

The President's Daily Brief

16 September 1970

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Jordan is discussed on *Page 1*.

There is increasing concern in Phnom Penh over the fate of the task force attempting to reach Kompong Thom. (*Page 4*)

In Chile, the military leaders appear inclined to avoid a challenge to Allende. (*Page 5*)

Construction has stopped on a Soviet SS-11 group at the Yedrovo ICBM complex. (*Page 6*)

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JORDAN

King Husayn has put the country under a military government. The King has replaced Prime Minister Rifai, who resigned yesterday, with Brigadier Muhammad Daud. All members of the new cabinet are from the military. The real power may eventually lie with Marshal Habis al-Majali, who was made commander in chief of the armed forces and military governor general, heading up five provincial military governors. Chief of Staff Haditha has resigned his post and been appointed special military adviser to the King.

Before acting, Husayn informed the Embassy in Amman that he was moving to an "all or nothing" showdown to establish "law and order." He said that he would not force the issue with the fedayeen but would "use any force necessary" if the fedayeen resisted his efforts to force the implementation of previous agreements, including the removal of fedayeen forces from Amman. The King asked the US to take steps to keep the Israelis from aggravating the situation but cautioned that he might later need US or Israeli assistance if things got out of hand.

Early this morning Amman remained quiet.

Husayn's action came just after a new agreement to end the fighting had been signed yesterday by the army and fedayeen. The agreement calls for the withdrawal of fedayeen from the streets of Amman in return for the withdrawal of the army from the outskirts of the city. The fedayeen are not to interfere with civil or military personnel, search houses, or arrest people, and their military bases in the city are to be removed; by the same token, military and public security personnel are not to interfere with the fedayeen. The fedayeen are to be allowed a "token presence" at such places as the post office, the power generators, and the water pumps. A joint government-fedayeen committee is to enforce the agreement, which will be extended to other cities after it has been carried out in Amman.

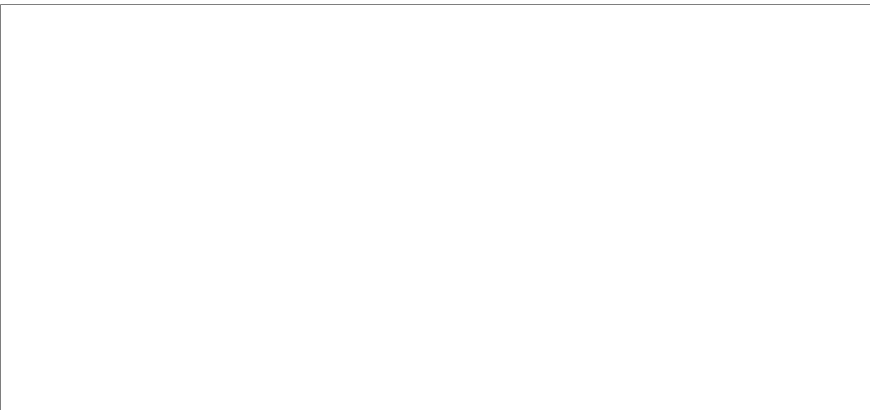
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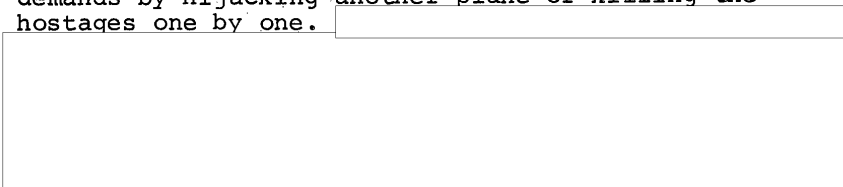
Husayn may be moving toward a confrontation with the fedayeen at last. His moves, at a minimum, appear to be an attempt to enforce yesterday's agreement with the fedayeen. The US Embassy in Amman believes, however, that the fedayeen have too much at stake to accept yesterday's agreement which could signify the end of the fedayeen movement as a major force in Jordanian politics. Rather than leave Amman, where they have the upper hand and a certain amount of protection from attack, the fedayeen will probably dig in and hope that at the moment of crisis the King, as he has in the past, will back down.

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Large-scale fighting between the army and the fedayeen could bode ill for the future of the hostages still being held by the PFLP. Swiss diplomats in Amman fear that the hostages may be taken to particularly dangerous locations to forestall a military move against the commandos. The British believe that the PFLP position is likely to toughen with the passage of time and that the PFLP may underscore its demands by hijacking another plane or killing the hostages one by one.

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The Germans, too, are saying that if the Bern group does not appoint a new negotiator with a clear mandate by noon today, they will be forced to "look for other possibilities for a solution."

