

The President's Daily Brief

20 September 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

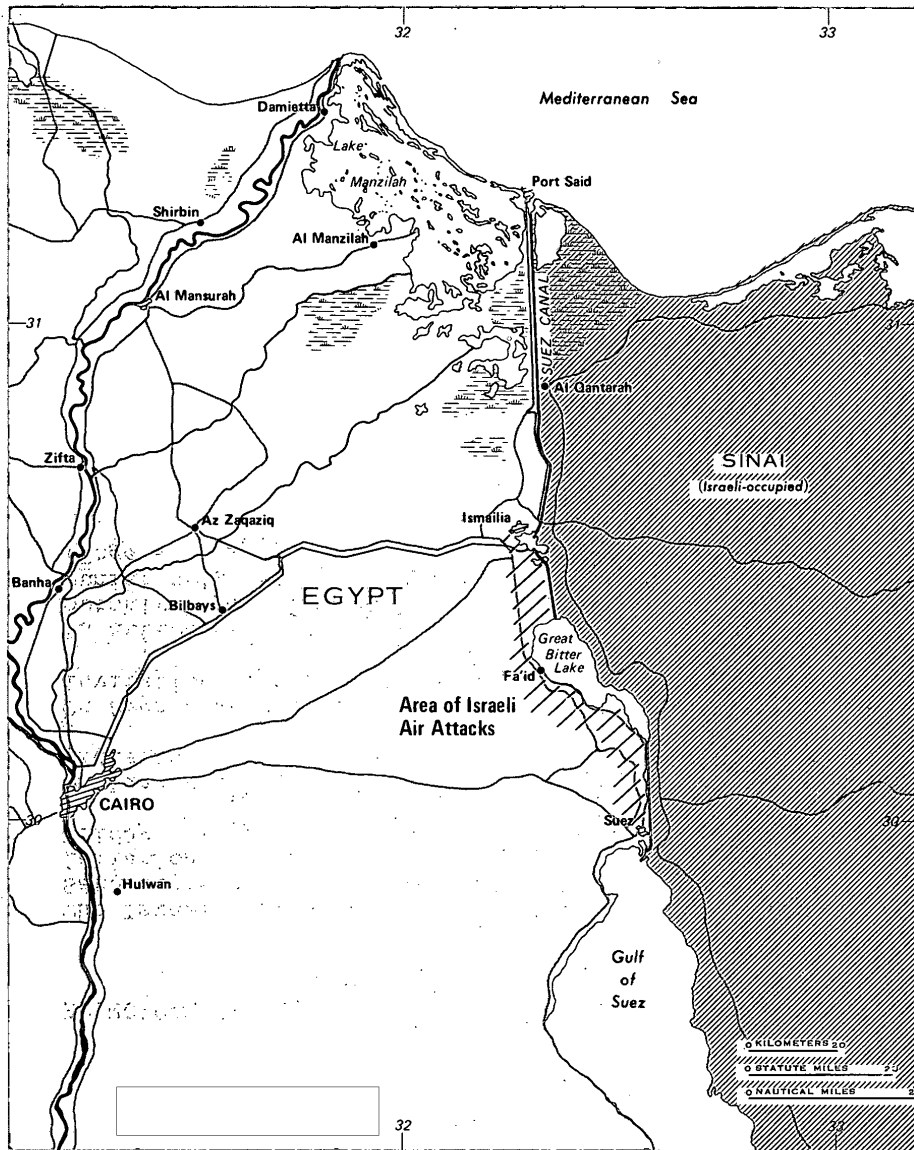
The Israelis privately confirm that Israel initiated Saturday's strike against Egyptian SAM sites in retaliation for the downing of the Israeli C-97 on Friday. (Page 1)

On Page 2 we comment on the antigovernment demonstrations in Saigon--the most violent in more than a year.

On Page 3 we discuss Brezhnev's acceptance of Brandt's invitation to visit West Germany.

