

The President's Daily Brief

14 October 1971

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Indian foreign minister's reaction to Ambassador Keating's demarche underscores New Delhi's determination to continue its extensive support of East Pakistani guerrilla forces. *(Page 1)*

President Thieu's strong showing in his re-election appears to have eased political tensions in Saigon. *(Page 3)*

The Jordanians have reached agreement with Saudi and Egyptian mediators on the basis for a new accord with the fedayeen. *(Page 4)*

Sadat has concluded his Moscow visit, which evidently concentrated on military aid discussions. *(Page 5)*

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INDIA-PAKISTAN

Foreign Minister Singh's reaction to Ambassador Keating's demarche on 12 October underscores his government's determination to continue its extensive support of East Pakistani insurgents.

Singh minimized the extent of Indian assistance to the guerrillas. He claimed that New Delhi cannot stop their activities, most of which, he said, occur deep within East Pakistan and are not "cross-border in character." Singh contended that they do not inform Indian authorities of their plans and professed ignorance of any guerrilla intentions to step up their action, except possibly in reaction to a post-monsoon "clean-up" drive by Pakistani forces.

India's suspicion of President Yahya's efforts to restore civilian participation at the provincial and national levels was evident in Singh's warning against any attempt to promote a political settlement between Islamabad and "breakaway" elements of the Awami League in the east wing. He insisted that any movement toward a settlement could not bypass the "true" East Pakistani leadership under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The foreign minister asserted that India will never attack Pakistani positions or commit any incursions into Pakistani territory. He argued that the Yahya government cannot use guerrilla operations as a "valid" excuse to attack India.

In contrast to Yahya's favorable reaction to the proposal for a mutual withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani forces from the borders, Singh confined his response to an ambiguous statement that, "We can reconsider the situation if they withdraw." He contended that India is honoring existing "ground rules" concerning border developments.

Despite the foreign minister's disclaimers of Indian support for and control over "liberation forces," both the Bangla Desh government-in-exile and the guerrillas based in India are almost totally dependent on India.

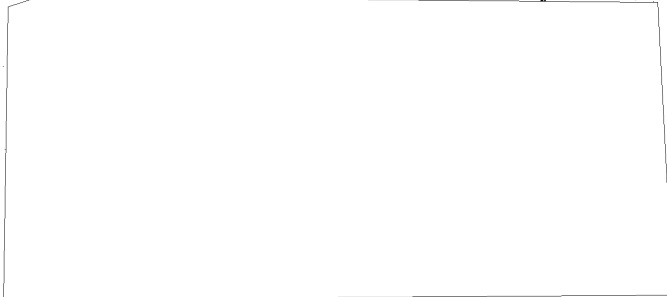
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New Delhi apparently continues to believe that the present level of guerrilla operations will not provoke Pakistani military retaliation, at least in the near future.



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SOUTH VIETNAM

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President Thieu's show of strength in his re-election has eased political tensions in Saigon. Small groups of radical students are still trying to spark confrontations with the authorities, but most other opposition elements seem resigned, at least for the near term, to Thieu's remaining in power. They also seem relieved that the possibility of a major crisis has receded.

Thieu himself has been maintaining a low profile, although he apparently hopes to make his inauguration on 31 October another massive display of government strength. There have been reports that he is drawing up plans to reform the government and to seek reconciliation with opposition elements. For the moment, Thieu's lieutenants are concentrating on organizing support in the National Assembly.

Although a new spurt of disorders prior to the inauguration is still possible, the election demonstrated that Thieu's critics have even narrower and more restricted bases of support than he. The dissident movement that coalesced briefly around Vice President Ky has lost momentum: Big Minh has all but retired from the political scene, and the An Quang Buddhists show little appetite for another struggle with the government at this time.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**JORDAN-FEDAYEEN**

The Jordanians have reached an agreement with Saudi and Egyptian mediators on a common working paper. According to a Jordanian diplomat, in talks in Riyadh earlier this week the Saudis and Egyptians accepted Jordan's demands that any fedayeen remaining in Jordan must operate under army control and that there must be no return to the provisions of the old Amman agreement, which allowed the fedayeen considerable autonomy. For their part, the Jordanians agreed to try to work out a new agreement on the basis of rewording the old one.

If the mediators can persuade the fedayeen leaders to accept this arrangement, their next step will be to try to arrange a new conciliation conference. The fedayeen movement, however, remains bitterly divided over negotiations with the Jordanians. The more moderate leaders, including Yasir Arafat, were severely criticized for merely being willing to attend the last conference, even though they were pressing for a return to the Amman agreement in toto. It thus seems unlikely that the fedayeen will now accept a working paper that incorporates Jordan's more stringent terms. The adoption of a common Jordanian-Saudi-Egyptian position will, however, tend to put the blame on the fedayeen for failure to arrive at an agreement.

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NOTE

USSR-Egypt: The communiqué issued yesterday at the end of President Sadat's visit to Moscow both called for a political solution in the Middle East--endorsing the November 1967 UN Security Council resolution--and reported agreement on additional, but unspecified, Soviet military aid to Egypt. The arrival of War Minister Sadiq in Moscow several days before Sadat and his remaining there after Sadat's departure strongly suggests that the subject of military aid dominated the talks. The Soviet concern over Sadat's support for purges in the Sudan last summer was reflected in a joint condemnation of any "attempts to spread anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism" in the Middle East.

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