

The President's Daily Brief

19 January 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

19 January 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Laos, irregulars have recaptured another position on the ridge overlooking the Long Tieng valley, but additional North Vietnamese units are now south of the valley. (Page 1)

[redacted] Cambodia [redacted]
[redacted] (Page 2)

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Thailand [redacted]
[redacted] (Page 3)

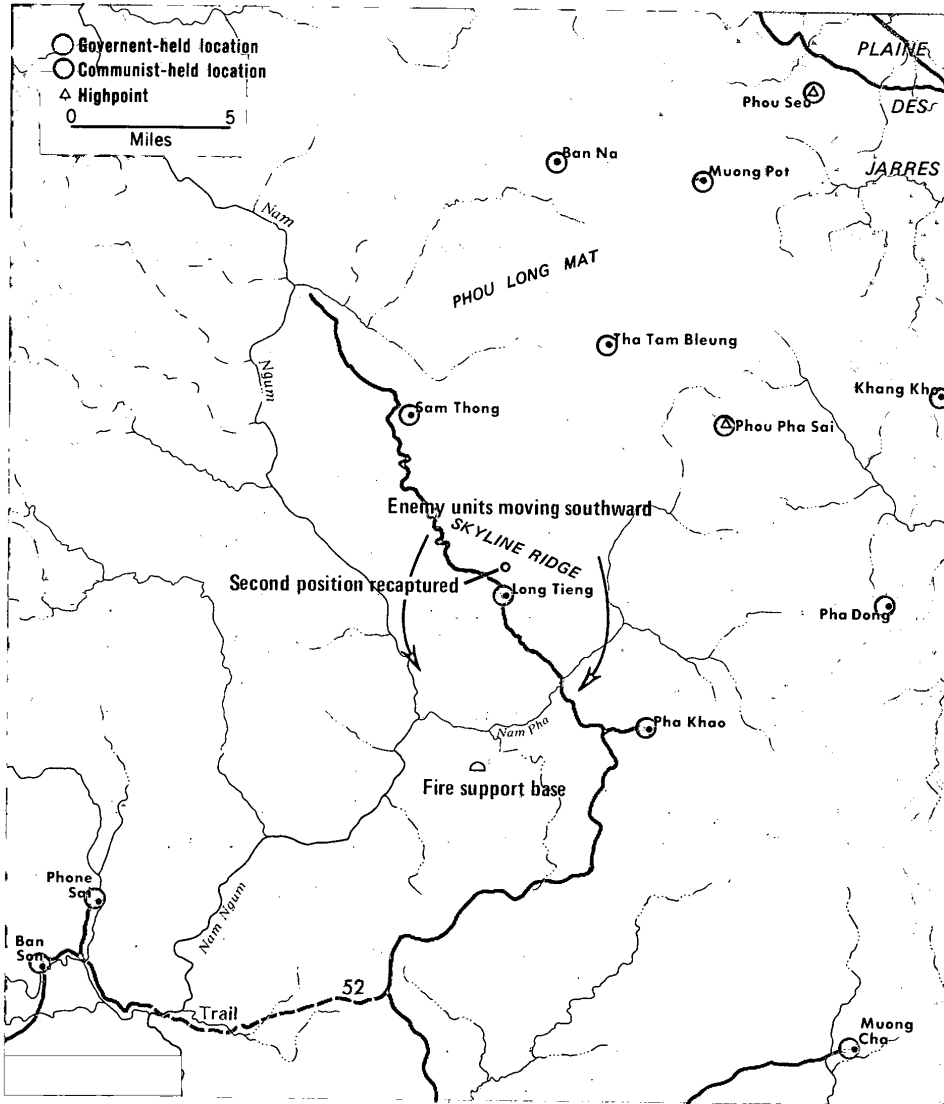
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Both the UK and Malta appear to expect today's talks to break the deadlock. (Page 4)

LONG TIENG AREA



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LAOS

A second position was recaptured from the Communists yesterday in the central portion of Skyline Ridge. This followed the rotation of fresh irregular units into front-line positions on the ridge and the resumption of the government's slow push eastward. The North Vietnamese, meanwhile, have kept up sporadic harassment of the Long Tieng valley with their 130-mm. field guns, and new information indicates that they may have moved up to three more battalions south of Long Tieng where two are already operating.

From such positions, enemy units could mount a flanking attack on the Long Tieng valley, threaten a fire support base being established some five miles south of Long Tieng, or try to block any irregular withdrawal from the valley. Enemy anti-aircraft positions in this area could also hinder air resupply and medical evacuation operations.

A [redacted] North Vietnamese [redacted] [redacted] says [redacted] that Long Tieng be taken "at all costs" and no later than early February. Afterward, the troops are to move farther on and remain in the area throughout the dry season before pulling back to the North Vietnamese border. [redacted]

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[redacted] at least some of the North Vietnamese units around Long Tieng are experiencing supply difficulties, particularly of small arms ammunition and food.

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Such shortages and transportation problems could well account for the failure of the North Vietnamese so far to launch coordinated ground attacks against irregular units defending the Long Tieng area. These difficulties are probably the result of heavy artillery and air strikes against Communist lines of communication.

