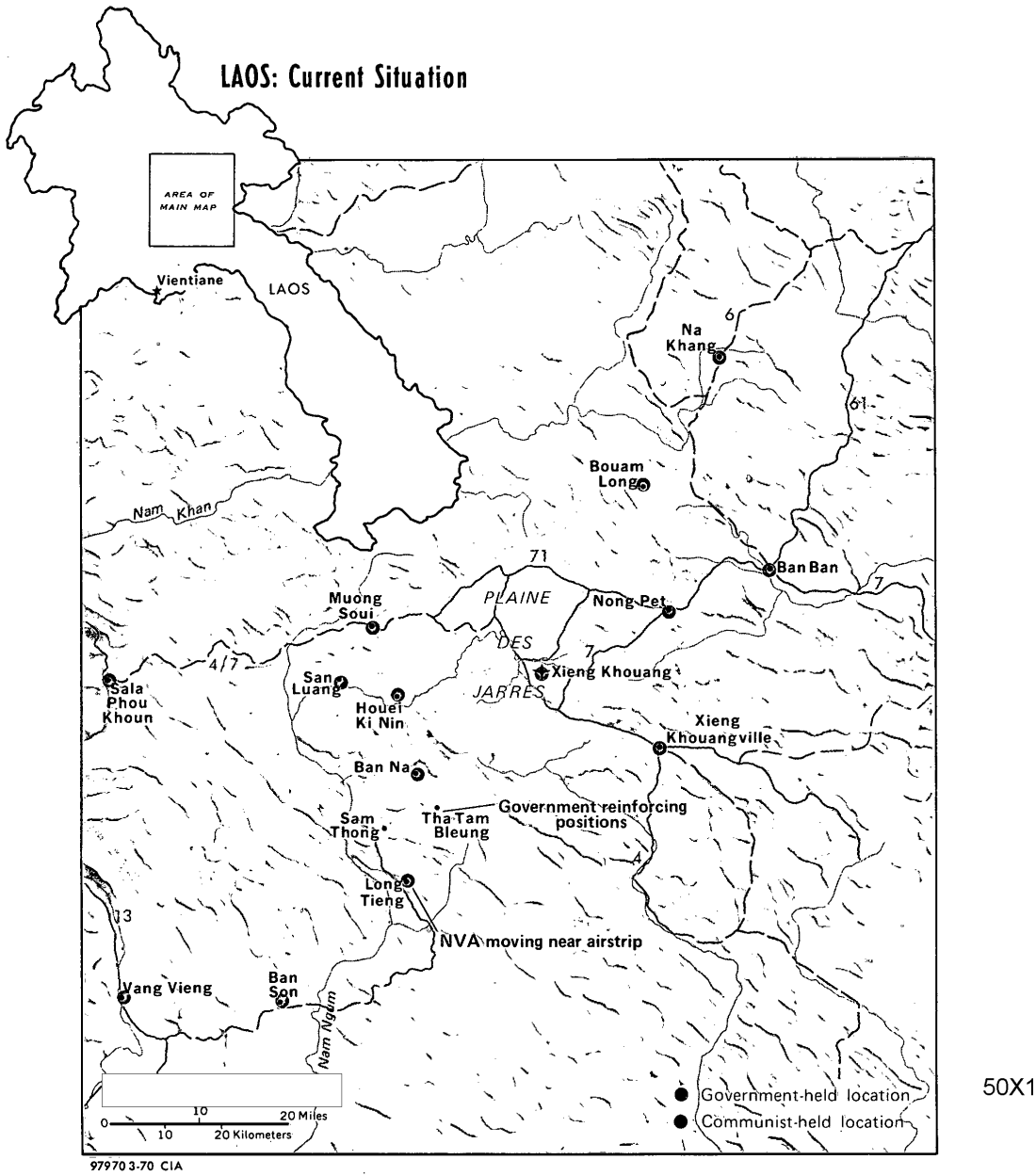
Many Canadians oppose the second voyage of the Manhattan. (Page 4)

Student violence in Turkey will meet stronger police action. (Page 5)

[Redacted] Libya [Redacted] (Page 6)

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LAOS

The government has moved additional reinforcements into Long Tieng, but the military situation continues to deteriorate. North Vietnamese troops have pushed to within one mile of the airstrip, even though new government troops have moved into the hills immediately north of the base. Vang Pao now has about 800 troops dug in around the headquarters complex. With enemy units closing in, however, there is a real danger that the government will lose the use of the airstrip.

It is not yet clear how many troops the Communists have in the immediate Long Tieng area. Enemy communications indicate the presence of at least two North Vietnamese battalions. Another radio terminal associated with the North Vietnamese 316th Division has moved into the area. An intercepted message indicating guides were directing elements of this division toward Long Tieng suggests the buildup is continuing.

