



The President's Daily Brief

7 July 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

7 July 1971

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

[Redacted] Soviet

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(Page 1)

In South Vietnam, [Redacted] Thieu is doing everything possible to keep Vice President Ky from qualifying for the presidential race this fall. (Page 2)

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Recent movements by North Vietnamese units in northern Laos seem designed to prevent Vang Pao's irregulars from driving eastward from the Plaine des Jarres. (Page 3)

South Korea [Redacted] has urged President Pak to make a gesture toward the concept of unification with North Korea. (Page 4)

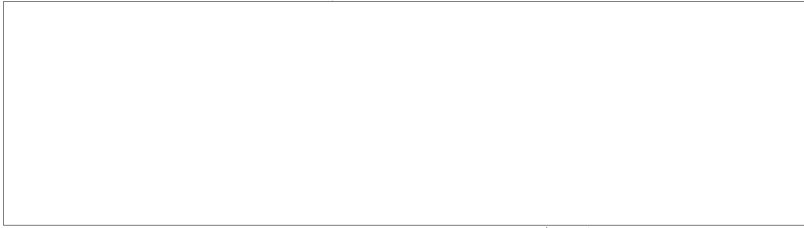
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[Redacted]

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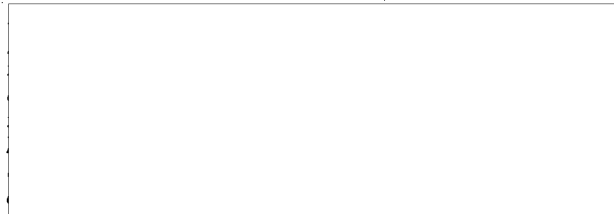
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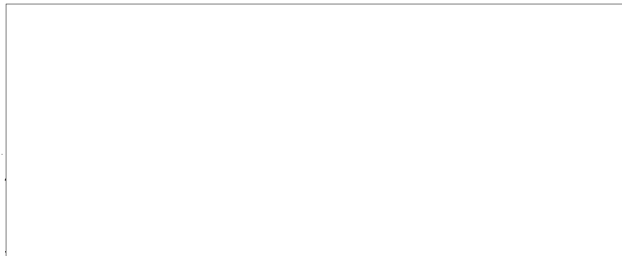
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SOUTH VIETNAM

[redacted] Thieu is doing everything possible to prevent Ky from obtaining from provincial councilors the 100 signatures he needs to qualify as a presidential candidate. Government officials are said to be using both intimidation and bribery to persuade councilors not to sign for Ky.

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[redacted]

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Ky himself apparently remains optimistic that he will be on the ballot, probably because of an agreement with Big Minh that provincial councilors sympathetic to Minh would endorse Ky.

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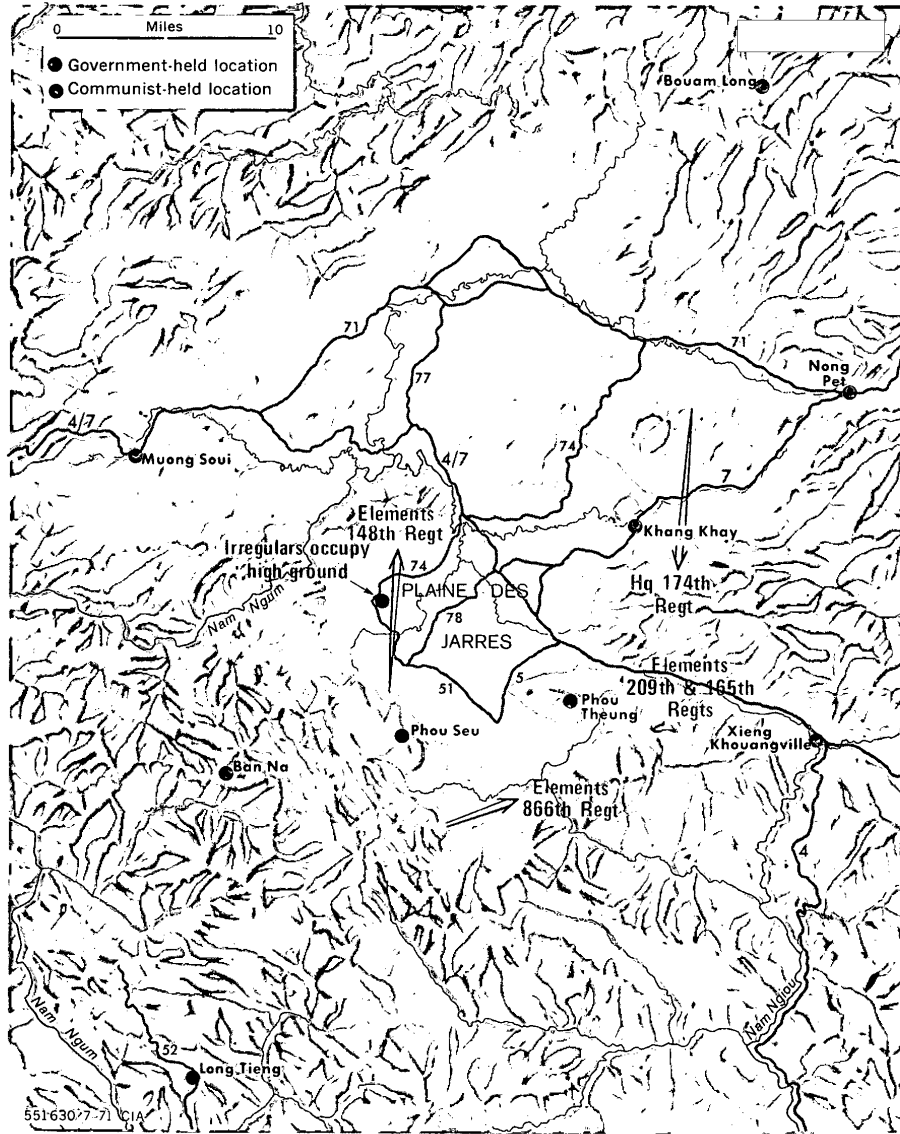
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[redacted] plans to have An Quang councilors nominate Ky are running into trouble because Ky's unpopularity among the Buddhists makes it difficult to ask them to feign support for him.

