

*The President's Daily Brief*

12 January 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

12 January 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS



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The South Vietnamese effort to regain territory in the north has upset Communist plans for renewed attacks in some areas. (Page 2)

The enemy has increased its activity in Cambodia in an apparent effort to keep government forces well away from Communist supply lines extending into South Vietnam. (Page 3)



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(Page 4)

The UK's NATO allies have offered Malta roughly \$2 million as a compromise settlement, but Prime Minister Mintoff's reaction was noncommittal. (Page 4)

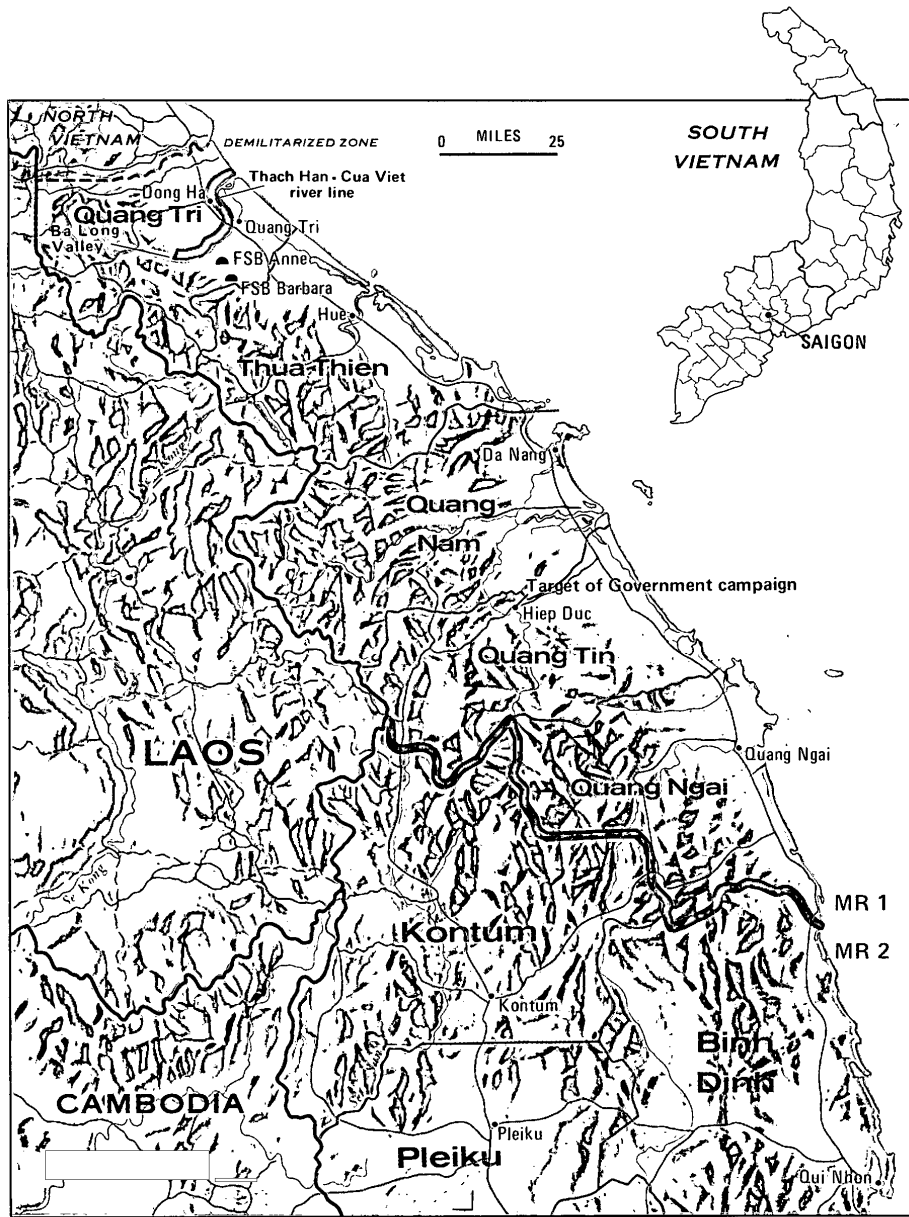
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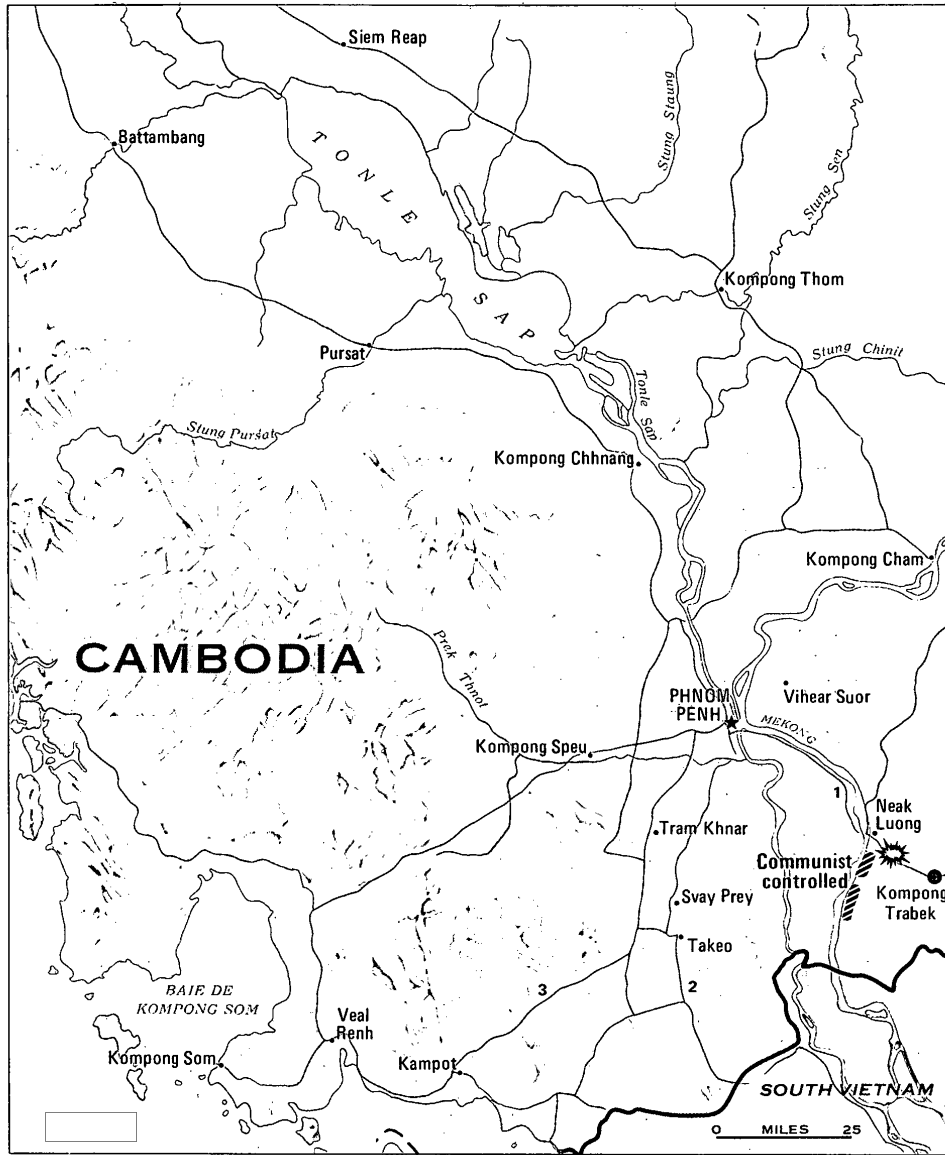
SOUTH VIETNAM

The government's campaign to recapture the Hiep Duc District capital in Quang Tin Province has forced the Communists to shelve plans for operations in the coastal lowlands. According to prisoners captured in nearby Quang Nam Province, all three regiments of a North Vietnamese division that were to carry out the attacks have been diverted to the defense of Hiep Duc and nearby logistics facilities. These facilities constitute an important support base for any main force action in the lowlands.

