



The President's Daily Brief

July 1, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

July 1, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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[Redacted] Syria. (Page 1)

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An appeal in the Chinese party daily for firm party direction of the anti-Confucius campaign reflects the continuing effort of Peking's leaders to keep the campaign from getting out of hand. (Page 2)

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In Ethiopia, military moderates who want Haile Selassie to remain as Emperor are making a determined attempt to consolidate their control. (Page 3)

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A serious dispute brought on by Pathet Lao demands that the Laotian government recognize the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government is making it even more difficult for Souvanna to preserve some semblance of cohesion in his cabinet. (Page 4)

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Cambodian government troops northwest of Phnom Penh inflicted heavy casualties on several Communist units over the weekend. (Page 5)

Argentine military and political leaders are supporting the succession of Vice President Maria Estela de Peron as chief of state during the illness of her husband. (Page 6)

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[Redacted] Soviet [Redacted] (Page 7)

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[Redacted] Iraq. (Page 7)

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USSR-SYRIA

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Syria is apparently the first country to receive this aircraft from the Soviets; they have not yet given it to their Warsaw Pact allies. The capabilities of the MIG-23 exceed those of any fighter now in any Arab country's arsenal, including Egypt's, and will give the Syrians a better capability against Israel's F-4 Phantoms. 25X1


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CHINA

An appeal in a People's Daily editorial yesterday for firm party direction of the anti-Confucius campaign reflects the continuing effort of Peking's leaders to keep the campaign from getting out of hand. The editorial conceded that some party officials will be criticized, but insisted that this "does not in any way imply that party leadership may be weakened."

People's Daily indirectly acknowledged that some have been able to steer the anti-Confucius campaign off the correct path. The editorial urged party officials to give guidance to those who have "wrong ideas." This is probably meant to refer to criticism of high party officials that has been appearing in wall posters in Peking and in the provinces.

 In the capital, security forces continue to put some constraints on poster writers, but have not prevented the appearance of criticism of unnamed party leaders. Just yesterday a new placard in Peking attacked party leaders for trying to stifle the poster campaign.

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ETHIOPIA

Military moderates who want Haile Selassie to remain as Emperor and who are reluctant to establish an actual military regime are making a determined effort to consolidate their control and end the maneuvering for power by their conservative opponents. They are not at present planning a direct move against the government of Prime Minister Endalkatchew.

Late Saturday, military units in Addis Ababa, supported by the police and other security forces, began arresting some of the highest ranking members of the nobility.

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The Emperor is unlikely to be able to stave off this latest move and will suffer a further erosion of his already circumscribed power.

Coordinating the armed forces' activities in the capital is a special committee made up of representatives of all military and security forces in Addis Ababa. The military and police reportedly are in complete control of the city. The committee seems to have the support of important military commands in other parts of the country.

The committee yesterday issued a communiqué stating that those arrested had attempted to obstruct the smooth functioning of the cabinet. Despite this indication of support, the cabinet's authority and prestige have been seriously undermined, and the military probably would welcome the voluntary resignation of many of the ministers. The military moderates, however, even if successful in isolating the conservatives, will have to overcome divisions and indiscipline in their own ranks before stability can be restored.

