



The President's Daily Brief

4 June 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PLANS FOR
OFFICIAL HOME

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

We have identified an increased number of North Vietnamese troops moving through the Laos panhandle in recent weeks. (Page 1)

In South Vietnam the bill governing this year's election is being written so as to keep Ky out of the race. (Page 3)

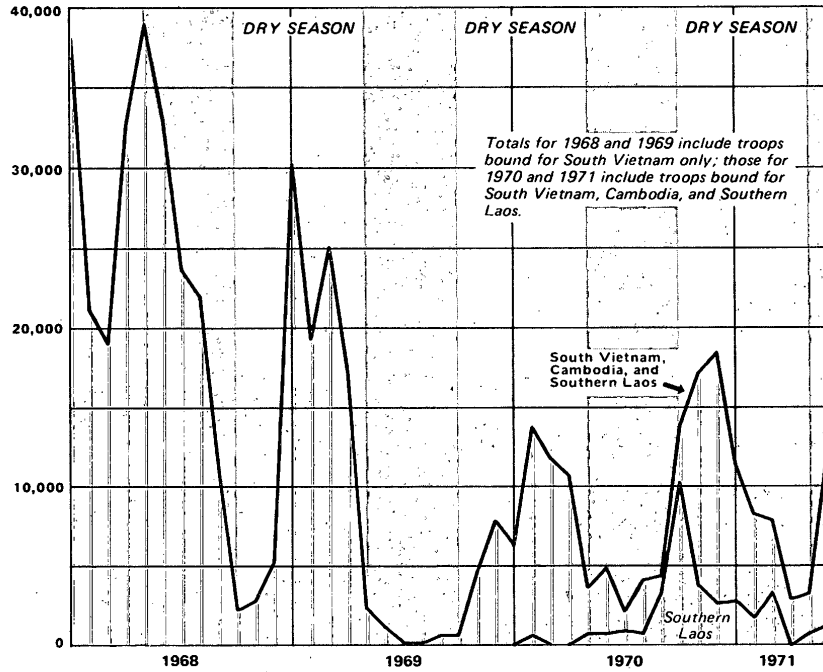
Kim Chong-pil, one of South Korea's most controversial politicians, has been named prime minister. (Page 4)

Relief efforts for East Pakistan and for the refugees in West Bengal have gained some momentum. (Page 5)

Trudeau's highlighting of his "independent" foreign policy during his Moscow visit has aroused some sharp domestic criticism. (Page 6)

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Infiltration Starts from North Vietnam



	1968 SVN	1969 SVN	1970 SVN, Cambodia, and Southern Laos	Southern Laos	1971 SVN, Cambodia, and Southern Laos	Southern Laos
JAN	21,000	19,200	13,700	100	8,200	1,700
FEB	18,900	25,000	11,700	---	7,800	3,400
MAR	32,600	17,100	10,600	---	2,900	---
APR	38,900	2,300	3,600	700	3,300	800
MAY	32,800	1,100	4,900	700	12,300	1,300
JUN	23,500	100	2,100	900		
JUL	21,800	100	4,100	700		
AUG	11,000	600	4,400	3,300		
SEP	2,200	600	13,800	10,200		
OCT	2,800	4,500	17,100	3,700		
NOV	5,200	7,800	18,400	2,600		
DEC	30,100	6,200	11,400	2,800		

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**INDOCHINA**

Although totals for May are still tentative, we have noticed an increase over the past three weeks in the southward flow of North Vietnamese troops through the Laos panhandle.

