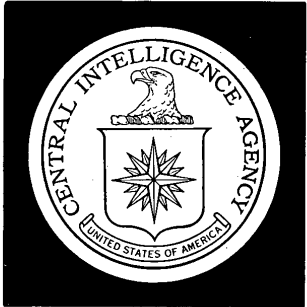


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The President's Daily Brief

24 September 1970

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

24 September 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Jordan is discussed on Page 1.

[Redacted]

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Vietnamese Communist activity is increasing in Cambodia [Redacted] (Page 5)

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[Redacted] North Vietnam [Redacted] Laos. (Page 6)

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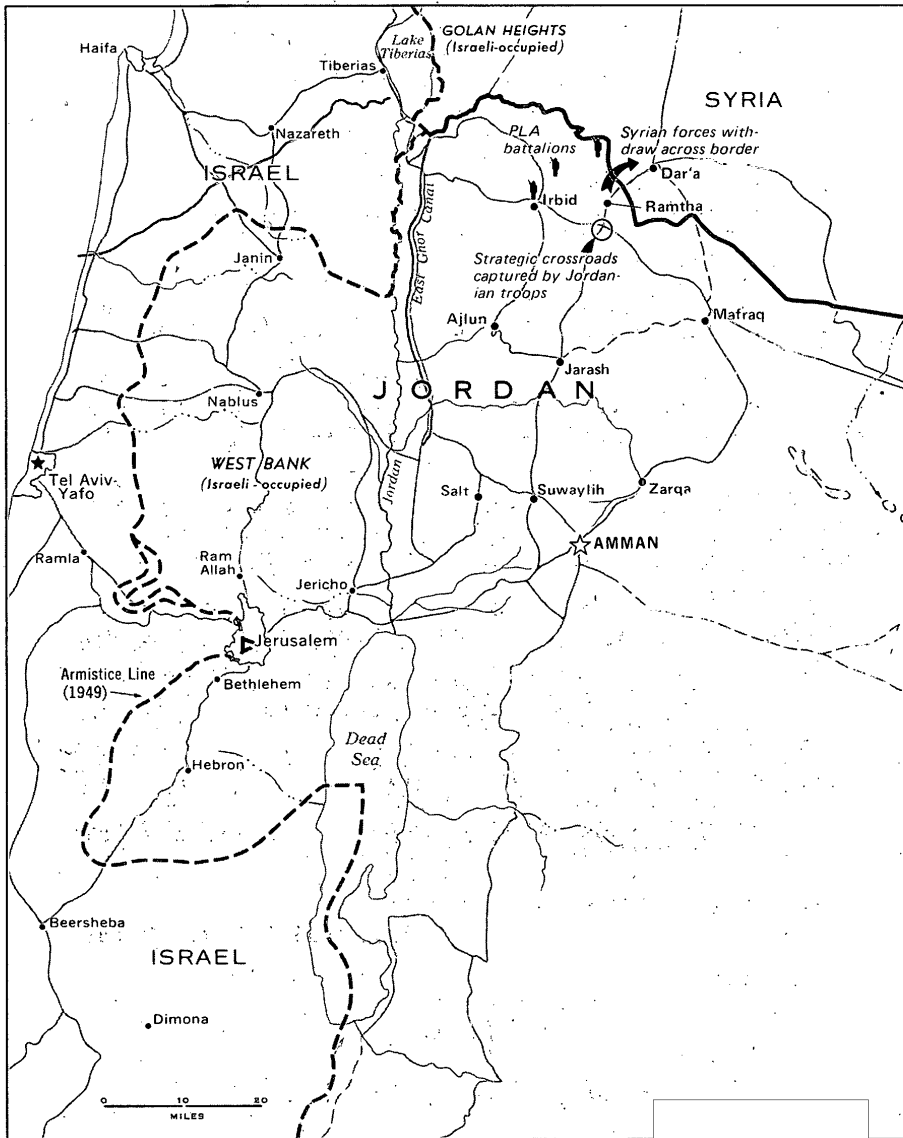
In Chile, the commander of the air force has claimed that the armed forces are prepared to prevent an Allende government if a legal excuse can be found. (Page 7)

[Redacted] Bolivia [Redacted] (Page 8)

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Moscow is expecting a record grain harvest this year. (Page 9)

JORDAN: Current Situation



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JORDAN

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[redacted] all Syrian forces have now withdrawn across the border although they remain close enough to return to Jordan quickly if they want to do so. [redacted]

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[redacted] The Syrian-backed Hittin Brigade of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), under the command of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), has replaced the Syrians in Jordan. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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Syrian withdrawal seems to have been only partially due to lack of success in the fighting, however. Syria was probably extremely nervous that the US or Israel would intervene. [redacted]

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[redacted]

The Syrians may have realized, too, that they could not keep up the fiction that their troops were only Palestinian; by replacing regular troops with a PLA unit, they may be hoping to legitimize their intervention and still prevent an all-out victory against the fedayeen.

