



*The President's Daily Brief*

*20 August 1970*

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

20 August 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Communist forces in Cambodia are probing government positions on the northern approaches to Phnom Penh; Sihanouk continues to broadcast from Peking. *(Page 1)*

Health officials in the USSR are increasingly worried about the outbreak of cholera. *(Page 2)*

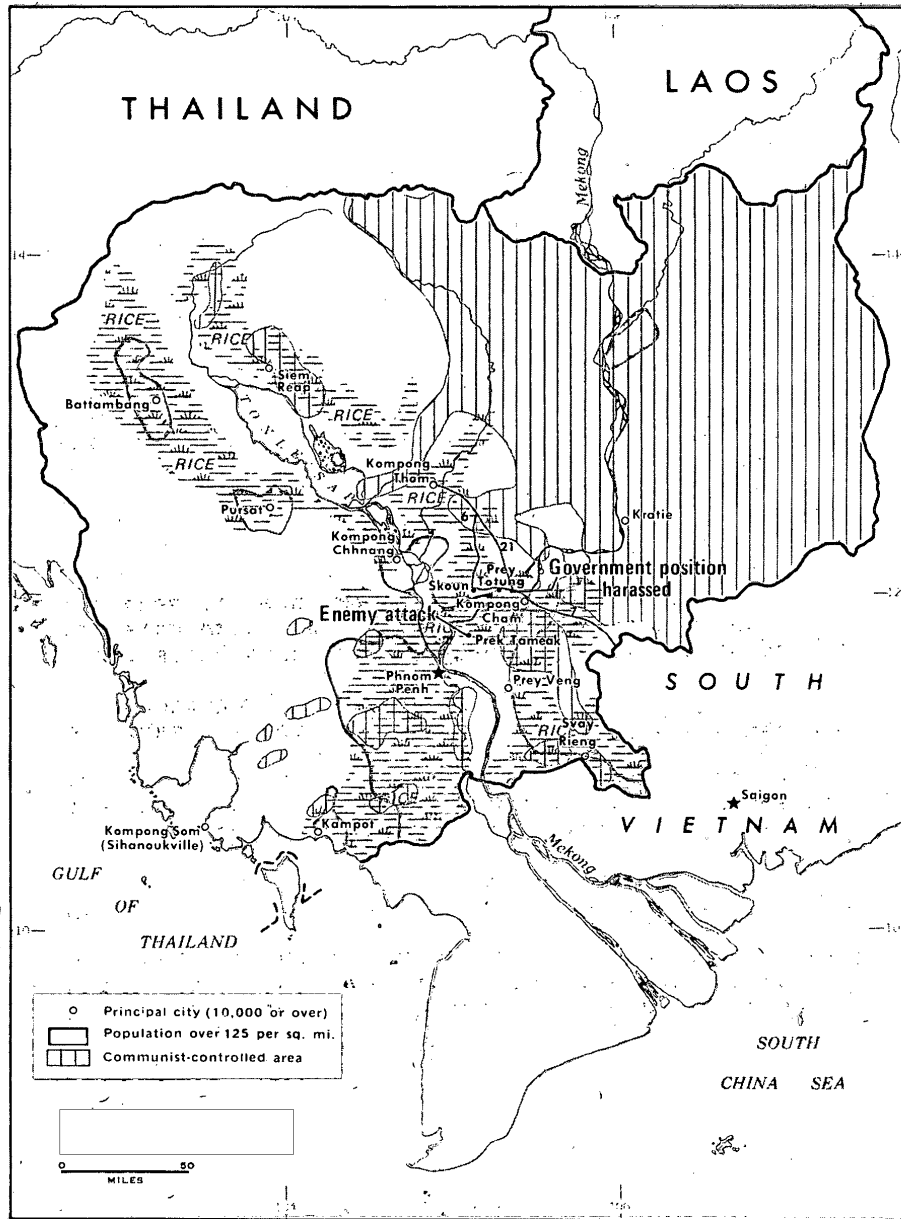
Leaders from the countries of Eastern Europe are meeting in Moscow to coordinate their approaches to West Germany and to European security. *(Page 3)*

Government forces in Laos have renewed their efforts to retake Ban Na. *(Page 4)*

Czechoslovaks may mark the second anniversary of the invasion with a self-imposed curfew, but actual breaches of security are unlikely. *(Page 4)*

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### CAMBODIA: Current Situation



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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY***CAMBODIA**

The Communists continue to apply pressure to Kompong Cham city, although there does not appear to be any serious immediate threat to the city itself. A government position at the junction of Routes 7 and 21, ten miles to the west, was harassed on 18 August, as it had been several weeks ago by enemy forces attempting to move overland to Kompong Cham.

