



The President's Daily Brief

2 September 1972

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the Vietnam fighting, a flurry of Communist shellings and commando attacks has shifted attention from the principal battlefronts. (Page 1)

Indian Prime Minister Gandhi is said to believe that India may have to get Bangladesh to soften its position on prisoners of war. (Page 3)

China [redacted] Pakistan [redacted] (Page 4)

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Jordanian King Husayn is considering entering negotiations with Israel later this year. (Page 5)

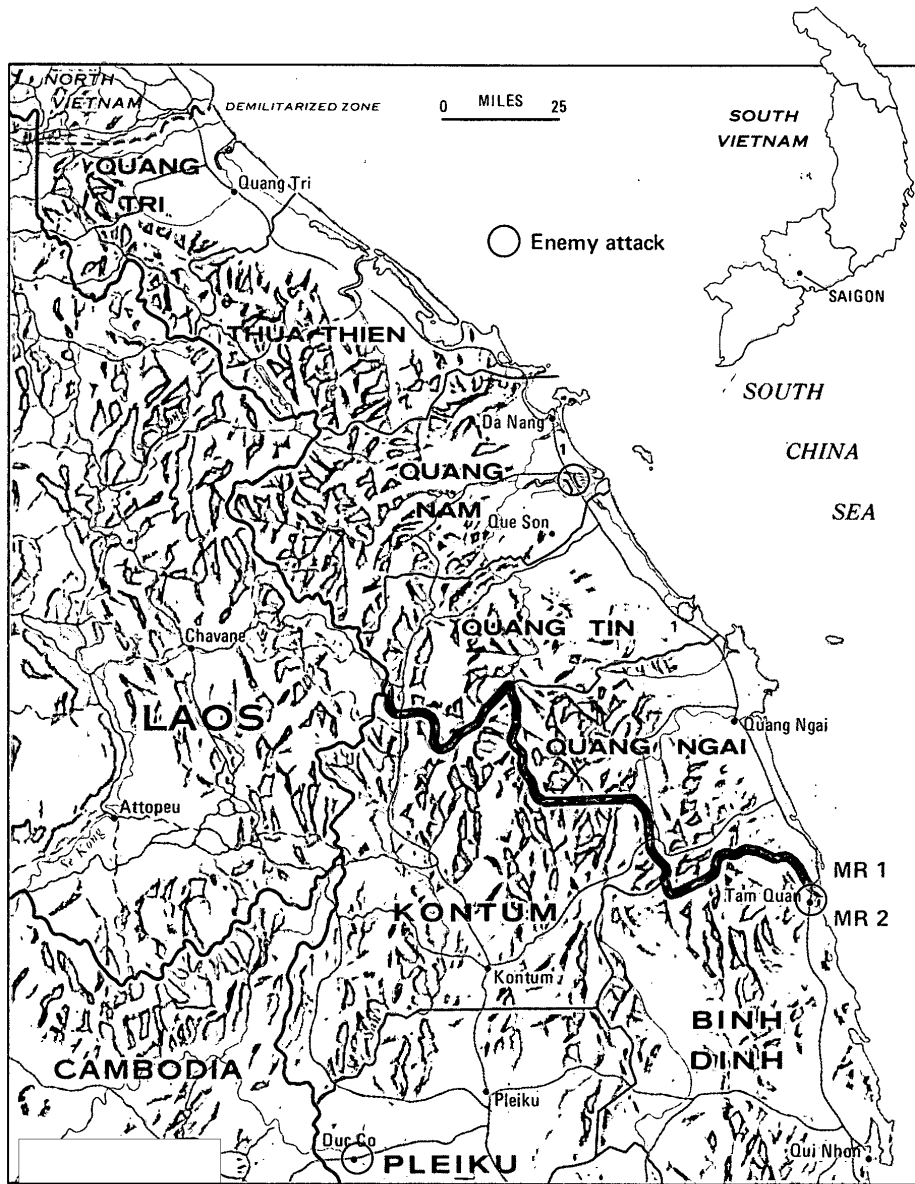
Violence is on the increase in Chile, as extremists of both the far right and the far left seek to exploit shortages and high prices. (Page 6)

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The Soviets [redacted] (Page 7)

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VIETNAM

A flurry of Communist shellings and commando attacks, mainly in Military Regions 1 and 2, has shifted attention from the principal battlefronts. Many of the attacks were directed at major highways. Highway 1 was cut in a number of places from Binh Dinh Province northward, and a half-mile-long bridge 15 miles south of Da Nang was cut. A 600-round mortar and artillery barrage against the South Vietnamese Ranger command post in the district town of Tam Quan in northern Binh Dinh was followed by a ground attack, which government forces repelled. In Pleiku Province, the Duc Co border ranger camp also was hit by a heavy mortar bombardment and ground attack.

South Vietnamese Marines report that they killed a large number of North Vietnamese in a battle just to the north of Quang Tri City, and territorial forces claim to have captured more than 200 weapons and 20,000 rounds of ammunition in an engagement south of the town. The South Vietnamese 2nd Division's counteroffensive in the Que Son Valley made no major gains yesterday.

