



Sunday Call

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The President's Daily Brief



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VIETNAM

The South Vietnamese now control most of the district town of Que Son and are fighting to drive the remaining Communists from the military compound near the center of town. To the west, government forces also are advancing and are within a few hundred yards of enemy-held Fire Support Base Ross. Elsewhere in Quang Nam Province, intercepts indicate that the Communists are continuing to prepare to shell targets in the Da Nang area.

Fighting has also intensified near Quang Tri City. South Vietnamese Marines have clashed with the Communists along both the northern and southern approaches to the city. Only a few contacts were reported near the Citadel, but intercepts indicate that Communist forces there are expecting renewed government attacks soon. South Vietnamese Airborne units west of the city have reported making some progress in their efforts to move toward the Thach Han River.

In the central highlands, the Communists remain active near government outposts north and west of Pleiku City. In addition, a military convoy was ambushed on Route 14 north of Pleiku on Friday.

LAOS

General Vang Pao's offensive in north Laos has suffered some sharp setbacks. In the past few days, heavy North Vietnamese ground attacks and shellings apparently have dispersed much of the 2,500-man irregular task force that had been operating north of the Plaine des Jarres. Several hundred men from this force have managed to work their way to other irregular positions near the Plaine's western edge, where they are now regrouping.

Northeast of the Plaine, the irregular task force from Bouam Long that had been advancing southward toward Communist supply lines near Nong Pet has also encountered some stiff opposition. Three of its battalions were forced to pull back slightly on Friday following heavy enemy attacks. Intercepts indicate that elements of the North Vietnamese 866th and 335th independent regiments most likely are responsible for the enemy pressure in this area.

The irregular task force operating in the Tha Tam Bleung area southwest of the Plaine was subjected to several Communist attacks on 31 August and 1 September, but gave no ground and took few casualties. The two other irregular task forces participating in the current campaign are also continuing to meet some Communist resistance; thus far, however, they have generally held their positions south and west of the Plaine.

LIBYA-FEDAYEEN

Last June, Colonel Qadhafi announced a joint Libyan-Fatah effort to recruit Arab volunteers for the Palestinian resistance movement. Since then, there has been a steady rise in the number of people answering the Libyan leader's call for a popular crusade against Israel.

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[Redacted]

Fatah leader Yasir Arafat recently claimed that 8,000 volunteers were now in Libya.

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The volunteers' motives are mixed. Those from Lebanon are mostly unemployed Syrian expatriate laborers who welcome an opportunity to earn a living, especially the \$150 a month that each recruit is said to be receiving. Those from the Persian Gulf are largely Palestinian refugees whose residence permits were about to expire. Others from conservative countries such as Yemen (Sana) and Saudi Arabia appear to be genuinely moved by pan-Arab slogans of unity and defeating the "Zionist invaders."

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Qadhafi, for his part, apparently is convinced that this project is essential if the struggle against Israel is to continue. Moreover, he contends that Libya must appeal to the Arab masses over the heads of their national leaders, who he fears are seeking a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli impasse. Although clearly annoyed with Qadhafi, most Arab leaders find it necessary publicly to support the Libyan initiative rather than risk censure for being soft on Israel.

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