The enemy also continues to probe government positions around Phnom Penh. Elements of a government battalion based at Prek Tameak, on the east bank of the Mekong 16 miles northeast of Phnom Penh, came under enemy attack Tuesday. South Vietnamese and Cambodian naval units and a South Vietnamese gunship provided fire support for the government forces. The battle, which lasted for three hours, cost the government forces but few casualties.

\* \* \*

In another lengthy message beamed from Peking, Sihanouk has charged Cambodia's intellectual community with cowardice for its loyalty to the Lon Nol government, and has called upon its members to join his cause and serve as pro-Sihanouk cadre in the countryside. He quoted at length from reports by Western publications and journalists describing the deterioration of the situation in Phnom Penh and his continuing popular support. Sihanouk again vowed that he would return to Cambodia in the "near future," but he was no more specific than before on when that might be. In an interview earlier this week, Sihanouk told [redacted] he had been advised by the North Vietnamese to hold off until Cambodia became more secure.

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### Cholera Outbreaks in the USSR



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USSR

*That cholera outbreak in the Soviet Union appears to be more widespread than officially admitted by the Soviets. (See The President's Daily Brief of 12 August.)*

Soviet Health Ministry officials have announced the closing of the cities of Odessa and Astrakhan, where the first cases of cholera were reported.



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Travel restrictions are quite extensive, encompassing large areas in the Caucasus and the Crimea--cases have been reported in Pyatigorsk and in Kerch. The Black Sea coast is restricted, as is the corridor along the Volga River south of Gorkiy.

To cope with the epidemic, various precautions have been taken. Restaurant dining is being discouraged, swimming is prohibited in reservoirs in the Moscow area, and drinking water is to be either boiled or chlorinated. In addition, civil defense personnel are reported to have been mobilized.