Government advances toward enemy support and troop assembly points in Quang Tri Province may also be keeping Communist planners off balance there. South Vietnamese success in retaking much of the ground around FSBs Anne and Barbara, for example, apparently prompted the Communists to shift major elements of a North Vietnamese division into the area.

Intercepts continue to reflect Communist concern that the South Vietnamese will soon try to move in force across the Thach Han - Cua Viet river line, which was reached in a government drive last month. North Vietnamese reconnaissance elements have been ordered to keep especially close tabs on all allied activity south of the river.

*Recent gains by South Vietnamese forces north and west of FSB Anne have put them within striking distance of a primary enemy support base in the Ba Long Valley. The need to counter this threat as well as to maintain defenses along the river suggest that the Communists will find it difficult to launch a major campaign at this time.*



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● Communist-held location  
★ Communist attack

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CAMBODIA

Communist military activity in the Phnom Penh area is increasing. On Wednesday Khmer Communists forced four government battalions along Route 1 to fall back to the west toward the base at Neak Luong on the Mekong. On the same day, the enemy shelled Neak Luong and its airfield. Yesterday the Communists ousted other government troops from several outposts below Neak Luong and gained control over sections of the Mekong's east bank.

*These are the most significant attacks in this sector since last October, when the Communists thwarted government efforts to move eastward along Route 1 toward the town of Kompong Trabek. The Communists' current operations seem designed to keep the Cambodians well away from Communist supply lines that extend into South Vietnam. They also threaten the vital supply convoys from South Vietnam that move up the Mekong to Phnom Penh.*



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NOTES

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USSR-Somalia:

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Soviet aircraft.

Malta: The UK's NATO allies have offered Malta roughly \$2 million, or about two thirds of the losses in base rental that resulted from the floating of the pound. Mintoff's reaction was noncommittal, but he raised several objections, such as the fact that the proposal covers only 1973, and further talks will be necessary. Another problem is Mintoff's suggestion that, as an assurance against a future pound devaluation, the annual rental payment of \$36.4 million be made in the national currencies of contributing countries rather than in pounds. This would involve changing the basic agreement, something the allies have refused to do.

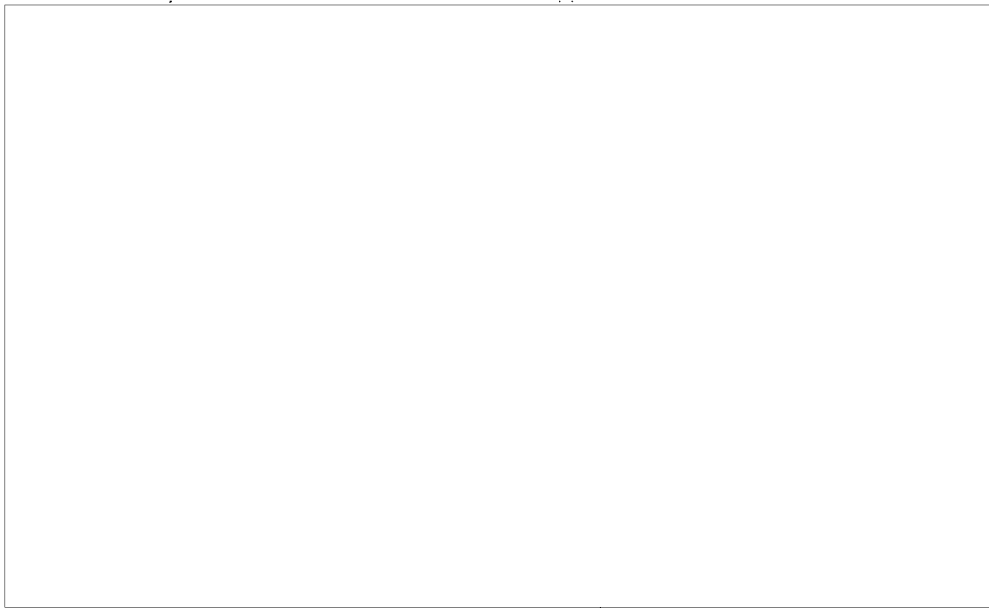
USSR-China:

