

The President's Daily Brief

27 April 1972



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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

27 April 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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The North Vietnamese are holding out the prospect of renewed secret talks and the return of politburo member Le Duc Tho to the Paris negotiations.

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[Redacted]

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Heavy fighting has broken out around Quang Tri City, and there are numerous signs that the North Vietnamese are preparing for new attacks on the other two major battlefronts. (Page 3)

Party chief Brezhnev has addressed a conclave of Soviet military leaders. (Page 4)

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WEST GERMANY

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NORTH VIETNAM

The North Vietnamese have responded publicly to the US decision to resume regular negotiating sessions in Paris by holding out the prospect of renewed secret talks. Press accounts state that chief Hanoi negotiator Xuan Thuy told the French foreign minister yesterday it was "highly possible" that Hanoi politburo member Le Duc Tho would come to Paris in the next few days, and that this could open the way for private negotiations. In making the announcement, Thuy apparently made no reference to the conditions he previously set for renewal of the secret sessions.

Hanoi's domestic news media have reported that the regular sessions will resume, but so far have avoided any reference to the possibility of Tho's returning. An editorial in the party's daily newspaper on 26 April claimed that setbacks on the battlefield and mounting public pressure had forced the US back to the negotiating table. Radio Hanoi went to some length to assure its domestic audience that North Vietnam had given up none of its basic demands to get the talks started again.

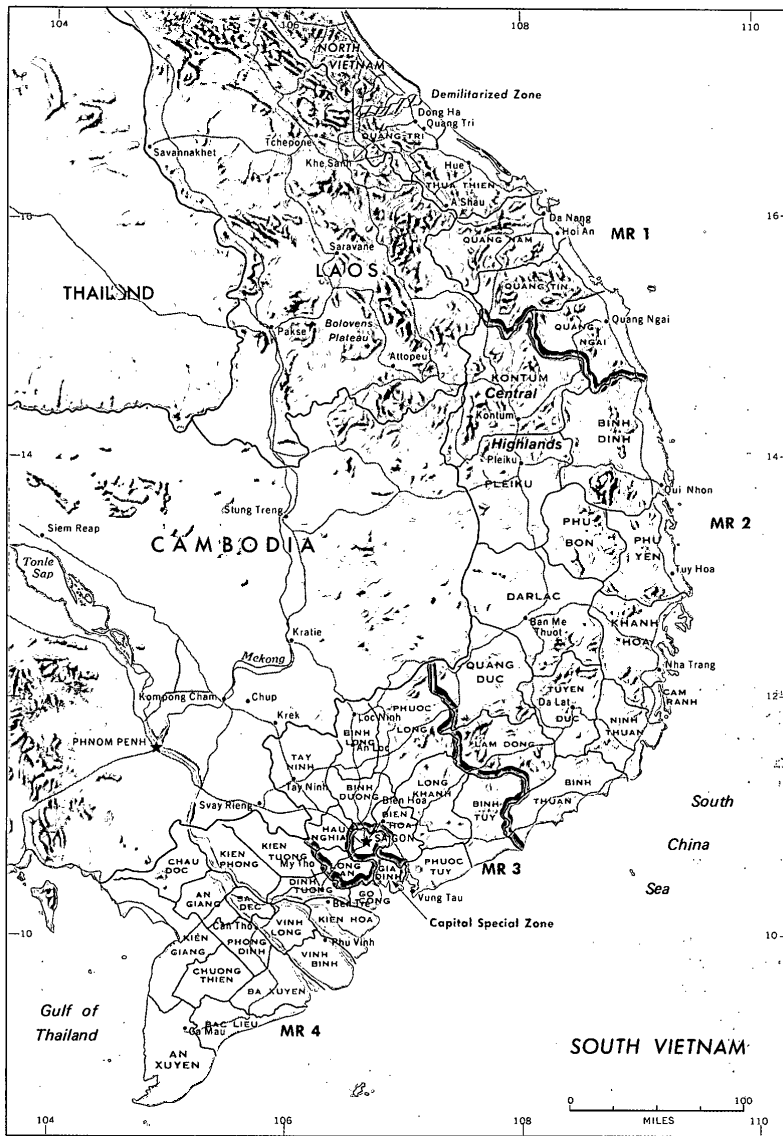
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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY***SOUTH VIETNAM**

Heavy fighting has broken out around Quang Tri City with fresh Communist artillery and ground assaults against South Vietnamese units in the city. In addition, there are numerous signs that the North Vietnamese are getting ready for new attacks on the other two major battlefronts. Intercepted communications reflect continuing enemy preparations for heavier fighting in both Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces. North Vietnamese advances have been slowed in Kontum Province north of the provincial capital, but Communist forces appear to be regrouping for a fresh round of attacks. The enemy has resumed heavy shellings of An Loc and apparently is concentrating large numbers of troops and armored vehicles to the north for a new push against the city.

An Khe Pass in Binh Dinh Province was cleared of enemy forces on 26 April by South Korean units, thereby reopening Route 19, the principal resupply route into the highland provinces of Kontum and Pleiku. The road had been closed for two weeks.

Smaller Viet Cong units are continuing to exact a heavy toll in the countryside. The Communists now control large sections of the eastern lowlands in the southern three provinces of Military Region 1, and local South Vietnamese officials are convinced that nothing short of a major military effort will succeed in restoring government authority to these formerly pacified areas. Viet Cong units are driving refugees away from hamlets and resettlement camps formerly controlled by the government and are attacking bridges and fortified compounds along many sections of Route 1, which runs along the coast.

In Chuong Thien Province, in the Mekong Delta, Vietnamese military officials admit that the Communists now have established almost complete control over all of the major communications routes there, largely without using their main force units.

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USSR

Party chief Brezhnev addressed a conclave in Moscow of Soviet military leaders gathered from across the country for a meeting last Monday and Tuesday. According to a domestic news broadcast, Brezhnev gave a "profound and thorough analysis" of the USSR's domestic and international situation, particularly as it affects the Soviet army and navy.

Brezhnev's purpose in addressing the meeting, which in other respects appeared to be routine, may have been to brief military leaders on defense-related issues to be discussed at the summit. Our records indicate it has been five years since Brezhnev addressed such a meeting. That was in April 1967, three days after the death of Marshal Malinovsky, when decisions were being made about the appointment of a new defense minister.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Soviet Naval Visits to Cuba

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1969							20-27 7 days					
1970					14-29 15 days				9-26 17 days			7-27 20 days
1971		10-28 18 days			25-4 10 days						31- 82 days	
1972	-20		5-									

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NOTES

USSR-Cuba: [redacted]

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Fedayeen: [redacted]

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Chile: Communist Party leaders' irritation with President Allende, while hardly new, has recently reached serious proportions [redacted]

[redacted] The Communists resent Allende's failure to consult the UP before he appointed an army general to the cabinet, although they approve the general's qualifications. They are galled by the President's persistent overtures to the extremist Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) to join the coalition at the same time that the MIR is challenging coalition candidates and policies. The party is also impatient with Allende's delay in pushing the program for nationalization of industry, particularly because Communist strategy for extending the coalition's power puts primary stress on control of the economy.

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