



The President's Daily Brief

14 July 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

14 July 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In South Vietnam, heavy fighting is continuing around Quang Tri City. (Page 1)

Mao Tse-tung's role as the ideological leader of China apparently is being modified. (Page 2)

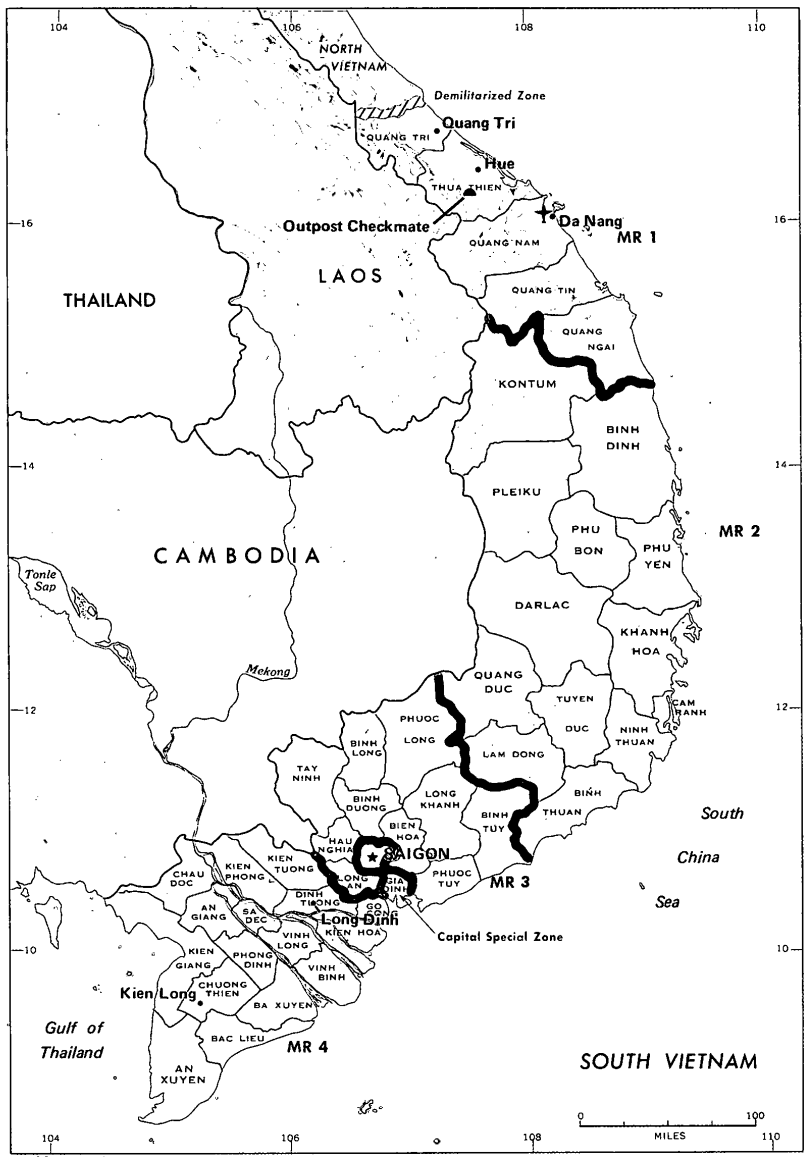
[redacted] Soviet [redacted] (Page 3)

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The Soviets [redacted] the Egyptians [redacted] (Page 4)

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Belgium has reacted sharply to French efforts to align the European Community behind Paris' Middle East policy. (Page 5)



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VIETNAM

Heavy fighting is taking place on three sides of Quang Tri City as the Communists continue to stiffen their resistance to the government's drive. Tank-led infantry assaults have been directed against South Vietnamese Marines north and east of the city and against airborne troops to the south.

On 12 July, the headquarters of the North Vietnamese 325th Division established communications with the senior Communist military authority in northern South Vietnam, suggesting that it may be planning to cross the DMZ into Quang Tri Province. One of its regiments has been there for two months, and a second apparently crossed over some time during the past week. Its third regiment is still in North Vietnam, but has recently been noted moving southward.

The Communists are maintaining pressure against government positions southwest of Hue. Outpost Checkmate, recaptured by the government on 12 July, was later struck by more than 200 mortar rounds. Hue was shelled yesterday, and government bases at Da Nang were attacked by rockets.

In the delta, fighting has eased somewhat, although the Communists remain active in southern Chuong Thien Province where the capital of Kien Long District and three government outposts were attacked yesterday. Fighting around the threatened district town of Long Dinh in Dinh Tuong Province has ended following the arrival of government reinforcements.

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CHINA

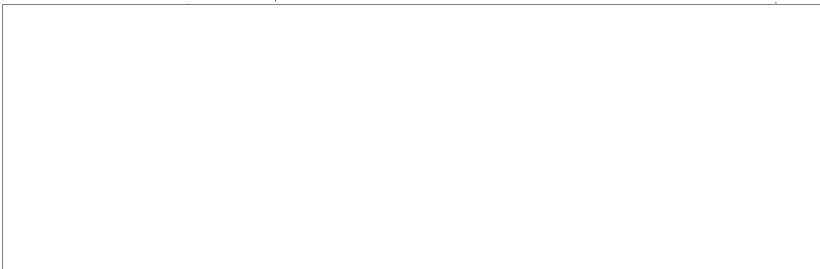
Mao Tse-tung's role as the ideological leader of China apparently is being modified.

