



The President's Daily Brief

20 May 1971

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

20 May 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Moscow's concern over the recent political upheavals in Egypt is evident

[Redacted]

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Current Chinese Communist production rates of the MIG-19 and other military aircraft are discussed on Page 2.

[Redacted]
Jordan
[Redacted]

(Page 3)

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The Soviets have successfully launched a Mars probe on their tenth try. (Page 4)

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USSR-EGYPT

Soviet news media continue to report on the changes in Cairo factually. In the only public comment thus far, "a responsible official source" in Moscow is quoted as saying that the USSR views the governmental changes in Cairo as an "internal matter."

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted] despite its concern, Moscow wants to avoid overreacting.

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[Redacted]

The extent of the Soviet setback is still not clear, probably not even to the Soviets. A common theme in comments by Soviet officials is that the recent course of events took Moscow by surprise and that the Soviets are worried over the implications of a possible Egyptian-US rapprochement. Moscow has previously experienced reverses in Cairo and probably feels that in the present circumstances it would be imprudent to get involved until the situation has sorted itself out. The USSR, however, is not likely to remain on the sidelines for long if it concludes its interests have been seriously threatened.

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COMMUNIST CHINA

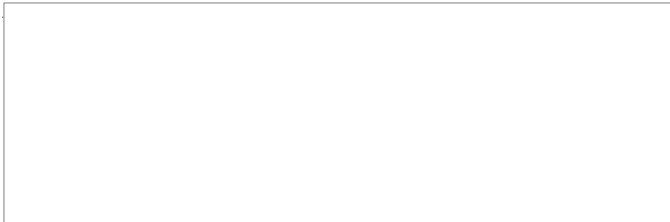
Our analysis of satellite photography  suggests that the production of MIG-19s could now be as high as 50 per month, compared to an average monthly rate of 35 last year. The latest photography showed 243 MIG-19s at the Shenyang airframe plant and 94 at a nearby airfield.

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This is the largest number of MIG-19s seen at the plant and the first sighting of more than a few at the airfield. The reason for this accumulation in the Shenyang area is unclear; it may simply reflect the inability of the air force to absorb new aircraft as rapidly as they are being produced.

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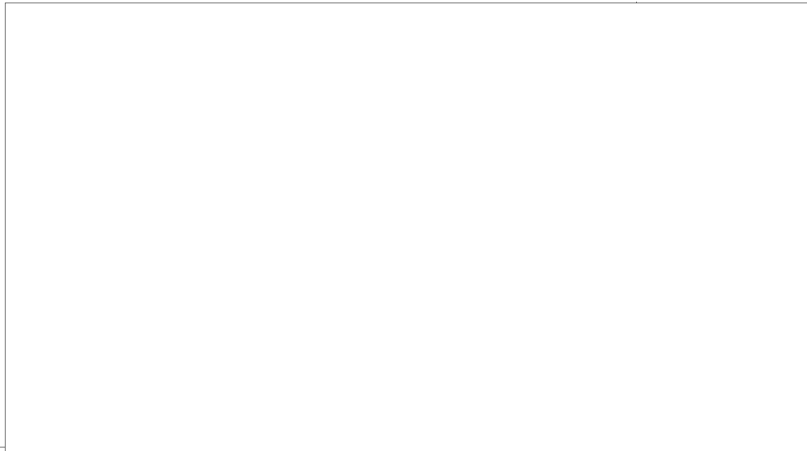
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JORDAN