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LAOS

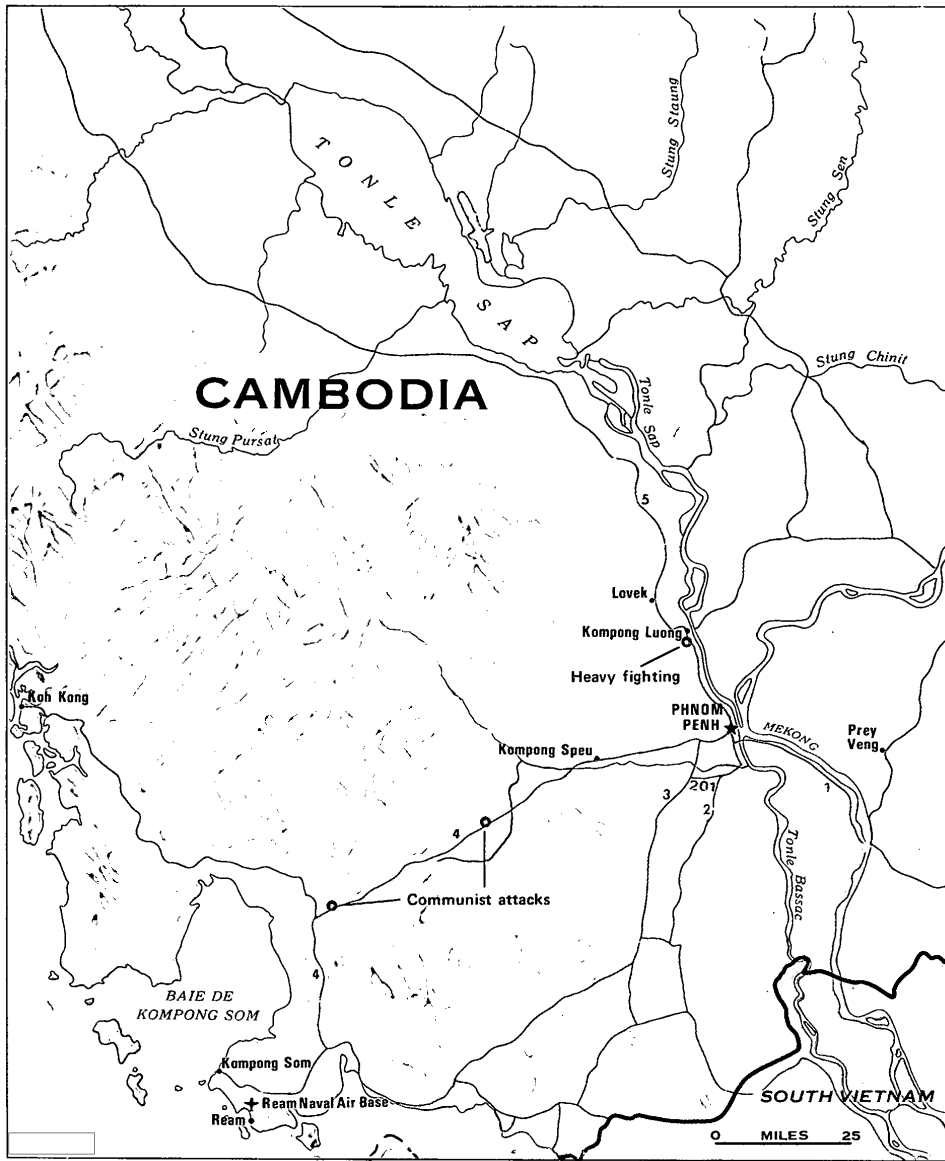
A serious dispute brought on by Communist demands that the government recognize the Viet Cong's Provisional Revolutionary Government is making it even more difficult for Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma to preserve some semblance of cohesion in his cabinet.

Hanoi apparently is pressing the Lao Communists hard to secure recognition of the PRG. During heated debate within the cabinet last week, Pathet Lao Deputy Prime Minister Phoumi Vongvichit went so far as to threaten that the coalition might collapse if non-Communist ministers failed to yield on the recognition issue.

Souvanna is said to fear that the Pathet Lao might seriously consider pulling out of the coalition. He is deeply disturbed over the intense wrangling and may decide to make some kind of conciliatory gesture toward the Communists.

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A compromise along these lines may eventually be worked out. For the present, however, both left and right are maintaining a tough stance on the recognition issue. One of the leading rightist ministers recently insisted that the non-Communists are united in opposing recognition of the PRG, and that they would rebuff any effort by the Prime Minister to change their minds. The non-Communists reportedly would like to refer the recognition issue to a cabinet subcommittee for "indefinite study."



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CAMBODIA

Government troops northwest of Phnom Penh on Route 5 inflicted heavy casualties over the weekend on several Khmer Communist units near Kompong Luong and are trying to clear the road of insurgent forces between there and the capital.

Communist attacks have slackened against the provincial capital of Koh Kong on the southwestern coast which came under attack last week. Reinforcements from the seaport of Kompong Som and timely air and naval support have helped to stabilize the situation. According to an intercept of June 29, most Communist units on this front will be withdrawn. Elsewhere in the southwest, the Communists are continuing their harassing attacks against two government garrisons on Route 4 west of Kompong Speu City.

Military action in the Phnom Penh area is light. The Communists shelled a resupply convoy on the Mekong River on June 29, but only one of 19 vessels sustained serious damage.

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ARGENTINA

Argentine military and political leaders are supporting the temporary succession of Vice President Maria Estela de Peron as chief of state during the illness of her husband. If Peron dies or is incapacitated for a long period, however, the armed forces may feel obliged to play a more active role.

As long as the country remains calm, military chiefs, who recognize their unpopularity, will be reluctant to exercise greater authority.

Those most likely to cause trouble are the extremist People's Revolutionary Army, Peronist labor leaders, and right-wing figures who are close to the Perons. Lopez Rega, Peron's private secretary and confidant, has been trying to exercise greater control over security matters since he returned to Argentina last week; his power will continue to grow.

Mrs. Peron has already expressed reluctance to assume full presidential responsibilities. She appears to recognize her lack of experience and inability to cope with the country's problems. If Peron dies, she will probably soon step aside in favor of Senate President Jose Allende, her constitutional successor.



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USSR-IRAQ:

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