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(continued)

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In the wake of the Syrian withdrawal, the Jordanians have launched a heavy attack on Irbid, using an armored brigade and two infantry battalions. Governor General Majali announced yesterday that Jordanian troops captured the Ramtha-Irbid-Mafraq crossroads, the key to the supply route from Syria, and were in control of Zarqa.

[Redacted]

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In Amman, the army continued clearing operations. [Redacted], a confidant of King Husayn, the army has discovered 300 fedayeen strongpoints, and has taken some 8,000 prisoners--a figure which probably includes a large number of noncombatant fedayeen sympathizers. [Redacted] the number of casualties appears to be much lower than press reports suggest.

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Iraqi activity continues to be minimal, and seems to be precautionary. [Redacted]

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The "agreement" announced over Amman radio yesterday by King Husayn and Salah Khalaf, number two man in the PLO, has been rejected by Yasir Arafat and by Cairo officials of the PLO, according to press reports. They claim that Khalaf and the three other PLO leaders captured several days ago by the Jordanians had no authority to enter into such an agreement.

Meanwhile, the kings and presidents resumed their discussions in Cairo last night and planned to meet again today. The four-man conciliation committee sent to Amman has returned, accompanied by the four PLO leaders who were released by King Husayn after the "agreement" was announced. Sudanese President Numayri, chairman of the conciliation committee, said his group "blessed" the agreement between Husayn and the PLO leaders and appealed to both sides to cease hostilities. Inasmuch as the agreement so totally supports Husayn's position, its approval by the delegation is somewhat surprising.

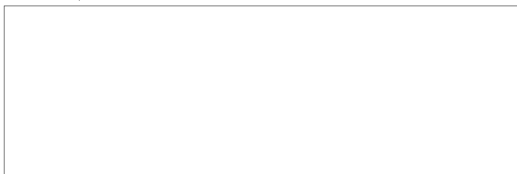
(continued)

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There has been no official word on the hostages, but [redacted] was informed on 22 September by a "good source" that all were safe. The source said that the hostages had been removed from Amman before the outbreak of fighting and were being held elsewhere in Jordan in groups of about six, apparently under close guard by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. According to press reports, the commandos have announced that the captives are being held in the "liberated zone" of north Jordan. The sources said that all of the hostages were "believed" to be safe.

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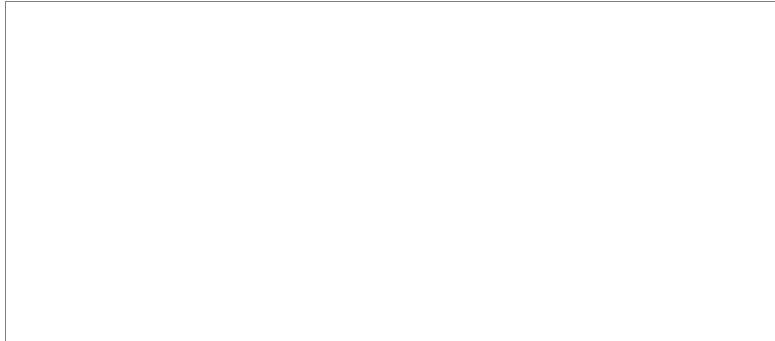
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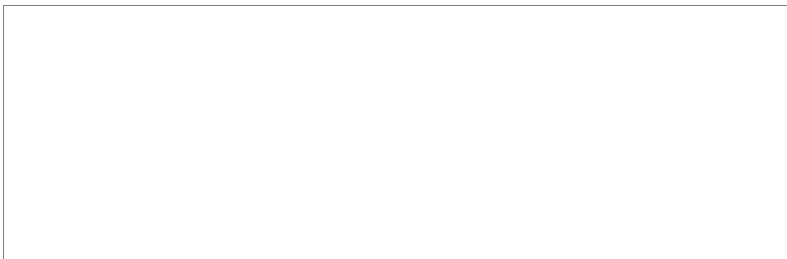
SOUTH VIETNAM



