



The President's Daily Brief

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13 June 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

13 June 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The North Vietnamese have launched a massive overland resupply effort from China, and together with the Chinese are working on a pipeline to carry petroleum south from the border. (Page 1)

Yesterday Peking issued its strongest statement in support of Hanoi since the intensification of the fighting this spring. (Page 2)

South Vietnamese troops have made gains in the fighting at An Loc, while Communist forces maintain heavy pressure in the northern delta area. (Page 3)

[Redacted] North Vietnam [Redacted] (Page 4)

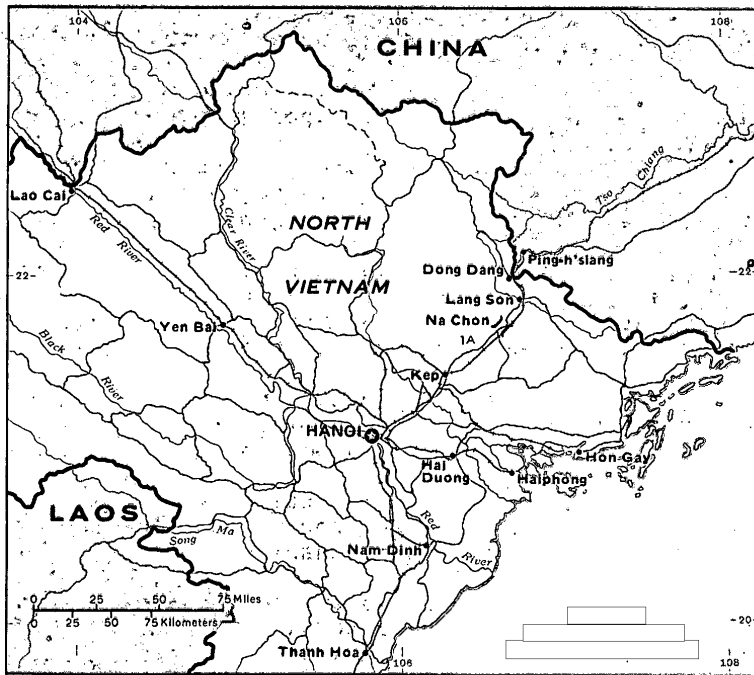
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Egyptian President Sadat has given further evidence of his frustration at the lack of progress in solving the Arab-Israeli dispute. (Page 6)

Soviet President Podgorny now is scheduled to arrive in Hanoi tomorrow. (Page 7)

The resignation of President Allende's cabinet sets the stage for the long-awaited reorganization of the Chilean Government. (Page 7)

Heavy Road/Rail Traffic Between Lang Son and Hanoi



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NORTH VIETNAM

The North Vietnamese have evidently launched a massive overland resupply effort from China. On the night of 9 June, US Navy pilots estimated that between 30 and 40 trucks per mile were moving on the 90-mile segment of Route 1A between Lang Son and Hanoi--about four times the level observed on the same stretch two nights earlier. Very heavy truck traffic was sighted the next night along a 25-mile stretch of the road south of Lang Son, and on 11 June trucks were reported backed up bumper to bumper at the downed rail-highway bridge at Na Chon. Attacks on this concentration resulted in numerous secondary explosions and a "continuous wall of flame," suggesting that the vehicles were loaded with petroleum products.

Photography of 6 and 7 June indicates that the Chinese and North Vietnamese also are working on a pipeline to carry petroleum south from the Chinese border town of Ping-hsiang. The photographs show trenching between the petroleum storage area of Ping-hsiang and the North Vietnamese town of Dong Dang. Moreover, 40 storage tanks are being added to the 50 now at Ping-hsiang.

The construction between Ping-hsiang and Dong Dang is apparently related to the pipeline recently observed under construction from Hai Duong northward toward Kep. Photographs [redacted] show some segments of pipe above ground midway between Kep and Dong Dang, indicating an intention to link Hanoi with the Chinese border. The distance from Kep to Dong Dang is about 50 miles.

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North Vietnamese communications show that one ship, anchored near Vinh with 3,000 tons of cargo still aboard, has been unable to unload during recent nights because of fear of attack. The second Chinese ship, located about 60 miles south at Hon La Island, has discharged only between 300 and 400 tons and has 3,000 tons still on board. One message reported that the Hon La area had been "terrorized" by US destroyers on 9 June.

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CHINA-VIETNAM

The Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a strong statement on Vietnam yesterday. This was in response to Hanoi's appeal of 10 June for strong international support. The statement links bombing of areas "close to the Sino-Vietnamese borders" to a "threat to Chinese security"--a reference the Chinese have avoided since the allied incursion into Laos in March 1971. The statement also labels US military actions in North Vietnam as "grave provocations against the Chinese people" and reiterates the "resolute support" of the Chinese people and government for Hanoi's cause, noting that "China and Vietnam are neighbors closely related like the lips and teeth"--formulations that Peking has employed--but rarely--within the past six months.

