

The President's Daily Brief

27 January 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Viet Cong officials in Hanoi have issued an appeal for a popular uprising in South Vietnam presumably keyed to the coming Communist offensive. (Page 1)

In Laos, government forces are strengthening their defenses around Long Tieng. (Page 2)

North Vietnam

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] Cambodia. (Page 3)

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Widespread opposition among black Rhodesians is threatening to upset the UK-Rhodesia settlement. (Page 4)

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SOUTH VIETNAM

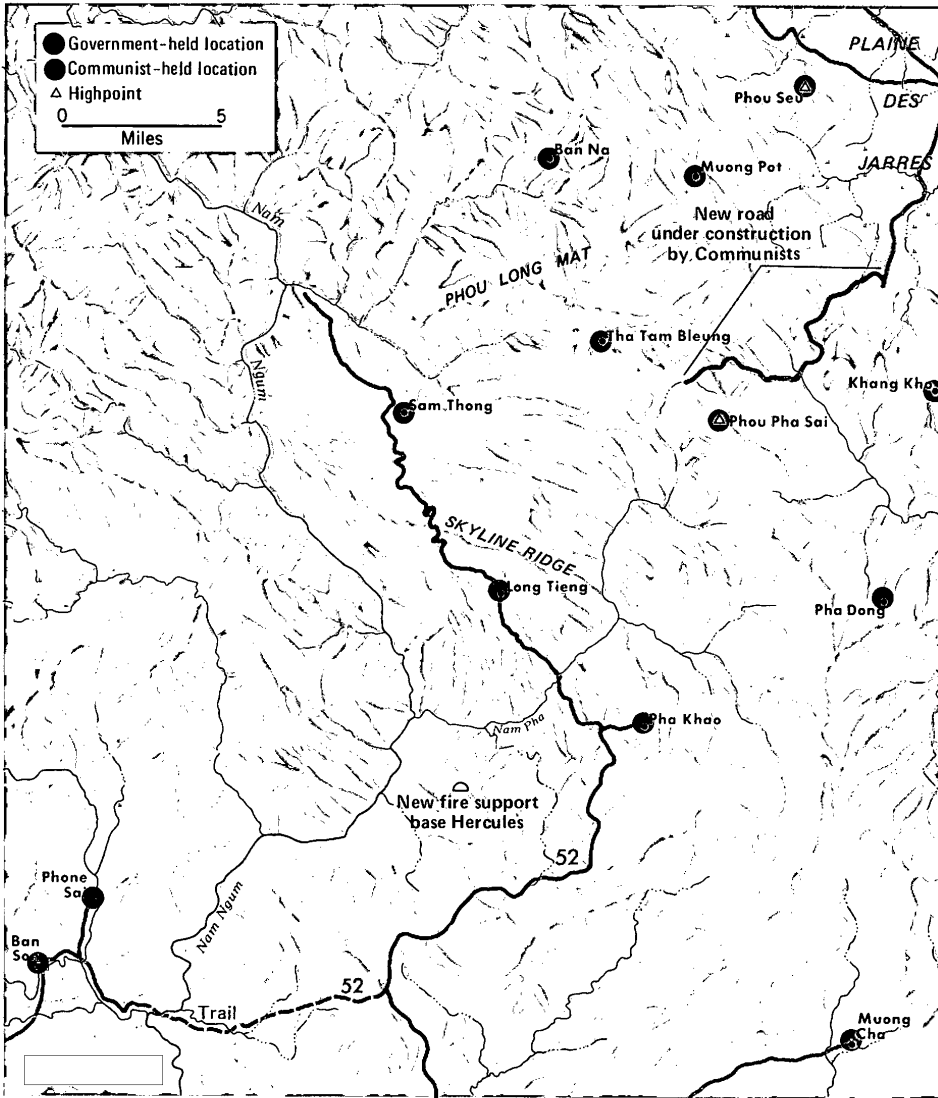
In an unusual full-dress news conference in Hanoi on 25 January, Viet Cong representatives issued a "policy statement" calling on the South Vietnamese to overthrow the Thieu government and drive out the Americans. As part of the appeal, which was later broadcast by Radio Hanoi, the Viet Cong officials reiterated a two-year-old proposal by their "Provisional Government" offering amnesty to any South Vietnamese soldier or civilian who would now support a general uprising. The statement also offered lenient treatment to civilian officials, regardless of their previous record, if they will join the anti-Saigon cause. Commenting on the statement, Hanoi's official newspaper praised the amnesty proposal and emphasized that "now is the time for our entire people to arise and hit the enemy."