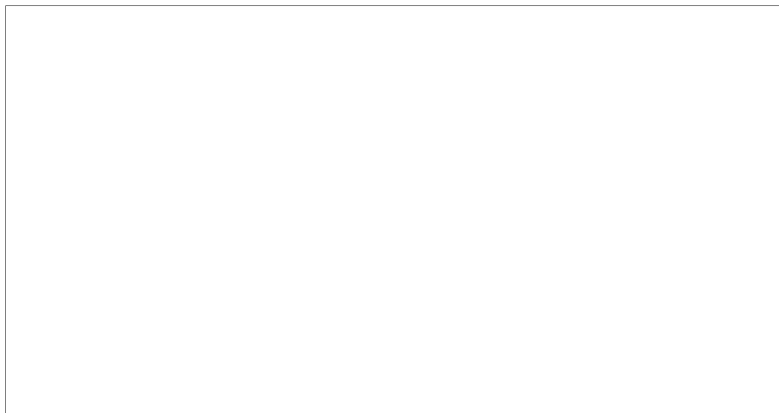
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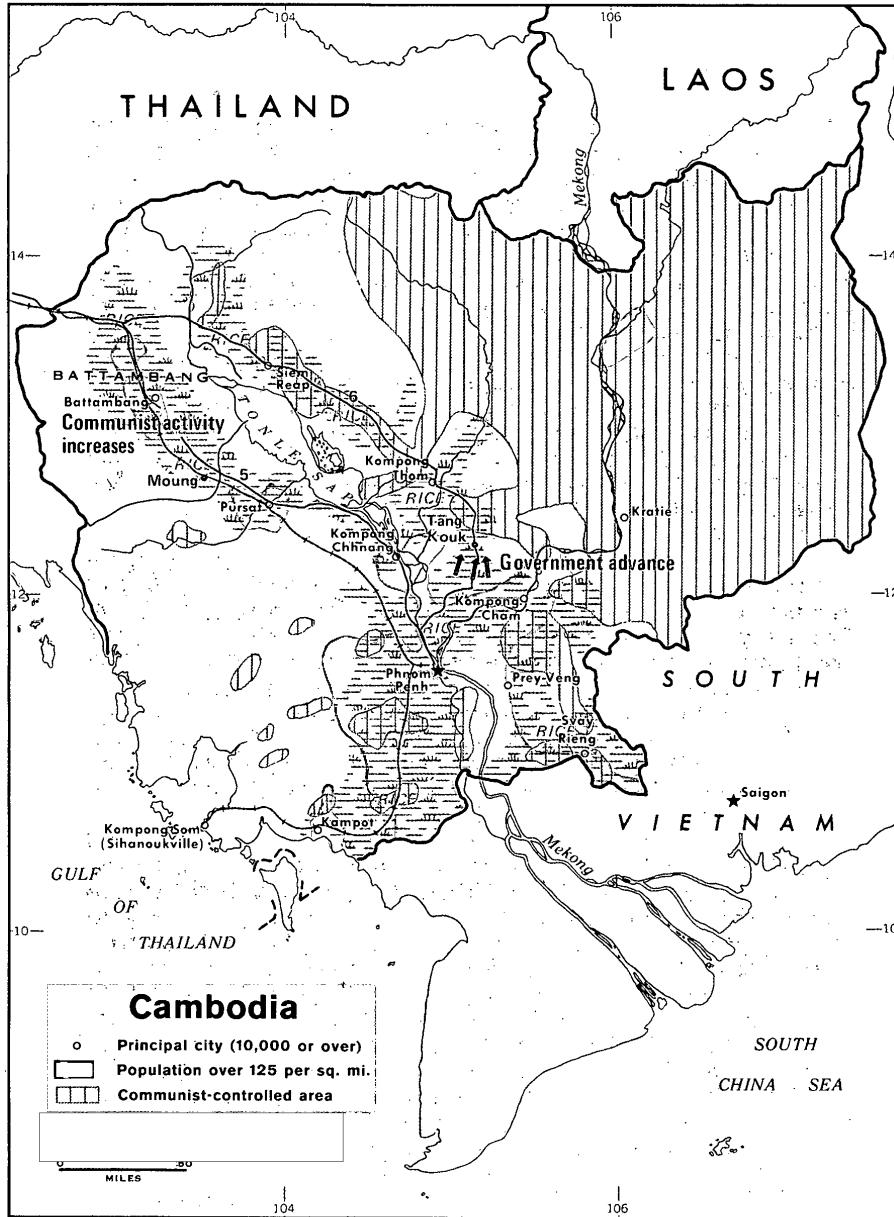


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Current Situation



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

[redacted] the Communists have been infiltrating outlying areas of the hitherto quiet Battambang Province since early September, propagandizing and requisitioning supplies. Communist forces have been reported operating as close as three miles to the railway town of Moung, on Route 5, and some residents are fleeing. Thus far, however, the only significant enemy attacks in the province have occurred in an area between 20 and 30 miles northeast of the well-defended Battambang city.

