



The President's Daily Brief

7 August 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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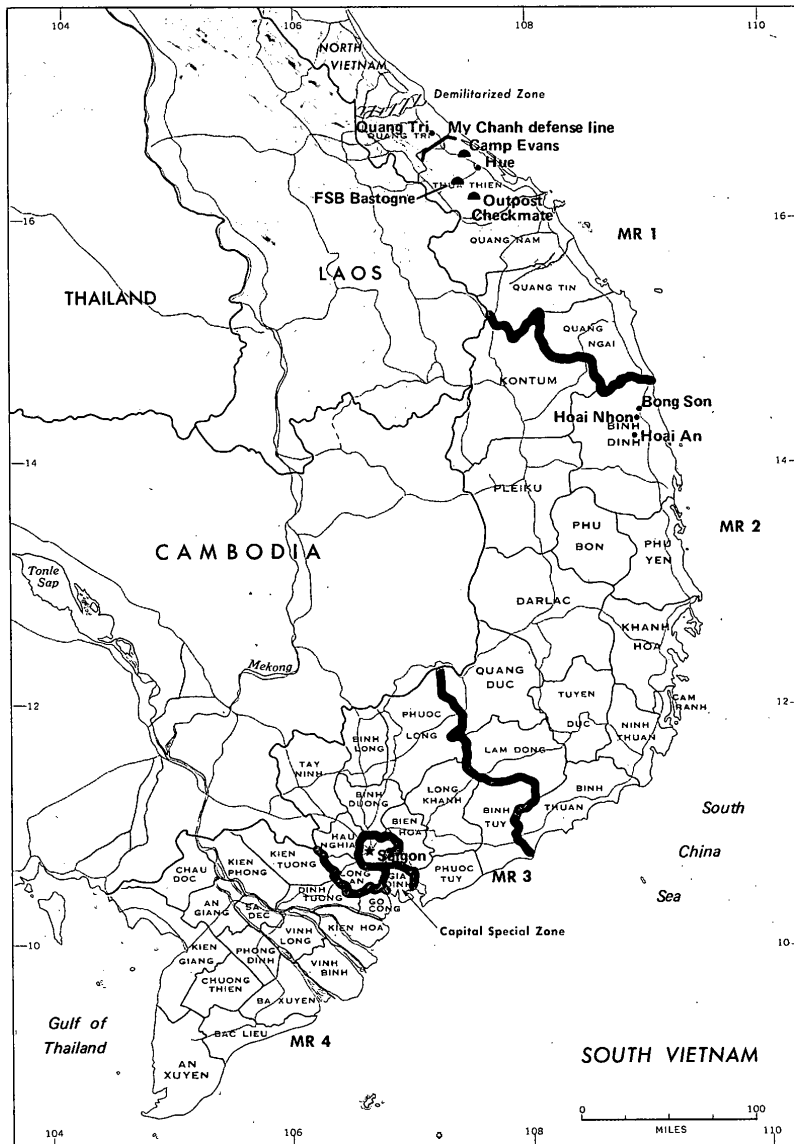
PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Heavy Communist artillery fire is continuing to hamper South Vietnamese clearing operations in Quang Tri City. (Page 1)

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Warsaw Pact leaders are reported to have decided at their recent summit meeting to help West German Chancellor Brandt in his campaign for re-election. (Page 3)



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SOUTH VIETNAM

Over the weekend, heavy Communist artillery fire continued to hamper South Vietnamese clearing operations in Quang Tri City. Elements of at least two North Vietnamese regiments remain dug in north of the citadel.

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Farther south, fighting was light along the My Chanh River defense line. Communist gunners, however, on Saturday shelled Camp Evans, the main government support base for the Quang Tri offensive, destroying over 60 tons of artillery ammunition.

West of Hue, South Vietnamese troops reoccupied Outpost Checkmate near Fire Support Base Bastogne.

Although the Communists have kept up heavy shellings and some ground probes in this area, intercepts indicate that allied air strikes and artillery fire have disrupted plans to attack Bastogne and Checkmate. The intercepts also indicate, however, that additional North Vietnamese units are being moved in, presumably to help launch new attacks on the two bases.

In Military Region 2, South Vietnamese Army troops pushed back a Communist assault on the coastal town of Bong Son. Bong Son and two other nearby district capitals, Hoai An and Hoai Nhon, have been almost completely destroyed in the recent fighting, and [Redacted] some 69,000 refugees have fled these areas.

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USSR-EGYPT



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USSR - WEST GERMANY - EAST GERMANY

A source of the US Embassy in Bonn quotes a visiting East German official as saying that the leaders of the Warsaw Pact states decided at their summit meeting on 31 July to help Chancellor Brandt in his campaign for re-election. They apparently also decided, however, that they would take no further steps toward normalizing East European - West German relations until Bonn's negotiations with Pankow, and possibly also with Prague, are satisfactorily concluded.

The Pact leaders are apparently concerned about the recent efforts of the opposition Christian Democrats to promote a normalization of West German - Chinese relations. They evidently fear that a future Christian Democratic government might find a community of interest with the Chinese in opposing any increase of Soviet influence in Western Europe. We doubt, however, that the Pact states will make important concessions that would help Brandt before the West German election campaign gets under way this fall.

The West German cabinet, meanwhile, is expected to decide on Wednesday to open formal negotiations with the East Germans.

The negotiators in the exploratory East and West German talks made no progress on the remaining six points of difference when they last met on 2-3 August. Pankow is clinging to its basic positions because it has had to make some concessions in the past in the interests of broader Pact policy and now needs to strike the best bargain possible. Moscow would have to exert heavy pressure for Pankow to give further ground.

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