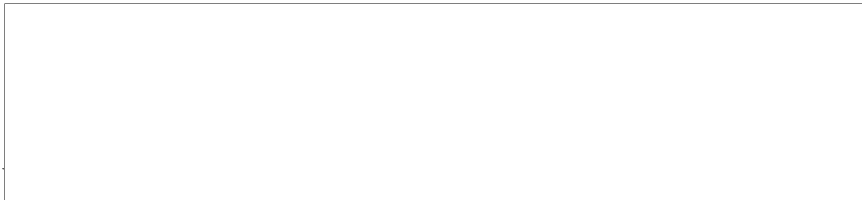
In an attempt to block further enemy troop movements into the northern approaches to Long Tieng, Vang Pao is reinforcing positions immediately south of the heavily contested Tha Tam Bleung area.

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CAMBODIA

Sihanouk denounced the Lon Nol government's recent actions in a statement from Peking yesterday and called for a nationwide popular vote, to be administered by the International Control Commission. Sihanouk argued that recognition of the Lon Nol government would be an illegal act, but made no mention of returning to Cambodia or using force to regain his office.

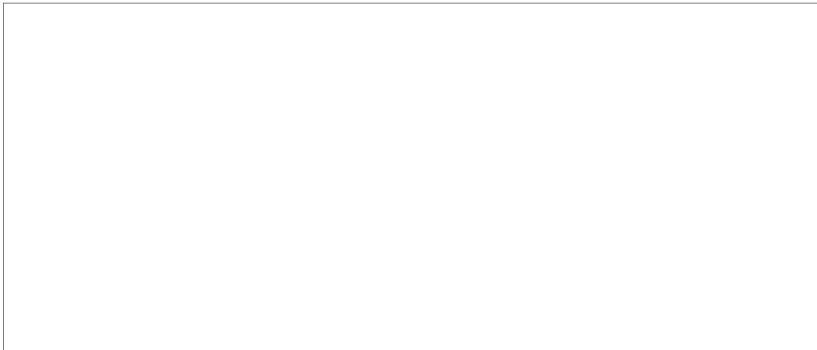
Sihanouk's unrealistic appeal for a referendum will almost certainly fall on deaf ears in Phnom Penh. The government already has passed the point of no return in its relations with Sihanouk as its current campaign to discredit him indicates.



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The Cambodian ambassador in Moscow, meanwhile, has told US [redacted] officials there that the Soviets had indicated they would not accept a Western-oriented government in Cambodia.

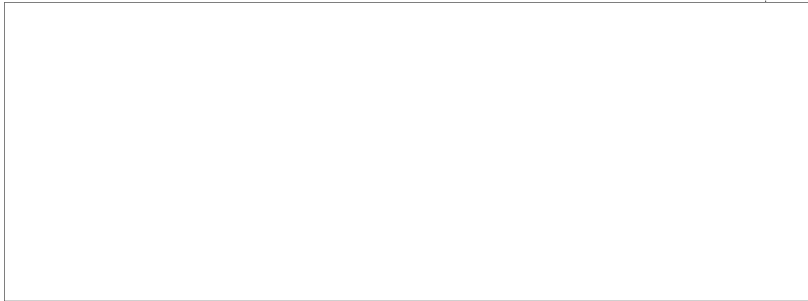
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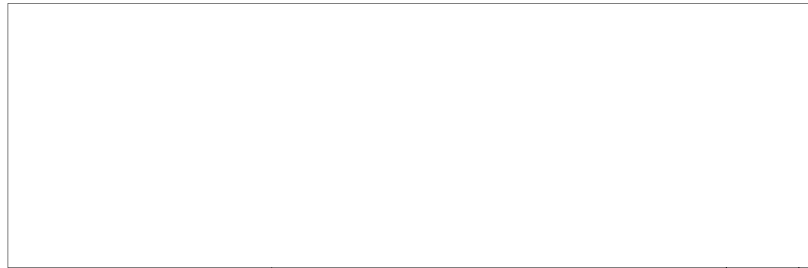
LAOS - SOUTH VIETNAM



