

The President's Daily Brief

20 June 1970



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

20 June 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Current developments in Cambodia are discussed on
Page 1.

In Laos, the Communists are successfully countering
government moves in the Saravane area. (*Page 3*)

Communist China has strengthened its ground forces
in northern China. (*Page 4*)

The Bolivian Government is faced with continuing
student demands and threats of demonstrations.
(*Page 5*)

The Soviets

[redacted]
[redacted] (*Page 6*)

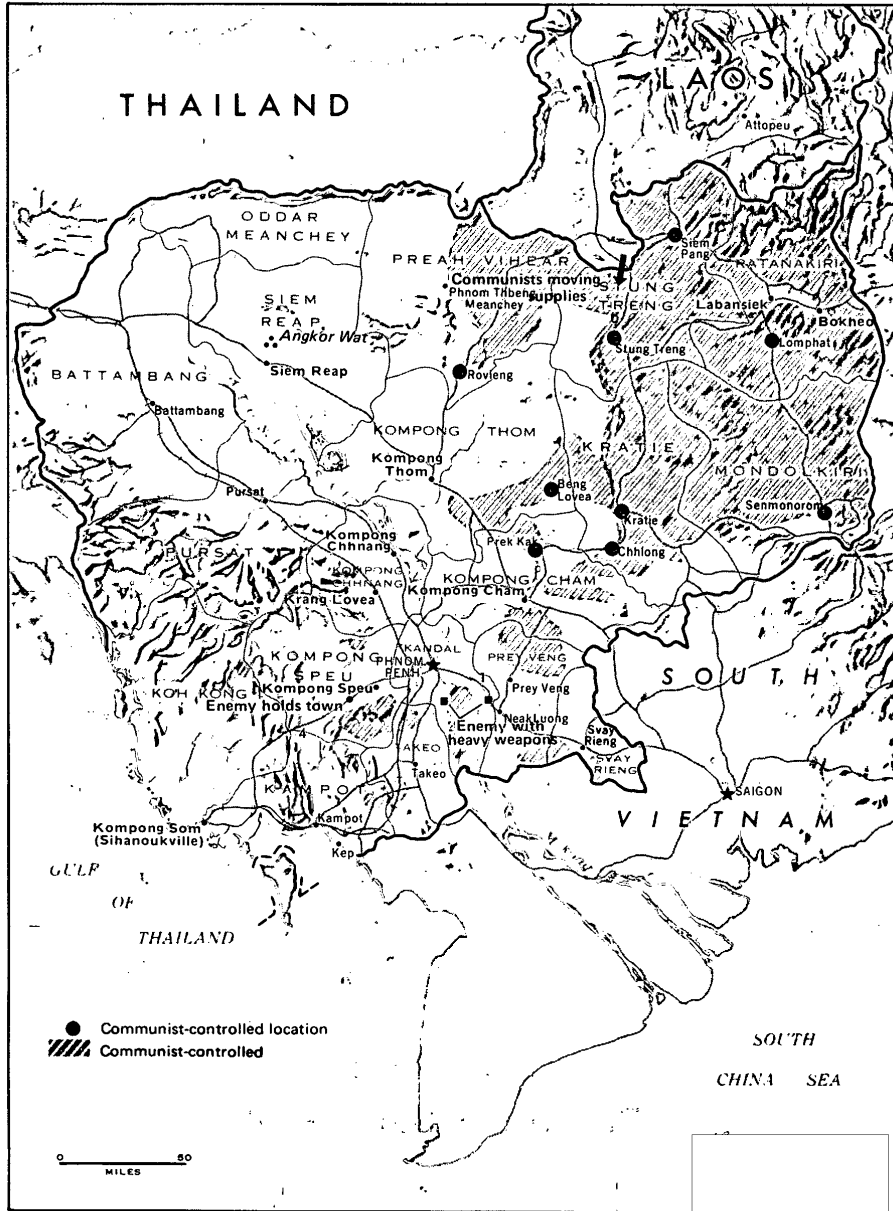
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Soyuz-9 experiments will aid Soviet programs to
develop permanent space stations and a manned lunar
landing. (*Page 6*)

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Cambodia: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

[redacted]
[redacted] Kompong Thom city reports fierce fighting there yesterday. [redacted] the city was still encircled [redacted]

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[redacted] On 18 June the regional commander asked Phnom Penh for massive intervention by "allied heliported troops" in order to save Kompong Thom. Press reports claim that some enemy forces have pushed to within 200 yards of major government strong points in the city, and that allied aircraft are attacking to relieve the pressure on defenders. [redacted]

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[redacted] in areas east of the Mekong River at the Laos-Cambodia border the Communists have requisitioned all bicycles, trucks, and boats for use in moving ammunition to Kompong Thom, and to Siem Reap as well.

