



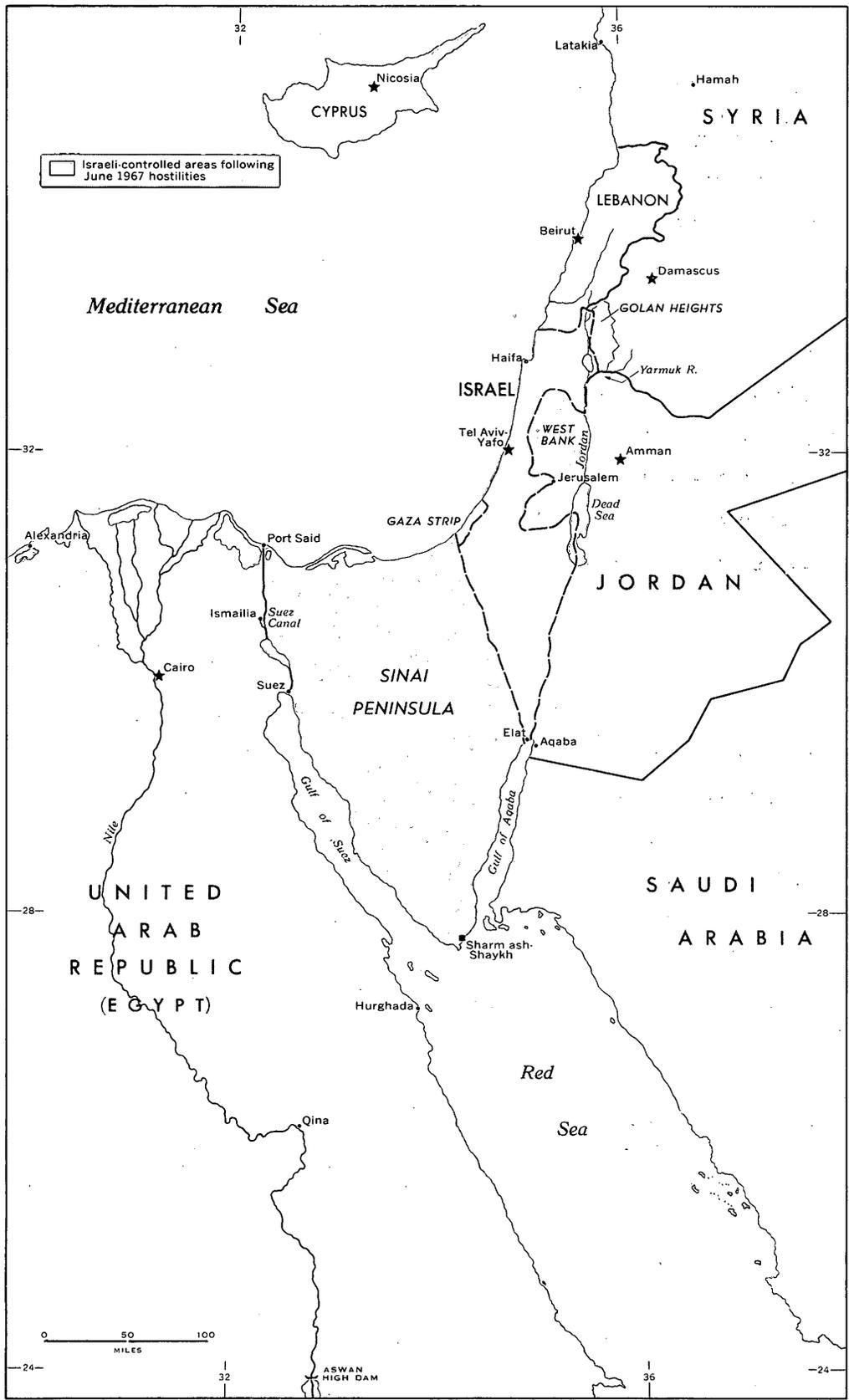
*The President's Daily Brief*

21 February 1969

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

22 February 1969

LATE NOTES FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF OF  
21 FEBRUARY 1969

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

MIDDLE EAST

There is nothing significant to report.

