

The President's Daily Brief

15 August 1972

45



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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

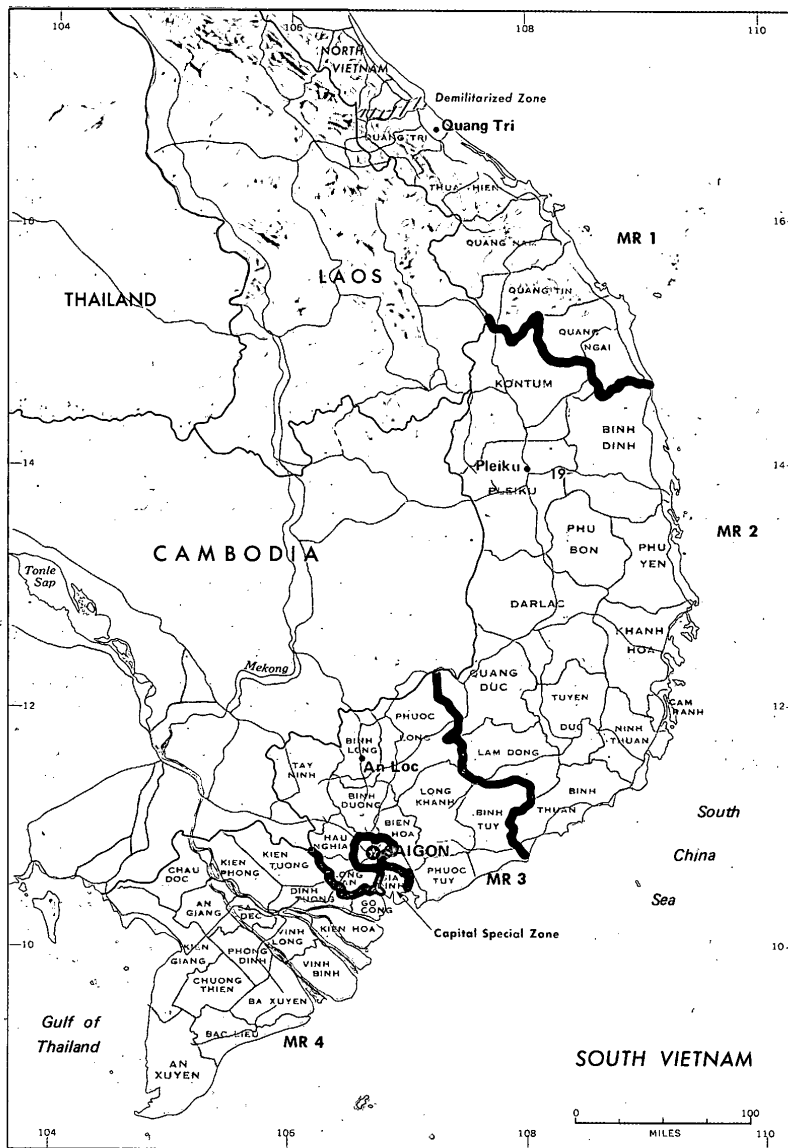
[redacted] enemy deployment patterns suggest that increased Communist military activity in South Vietnam is in the offing.
(Page 1) [redacted]

25X1

Japan's Prime Minister Tanaka is rapidly preparing the political ground for normalization of relations with China. (Page 3)

25X1

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VIETNAM

[redacted] reports outlining enemy intentions throughout South Vietnam suggest that increased Communist attacks could begin soon. [redacted]

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[redacted] reports, including prisoner and rallier interrogations, indicate that the Communists would like to pick up the pace of action between now and late August. The Communists are telling their cadre that another round of offensive action will undercut US policy on the war and force concessions from Washington.

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The string of terrorist, sapper, and small-scale infantry attacks of the past few days may mark the opening of this effort.

On the battlefields, sustained enemy artillery fire continues to impede the South Vietnamese Marines' effort to retake Quang Tri City. The Communists continue to have difficulties, however. In a message exchanged between elements of the North Vietnamese 304th Division near Quang Tri City, one unit reported that "the enemy was successful at two fronts; we are being butchered."

In the highlands, Communist pressure against government positions in northwestern Pleiku Province is continuing. A border ranger camp was hit with mortar and recoilless rifle fire, the third such attack in a week. Other enemy action included the ambush of a convoy on Route 19 and the destruction of a large amount of artillery ammunition stored near Pleiku City.

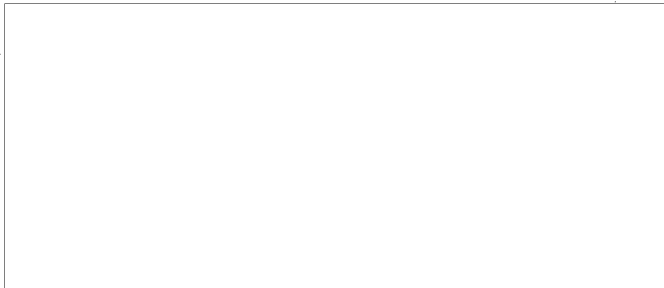
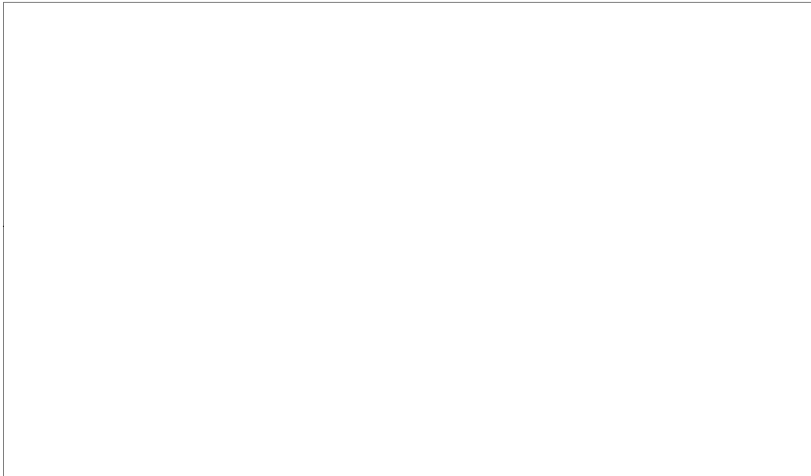
Farther south, the COSVN senior tactical command that earlier directed operations around An Loc has moved into South Vietnam from Cambodia. The command is now about 17 miles southwest of An Loc, in position to direct the elements of the Communists' 7th and 9th divisions that have recently moved into this area.

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Sweden will give \$67 million in aid to North Vietnam over the next three years, a \$22-million increase over the last three-year aid program. Since 1970, \$10 million of the annual allocation has been set aside for redevelopment and was only to be released after hostilities ceased. Under the new program, the \$30 million so earmarked will be released now.

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JAPAN-CHINA

Prime Minister Tanaka is rapidly preparing the political ground in Japan for normalization of relations with China. An article in Sunday's edition of the newspaper Mainichi, which bears all the earmarks of a trial balloon, describes a draft declaration prepared by the government for signature during Tanaka's visit to Peking in September. The newspaper indicated that the draft largely corresponds to the views expressed by China's leaders through "informal contacts."

Indeed, the draft appears to accept the course toward normalization laid out by Chou En-lai



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We believe that the Chinese would have no problems with the declaration should Tanaka put it forward during his visit.

The floating of the declaration appears designed to keep Tanaka ahead of public opinion and his parliamentary opponents, without committing him irrevocably on specific issues. It also is intended to win the backing of a majority of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and thus to neutralize the opposition of the party's right wing.

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