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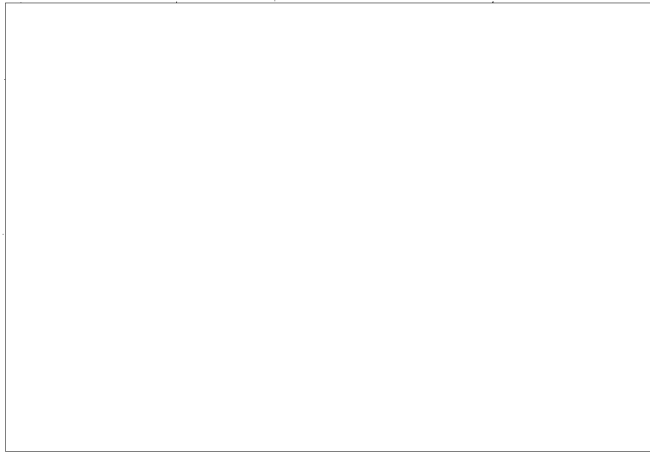
CAMBODIA



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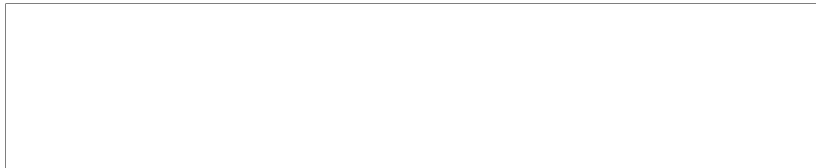
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THAILAND



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MALTA-UK

The increased NATO package of more than \$36 million plus bilateral aid, agreed to by the North Atlantic Council yesterday, may break the deadlock when the UK resumes negotiations with Malta today. Prime Minister Mintoff has previously indicated that he will consider an offer of this magnitude

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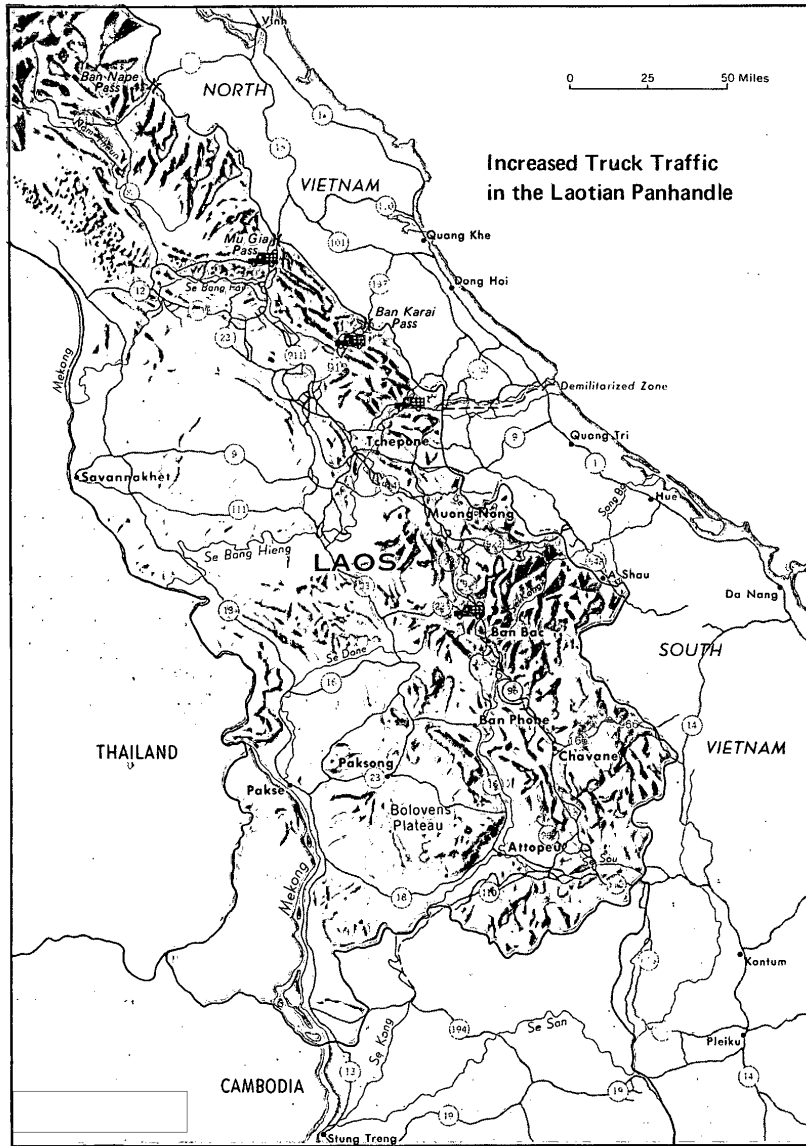
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The British are beginning to moderate their own hard line regarding a total withdrawal now that Mintoff shows some signs of coming to terms. The UK high commissioner in Valletta stated on Monday that British force strength would return to pre-departure levels if an accord is reached. British troops are still packing up for withdrawal

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NOTES

Indochina:

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[Redacted] An in-
tercept of 9 January indicates that some unusual
daylight truck movements are scheduled, at least on
routes to the northwest of Tchepone.

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South Vietnam:

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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(continued)

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Western Europe - Bangladesh: The European Community countries and Britain have agreed to recognize Bangladesh, possibly next week. These countries hope that presenting Pakistani President Bhutto with a united front will dissuade him from breaking diplomatic relations. Although Bhutto broke ties with three small Communist countries when they recognized Bangladesh, he merely recalled his ambassadors when Burma and Nepal, countries of greater importance to Islamabad, took this step.

USSR: [REDACTED]

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