



The President's Daily Brief

10 June 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

A recent article in a North Vietnamese party journal sheds more light on basic aspects of Hanoi's current thinking on the conduct of the war. (Page 1)

Xuan Thuy's interview on US prisoners is discussed on Page 2.

Cambodian forces northeast of Phnom Penh are regrouping following the recent heavy attacks by the Communists. (Page 3)

The Soyuz 11 mission evidently will last at least several more days and probably a week or longer. (Page 4)

The parliamentary election in Malta is expected to be very close. (Page 5)

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France is expected to announce soon that its first IRBM group is operational. (Page 6)

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NORTH VIETNAM

An article published in the January-February issue of an authoritative Communist party journal, Tuyen Huan, sheds more light on two basic aspects of Hanoi's current thinking on the conduct of the war. One is the relative priority to be attached to prosecuting the war and to developing the home front in North Vietnam; the other is the kinds of military tactics that now are suitable for Communist forces, especially in South Vietnam.

Discussion and policy decisions about both issues have surfaced periodically during the past decade. From late 1968 well into last year, most North Vietnamese statements of this kind tended to argue that some balance should be struck in the allocation of resources and energies to the home front and the war. This article, however, says categorically that the war is North Vietnam's first order of business.

In one remarkably candid passage, the article says: "As the great rear area of the three theaters (Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), North Vietnam has the primary duty at the present time to seek to mobilize manpower and materials in order to meet fully and promptly all of the requirements of the front line... irrespective of the situation...."

Similarly, military tactics are addressed in terms the Vietnamese Communists often have used when they debate the merits of a long, drawn-out struggle as against intense, large-scale fighting. The article not only calls for heavier doses of large-scale fighting involving conventional forces, but also for "sudden leap-like developments" aimed at quickly changing the balance of forces, and cites Communist offensives during Tet 1968 and the spring of 1965 as examples. To make certain that the examples are applicable to today's war, the article asserts "the total defeat of 'Vietnamization'...also involves large leaps to change the balance of forces to the point where the enemy will not be able to continue the war."

These ideas probably were formalized as policy at the party central committee's 19th plenary session held around the turn of the year. Their appearance in a party study journal indicates they reflect agreed Communist policy. The article indicates that Hanoi intends to raise the level of fighting in Indochina in the months ahead.

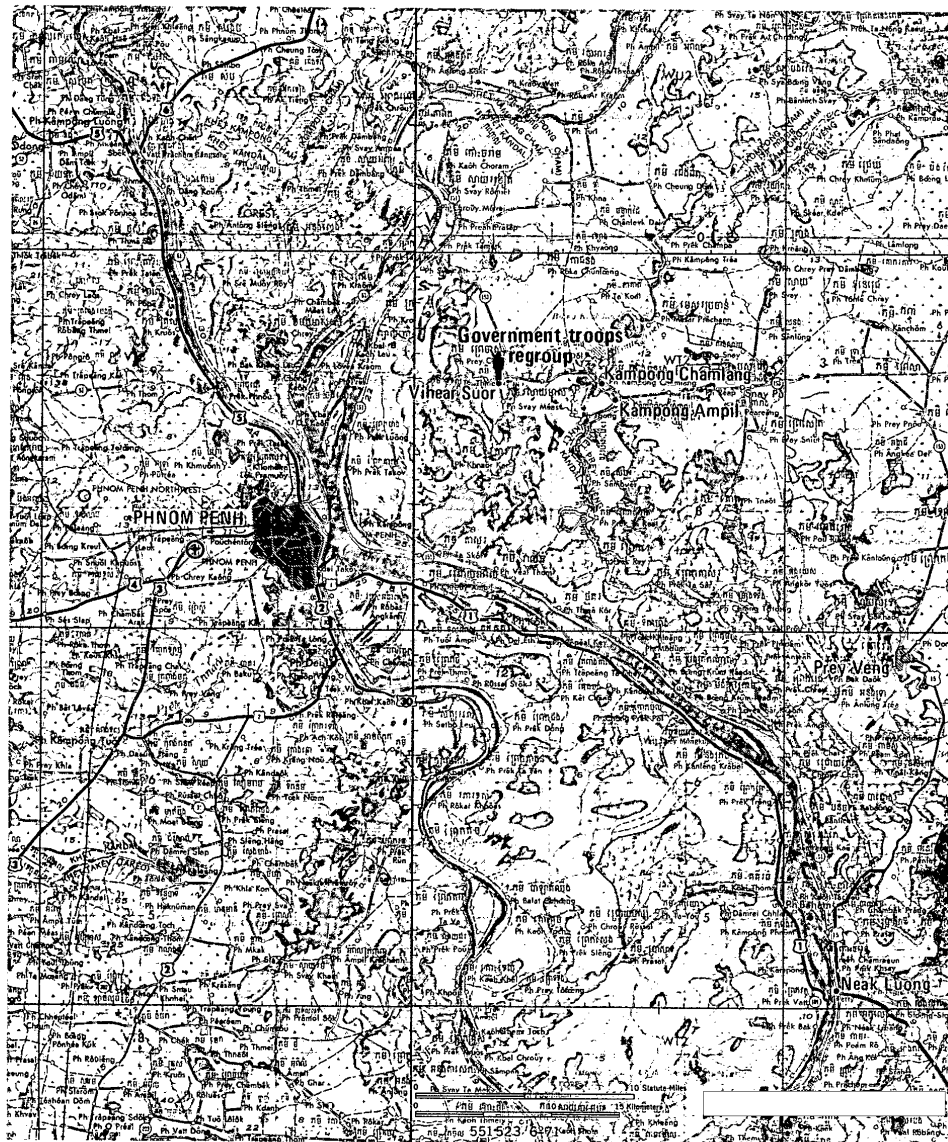
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NORTH VIETNAM