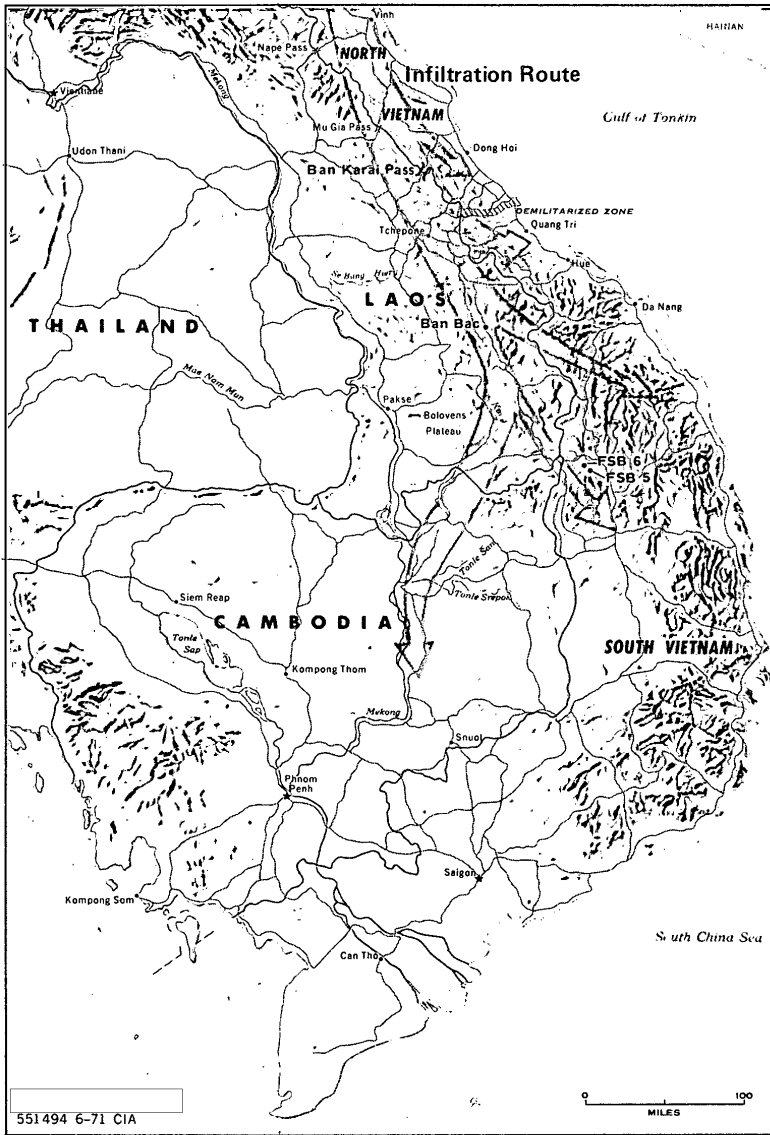
More than 12,000 NVA troops have been identified passing through way-stations in Laos since the beginning of May. Nearly 6,000 are going to Cambodia or the southern half of South Vietnam, and another 1,000 are going to stay in southern Laos. About 5,000 are destined for northern South Vietnam, and of these all but about 200 are headed for the western highlands. Gaps in the sequential numbering pattern suggest that another 8,000 are on the way or will be shortly; of these, 6,000 are bound for the western highlands.

It is unusual for so many enemy troops to be sent into the highlands toward the end of the dry season; there is normally little need for them there once the monsoon rains begin. In the entire 1969-70 dry season, only 5,000 infiltrators were sent there. Last month's additions bring the total for the corresponding 1970-71 period to 12,600. Some of the new personnel are doubtless intended to replace heavy casualties suffered by the Communists at Fire Support Bases 5 and 6, but intercepts show that three of the infiltration groups bound for the highlands are traveling in convoy and with artillery in tow. This suggests that several integral units are involved--possible artillery battalions. The Communists may be increasing their capabilities for major attacks in this region during the summer or early in the fall, possibly in anticipation of the presidential election in October.

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Coincident with the recent increase in activity, there has been a marked improvement in both the quality and quantity of intercepts from Communist way-stations

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which handle infiltrating personnel. Between January and early May, only two major way-stations--one located near the Ban Karai Pass in the north and the other located near Ban Bac in the south--consistently provided information on personnel movements. Since the step-up in activity, however, detailed reports on infiltrating troops from numerous way-stations throughout the panhandle have been intercepted.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

President Thieu has successfully persuaded South Vietnam's Lower House to reinstate in the bill regulating this year's presidential election contest a clause which would limit the number of candidates. The restrictive clause would require a candidate to be endorsed either by one fifth of the nearly 200 National Assembly members or by one fifth of the country's 500-odd provincial councilors.

When this provision was first proposed, its alleged purpose was to make it less likely that the winner would be a minority president (in a field of 11 candidates in 1967 Thieu won with only 35 percent of the vote). Initially, Thieu did not push strongly for its adoption. His recently renewed interest in seeing the clause written into the election law coincides with Vice President Ky's talk about entering the race and is clearly aimed at keeping Ky out. Thieu and "Big" Minh are apparently the only candidates now assured of meeting the stringent terms for nomination.

Thieu's chances of re-election will improve if Ky does not enter the race, but his tactics also run some risk. He will almost certainly come under charges of trying to stack the political deck in his own favor. Minh has warned that he might drop out of the contest if the restrictive clause passed. Minh might, however, now be persuaded to make some deal with Ky in an effort to defeat Thieu, a course Minh has so far rejected.

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SOUTH KOREA

President Pak's appointment yesterday of Kim Chong-pil to be prime minister marks the full return to public life of one of South Korea's most dynamic and controversial politicians. As chief architect of the coup that elevated Pak to power in 1961, Kim was at the center of much of the infighting that characterized the regime's early years and was founder of the government party.

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In 1968, Kim was forced to the political sidelines when his own presidential ambitions almost brought him into open conflict with Pak.

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Kim's appointment appears to be a reward for his vigorous campaigning on behalf of Pak and the government slate in the recent national elections. Kim will attempt to use the premiership to strengthen his claim to be Pak's political heir. Control of the government party machinery is currently in the hands of Kim's factional enemies, but they are coming under increasing fire from the party rank and file as a result of the strong showing of the opposition in last month's National Assembly elections.