An attack early today on fuel storage tanks on the outskirts of Phnom Penh is the most significant Communist action in the capital area since January. (Page 4)

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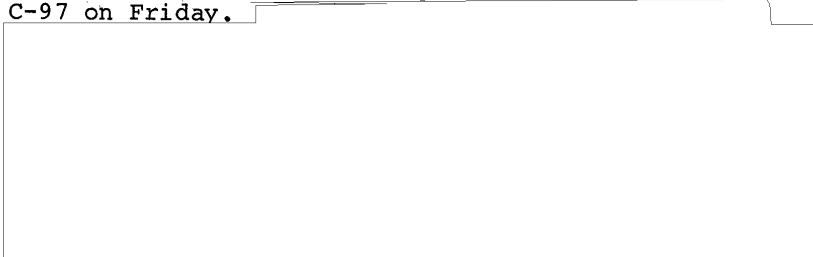
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ISRAEL-EGYPT

The Israelis have confirmed to US officials in Tel Aviv that Israel initiated Saturday's action in retaliation for the shooting down of the Israeli C-97 on Friday.



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Since Saturday's incidents, no unusual air or air defense activity by either the Israelis or the Egyptians has been noted.



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SOUTH VIETNAM

The antigovernment demonstrations in Saigon over the weekend were the most violent in more than a year. The protests, staged mainly by small groups of radical students, follow several weeks of scattered student disorders in both Saigon and Hue. Although the government still seems capable of controlling such demonstrations, the agitation is continuing to grow and repeated resort to strong police measures could create new sympathy for the protesters and backfire against Thieu.

the demonstrations have received some support from Ky, who met with radical student leaders last week. He advised them to direct their protests solely against Thieu, calling the recent fire bomb attacks on Americans counterproductive. Several of Ky's aides are reported to be trying to persuade veterans and other antigovernment political and religious groups to join with the students in larger demonstrations this week. The purpose would be to stir up domestic and foreign opinion and induce the military to act against Thieu.

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Despite Ky's ties with veterans' groups and his recently increased stature among students, he is still a long way from uniting the diverse opposition groups behind his leadership.

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USSR

Brezhnev's acceptance of Brandt's invitation to visit West Germany at an undetermined date is the latest in the Soviet leader's efforts to break out of the mold of party boss and to assume the role of world statesman.

Brezhnev's moves, which coincide with a period of increased Soviet diplomatic activity, follow his success in enhancing his personal power position at the party congress last spring. His course impels the party deeper into the realm of operational diplomacy, as distinct from policy formulation, and tends to cast President Podgorny and Premier Kosygin somewhat into the shade. Brezhnev is continuing to operate within the framework of collective leadership, however. For example, he broke off his working vacation in the Crimea, immediately before Brandt's visit there, and made a brief trip to Moscow, apparently for last-minute consultations with his colleagues on the Politburo.

Brezhnev's trip to Paris next month will mark the first time he has traveled to a non-Communist country since he became party general secretary in 1964. As one of Khrushchev's lieutenants in the early 1960s, he traveled to Finland, Africa, Iran, and South Asia. His sole visit to Western Europe during that period was to Italy for the funeral of Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti.

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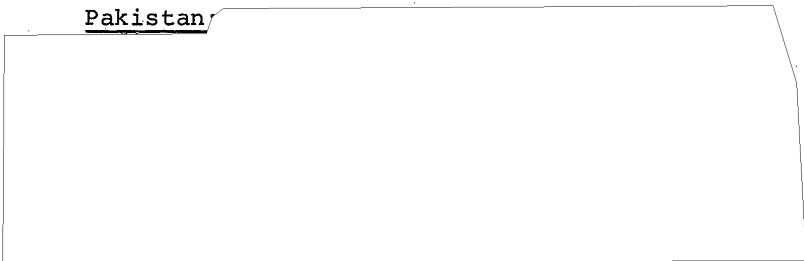
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NOTES

Cambodia: An attack by Communist sappers early today on the Esso and Shell companies' fuel storage tanks on the northern outskirts of Phnom Penh apparently caused extensive damage. The raid was the most significant enemy action in the capital area since the strike on the city's airfield last January. The tanks are the only sizable petroleum facilities in central Cambodia, and their destruction would seriously disrupt supplies to civilian consumers. Military operations do not depend on these facilities, however, and should not be affected.

UN-Jordan: After two days of UN Security Council debate on Israeli actions in Jerusalem, intra-Arab agreement on a draft resolution is not yet in sight. The Jordanians have discarded the text worked out with the US in favor of a new one that calls on the Secretary General to report on the situation within 30 days. They describe this as the "irreducible minimum" that could gain Arab support, but still face a problem of finding a Security Council member to introduce it. Syria, the only Arab member of the Council, has drafted a markedly different text that would send a special Council mission to Jerusalem with instructions to report back in 15 days. It also cites the possible need to apply UN sanctions against Israel.

Pakistan



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