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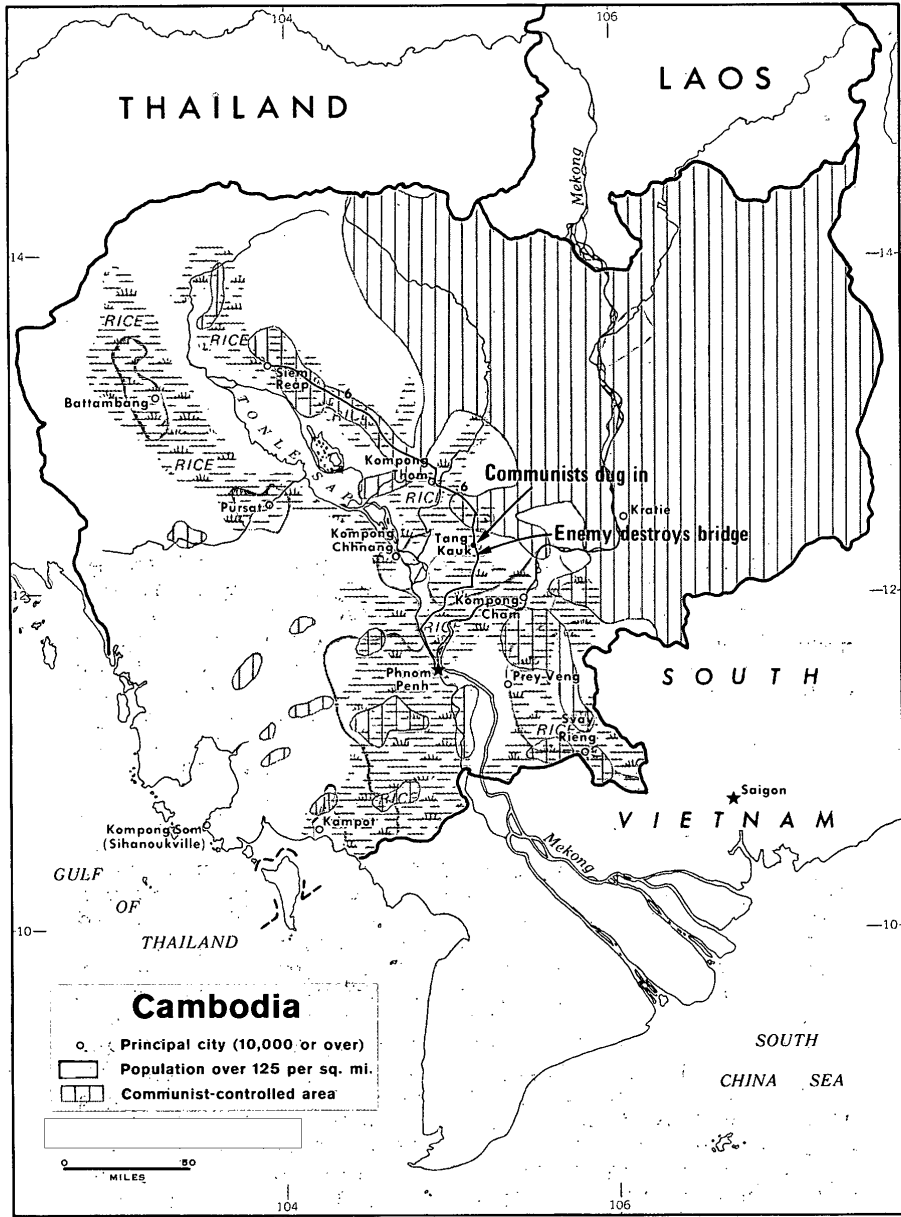
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The PFLP also seems to be growing increasingly impatient. In a press statement issued yesterday, the PFLP said that it now believes that the Red Cross is playing a biased role and attempting to buy time for the "imperialist states," thus shirking its duty as a disinterested party. In an obvious maneuver to split the European countries from the US and Israel, the PFLP said direct responsibility for their own people now falls upon the shoulders of the states concerned, and that it is incumbent upon these states to announce their agreement to the front's demands. Israel, the PFLP said, must agree in principle to return the two Algerians recently taken off a TWA plane along with one Swiss accused of belonging to the PFLP and ten Lebanese soldiers. The PFLP would then name the prisoners Israel must release in exchange for the release of the Israelis and dual citizens being held.



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Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

The government task force which is trying to reach Kompong Thom, is still stalled on Route 6, south of Tang Kauk village. Yesterday, Lon Nol ordered the group's commander to Phnom Penh to "explain" his decision to withdraw from Tang Kauk village after failing to dislodge Communist forces there. The government lost 20 killed and 103 wounded in the fighting for the village.

