



The President's Daily Brief

1 July 1971

46

~~*Top Secret*~~



50X1

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

1 July 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Laos, Vang Pao's forces continue to cut deeply into Communist territory on and near the Plaine des Jarres. (Page 1)

The immediate Communist threat has eased in South Vietnam's central highlands. (Page 2)

50X1

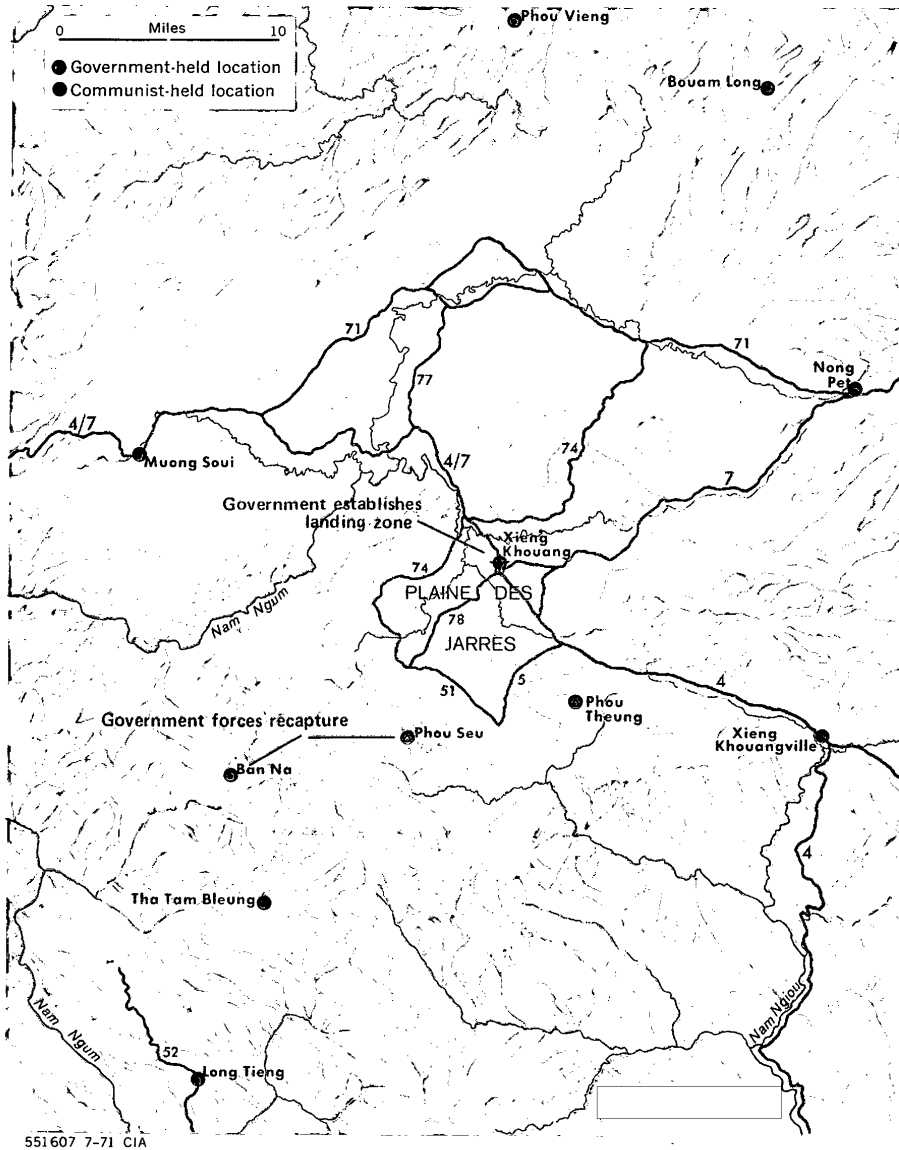
Peking has increased its forces in western China since early this year. (Page 3)

Communist logistic forces in the Laotian panhandle are continuing a low level of transportation activity despite unusually heavy rains. (Page 4)



FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS: PLAINE DES JARRES AREA



50X1

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LAOS

On Tuesday, forward elements of Vang Pao's irregulars reached Xieng Khouang airfield in the north central portion of the Plaine des Jarres and established a landing zone nearby. They found no evidence of recent enemy activity. At the same time, other patrols moved into the northeastern part of the Plaine, locating and destroying many small supply caches.