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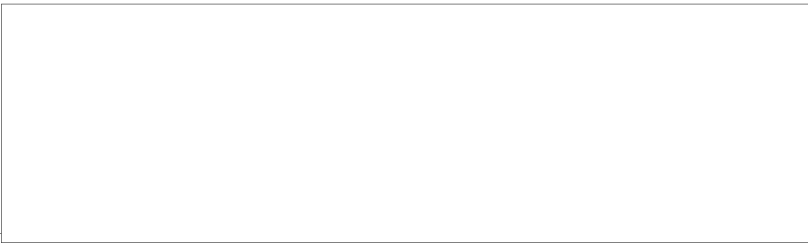
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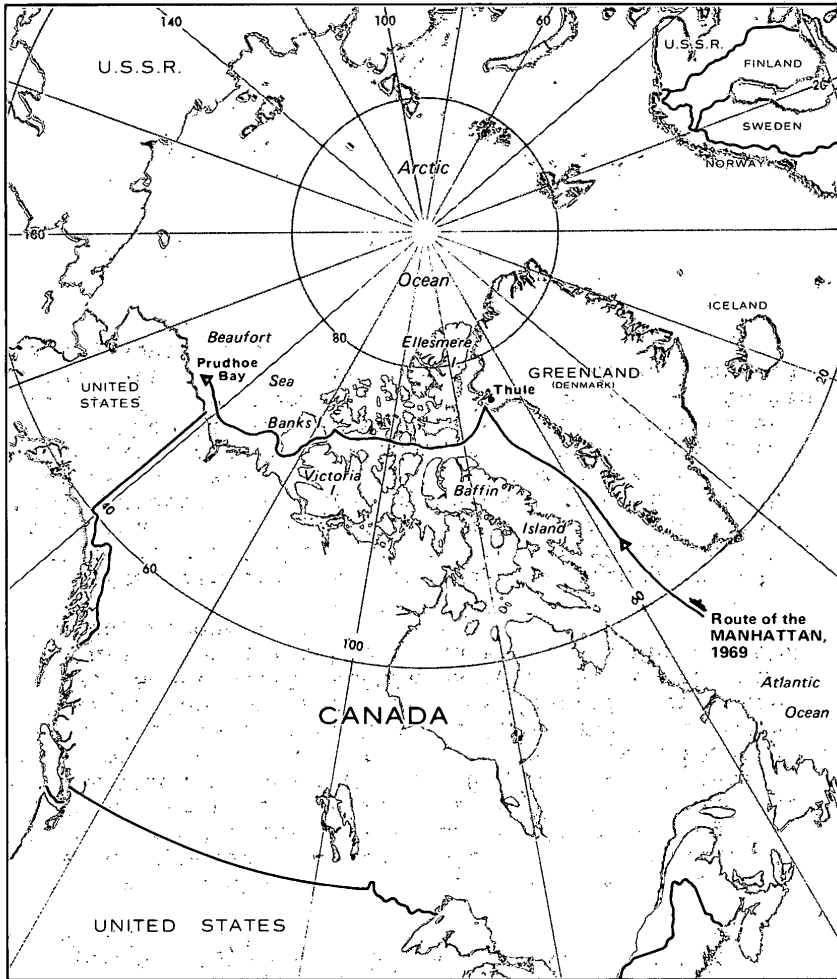
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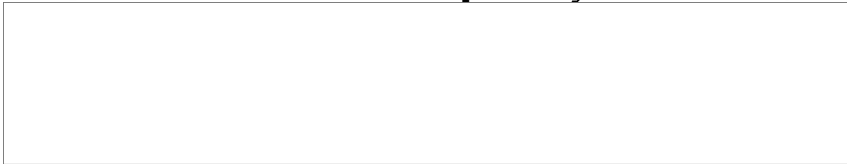


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CANADA

Opposition to the second voyage next month of the icebreaker-tanker Manhattan through the Northwest Passage has not subsided despite the government's announcement earlier this week of new safety measures for the vessel. The government has been attacked in the House of Commons and in the press for not taking a more forthright position on Canada's sovereignty over its Arctic water routes and on pollution controls for ships using these waters.



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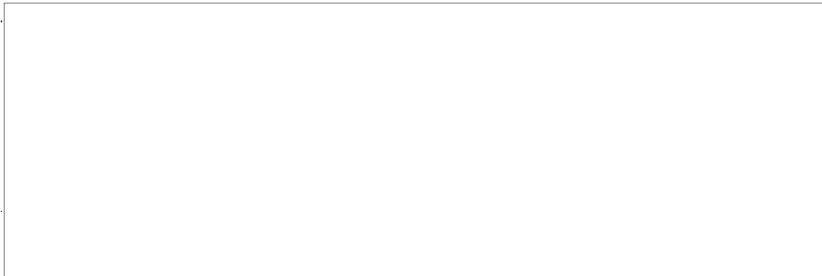
TURKEY

Senior Turkish authorities have decided to institute military control of Istanbul and Ankara in an attempt to curb continuing student violence, which has occurred repeatedly in at least five cities during the past three weeks. Observers are struck by the degree to which extremists have taken over the student movement and the extent to which political issues and anti-Americanism have replaced valid academic grievances.

The current rash of student unrest appears to be the most highly organized and widespread in several years. Because student extremism has alienated many of those who were previously sympathetic, stronger police action at this time probably would receive broad popular support.

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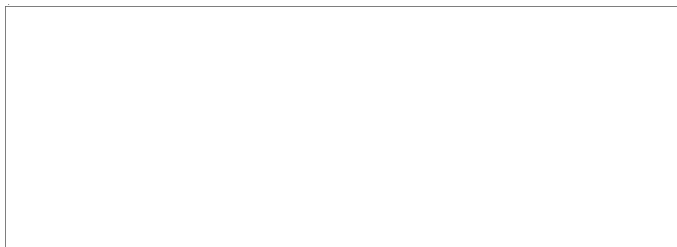
LIBYA



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