

The President's Daily Brief

25 September 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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[Redacted] Lebanon [Redacted]

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(Page 2)

Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka has arrived in Peking for five days of talks on normalization of relations.

(Page 3)

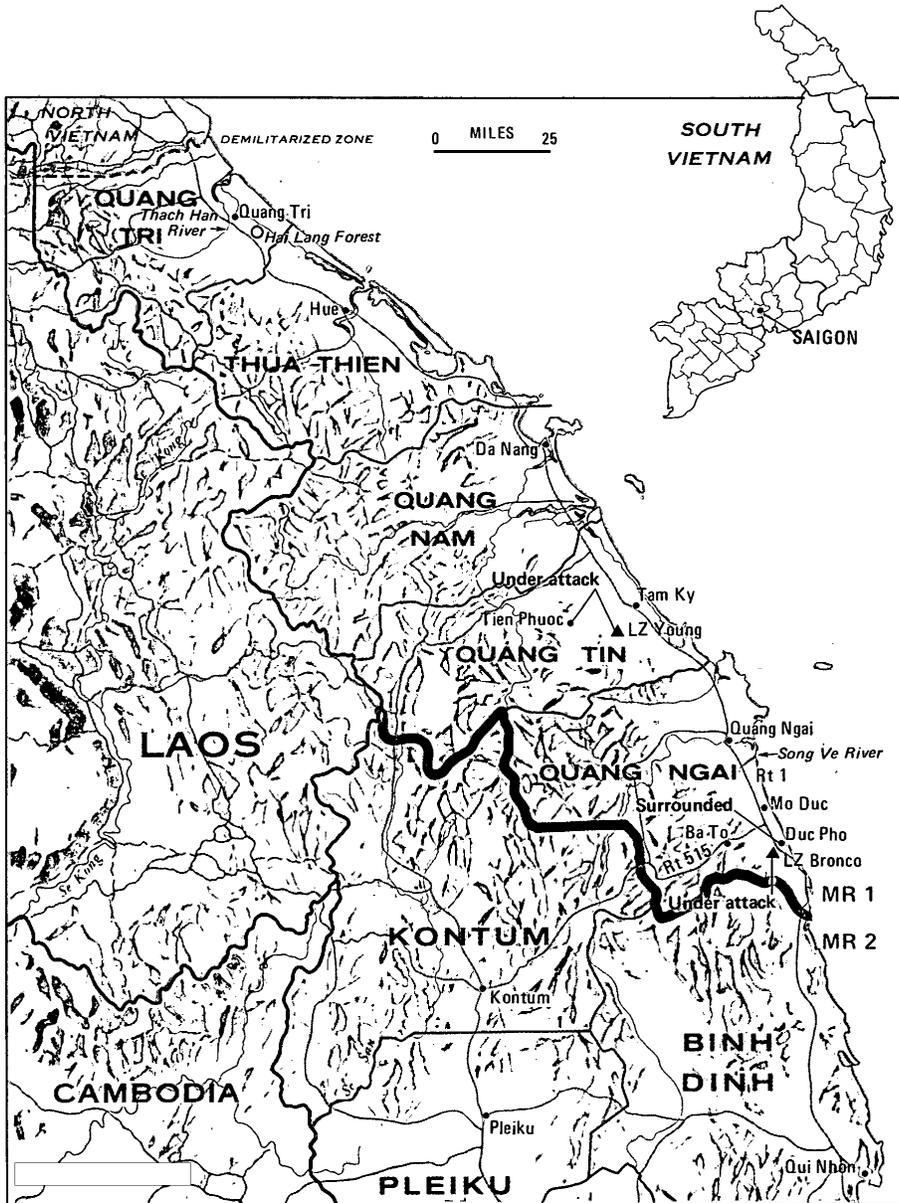
A number of President Marcos' political opponents have been arrested during the first hours of martial law in the Philippines, where the administration is trying to generate public support for its action.

(Page 4)

In Uganda, the security situation remains precarious. There is still some fighting in the south, and President Amin continues to threaten Tanzania. (Page 5)

A Soviet military airlift to Syria is in progress.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

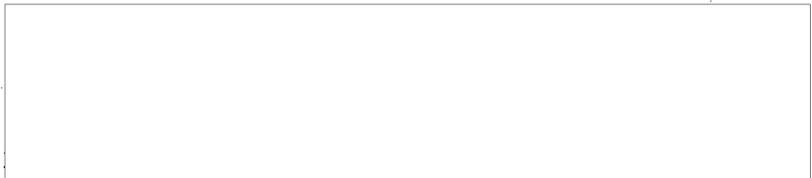
The situation in the coastal lowlands remains serious. In Quang Ngai Province, units of the North Vietnamese 2nd Division have surrounded the district capital of Duc Pho and are heavily shelling it, as well as nearby Landing Zone Bronco. The attackers are also employing wire-guided missiles against government positions, the first time such weapons have been used by Communist forces in this sector. Although enemy attacks against the town of Ba To eased over the weekend, South Vietnamese Rangers trying to reach the town are still several miles to the east and a North Vietnamese battalion is said to be prepared to block their advance along Route 515. In Mo Duc District, enemy units are still in control of parts of Route 1 between Mo Duc town and the Song Ve River.

In Quang Tin Province, the Communists renewed their attack against Tien Phuoc over the weekend. Field reports indicate that heavy artillery and wire-guided missiles are being directed against the town, as well as Landing Zone Young to the southeast. Units of the North Vietnamese 711th Division in the area may be trying to take advantage of the heavy fighting in Quang Ngai Province to push into the lowlands around Tam Ky, the provincial capital.