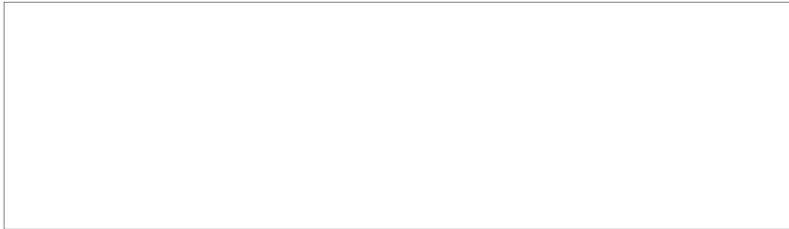
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The government land drive north to Kompong Thom is still being slowed by sporadic Communist harassing fire. The column has now been reorganized into four task forces. Three of them, one on Route 6 and one to either flank, are advancing toward Tang Kouk village along a front of almost four miles.

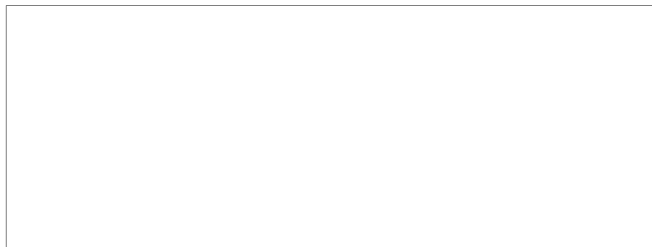
An intercepted message from COSVN's Strategic Intelligence Bureau to one of its associates indicates that the Communists are sensitive to the opportunities for "annihilating a number of Cambodian units" presented by the Kompong Thom operation. The message does not necessarily mean, however, that they will undertake large-scale attacks against the 8,000 - 10,000-man Cambodian force backed with air support.

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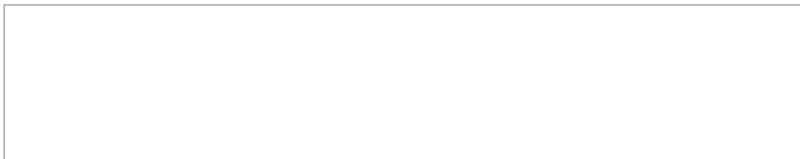
NORTH VIETNAM



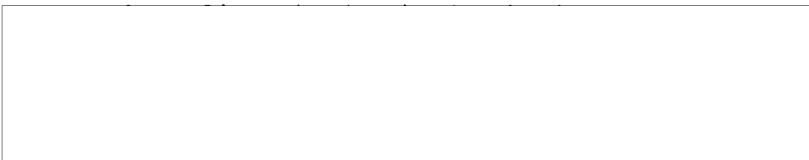
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CHILE

The head of the Chilean Air Force, General Carlos Guerraty, has told the US Embassy in Santiago that the armed forces and national police are prepared to prevent Allende from assuming the presidency if they can find a constitutional pretext that would elicit the support of the troops in all the services. He asserted that within six months Allende would destroy the armed forces as they now exist. Guerraty emphasized that the move must be made within ten days. He added, however, that if the US could provide money, votes could be bought to defeat Allende in Congress on 24 October.



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Guerraty's previous efforts to arouse military resistance to Allende have not elicited much response. The military's reluctance to move stems in part from fear of violence from Allende backers.

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BOLIVIA



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A policeman and two students have been killed, and the students hold four policemen as hostages. On Monday, the day of the greatest violence to date, students attacked the US Embassy in La Paz.

The arrest and deportation of five leftist clergymen on 16 September touched off the latest demonstrations. Ovando is not bowing to leftist demands that he rescind these actions, but his announcement that security forces will respect university autonomy could be unpopular with the right.

Military and police officials have long wanted an excuse to raid the university in La Paz, which they believe serves as a base for subversive activity, and now are likely to press Ovando to allow them to enter it to free the police hostages. Although such a move would intensify the student protest movement and might prompt labor to join the conflict, any sign that the President is weakening in the face of the violence could trigger the long-awaited showdown between himself and the military.

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USSR

Agriculture Minister Matskevitch has predicted a harvest of "about 180 million tons of grain," which would be the largest in Soviet history. Poor weather during the next two weeks could set back the harvest, but the weather is now good and the outlook is favorable for at least the next few days.

If the Soviets achieve this record harvest, the usable output--145-150 million tons--would be 10-15 percent above the average level in 1966-69. It would enable the Soviets to maintain current grain reserve levels, to meet domestic needs for high-quality bread, and to relieve the meat shortage by allocating more grain to feed livestock. The Soviets would be able to maintain their present shipments to Eastern Europe, as well as to Egypt, Cuba, North Vietnam, and North Korea, their major non-European clients.

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