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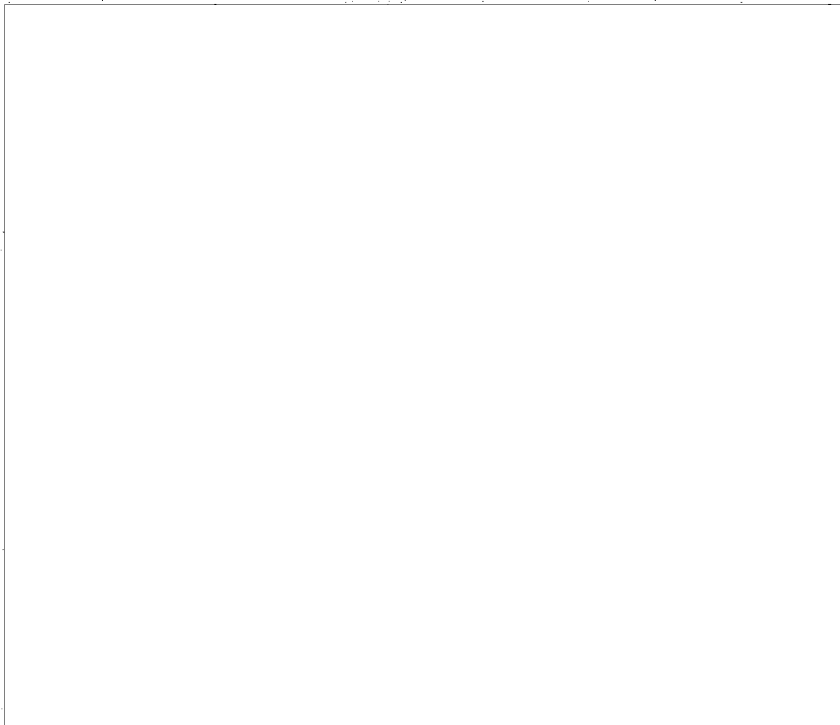
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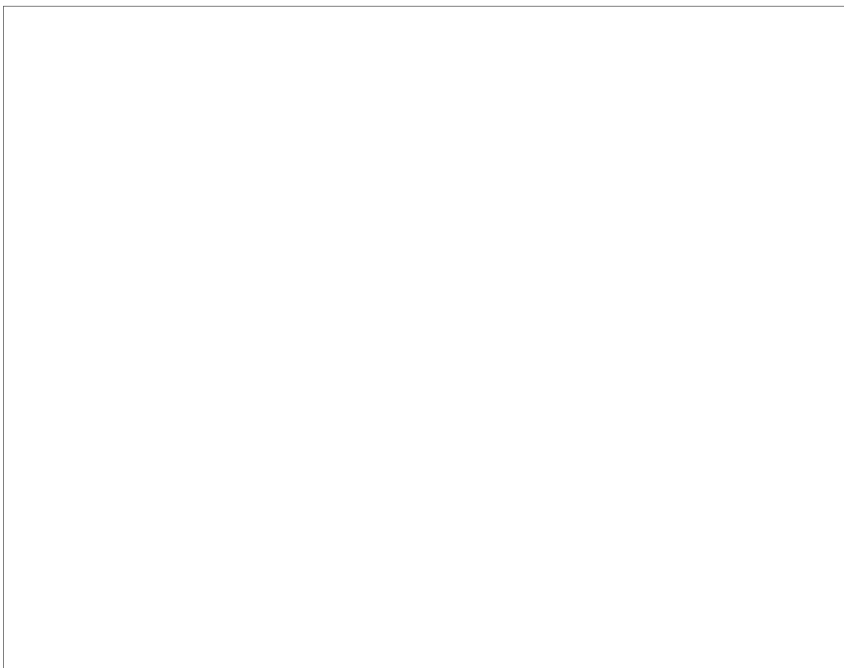
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