Government forces have not been present in this area of the Plaine since February 1970, when a North Vietnamese counteroffensive drove the irregulars from Xieng Khouangville and swiftly rolled back the gains of the rainy season campaign in 1969.

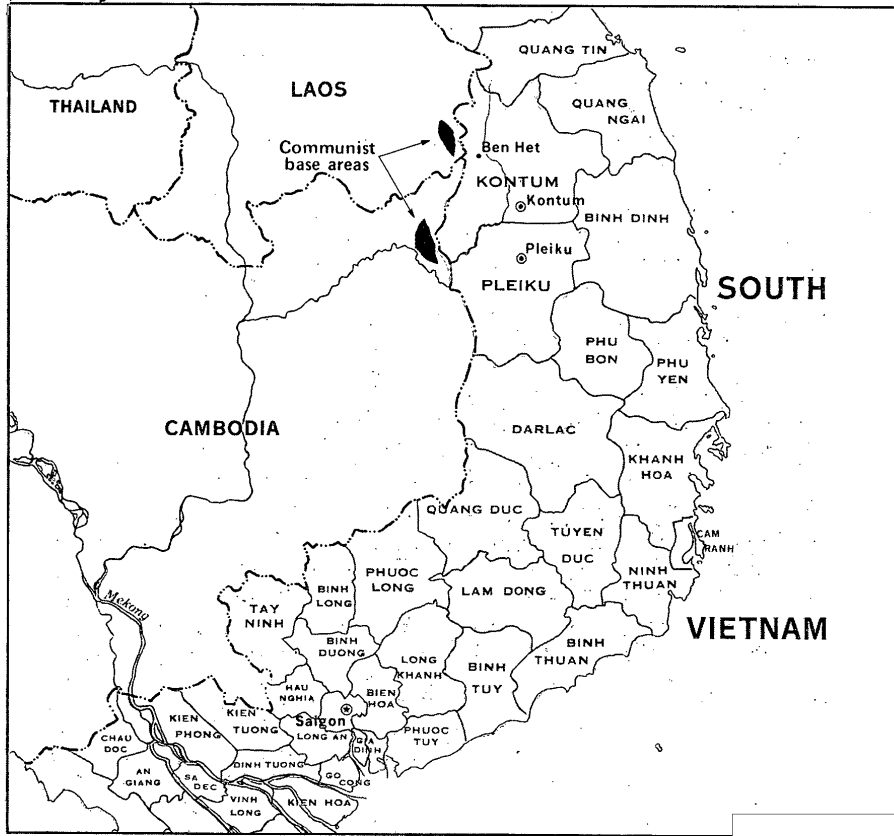
Other significant government advances were scored west of the Plaine. Irregular units have captured the entire Phou Seu ridge--the scene of clashes for several days--and other irregulars have moved back into Ban Na, an important government artillery base that had been abandoned in April.

Vang Pao was not able to take Ban Na until mid-October last year, and his efforts to secure strong points north of Ban Na then had proved only temporarily successful.

The North Vietnamese clearly have been caught off balance by Vang Pao's offensive. They had been pulling back some of their units from forward positions west of the Plaine, which in part accounts for Vang Pao's relatively easy progress to date. Recent intercepts from the two Communist regiments near Phou Seu and Phou Theung indicate that they have suffered casualties and have supply problems, largely resulting from government tactical air and artillery attacks. The North Vietnamese, however, still have six regiments, with artillery and armor support, in the general vicinity of the Plaine.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Forces Return to Base Areas



