

The President's Daily Brief

9 December 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

9 December 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In South Vietnam, the Communists are again reported preparing to launch a last-minute round of attacks before a cease-fire is declared. The Saigon government, concerned that political prisoners--if released under terms of the cease-fire--would provide a further source of Communist manpower, hopes to continue their detention by developing criminal charges against as many prisoners as possible. (Page 1)

Japan plans to open its embassy in Peking by the end of January. (Page 2)

India and Pakistan reached accord on the line of control in Kashmir on 7 December, thus clearing the way for mutual troop withdrawals. (Page 3)

The Lebanese Army yesterday began operations against fedayeen elements that have reinfilitrated the Lebanon-Israel border area in defiance of a government ban. (Page 4)

Somalia's President Siad is reported to have been forced out of office by his colleagues on the ruling council. (Page 5)



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SOUTH VIETNAM

The Communists are again reported preparing to launch a last-minute round of attacks, this time before 25 December, in order to obtain control of as much of the countryside as possible before a cease-fire is declared.

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[redacted] the Central Office for South Vietnam says there will be a cease-fire in Vietnam between 25 December and 1 January. Attacks are said to have been ordered north and west of Saigon and in Tay Ninh Province. Recent Communist movements in northern South Vietnam suggest that units there are also preparing for combat.

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The Saigon government, concerned that political prisoners, if released under terms of the cease-fire, would provide a further source of Communist manpower, would like to continue their detention.

[redacted]

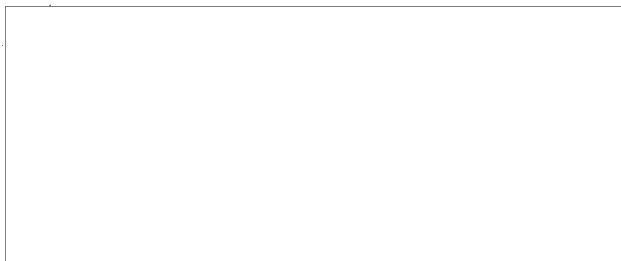
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Communist prisoners in South Vietnam are estimated at between 30,000 and 40,000.

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JAPAN-CHINA

The Japanese cabinet expects to issue an order on 15 December closing its embassy in Taipei and authorizing the establishment of an embassy in China. Japan plans to open the Peking embassy by the end of January.



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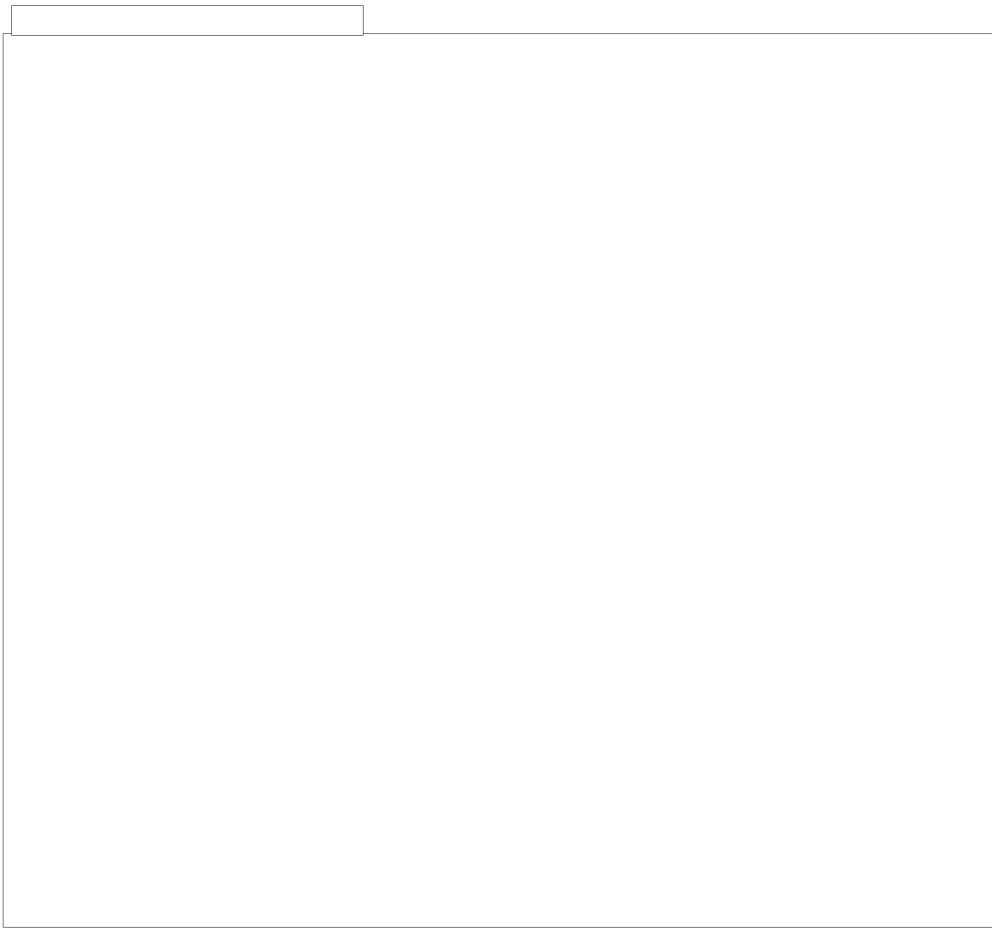
INDIA-PAKISTAN

India and Pakistan reached accord on the line of control in Kashmir on 7 December.

Although terms of the agreement have not been publicized, Pakistan apparently abandoned its claim to a one and one-half square mile enclave in return for equivalent territory elsewhere on the line of control. Both countries presumably will maintain that this exchange does not affect the claim of each to all of Kashmir. The agreement clears the way for mutual troop withdrawals.

Progress toward over-all resolution of the 25-year Kashmir dispute remains unlikely. Both sides seem willing for the time being to live with the situation.

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LEBANON-FEDAYEEN

The Lebanese Army yesterday began operations against fedayeen elements that have reinfiltreated the Lebanon-Israel border area in defiance of a government ban. The guerrillas are apparently putting up stiff resistance, and there have been casualties on both sides. The Lebanese have been especially sensitive to fedayeen movements in the border area since the Israeli commando strike on 23 November against a fedayeen band just north of the Israeli border.

The guerrillas' willingness to provoke the Lebanese Army at this time may reflect an attempt by guerrilla leader Yasir Arafat to strengthen his sagging leadership position. He has been severely criticized by the movement's rank and file for his "capitulation" in agreeing to controls on the guerrillas.

There are some signs that passions are rising anew among pro-fedayeen elements at the American university and the refugee camps. This could once again threaten the delicate confessional balance in Lebanon.

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SOMALIA

[redacted] President
Siad has been forced out of office by his colleagues on the ruling council. The move against Siad was triggered by his demand that two of the council members be arrested for plotting against him--a step that a majority of the council refused to take. The faction-ridden council has so far failed to agree on a new president, but has selected a triumvirate that presumably includes Vice-President Samantar, National Security Service (intelligence) Director Suleiman, and Information Minister Abokor.

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Although concern over the growing Soviet presence in Somalia may be a factor in Siad's ouster, these new leaders are likely to be too preoccupied with internal matters, especially maneuvering against one another, to give much attention to foreign policy questions any time soon.

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NOTE

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