The situation at Kompong Chhnang city apparently has stabilized, at least for the moment. [redacted]

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Phnom Penh is calm, but government spokesmen continue to talk of an impending attack on the city. There is still no evidence any enemy action is in the offing [redacted]

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The US Embassy reports that Lon Nol finally has agreed to the evacuation of the government's two remaining outposts in Ratanakiri Province. No timetable for the evacuation of Labansiek and Bokheo towns has thus far been set, however.

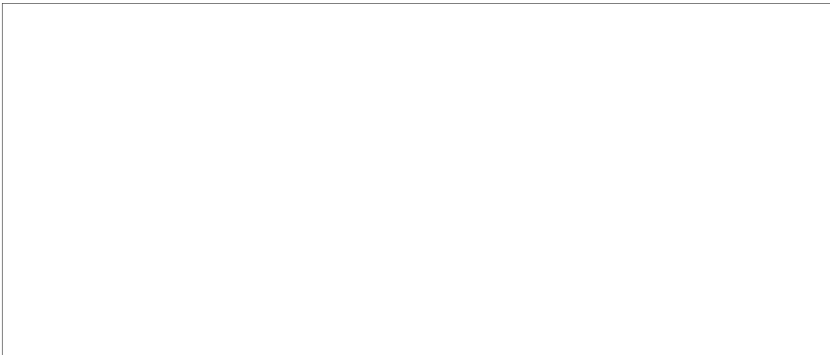
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Cambodian-Lao discussions on possible joint operations to interdict enemy supply lines have petered out. A five-man party of Cambodian Army officers visited Vientiane from 12-15 June and discussed the possibility of "joint" operations to interdict enemy supply lines running through southern Laos into Cambodia, in spite of the fact that Phnom Penh currently has no forces available for such an effort. Officials in Vientiane were generally agreeable to the use of Lao troops but were unwilling to make specific tactical commitments or to train Cambodian recruits which Phnom Penh hoped to make available to the Lao Army for use in border operations. The Cambodian delegation returned home with no firm plans for subsequent meetings. The Laotians did promise, however, to turn over any French weapons which may be left in the Lao Army inventory.