On the political side, Hanoi late last evening made a move to grab the spotlight by announcing that three US fliers were being released on the occasion of North Vietnam's National Day.

* * *

A recent intercept from the Quang Tri area indicated that 3,500 tons of cargo had been distributed to tactical units in the area.

Although no time period for the deliveries was given in the message, the figure could represent a monthly summary. If so, the delivery rate of more than 100 tons daily is substantially higher than over-all Communist daily requirements and suggests some stockpiling for the future. The same logistic unit has continued a high level of supply activity near Quang Tri City for several months, using both the waterways and roads. By using waterways the Communists will be able to keep significant quantities of supplies moving during the rainy season, which should begin in the area in the next few weeks.

(continued)

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Heavy logistic activity is also under way in southern North Vietnam. Most routes remain open, and some are being improved. Aerial observers have reported spotting massive concentrations of supplies, and they have seen heavy vehicle and watercraft activity. Large-scale supply deliveries south of Vinh are continuing. For example, scattered intercepts during August reflected the southward movement of about 775 tons of ordnance alone, and actual deliveries doubtless were considerably higher.

* * *

The second tropical storm in a week is threatening North Vietnam. Typhoon "Elsie," packing 65-75 knot winds with gusts over 100 knots, is scheduled to hit the Vinh area late today. It is expected to head inland and spare the Red River Delta from direct effects. A flood threat to the delta from peripheral rains and rivers swollen by inland precipitation, however, is still a possibility.

Tropical storm "Cora," which hit near Haiphong on 29 August, was short-lived. The storm lost most of its power as it moved inland, and by the end of the day it had been downgraded to a tropical depression. Rainfall reported from selected stations on 29 August ranged from less than an inch to about 3 1/2 inches. There is no information on changes in river levels in the delta; in the mountains, however, rivers rose only moderately.

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SOUTH ASIA

Prime Minister Gandhi now appears to believe that she cannot profitably prod President Bhutto any further toward concessions. [redacted]

[redacted] she told her cabinet [redacted] that India may have to make more concessions to Pakistan and convince Bangladesh to soften its position on the prisoners of war.

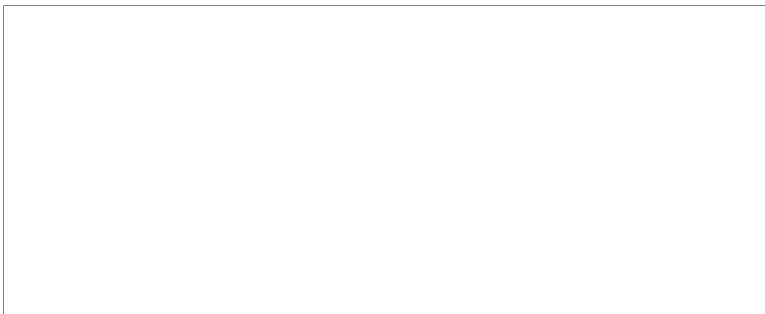
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The Pakistani negotiators who were in New Delhi earlier this week may have convinced Mrs. Gandhi that as long as Bangladesh Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman remains adamant on the prisoner issue, Islamabad will not be able to reach an accommodation with New Delhi.

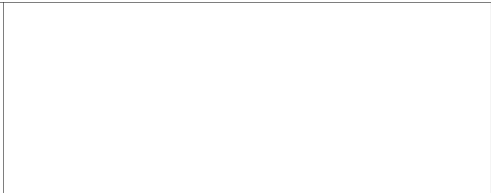
Unless the Indians now are willing to make a major effort, however, attempts to budge Mujib may be no more productive than previous low-key Indian initiatives. He is stubborn and has publicly committed himself on many occasions to trying Pakistani "war criminals."



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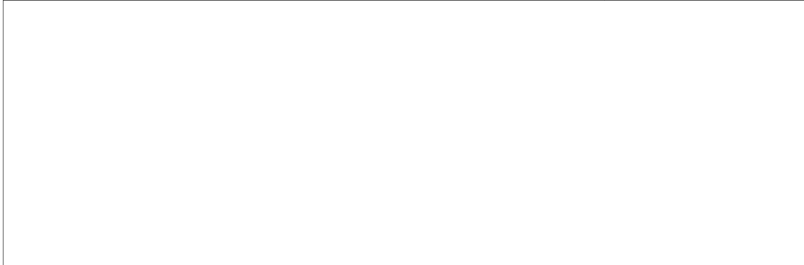
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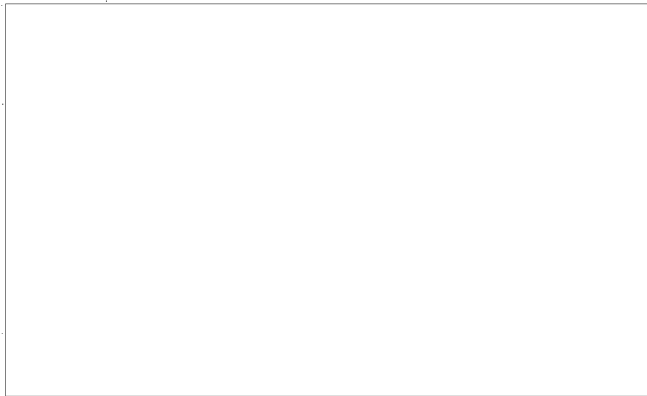
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PAKISTAN-CHINA