The statement concludes by noting that "US imperialism should know that the heroic peoples of Vietnam and other Indochinese countries are by no means alone in their struggle." This phraseology has never previously appeared in Chinese expressions of support for North Vietnam.

This is Peking's strongest statement in support of Hanoi since the intensification of fighting in Vietnam, but it commits the Chinese to no particular course of action. They have clearly delimited the area of their primary concern to the Sino-Vietnamese border, while at the same time moving some way to assuage North Vietnamese feelings. This Foreign Ministry statement, coupled with Peking's declaration at the UN environmental conference at Stockholm over the weekend, represents a general hardening of the public Chinese position on the fighting in Indochina. Peking's propaganda, however, still remains at a somewhat milder level than during the Laos incursion, considerably milder than in 1965 when operation Rolling Thunder first got under way, and in general neither overly provocative nor bellicose.

While much of the Foreign Ministry statement seems designed primarily for North Vietnamese consumption, the phrase noting that Washington should know that the Vietnamese are "not completely alone in their struggle" seems a signal to the US that Peking recognizes its continuing obligation to Hanoi.



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SOUTH VIETNAM

South Vietnamese troops have retaken the northwestern section of An Loc, leaving only one pocket of enemy resistance within the town. Road access to An Loc remains blocked, however. Government forces yesterday reported sporadic fighting at several points along Route 13 but no further progress in clearing the highway.

In the northern Mekong Delta area, Communist forces are maintaining heavy pressure on government positions, particularly in Dinh Tuong and Kien Tuong provinces.

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Although the disposition of these forces suggests that they currently pose little direct threat to Saigon, small-scale actions such as road interdictions, terrorism, and shellings are well within their capabilities. The enemy's attacks elsewhere in MR 3 have served to divert troops from Saigon, but the government now is taking steps to improve the capital's defenses. The National Police are augmenting forces throughout the city and instituting intensive screening procedures to prevent the infiltration of weapons and supplies. On the city's outskirts, Regional Force units are patrolling along known infiltration routes and in areas where the Communists have frequently mounted rocket attacks.

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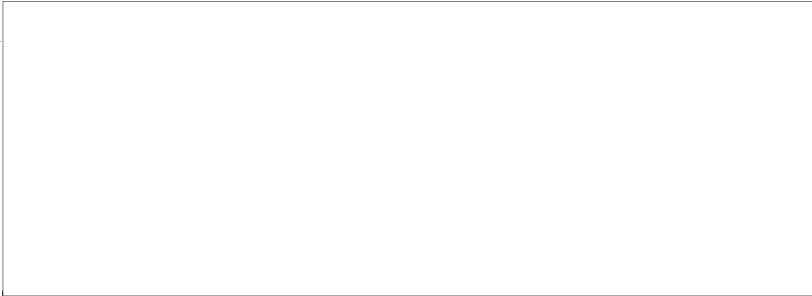
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EGYPT

In a conversation with former UN ambassador Yost on 10 June, President Sadat gave further evidence of his frustration at the lack of progress in solving the Arab-Israeli dispute. Sadat placed the blame for the impasse on Washington's failure to persuade Israel to match concessions made by Cairo, and charged that the US had abandoned efforts to find a peaceful way to liberate Egyptian territory. Because of the difficulty of harming the Israelis, he warned that US interests throughout the Arab world would suffer if peace did not come soon.

Egypt's frustration over the lack of movement toward a settlement and over its inability to achieve one by military means has been growing in recent months. Sadat, moreover, sees a threat to his own position in popular realization that he has made no progress toward resolving his dilemma.

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NOTES

USSR - North Vietnam: There has been some slippage in the timing of Soviet President Podgorny's visit to North Vietnam, [redacted]

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[redacted] Podgorny is now scheduled to be in Hanoi from 14-17 June. He may be accompanied by Konstantin Katushev, the Central Committee official responsible for Moscow's relations with ruling Communist parties. Katushev accompanied Podgorny on his visit to North Vietnam last October, and he was in Hanoi again in April, immediately after Dr. Kissinger's visit to the USSR.

Chile: The resignation of President Allende's entire cabinet, announced yesterday, sets the stage for the long-awaited government reorganization. A long and bitter debate has been under way within the governing coalition on the direction the government should take. The new cabinet list, not yet published, will show whether Allende and his more moderate supporters among the Communists have come out on top. Allende plans a major address later this week.

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