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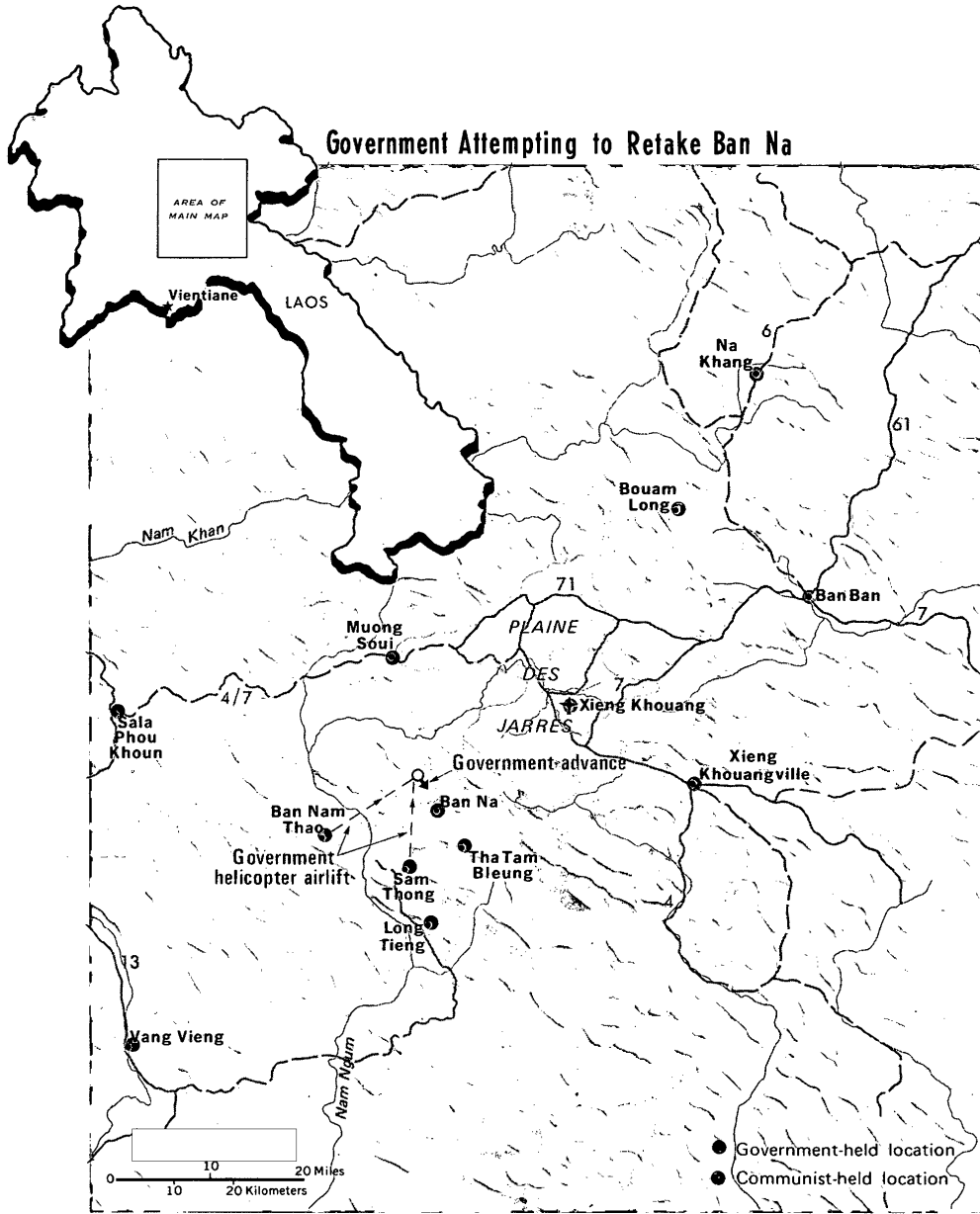
USSR - EASTERN EUROPE

East European delegations to a Warsaw Pact summit meeting arrived in Moscow yesterday and will probably begin formal talks today. Now that the Soviet - West German treaty has been signed, the Soviets probably want to coordinate future policy moves with their allies.

[redacted] the treaty cleared the way for the conclusion of similar treaties by the Poles, East Germans, and Czechoslovaks. The next round of Polish - West German negotiations-- which are already far advanced--is scheduled for early September. Pankow, of course, has begun a dialogue with Bonn, and within the last few days Prague has hinted at its willingness to open talks.

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*The meeting will also give Moscow an opportunity to renew its efforts for a conference on European security. Moscow probably intends to use the treaty with Bonn to add impetus to its campaign for such a conference. The Soviet press has already argued that the treaty should satisfy Western demands that progress on specific security issues precede a conference, and the summit meeting may issue a formal statement to this effect.*



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## NOTES

Laos: Government forces southwest of the Plaine des Jarres have renewed their effort to retake Ban Na, a small outpost located about 14 miles north of Long Tieng. General Vang Pao's previous drives toward Ban Na from the south over the past three months have been turned back by stubborn opposition and counterattacks by the North Vietnamese. This latest attempt, initiated on Tuesday, involved a helicopter airlift of over 500 men to positions five miles north of the enemy stronghold and so far it has met little resistance. The effort to retake Ban Na is the first step in a modest rainy season offensive designed to improve the defenses of the Long Tieng complex.

Czechoslovakia: Security forces have taken precautionary steps to prevent demonstrations tomorrow-- the second anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion-- but neither the regime nor the public expect anything serious to happen. Dissidents in Prague have distributed leaflets urging a quiet evening boycott of public establishments and a self-imposed curfew. Most Czechs are aware that breaches of security such as occurred last year would only weaken the Husak government, endangering its fragile truce with party conservatives who favor harsher repressive tactics.

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