Xuan Thuy, North Vietnam's chief delegate in Paris, told Chalmers Roberts of the Washington Post that the Communists might be willing to separate their military and political demands, and thus not insist on the removal of the present Saigon government as part of the price for American prisoners. But he made clear that simply setting a date for the withdrawal of US forces would not bring about their release. Thuy indicated that prisoners would not be set free until the US is committed not just to the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam, but to pulling out all American military personnel from Indochina--including advisers and other noncombatants--and ceasing all American military operations against the Communists. He implied strongly that military aid to the South Vietnamese Government would have to end too.

The Thuy interview suggests that Hanoi is not likely to alter soon its basic position on prisoners even for propaganda effect. Thuy made clear once again that the Communists insist the prisoner question is a postwar issue that can only be settled after the US agrees--either by negotiation or by ending support for the present Saigon government--to resolve the main issue of political power in South Vietnam to Hanoi's satisfaction.

Phnom Penh Area



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CAMBODIA

Government forces northeast of Phnom Penh are regrouping following the heavy attacks by the Communists two days ago. Most of the Khmer Krom troops that were hit on 8 June between Vihear Suor and Kampong Chamlang were able to fight their way back to their staging base at Vihear Suor.

A Cambodian spokesman says these forces will make another attempt soon to drive through to hard-pressed government positions at Kampong Chamlang and Kampong Ampil.

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The commander of the Khmer Krom units on the northeastern battlefield told the US defense attaché yesterday, however, that he is unable to retake the initiative now because his troops are low on ammunition and in need of replacements. He said his units suffered 26 killed and 126 wounded in the fighting on 8 June, a total substantially lower than initial reports indicated. Over-all Khmer Krom losses in the current campaign total 50 killed and 246 wounded. The commander said his men's morale nevertheless remained high because they killed at least 85 of the enemy in Tuesday's encounter.

The US defense attaché reports that a Vietnamese Communist prisoner captured by the Khmer Krom has told his interrogators that his unit had moved out of the Chup plantation area with orders to capture Kampong Chamlang and Kampong Ampil. The prisoner said his unit would eventually attack Phnom Penh.

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USSR

The current space mission involving Soyuz 11 and the Salyut orbital station evidently will last at least several more days and probably a week or longer.

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When the checkout of Salyut is completed, the present crew may be replaced by another crew for a longer mission, although there is no sign at present that another Soyuz spacecraft will be launched.

One important aspect of the current mission is the opportunity it gives the Soviets to obtain more data on the effects of prolonged weightlessness on Soviet space crews. The cosmonauts involved in the 18-day mission of Soyuz 9 in June 1970--the longest Soviet space flight to date--suffered severe debilitation and other medical problems for at least ten days after their return. The Soviets will want to minimize these problems before sending cosmonauts on missions of longer duration.

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MALTA

In the elections for the 55-seat parliament to be held from 12 to 14 June, the main contenders are the conservative Nationalist Party led by Prime Minister Borg-Olivier and the leftist Labor Party under Dom Mintoff. One development favorable for Labor has been the neutral attitude of the local Catholic church, an attitude which contrasts sharply with past church policy of warning that a vote for Labor was a mortal sin.

Pulse-taking in one key electoral district suggests that a pro-Labor trend may be running. Although Nationalist leaders are confidently predicting victory, most observers see the race as very close, with a good chance that the Labor Party will win a slim majority. Labor is expected to win backing from a large portion of young people voting for the first time.

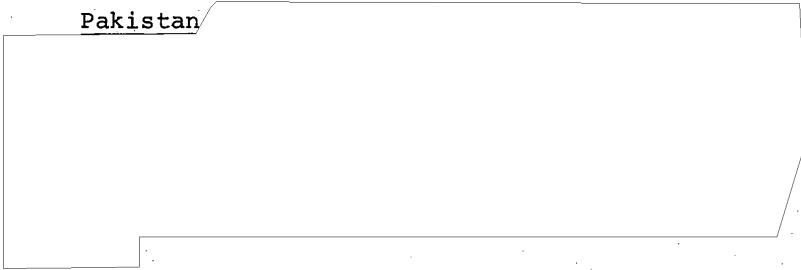


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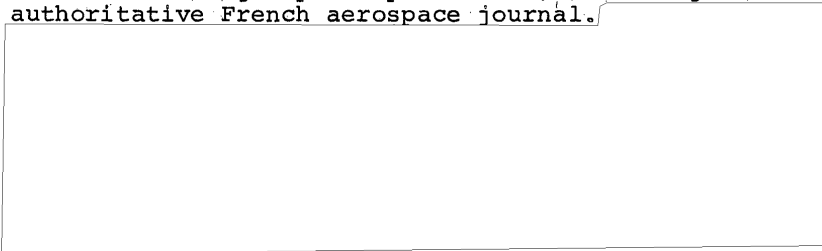
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Pakistan



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France: President Pompidou will visit the IRBM site at St. Christol in southeastern France later this month, at which time he is expected to announce that the first group is operational, according to an authoritative French aerospace journal.



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