This is the first time since Tet of 1968 that the Communists have formally called for an uprising in the South. Hanoi undoubtedly hopes that the statement will intimidate Saigon's forces and the South Vietnamese population in preparation for the coming Communist offensive. As in the past, the Communists may also anticipate that this kind of propaganda will help them get maximum advantage from any military successes.

Calling for a popular uprising also carries a propaganda risk for the Communists, however. Although the enemy's military units are capable of striking many populated areas of South Vietnam, it is doubtful that they have sufficient assets in place to demonstrate a significant degree of popular support during the attack. Many ranking enemy cadres in South Vietnam are said to be highly dissatisfied with the way recruitment and political agitation have been going and are particularly skeptical of Communist strength in the cities, where, according to Communist doctrine, a "general" uprising must culminate. Thus, the Communists may be setting themselves up for a political disappointment that could cost them some of the credibility and support, both in South Vietnam and abroad, that might be generated by a dramatic military effort.

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LONG TIENG AREA



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LAOS

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A new fire support base south of Long Tieng will soon be operational. The Long Tieng airstrip has been reopened for limited use by Lao Air Force T-28s and small resupply aircraft.

These developments should make it possible for Vang Pao to mount a more cohesive and flexible defense and to begin more aggressive patrol operations aimed at locating enemy units for air and artillery strikes.

The North Vietnamese have maintained a moderate level of ground probes and shelling attacks on irregular positions around Long Tieng. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] the Communists are continuing to push ahead with a road from the southwestern edge of the Plaine des Jarres toward Tha Tam Bleung. [Redacted]

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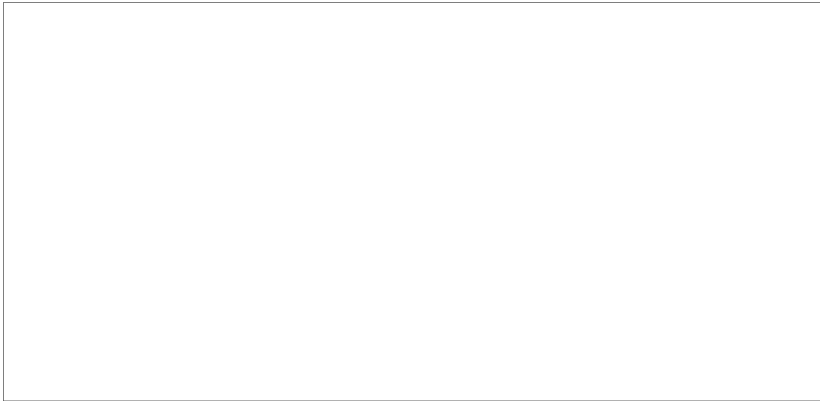
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Most North Vietnamese combat units appear to be re-supplying and refitting, and intercepts from some have made reference to receiving replacements. They could resume an assault on Long Tieng shortly after supplies are brought in over the new road.

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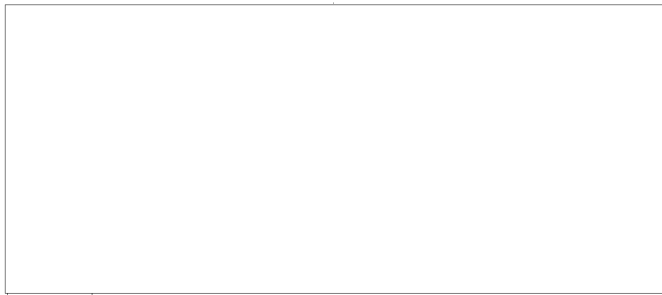
CAMBODIA - NORTH VIETNAM



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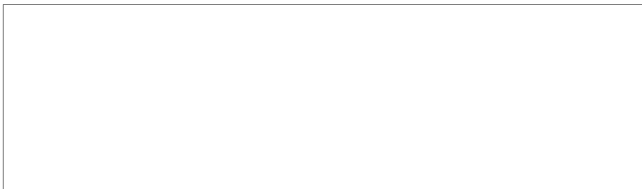
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UK-RHODESIA