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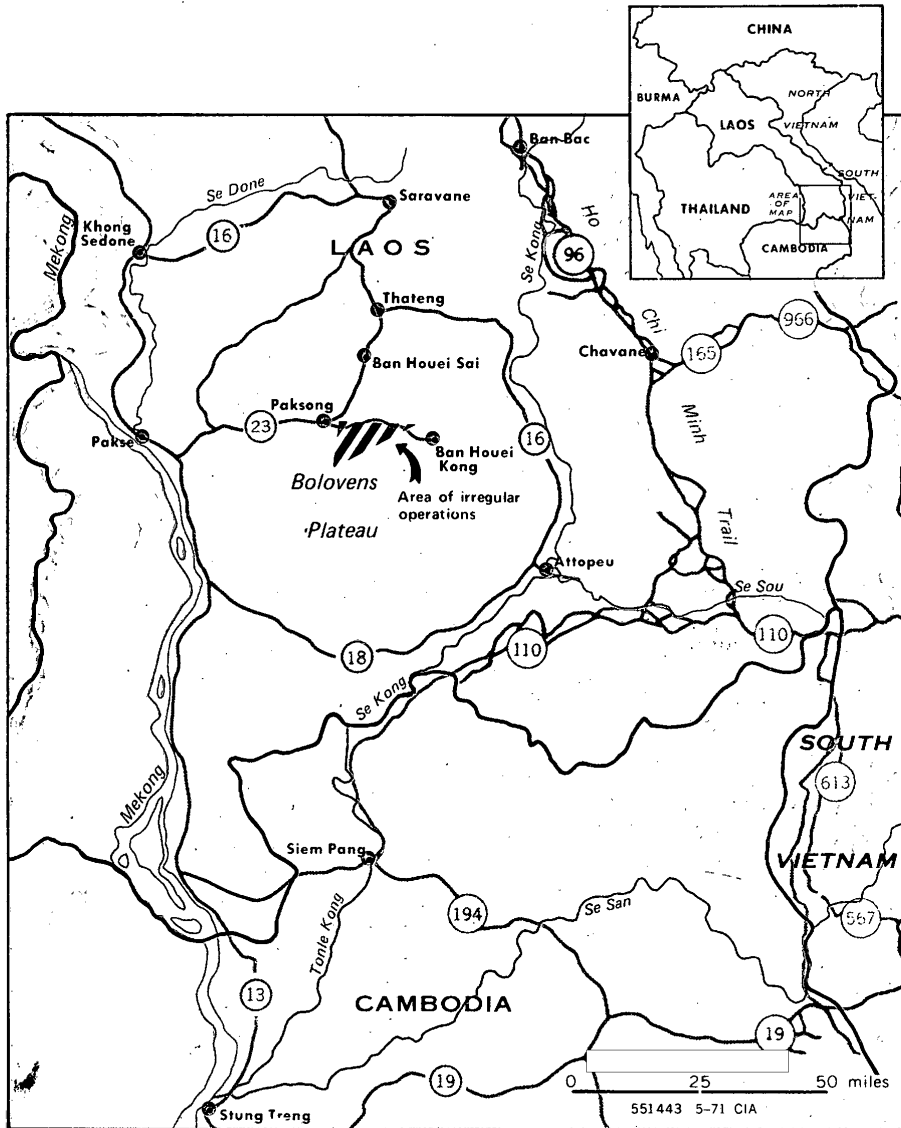
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- Communist-held location
- Government-held location

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NOTES

USSR: The Soviets successfully launched an un-
manned Mars probe from Tyuratam yesterday, using an
SL-12 booster. [redacted]

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[redacted] The probe, labeled Mars 2, probably is in-
tended to soft-land a scientific package or to put
a payload in orbit around the planet when it reaches
there in late November. If the Mars probe succeeds
in its mission, it will be the first successful one
in ten attempts made by the Soviets since 1960.

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Laos: There have been no major North Vietnam-
ese attacks since yesterday, when the Communists
forced government troops to abandon Ban Houei Kong,
the last government base on the Bolovens Plateau.
The irregular task force operating between Ban
Houei Kong and Paksong is continuing, however, to
make some progress toward its high ground objec-
tives near Paksong, although so far it has had only
limited contact with the enemy. There have been
several recent reports that Communist units are
operating west of the Bolovens, suggesting that
the North Vietnamese may intend to launch harassing
attacks along Route 13 both north and south of
Pakse. Two small-unit clashes occurred some 30
miles south of Pakse on 18 and 19 May.

Thailand - North Vietnam: Talks to arrange
the repatriation of some 40,000 North Vietnamese
refugees living in northeast Thailand have been
suspended as a result of Hanoi's claim that the
present "war" situation in North Vietnam would
make such repatriation "unsafe." Both sides have
used the negotiations, which resumed last fall
when Hanoi sent a team to Bangkok, to raise polit-
ical matters in corridor discussions. Hanoi's de-
cision to withdraw its delegation suggests that
it sees little reason at this time for trying to
pursue a political dialogue with Bangkok.

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