



The President's Daily Brief

28 August 1969



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

MIDDLE EAST

The hullabaloo over the fire in the al-Aqsa mosque continues in the Muslim world. King Faysal of Saudi Arabia, in a long, emotion-packed meeting with Ambassador Eilts, defended his recent call for Muslims to mount a holy war against Israel. According to Faysal, the al-Aqsa mosque fire was intentionally set by the "international Zionist-Communist conspiracy," and the continued existence of the conspiracy threatens all the shrines of the holy land, Muslim and Christian alike. On the other hand, the only warlike action taken by the Arab foreign ministers during their meeting in Cairo this week was a vote of support for the fedayeen. Apparently the Arab leaders are waiting to see what comes out of the UN General Assembly meeting which begins next month.

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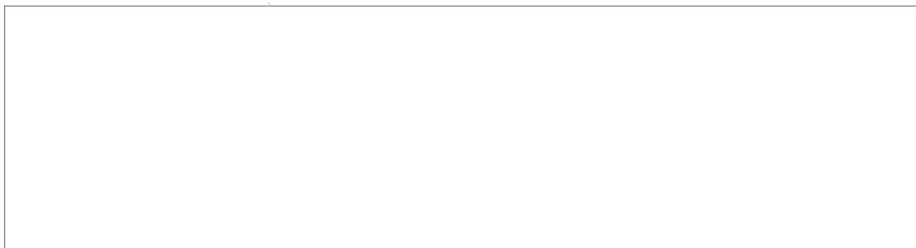
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Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov, wrapping up a lengthy commentary on the US proposal for settlement in the Middle East, emphasized the Soviet desire to continue bilateral talks. He also stressed, however, Moscow's belief that the UN should assume a more significant role than it has thus far in providing safeguards for both sides. Furthermore, Semenov said, areas of difference should be "reduced" before the General Assembly session in September when Foreign Minister Gromyko will be prepared to continue discussions with Secretary Rogers.

SOVIET AFFAIRS

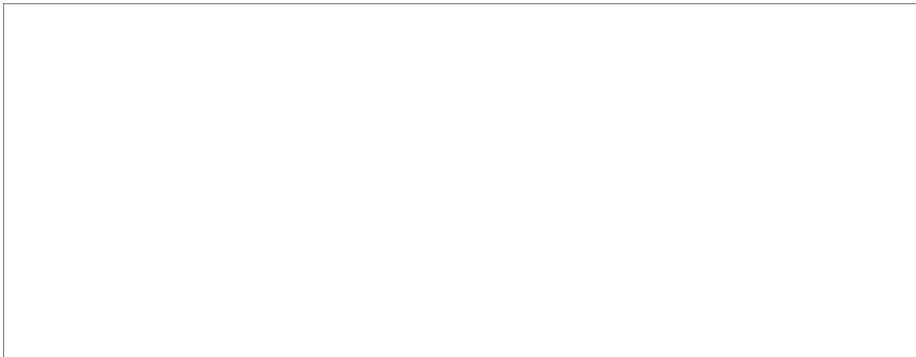
The Soviet delegation to the 25th anniversary of the Slovak national uprising is headed by Kiril Mazurov, a member of the Politburo. The designation of such a high-ranking man is yet another sign of Moscow's satisfaction with the recent performance of the Czechoslovak leadership. Furthermore, Tass announced yesterday that party leader Husak has been awarded the Order of Lenin. He was the only major political figure in a list of about 40 Slovaks so honored for their role during the 1944 uprising.

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VIETNAM

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Initial reports indicate that the nationwide transport strike which began yesterday was generally effective in both the capital and the second largest city but only scattered disturbances were reported. Communist plans to spark widespread unrest was apparently stymied by President Balaguer's tough public stand and a show of military force. Balaguer's political foes, however, hope to use the strike as a club in their campaign to get him to renounce any intention of running for re-election next year.

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