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INDIA-PAKISTAN

Relief efforts have gained considerable momentum this week. UN Assistant Secretary General Kittani plans to visit Islamabad and Dacca next week to coordinate various foreign aid operations in East Pakistan. He anticipates arranging for UN monitoring of the use of the supplies. UNICEF and the UN's World Food Program will provide most of these. Drought and insect damage, meanwhile, have so clouded agricultural prospects in West Pakistan that the eastern wing must depend entirely on foreign sources for its foodgrain imports in coming months.

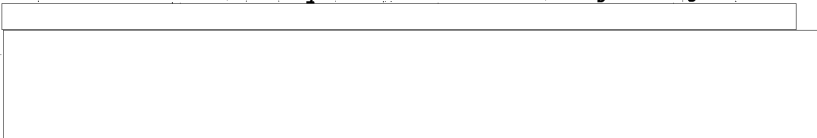
In West Bengal, a massive UN-sponsored effort to aid some four million refugees is beginning. State officials there nevertheless fear that the influx of refugees will bring on a total administrative breakdown, and are pressing Prime Minister Gandhi to move them to other states. The entire West Bengal cabinet is said to be planning to threaten resignation when Mrs. Gandhi visits Calcutta tomorrow unless she agrees to relieve the state of all responsibility for the refugees.

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CANADA

Prime Minister Trudeau's efforts to highlight his "independent" foreign policy during his recent trip to the USSR have come under increasing attack at home. Critics are charging that Canada's position on East-West security issues is becoming ambiguous



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Canadian Ambassador Ford in Moscow has indicated that the talks did not achieve much in the way of concrete agreements. Moscow was quite negative toward a Canadian suggestion for an international conference on Arctic problems. Ottawa, for its part, put off discussion of a Soviet proposal for an economic agreement that presumably would involve the participation of Canadian firms in constructing factories in the USSR.

[Redacted] no indication of any secret or unpublished agreements, as suggested in some early press stories. These apparently were sparked by the delay in the public release of the protocol.

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PANAMA

Members of Panama's team for canal negotiations are holding a series of public meetings outlining the government's position and objectives. They have already met with business executives and some community leaders, and additional meetings with students and other groups are planned. The government position they have enunciated concedes continued US control of canal operations but calls for a reduced US military presence and stresses Panama's interest in attaining full jurisdiction over the Canal Zone. The negotiators also stated that any new treaty would be ratified by plebiscite.

This current round of popular consultations seems designed to develop a climate of opinion which can be exploited in support of the government's negotiating tactics. It also serves to head off any later charge that the regime was acting secretly to conclude an unfavorable agreement with the US. Government rhetoric at this stage, however, can easily reduce Panama's flexibility in negotiations.

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NOTES

East Germany:

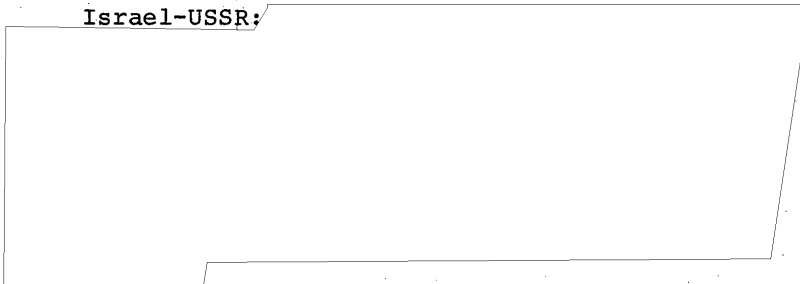
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Communist China: Politburo member Kang Sheng appeared yesterday at a reception for visiting Romanian Party chief Ceausescu after being politically sidelined for over six months. The listing of Kang in his customary place among the regime's top leaders indicates that he retains his position on the elite politburo standing committee. The regime's failure to account for Kang's temporary eclipse and its curious handling of the status of several other politburo members strongly suggest that China's leadership remains beset by major differences on a wide range of policy and personnel issues.

Israel-USSR:

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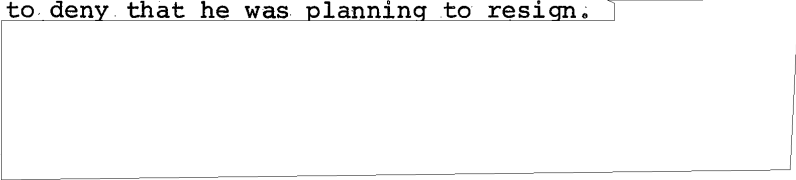


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Peru: Reports of military plotting against President Velasco have risen to the extent that Velasco felt obliged to go on TV Wednesday evening to deny that he was planning to resign.

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