The prospect that Ky may not qualify is said to be causing Minh to have second thoughts about his candidacy. Minh's resolve to run has wavered in the past because of his concern over the fairness of the election; some of his supporters believe that if the government's tactics succeed in keeping Ky off the ballot, Minh will conclude that he has no chance to win and will withdraw.

Thieu apparently is aware of the possibility that both Minh and Ky will drop out. Thieu is reported to have ordered province chiefs to solicit blank endorsements from councilors which could be used to nominate some other candidate if necessary to give the appearance of a fair election.

LAOS: PLAINE DES JARRES AREA



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**LAOS**

Major North Vietnamese units near the Plaine des Jarres appear to be relocating in order to block any effort by Vang Pao's irregulars to move eastward from the Plaine. According to both intercepts and direction finding, "large formations" of the 148th Regiment of the 316th NVA Division are pulling back from the Phou Seu area southwest of the Plaine, where they have been active in much of the recent fighting. The division's 174th Regiment, which has been laying siege to Bouam Long north of the Plaine, is suspected to be moving southward, possibly to secure high ground east of the Plaine. This regiment has not been heard in communications since 3 July, and there has been no contact reported by commanders of irregular forces at Bouam Long.

The NVA 866th Independent Regiment also appears to have moved recently to new positions southeast of the Plaine. Elements of two regiments of the 312th Division--the 165th and 209th--are located in the same general area.

It may take the North Vietnamese some time to refit and regroup their units before they are able to mount any major counter-offensive. Their intercepts indicate, for example, that they are continuing to have supply difficulties and that they have many sick and wounded troops.

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SOUTH KOREA

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] is urging Pak to take a new initiative on unification with North Korea,

[Redacted] As a first step in Yi's plan, Pak would propose that the North and South Korean Red Cross societies arrange for an exchange of names and addresses of refugees and families divided by the war. If all went well, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] this would be followed by an exchange of mail, athletes, artists, and news publications. Eventually, there could be economic and political contacts between the North and South.

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Last year Pak rejected recommendations for similar exchanges and is not likely to accept such a far-reaching proposal now. Pak, however, is said to favor a gradual relaxation of Seoul's rigid prohibition against all contact with the North in order to bring South Korean policy more into line with the worldwide easing of East-West tensions.

Last summer Pak, in a clear attempt to seize the propaganda initiative from Pyongyang, called for a lifting of the barriers dividing Korea and promised, subject to conditions unacceptable to the North, to drop South Korea's opposition to North Korean participation in the UN debate of the Korean question. Thus, he may be willing to make some public gesture on the unification issue--such as the exchange of names--prior to the UN debate later this year.

Although all Koreans favor reunification in principle, public fear and resentment among Southerners against the North is strong. Pak will move cautiously in order not to alarm the many South Koreans who oppose any form of compromise with the Communists.



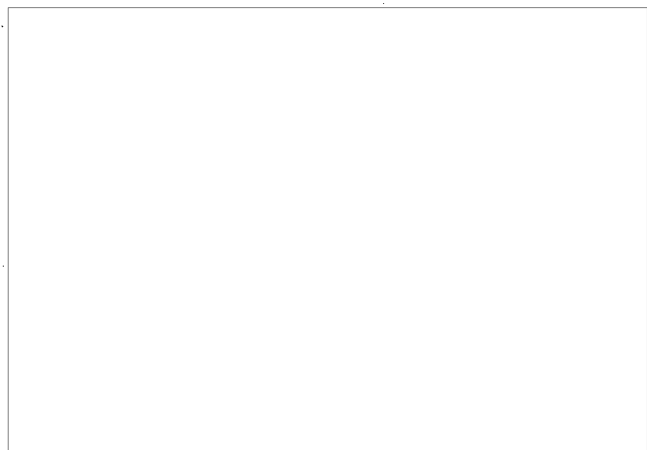
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USSR - NORTH KOREA



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