

ARAB STATES - ISRAEL:

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Military ground activity over the weekend was generally light on all fronts, with sporadic mortar, tank, anti-tank, artillery, and light arms fire reported. The heaviest action reportedly occurred on the Syrian front where Damascus claimed to have repulsed in "fierce fighting" several attempts by Israel to improve its field positions, inflicting heavy losses on the Israelis. In Jerusalem, a military spokesman downplayed the fighting, calling it the "usual daily exchange of fire," but he admitted Israel suffered three wounded there yesterday.

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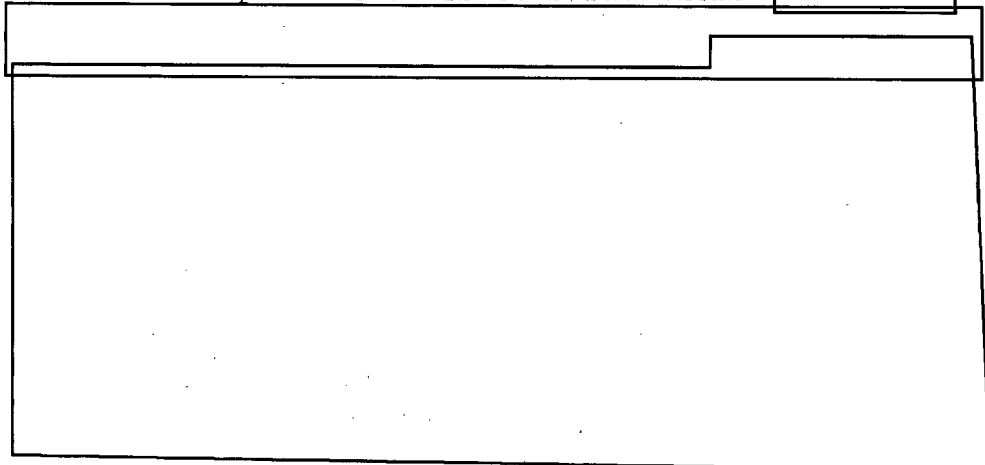
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The US Consul in Jerusalem reports that developments in the Israeli-occupied West Bank of Jordan are taking on the characteristics of the 1967-68 period, when women and students led widespread public disorders. According to the consulate, Israeli authorities on December 15 arrested a number of women demonstrators, including the wife of a former Jordanian cabinet minister. The demonstrators were protesting in front of the International Red Cross office in East Jerusalem against Israel's deportation to Jordan last week of eight West Bank citizens for pro-fedayeen activities. The Israeli West Bank military government on December 15 also ordered the indefinite closure of the 250-student Anglican Arab College, the West Bank's only significant college and long a center of Palestinian nationalist activity. The consulate believes that these latest Israeli efforts to forestall further trouble are, in fact, virtually certain to lead to additional disorders.

In an official statement issued shortly before Secretary Kissinger's arrival yesterday, the prime minister's office in Jerusalem reiterated that Israel will not talk with Syrian representatives at the Geneva peace conference, now scheduled to convene on December 21, until Damascus provides it with a list of Israeli POWs and allows International Red Cross representatives to visit them.

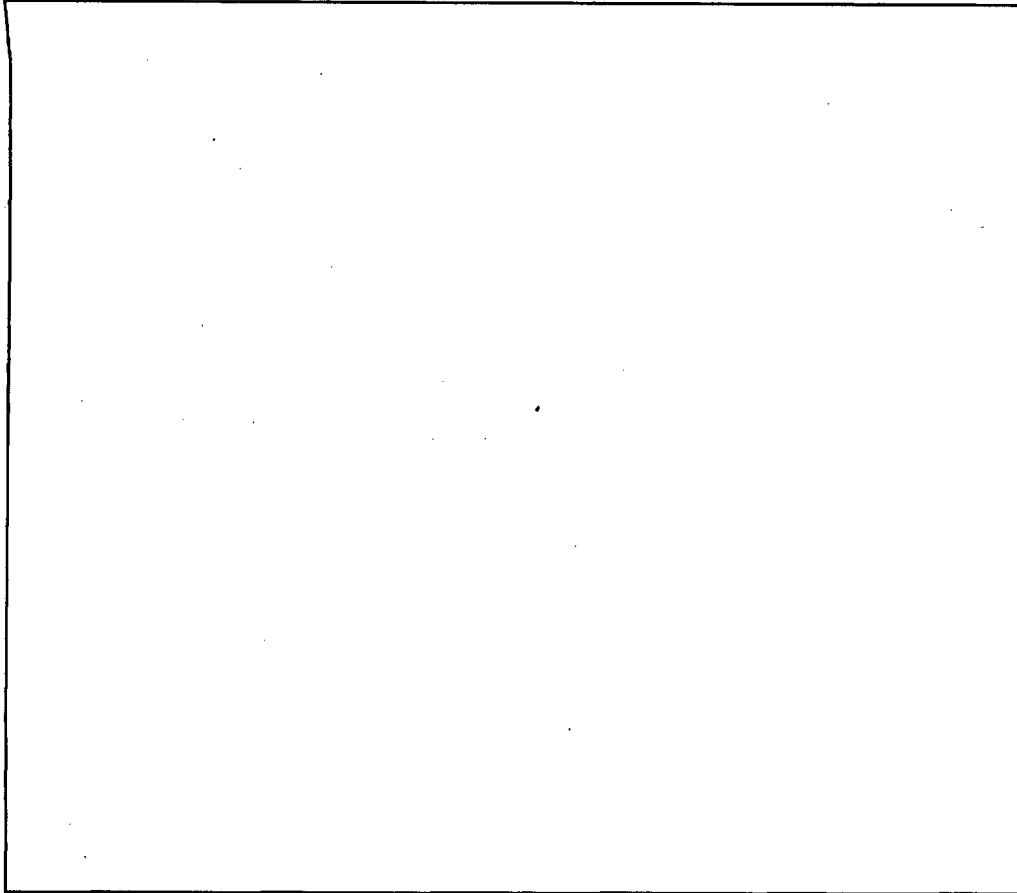


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King Faysal, meanwhile, is said to be adamant that East Jerusalem revert to Arab control. The political officer of the Saudi Embassy in Cairo informed an official of the US Interests Section over the weekend of Faysal's view that an Arab flag--Jordanian or Palestinian--alone must fly over East Jerusalem. The King, he claimed, will not accept any "open city" plan. The Saudi official cited Faysal's hopes that he has now convinced Secretary Kissinger of the Arabs' moral as well as legal right to the city.

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