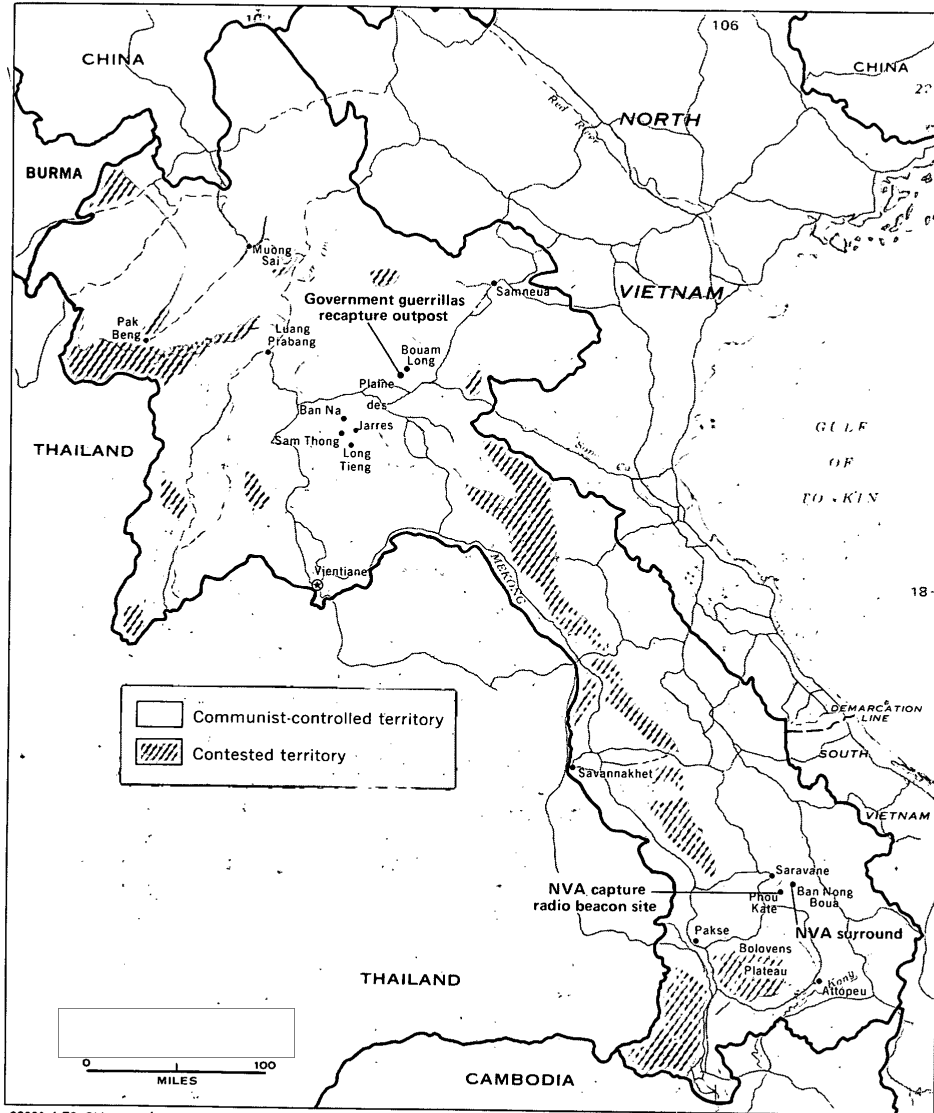
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Laos: Current Situation



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LAOS

The Communists continue to frustrate government efforts to retake Saravane. Press reports indicate that government defenders have abandoned Ban Nong Boua, a small base southeast of Saravane which was to have served as a staging area for the recapture of the town. Ban Nong Boua had been under intermittent rocket and mortar fire for the past several days.

The only radio beacon site in south Laos, located a short distance from Ban Nong Boua at Phou Kate, has also fallen to the Communists. The beacon had been a valuable navigational aid for air operations in the southern panhandle.

The military situation in northern Laos remains relatively quiet, with only minor skirmishes reported. Continuing bad weather southwest of the Plaine des Jarres has forced Vang Pao to postpone, at least temporarily, his drive to retake Ban Na. North of the Plaine, Laotian guerrillas recaptured an important outpost guarding the approaches to the government's long-besieged base at Bouam Long. Enemy forces, who had seized the outpost in early April, did not oppose this action.

Peking May Be Strengthening Military Posture in North China



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COMMUNIST CHINA

In the past few months Peking has moved several armies to strengthen its ground forces in north China. Two armies from east and southeast China, the 27th and 28th, appear to have moved northward to the Peking area. In addition, there are tenuous suggestions that the 47th Army has moved from south China to the northwest. A few other armies are also out of communications but so far there is no indication that they have redeployed.

A typical Chinese army numbers some 40,000. Therefore the northern deployment of three armies may have resulted in an increase of 100-120,000 troops in the north. We had previously estimated ground forces strength there at 1 - 1.2 million.

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BOLIVIA

Attempts by the Ovando government to link the deaths of two Cochabamba university students to alleged US "agents" have backfired. Leftist student and labor groups are using statements by government leaders to substantiate their charges that foreign elements were responsible for the students' deaths and to drum up support for further demonstrations against the government. The students are demanding that the government expel Ambassador Siracusa and the US military mission there. Further demonstrations are planned for La Paz and other cities and US installations could be targets.

The Ovando government has given no evidence that it knows what to do about the growing student unrest and the students are interpreting the government's inaction as weakness. Members of the military are becoming increasingly uneasy over the handling of the student disorders

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NOTES

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USSR: Soyuz-9 was recovered yesterday in the Soviet Union after setting a new duration record for manned spaceflight of 18 days.

[Redacted]

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The results obtained will be useful to the Soviets in programs leading to development of permanent space stations and a manned lunar landing.

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