EUROPE

Ambassador Bruce says the British believe that the French are intransigent on WEU partly because London passed the substance of a conversation on 4 February between De Gaulle and British Ambassador Soames to other members of the Common Market. London claims that in this conversation De Gaulle implied a threat to break up the Market. The extensive press coverage that has now been given the conflicting versions of the De Gaulle - Soames conversation is certain to exacerbate the WEU crisis. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

We have seen nothing overnight to change our assessment of Soviet and East German intentions toward Berlin

[redacted]

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VIETNAM

Phan Rang Air Base in coastal Ninh Thuan Province received 74 rounds of 82-mm. mortar fire yesterday, damaging nine aircraft and wounding six personnel. Enemy forces also attacked a base camp of the 101st Airborne Division 97 miles east of Saigon. Spokesmen said the attackers were driven off, suffering eight dead. US casualties were two killed and 11 wounded. [redacted] press reporting)

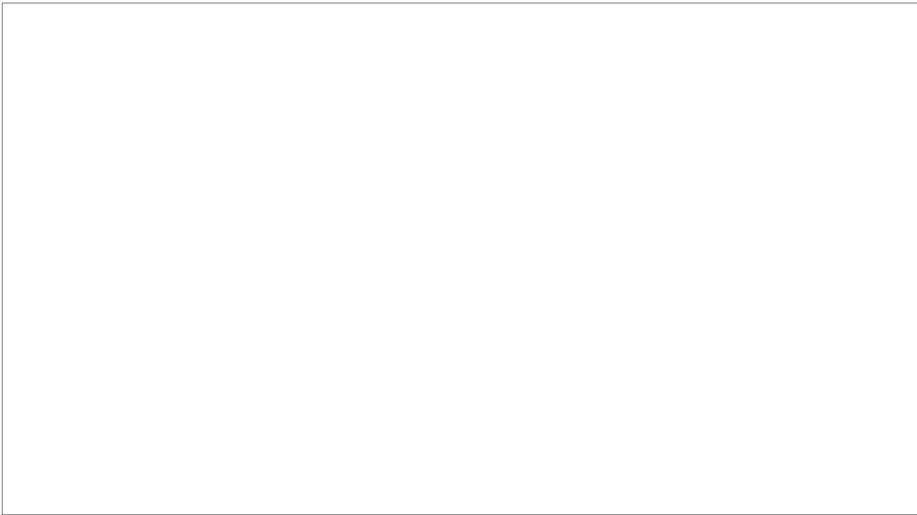
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## II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

### GUATEMALA

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### PAKISTAN

Sheikh Mujibur Rehmen, the popular East Pakistan opposition leader, and 33 others detained on charges of plotting East Pakistan's secession, have been freed, it was officially announced in Dacca today.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

MIDDLE EAST

Israel is likely to hit fedayeen bases in Jordan in retaliation for the explosions in Jerusalem today.

Israeli aircraft have been reconnoitering areas in Jordan during the past few days,

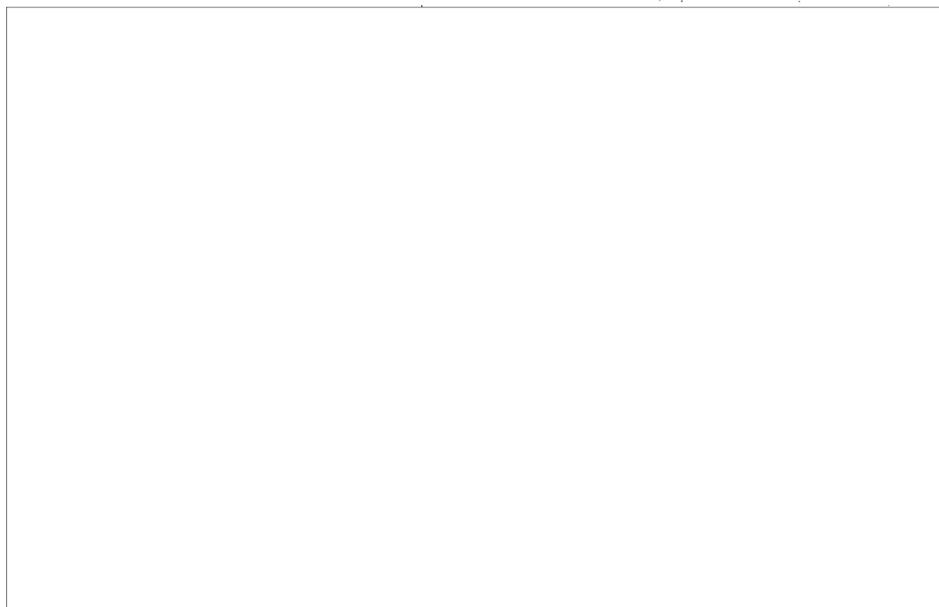
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Frequent ceasefire violations and incidents along the Israel-Jordan ceasefire line and in Israeli-occupied Jordan during the past week have raised tension higher than it has been for some months. Anti-Israeli demonstrations in West Bank towns have increased considerably and have taken on a more violent aspect than in the past.