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JORDAN-ISRAEL

King Husayn told Ambassador Brown on Thursday that he may enter into peace negotiations with Israel later this year. The King has not yet decided the specifics of his negotiating position and wishes to discuss it at length with his advisers. Husayn, who has been meeting in recent weeks with leaders from the Israeli-occupied West Bank area of Jordan, has told them that he believes the time has come for a peace settlement. He told Ambassador Brown that the West Bankers he spoke to had posed no objections.

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The King's approaches to West Bank leaders help explain the rash of press speculation in the past few days on the possibility of early Jordanian-Israeli negotiation. Husayn clearly does not yet have a definite proposal in mind, however, and has not decided on the timing of his move.

Perhaps by coincidence, Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Allon privately told US diplomats on the same day that his government is now ready to make peace with Husayn. Like Husayn, Allon did not anticipate any movement toward a settlement for the next few months. Allon indicated that, at a minimum, Israel's position would center around his already-publicized plan, which provides for a string of fortified Israeli settlements along the Jordan River and the annexation of some Jordanian territory. Allon also said he has recommended to Prime Minister Meir that Gaza City and its port be included in any peace settlement in order to give Jordan an outlet to the Mediterranean Sea.

Israeli leaders differ on the subject of a settlement with Jordan, however. This week, Defense Minister Dayan, a long-time political rival of Allon, went on record opposing an end to Israeli control of the West Bank, even in exchange for peace with Jordan. Such a withdrawal is one of the key provisions of Allon's plan. Last Wednesday, Dayan said in a speech that he did not believe there was much chance of attaining a contractual peace with Jordan, but from his point of view, this did not rule out the possibility of a modus vivendi with Amman. Neither Dayan, Allon, nor Husayn made any reference to the city of Jerusalem, whose future status has long been an obstacle to an Israeli-Jordanian settlement.

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CHILE

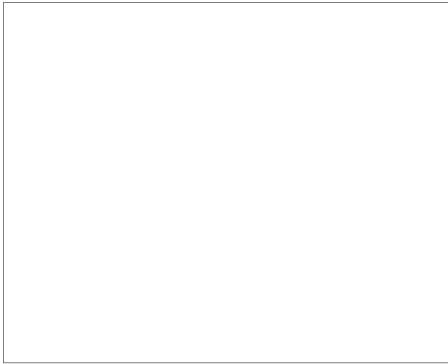
Disturbances, many of them violent, are on the increase as extremists of, both the far right and the far left seek to take advantage of popular resentment over shortages and high prices. Each side apparently believes that violent protests will serve its ends.

The far rightists, for example, hope to make so much trouble that the military will abandon their nonpolitical stance and intervene in the operation of the government. Some businessmen, encouraged by the success of a recent shopowners' strike, are said to have allied themselves with ultrarightists.

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The extreme leftists, for their part, believe that increasing violence will force Allende to take a more radical policy line.

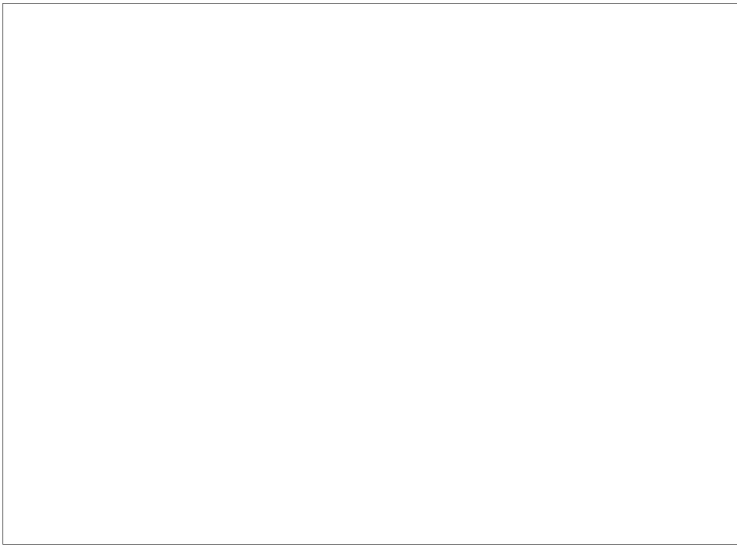
So far, Allende appears to be withstanding these pressures without resorting to drastic countermoves. He continues to believe that offering to accommodate his opponents is the best way to divide and weaken them.



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NOTE

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