Colonel Tran Van Nhut, hero of the battle of An Loc, has recently assumed command of the South Vietnamese 2nd Division, which is charged with defense of Quang Ngai and Quang Tin provinces.



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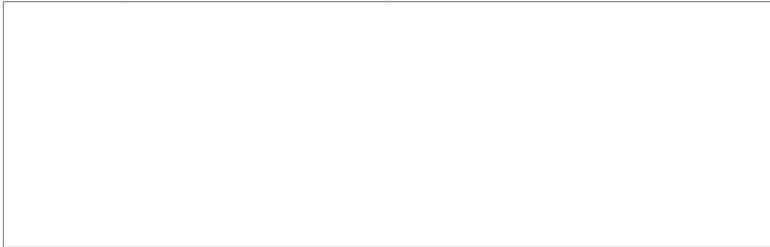


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Action in Quang Tri Province was generally light over the weekend, except along the Thach Han River and in the Hai Lang Forest, where government troops continued operations designed to disrupt an enemy buildup.

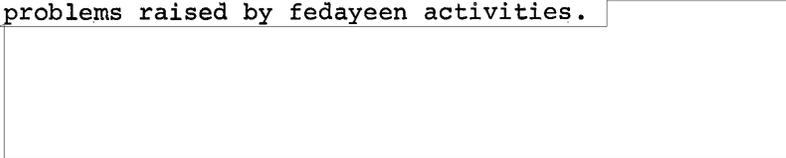
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LEBANON



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The Lebanese press this weekend indicated that Premier Salam and Palestinian Liberation Organization chief Arafat are still meeting on unresolved problems raised by fedayeen activities.



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The more militant fedayeen elements may not be as ready as Arafat to come to terms with the Lebanese Government. Arafat himself most likely views an agreement mainly as a temporary device to forestall further moves against the fedayeen by the Lebanese Army.

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JAPAN-CHINA

Prime Minister Tanaka has arrived in Peking for five days of talks on the normalization of relations. Tanaka expects the Chinese to be flexible on most issues, but has been led to believe they will insist that Japan sever its formal diplomatic relations with Nationalist China.

We believe Tokyo is prepared to meet this demand.



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Various Japanese who have recently talked with Premier Chou En-lai believe Tanaka will be able to avoid or finesse other contentious issues. Chou has let it be known that the Chinese would not bring up "third country" problems--presumably a reference to military ties with the US and Japan's relationship with South Korea. Should Peking press for a Japanese statement on Taiwan's status, Tanaka will repeat Japan's longstanding position that, having renounced all claims to Taiwan, it was not in a position to express a view on the island's future.

The Japanese will insert into the joint communiqué to be issued during the visit a statement recognizing the Peoples Republic of China as the sole legitimate government of China. In Japanese eyes, this statement will constitute the establishment of relations with Peking. The Japanese will then move promptly to sever relations with Taipei, if the Nationalist Chinese themselves do not make the move.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

PHILIPPINES

President Marcos is moving quickly to try to enlist public support for his declaration of martial law. In his speech to the nation on 23 September, Marcos repeated his allegation of a Communist conspiracy, adding that martial law was necessary because less drastic methods--in particular his suspension of the writ of habeas corpus in 1971--had failed to check the growth of guerrilla forces. Marcos went on, however, to say that he will use martial law powers to mold a "New Society" for the Philippines by disarming private political armies, eliminating corruption in government, controlling prices, and ensuring social and economic justice.

Marcos apparently believes that if he can prevent martial law from impinging too heavily on the daily life of the average citizen, serious opposition will be discouraged. He has already eased travel restrictions and allowed some newspapers to reopen, although under stringent military censorship.

The first series of arrests under martial law was aimed not only at Communist conspirators, but also at political rivals. Among those arrested are important leaders of anti-Marcos political blocs as well as respected newspapermen who have exposed Marcos' political manipulations. Constabulary forces have also raided national and provincial offices of radical student groups that have criticized Marcos.

Thus far, Marcos appears to be having his way. Resistance to martial law may develop, however, as news of his political purge spreads. There are already indications that individual constabulary officers question Marcos' motives.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

UGANDA

Ugandan troops are still fighting remnants of a guerrilla force that invaded from Tanzania last week. It appears that the fighting is on Ugandan territory, rather than in Tanzania as claimed by Uganda's Government. Ugandan troops are said to have been augmented by the arrival Saturday of about 400 Libyan troops, presumably the same group that was barred Friday night from proceeding to Uganda via Sudan. Tanzania has denied again that its troops are involved or that any fighting has occurred on its territory.

Several African leaders are attempting to mediate, and a Somali peace proposal is said to have been accepted by Tanzanian President Nyerere. Ugandan President Amin has labeled the proposal "very good" but at the same time has threatened new attacks on Tanzania, if Dar es Salaam does not withdraw its troops from the border.

The security situation remains precarious. All US citizens detained by Ugandan forces have been released. US Peace Corps volunteers are being assembled in Kampala for evacuation. Undisciplined soldiers continue to rough up and occasionally kill Asians and to settle tribal scores with other Ugandan Africans. Many Asians who cannot meet new deadlines for their departure from Uganda are fearful of their safety. The British High Commissioner has said that the airlift for Asians resumed on Saturday and should be in full operation this week. If he can obtain enough aircraft, the commissioner anticipates that all the Asians may be out of Uganda in time to meet the deadlines.

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NOTE

USSR-Syria: Since 19 September a Soviet military airlift has been under way to Syria. Ten AN-12 and two AN-22 cargo aircraft have arrived so far. More flights are expected today. The cargo may be destined for Syria's air defense command, which earlier this year received Soviet SA-3 surface-to-air missile equipment.

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