



*The President's Daily Brief*

*10 November 1970*

49



~~*Top Secret*~~

50X1

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

10 November 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Communists attacked Cambodian positions in Kompong Cham Province with renewed intensity yesterday. (Page 1)

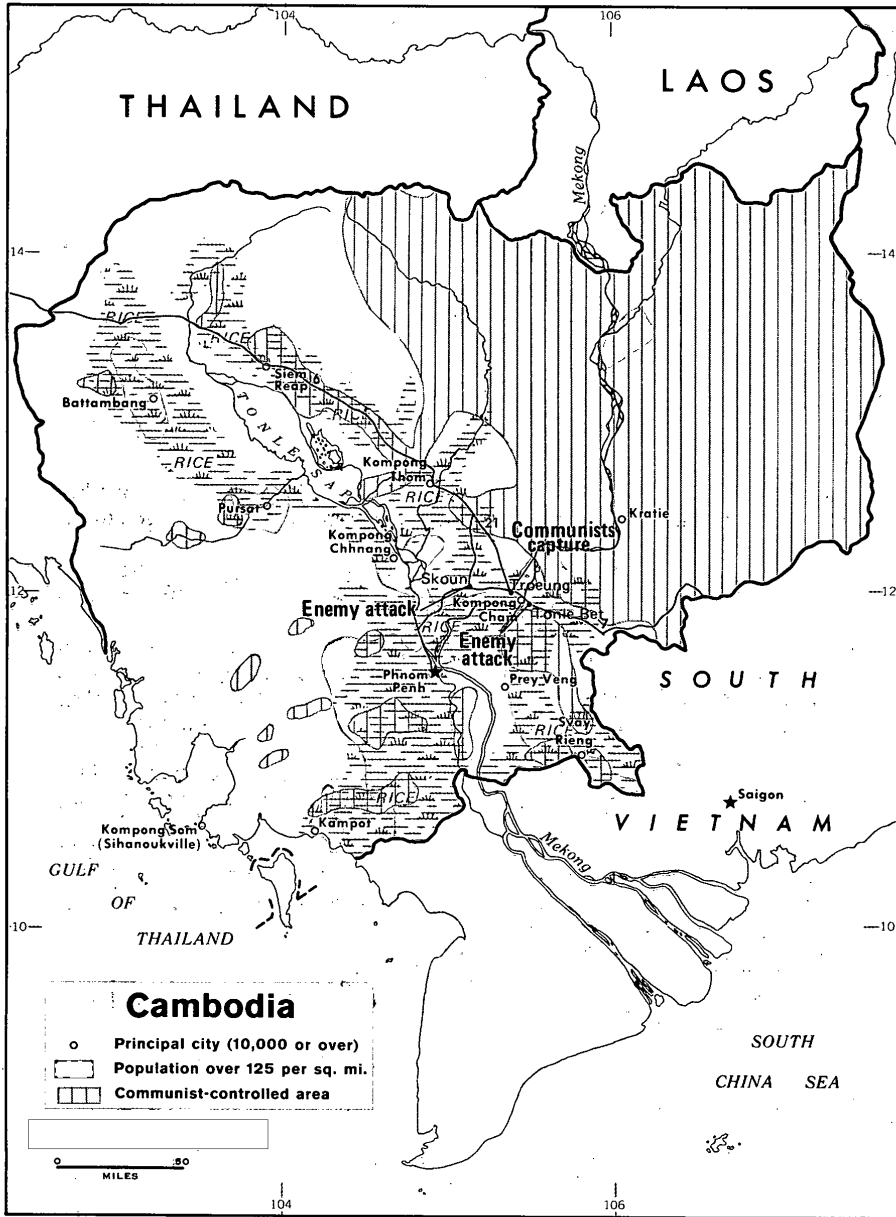
The proposed union between Egypt, Libya, and Sudan may nurture more problems than unity. (Page 2)

Some comments on Hanoi's gradual shift in the past two years from a main force offensive in South Vietnam to small unit actions throughout most of Indochina appear on Page 3.

Upcoming cabinet changes have whetted the appetite of Thailand's political factions. (Page 4)

President Yahya has decided to devalue the Pakistan rupee. (Page 5)

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*



550488 11-70 CIA

50X1

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

Enemy troops launched a series of attacks on government positions in and near Kompong Cham city yesterday. The heaviest fighting was at the city's airfield, where three Khmer Krom battalions were forced to call for air strikes. In addition, Tonle Bet and two nearby villages on the east side of the Mekong were subjected to enemy ground probes.

Northwest of Kompong Cham, government reports state that the enemy killed 24 Cambodian soldiers and wounded 20 in capturing the town of Troeung at the crossroads of Routes 7 and 21. They also attacked a village north of Troeung with mortar fire. Elsewhere the Communists probed government defenses at the town of Skoun, which serves as the rear security base for the government column operating on Route 6. According to Cambodian messages, government troops repulsed these attacks, killing 15 Communists.