Meanwhile, military authorities in the capital are telling newsmen that the 4,000 - 5,000-man task force is surrounded and the Cambodians have no means to extract them. It is not clear, however, whether the situation has deteriorated appreciably in the past 24 hours or if the Communists are bringing up forces for a major battle.

Lon Nol, who personally ordered the Kompong Thom operation, will probably be reluctant to order its termination. The government has been touting it as a major step forward in the fight against the Communists. Lon Nol probably will first request additional allied air support to help get the task force moving again, but if that fails, he may as a last resort call on the South Vietnamese to help airlift the Cambodian troops out.

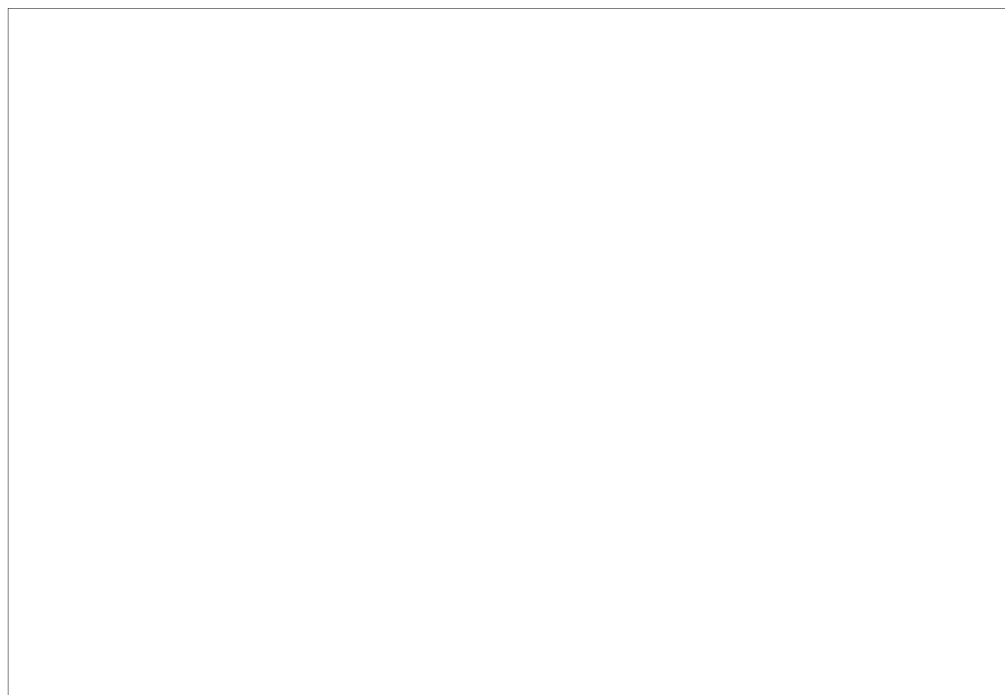
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CHILE

Ranking military leaders are saying that Salvador Allende's electoral plurality has not changed their determination to stay within and to protect the country's "constitutional process." Already they are making some "demands" on the Marxist leader and seem to be accepting his assurances at face value.

The military leaders' inclination to avoid any challenge to Allende is also influenced by concern over the widescale violence they feel would erupt if he is denied the presidency. Most military units would probably act quickly to suppress disorders, but some commanders have expressed concern about the military's ability to cope with a widespread breakdown of public order.

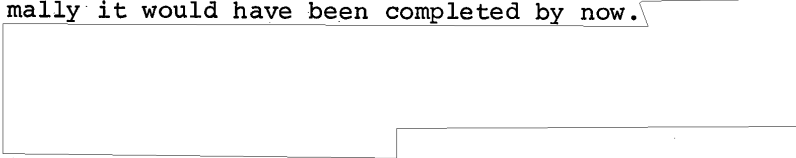
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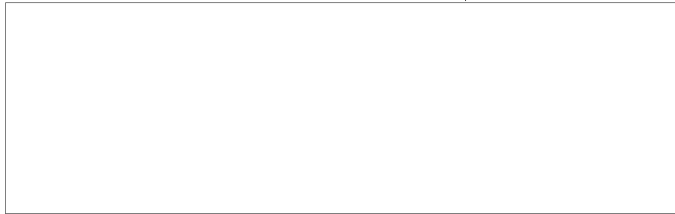
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USSR

The latest satellite photography shows that construction has stopped on an SS-11 group at the Yedrovo ICBM complex. Why the Soviets abandoned this group is unclear. The group was started in June 1969, and if construction had proceeded normally it would have been completed by now.



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