



# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

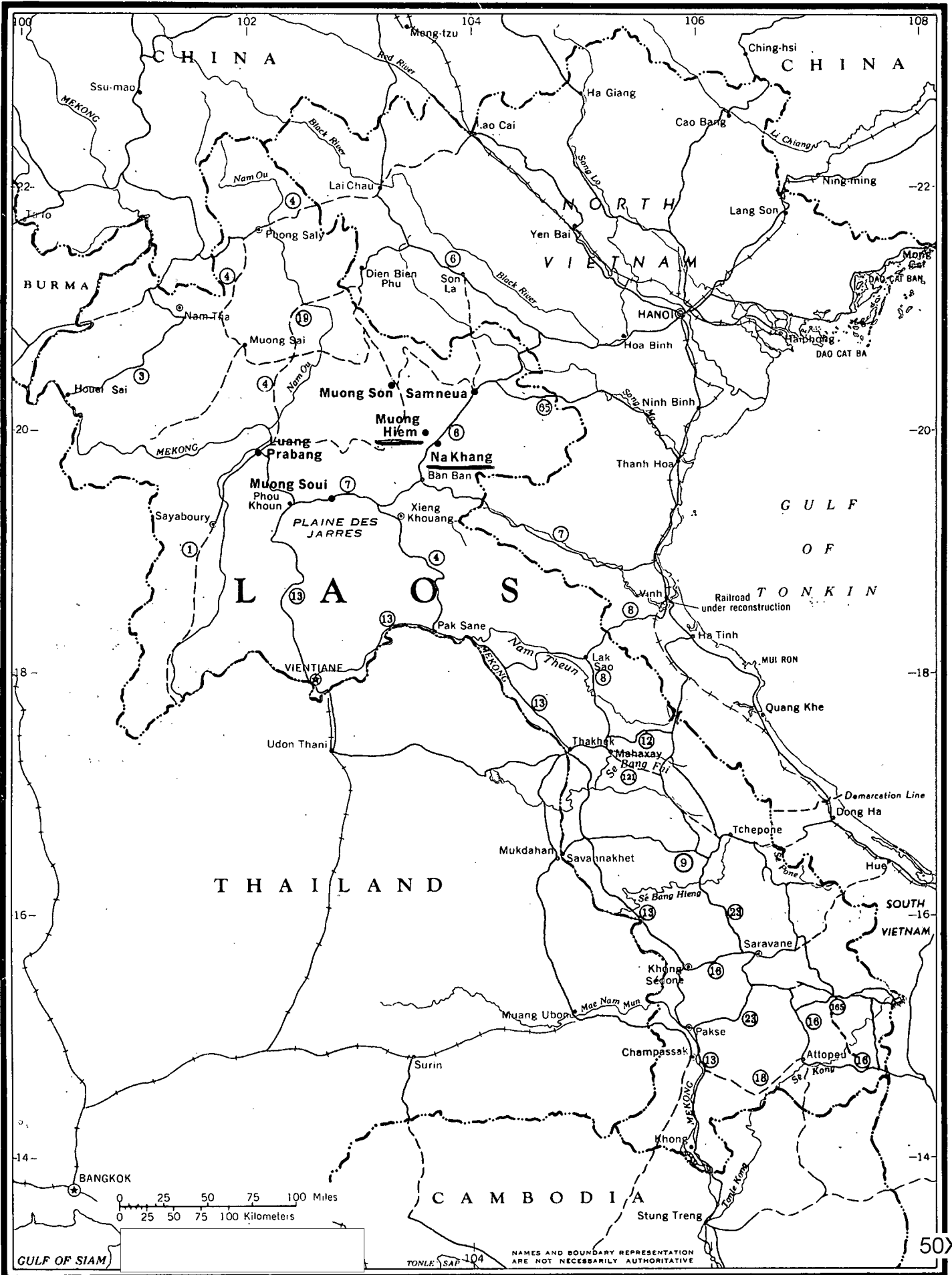


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14 MARCH 1966

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DAILY BRIEF  
14 MARCH 1966

1. Indonesia

Sukarno is already trying to retrieve his authority, and the army may be planning further moves against him and his leftist ministers, possibly tonight.

Some of the generals are said to be particularly incensed over Sukarno's assertions that Suharto has exceeded the authority Sukarno gave him last Saturday. Suharto's advisers have urged him to ignore the insinuation that his orders are in any way limited.

There are signs that some of the generals may not be wholly committed to keeping Sukarno down, but student and other civilian groups show signs of continuing their public action in support of the army's positions.

2. Laos

Communist forces continue to overrun government positions in northern Laos. Muong Hiem, an important base and airstrip, fell yesterday, less than a month after the Communist seizure of Na Khang to the southeast (see map).

Yesterday's action appears to cap a year-old campaign to clear government guerrillas from Route 6, which the Communists presumably hope to use as an alternate supply route to the Plaine des Jarres.