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EUROPE

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

SOVIET AFFAIRS

We have re-examined the evidence pertaining to Soviet and East German intentions vis-a-vis Berlin in the context of the President's scheduled visit and the West German presidential election there. This review has taken into account the announcement on 20 February that the Soviets and East Germans will conduct joint military exercises in early March in an area of East Germany which will put them in a position to harass or disrupt access to Berlin from West Germany. Our conclusion is that the main judgements

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remain valid. These essentially are that Moscow will seek to avoid a major East-West confrontation over Berlin at this time. The Communists have, however, been making military preparations for greater harassment of access to Berlin.

Authoritative Soviet and other East European officials have given numerous assurances that the Communists do not wish to jeopardize East-West relations at this time by challenging Allied rights of access to Berlin. Given our assessment of Moscow's present political posture, these assurances can, we believe, be given some weight, especially in regard to any serious disruption of air access. The Soviets have not, at the same time, ruled out actions, beyond those already instituted by the East Germans, designed to demonstrate the Communists' ability to disrupt the movement of people and goods between West Germany and West Berlin. Indeed, they have implied

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that some such actions will be taken. These could in fact hamper Allied access, particularly on the ground, for short periods.

The military indications we have observed are consistent with Communist plans to impede traffic to Berlin in the same way as in 1965 when there were disruptions of travel in the autobahn and buzzing of Western aircraft in the air corridors. Some variations on the 1965 pattern are possible. If, however, the Soviets and East Germans are contemplating extreme actions, such as imposing a blockade of some duration on the land routes or forcing a suspension of air traffic, we believe that they could have made, or will soon make, detectable military preparations beyond those already observed.

The range of action available to the Communists short of a direct challenge to the West is considerable. They are determined to teach the West Germans a lesson. In so doing, they might create an incident going beyond the harassments of 1961 and 1965, designed to underscore their intent that this will be the last such election in Berlin. Such an incident, however, would be isolated and carefully controlled by the Soviets.

Any important moves will probably not be taken until after the President leaves Berlin on 27 February. Moscow will try to ensure its control of the situation. Nevertheless, Berlin is such a sensitive issue that the President will probably return to the United States in an atmosphere of heightened tension over the city.

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*



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VIETNAM

There are continued signs in interrogations, [ ] 50X1  
[ ] and intercepts of an enemy intent to launch wide- 50X1  
spread offensive action shortly. The most probable tim-  
ing appears to be this weekend. General Abrams notes that  
while 22 or 23 February seem the most likely dates for  
the start of an enemy offensive, allied operations could,  
as on previous occasions, force a delay.

II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

PAKISTAN

President Ayub, faced with a virtually unmanage-  
able situation, has bowed to the opposition in deciding  
not to run for re-election next year. With this goal  
accomplished, the opposition is likely to lose its tem-  
porary cohesion and quickly revert to the several small  
parties based on ideological and personality grounds.  
Nevertheless, leaders of the opposition parties may be  
willing to meet with Ayub to work out basic constitu-  
tional changes.

Ayub apparently hopes for an orderly transition,  
but he now has little power to control events. No single  
opponent now has enough nationwide support to emerge as  
his obvious successor; many, however, will be tempted to  
show what support they have by promoting popular demon-  
strations. Continued chaos would raise the possibility  
of army intervention, as the military remains one of the  
few stable elements in the country.

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