*These attacks are the most significant enemy military actions since late August. The last major Communist attacks in the Kompong Cham area were in late May. Although the government has strengthened the defenses of Kompong Cham city, at least five Communist main force regiments are in the area and have the ability to bring even heavier military pressure to bear on the city.*

*It is still too early to tell if these latest attacks signal the opening round in the Communists' dry season campaign. They may be designed in part to help forestall further Cambodian advances north and east of Route 6.*

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

EGYPT-LIBYA-SUDAN

The chiefs of state of Egypt, Libya, and Sudan have decided to draw up a preliminary plan to lay the groundwork for the "establishment of a union of the three countries." A "unified, tripartite command of the three heads of state" has been set up "to work to expedite and promote integration," and lower level committees have been formed to further the process in specific fields.

*It is not clear what form of union is contemplated. Cairo has been involved in something like this twice before: the union with Syria in 1958, with Nasir as President of both states, which collapsed in Syrian resentment of Egyptian domination, and the federation with Yemen, also in 1958, which was so loose as to be meaningless and was quietly buried. The Egyptians therefore are wary of further experiments.*

*Nevertheless, Sadat probably hopes to increase his domestic and international stature by participating in a unity scheme that Nasir presumably had blessed. He may also hope that closer cooperation with Libya will afford more ready access to Tripoli's oil-rich coffers. Meanwhile Numayri and Qaddafi appear to be sincere in pursuing Arab unity and may try to push Egypt faster than it wants to go. They may see closer cooperation with Egypt as a way to strengthen their somewhat shaky domestic positions, but it could have the reverse effect by further alienating the significant groups in both Libya and the Sudan that are fearful of Egyptian hegemony.*

**FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY****INDOCHINA**

*Over the past two years, the Communists have made drastic changes in the organization and deployment of their armed forces. By mid-1968 they had committed elements of nearly 60 main force--or regular--infantry regiments to the fighting in South Vietnam. Today there are only about 20 such units in the country, and many of these are in relatively remote base areas.*

*As many as ten regiments have been disbanded and the forces subordinate to them reorganized to operate as separate battalions or as reinforcements for local Viet Cong units. Many more main force units, however, have been sent back as integral units into North Vietnam (about ten regiments), to Laos (six regiments), and Cambodia (12 regiments).*

*These shifts underscore the enemy's changed priorities. Laos and Cambodia now come before Da Nang and Saigon, at least as far as main force commitments are concerned. For example, several regiments formerly in the central highlands of South Vietnam are now helping to protect North Vietnamese infiltration routes in southern Laos and Cambodia. About nine regiments of three main force divisions that periodically applied pressure against the provinces northwest of Saigon are now located entirely on the Cambodian side of the border.*

*These deployments also point up the fact that a large part of the enemy's main force is still intact, even though largely directed away from objectives in South Vietnam. This is part of the over-all transformation of Communist tactics in South Vietnam, where now there is greater emphasis on guerrilla forces, terrorism, and political action.*

**FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THAILAND

Prime Minister Thanom recently announced that cabinet changes currently under consideration would affect only two or three ministries. [REDACTED]

50X1

50X1

*These key portfolios are thought to be particular targets of Deputy Prime Minister Praphat's supporters, who appear to be pushing for an extensive cabinet turnover. Praphat has been somewhat more assertive in recent weeks, but there is no evidence that he is prepared to press an issue in direct opposition to Thanom.*

*There is evidence, however, of a growing political alliance between Praphat and General Krit Siwara, deputy commander in chief of the army. Krit is a popular figure in the army and is often mentioned as the eventual successor to Praphat as commander in chief. Krit has been consulting closely with Praphat and their continued cooperation could be a significant factor in Bangkok's power relationships.*

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

PAKISTAN

President Yahya has told Ambassador Farland that he will devalue the rupee shortly after his return on 14 November from a state visit to Communist China. Yahya said he had decided to take responsibility himself for the decision because he recognized the economic necessity of immediate action. If he left the problem to a newly elected government, he said, the politicians would debate it endlessly.

*Yahya's decision will give a boost to Pakistan's economy and has been urged for some years by the country's aid donors.*

*Politically, the decision may cause problems, especially if it is announced--as Yahya apparently intends--before the elections for the constitutional assembly on 7 December. The electoral campaign has been orderly in recent weeks, but radical groups are seeking a popular issue and probably would try to exploit the popular fear of economic dislocation that might accrue in the short run from devaluation. If their campaigns began to focus on anti-regime themes, violence--always close to the surface--could break out.*

*Yahya remains determined to go through with elections and apparently believes he can weather a storm caused by devaluation.*

50X1

*There is no firm evidence that the military will act to stop the elections, but its attitude could change if widespread disturbances break out again.*



*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

**NOTE**

US-USSR-Turkey: The Turkish Foreign Ministry has informed the US Embassy in Ankara that US Generals Scherrer and McQuarrie and the Turkish colonel have been returned across the Soviet border. They are expected in Ankara early this morning. The fourth member of their party, Major Russell, and the aircraft will follow later today.

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

*Top Secret*