In the past week or so, Chinese public media have increasingly urged party cadre to acquire a thorough knowledge of the "Marxist stand, viewpoint, and method." Since the Cultural Revolution, the focal point of political study in China has usually been expressed in terms of the "thought of Mao Tse-tung" or "Marxism - Leninism - Mao Tse-tung thought." While references to these formulations continue to appear, it is clear from the open media

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the need to grasp classical Marxist theory has become the principal theme at cadre study sessions.

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This changing emphasis is related in part to the continuing campaign against Mao's former heir, Defense Minister Lin Piao. During his period of political ascendancy, Lin sought to popularize the study of Mao's thought through the wide dissemination--principally in the little red book--of selected quotes from Mao. For several months now, Peking has denounced this practice, and the little red book has been notably absent from public use.

The current emphasis on developing an understanding of general Marxist theory seems, however, to be more than just an effort to impugn Lin. By stressing the contribution of earlier Marxist theoreticians, the regime may be preparing the ground for a China without Mao. In this vein, a People's Daily article broadcast on 11 June, while containing nothing that would denigrate Mao's historical position, went to unusual lengths to explain that no leader is irreplaceable.



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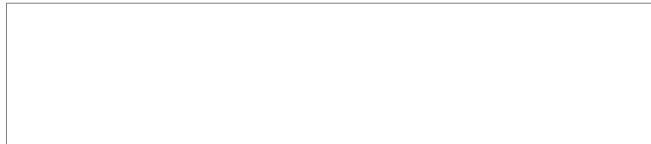
USSR



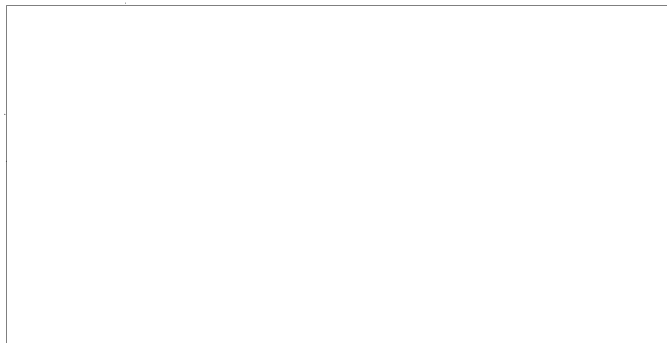
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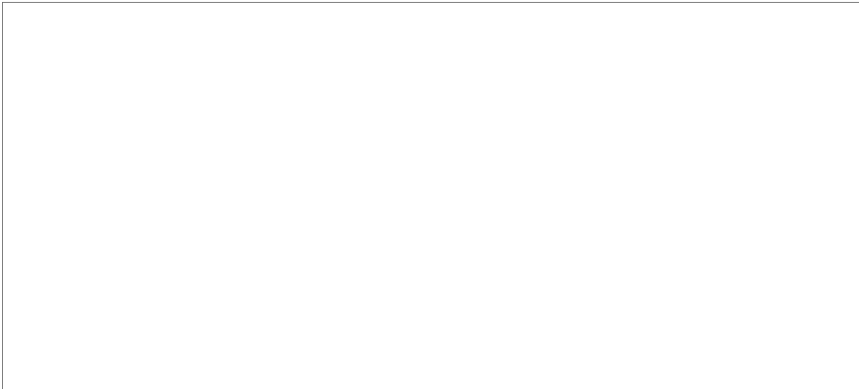


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USSR-EGYPT

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The particular target of Soviet criticism appears to be a series of articles being written by the influential editor of the semiofficial al-Ahram, Muhammad Haykal. Haykal, who played a key role in US-Egyptian efforts to reach agreement with Israel last year, has never been popular with the Soviets, and his current articles have clearly touched a raw nerve. Among his charges are that the stalemate in the area makes the Arab states more dependent on the USSR, deepens the split between them and the US, and prevents the Arabs from debating the pros and cons of the Soviet presence in the Middle East.

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BELGIUM-FRANCE

Belgium has reacted sharply to French pressures to align the European Community behind what it considers an excessively pro-Arab Middle East policy. The US Embassy in Brussels was recently shown instructions to Belgium's embassies in Community capitals and Washington to consult with Community colleagues when faced with French political initiatives on Middle East questions. If the French persist in promoting "flagrantly" pro-Arab positions, Belgian diplomats are enjoined to seek Community support to isolate Paris. The Belgians believe that Paris broke a commitment to redraft in more balanced terms its UN Security Council resolution on 26 June condemning Israeli reprisal raids into Lebanon.

Friction between France and its Community partners over their endeavor to develop common policies toward the Middle East is not new. The Dutch have outspokenly opposed France's pro-Arab stance. Last year all five of Paris' Community partners were outraged when the French told UN Secretary-General Thant about a supposedly confidential position paper developed in the Community.

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NOTE

Libya: Chief of State Qadhafi has not been seen in public since late last month when he returned from meeting with his Arab confederation partners, Presidents Sadat and Asad, deeply disillusioned by the lack of any decisions to end the stalemate in the Middle East. In venting his frustrations, Qadhafi apparently quarreled with Minister of Economics Jallud, a key member of the Revolutionary Command Council, over the formation of a new cabinet and threatened to give up his chairmanship of the RCC and his governmental posts. The temperamental Libyan leader in the past has frequently sulked in seclusion, but the absence of his signature on RCC decrees since 1 July and heavy patrols around RCC headquarters give evidence that a serious split may have developed in the council.

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