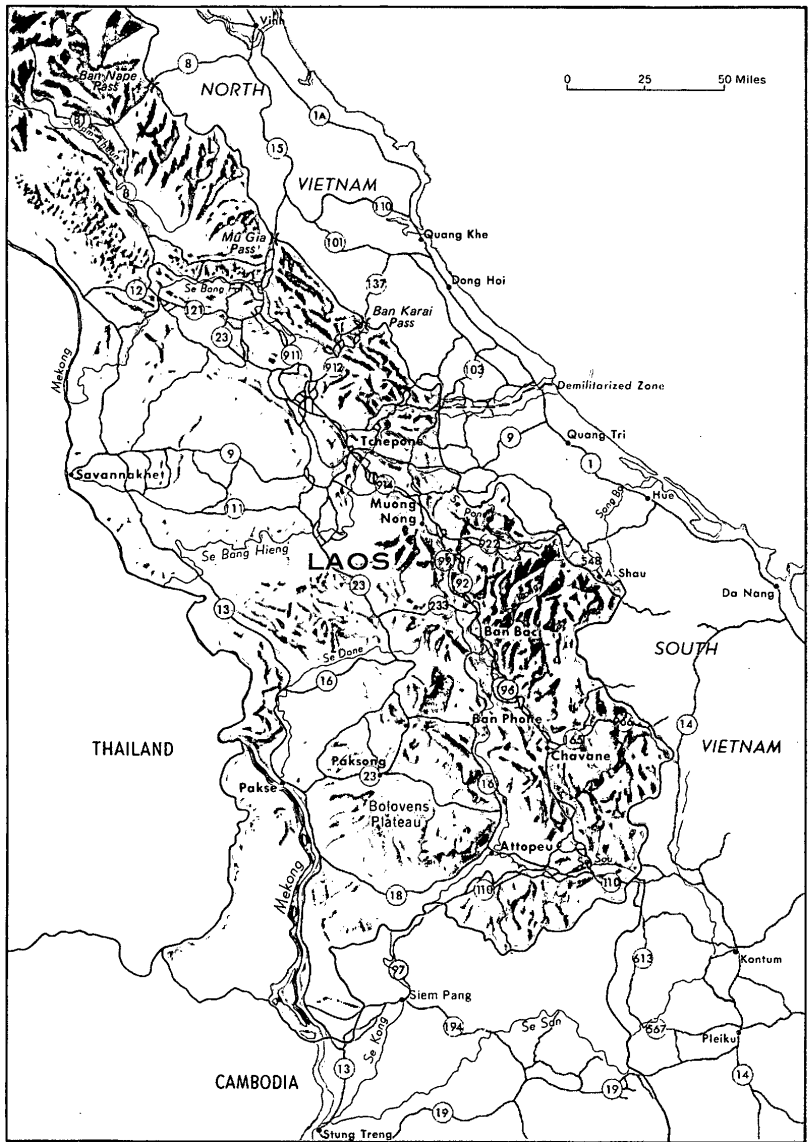
The UK-Rhodesian agreement arrived at last November called for creation of a commission to study the acceptability of the settlement among Rhodesia's Africans. The commission is now operating under the chairmanship of Lord Pearce and is encountering evidence of widespread opposition among black Rhodesians to the preliminary settlement. As expected, most urban blacks are against the accord, but there are also early signs that rural Africans are solidly opposed.

The commission still has about six weeks of canvassing ahead of it. Unless the present trend is reversed soon, which seems unlikely, Lord Pearce will have no recourse but to report to London that the agreement is unacceptable to Rhodesian Africans. In that case, the settlement, which London views as a last-ditch effort to prevent Salisbury from turning to South Africa's type of apartheid, would be dead.



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NOTES

Indochina: Both aerial observation and sensor detection indicate that the North Vietnamese are sustaining a high level of vehicle activity in the Laotian panhandle since they began their logistic push earlier this month. One logistic organization located in northeast Cambodia near Siem Pang notes, in an intercept, that it moved 118 tons of supplies on 15 January and that some 126 tons of 82-mm. mortar ammunition--more than 20,000 rounds--are stored in its area. The location of the stockpile, one of the largest of a single type of ammunition ever detected in this part of Cambodia, is such that the ammunition could be made available fairly rapidly to combat units either in South Vietnam's central highlands or in the COSVN area farther south.

Warsaw Pact: The statement on European security issued at the end of the Warsaw Pact summit meeting yesterday contained nothing new. There is no indication that Moscow has formulated a negotiating position or has arrived at a realistic way to get talks on force reductions under way. Nevertheless, the statement may well touch off a new round of pronouncements by Moscow and its allies professing interest in such talks. The Soviets may see special merit in this over the next several weeks as a means of attesting their desire to lessen tensions in Europe and to take some play away from President Nixon's visit to Peking.

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