551610 7-71 CIA

50X1

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

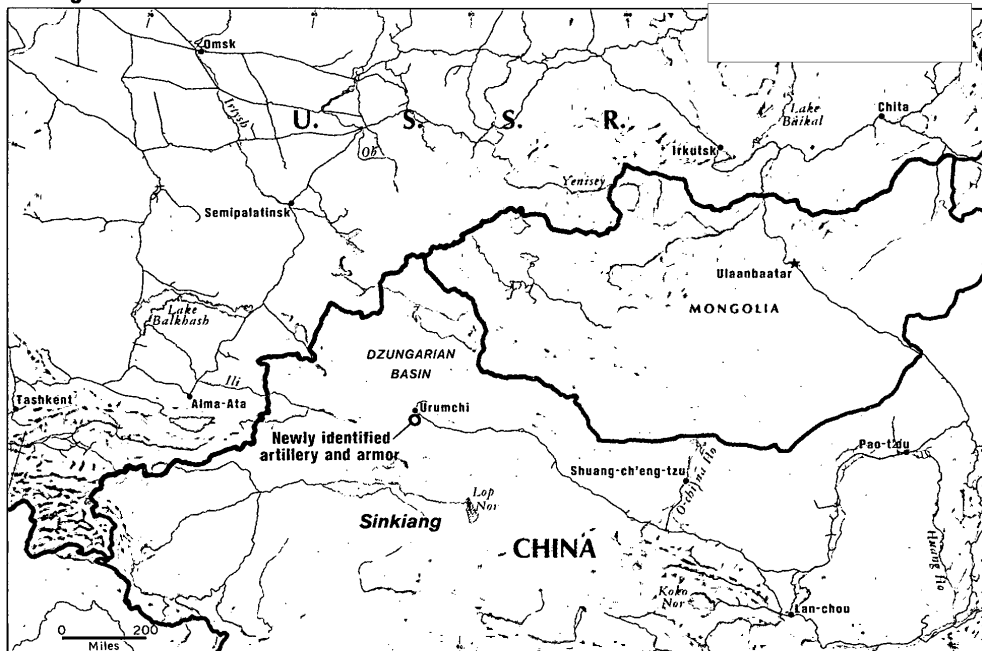
SOUTH VIETNAM

Two North Vietnamese infantry regiments and part of an artillery regiment have moved away from the Ben Het battlefield in western Kontum Province to sanctuary in Laos. Two other North Vietnamese infantry regiments, which had been attacking allied targets in Pleiku Province, have pulled back into a Cambodian base camp. Elements of these units, however, no doubt remain behind to harass allied positions in conjunction with local forces.

These regiments apparently have pulled back for a period of rest and retraining. They are likely also to absorb many of the new personnel and much of the equipment--including long-range artillery and possibly antiaircraft weapons--which were moving south during May and June from North Vietnam.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Peking Increases Forces in Western China



50X1

50X1

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

COMMUNIST CHINA

The latest satellite photography shows more than 100 artillery pieces in revetted positions, about 50 tanks and assault guns, and over 300 trucks in the hills just south of Urumchi in Sinkiang. The equipment would be enough for an artillery division and an armor unit of undetermined size.

Chinese forces in Sinkiang had been expanded from about 40,000 in 1965 to 80,000 at the end of 1970. Much of this gradual increase resulted from the addition of an infantry division and border defense forces. Identification of the equipment for new units is the first evidence of a reinforcement of this nature in western China. The artillery and armor will considerably enhance the capability of the Chinese to defend the flat plain between the Soviet border and Urumchi.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Indochina: Communist supply forces in the Laotian panhandle are continuing a low level of transportation activity despite unusually heavy rains. Occasional breaks in the weather have permitted the repair and use of rain- and bomb-damaged main roads, and supplies have been free-floated on waterways. Although truck movements increased during the past week, the flow of supplies during June remained below last June's level when weather was better. Some AAA units and logistic personnel are returning to North Vietnam for the duration of the rainy season, but there have been no indications of a large-scale withdrawal; most of the Communists' logistic forces are likely to remain in the panhandle.

USSR-Egypt:

50X1
50X1

Top Secret