3. Vietnam

American military leaders in South Vietnam now confirm the presence of a ninth North Vietnamese Army regiment in South Vietnam. This brings confirmed North Vietnamese strength in the south to 15,880, about one-fifth of the total Communist regular force in South Vietnam. More North Vietnamese are being infiltrated, and the Communists are now filling out additional division-level structures. The subject is examined in today's Annex.

#### 4. South Vietnam

Political agitation continued today in ousted General Thi's old area of northern South Vietnam. Today's demonstrations were by and large orderly and at a relatively low level.

Premier Ky is taking it all very calmly, feeling that the protest over Thi's removal has been kept well in hand. A potential for trouble remains, however.

Some Buddhist leaders and local politicians in the Hué - Da Nang area seem to want to keep things stirred up. They had demonstrators out today with banners calling for an end to military rule and shouting demands that Chief of State Thieu, a particular Buddhist target, be thrown out.

If these elements can keep the pressure on, much will depend on how deft and firm Thi's successor, General Chuan, proves to be.

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#### 5. Communist China

Mao Tse-tung, now 72 years old, may be nearing the end of his road. He has been out of public view for five months and his activities have been unreported in the Chinese press since 26 November. He has now exceeded his longest recorded previous absence, in the winter of 1956 and 1957, when he is believed to have suffered a stroke.

Mao's absence has cost Peking several chances recently to impress high-level foreign visitors, of the type he used to receive regularly.

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6. Belgium

The political crisis was broken yesterday when the Liberal Party leaders voted for a coalition with the Social Christians. This solution eliminates Foreign Minister Spaak and may presage moves to cut defense expenditures.

7. Yemen

Faysal has balked at Nasir's conditions for Egyptian evacuation of Yemen, specifically refusing the demand that the republicans have a two-to-one ratio in the interim government.

[REDACTED], but at any time Nasir could indulge in some precipitous act that would wreck chances of a settlement.

8. Guinea

Our relations with Guinea may be in for another chilly spell. President Touré has grimly told our chargé he has "proof" of US involvement in both the Ghanaian and Nigerian coups. Touré probably has a basic desire to get along with the US, but is emotionally upset over Nkrumah's ouster, and appears to be under pressure from radical factions in his party.

9. Congo (Brazzaville)

Reports from Leopoldville say that the radical regime across the river may be in trouble. Most of its employees have not been paid since December, and there is tension between the president and the army. Almost any new government would probably be less caustically radical, but neither the rag tag army nor any other group in sight appears to offer any real solutions to the country's ills.

10. Soviet Union

There are indications that the Soviets were preparing to deorbit Cosmos 110 yesterday, and then abandoned the attempt. The reasons for these preparations are unknown.

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It is still in orbit today, and we continue to believe that, barring a malfunction, the Soviets are unlikely to bring it down before 20 March.

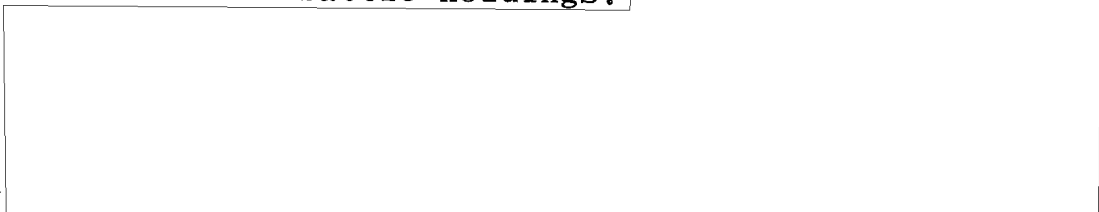
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ANNEX

Communist Military Strength in South Vietnam

The presence of a ninth North Vietnamese regiment has been confirmed in South Vietnam. In addition, two new North Vietnamese battalions and two more Viet Cong battalions have been accepted as confirmed by US military officials in Saigon. As a result, they have raised the confirmed strength for all Communist troops from 72,300 to 74,990 men. The figures do not include some 18,000 combat support troops or 103,000 Viet Cong guerrillas.

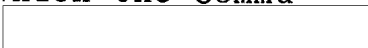
There are good indications that the infiltration of North Vietnamese regulars continues apace. This means that, over and above the forces mentioned in the last paragraph, additional North Vietnamese regiments may already be in South Vietnam, even though they do not yet appear as confirmed in official order of battle holdings.



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Moreover, friendly Laotian guerrillas counted some 400 trucks moving south through the infiltration corridor during an eight-day period in mid-February. Unlike the goods convoys which have operated over these routes for the past year and more, virtually all of these carried troops. They moved at night in convoys of 20-25 trucks each. The destination of the troops--the number could run as high as 9,000--has not yet been established, but many of them will doubtless show up shortly in South Vietnam.

This infusion of new blood from North Vietnam is being used, along with Viet Cong units, to fill out the division-level structures which the Communists have been developing lately.



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ANNEX (Cont'd)

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The Communists may be creating two more right now. At least one is made up entirely of North Vietnamese.

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In most cases, these structures are not divisions in the usual sense. They are rather a group of regiments and other units brought together under a single headquarters, usually for a specific tactical purpose; for example, the two or three North Vietnamese regiments which fought together in the Ia Drang valley last November.

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