



The President's Daily Brief

19 November 1970



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

19 November 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Recent photography shows what appear to be two stages of a missile of greater length and diameter than any previously seen in China. (Page 1)

[Redacted] Soviet [Redacted]
(Page 2)

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Hanoi's sharp reaction to the US protest of the shoot-down of an American reconnaissance aircraft over the North is discussed on Page 3.

[Redacted] Israeli-Egypt [Redacted]
(Page 4)

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Lebanon claims that Israel has threatened reprisals against border villages where the fedayeen have re-opened offices. (Page 5)

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[Redacted] Israel [Redacted]
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In Syria, Asad has taken new steps to consolidate his position. (Page 7)

In Chile, moves toward closer ties to Cuba are appearing on several fronts. (Page 7)



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COMMUNIST CHINA

Satellite photography of early November has provided new information on the Chinese strategic missile program. Photography of the Ching-yu silo launch complex near the Korean border showed what appear to be two stages of a missile of greater length and diameter than any missile previously seen in China.

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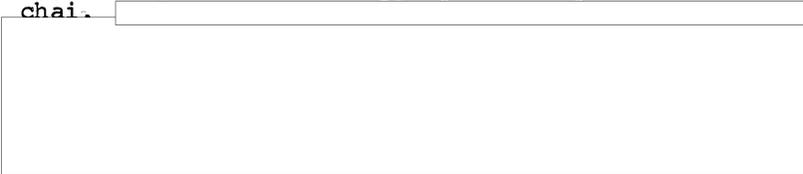
The photography confirmed that construction of a silo is in progress at the Wu-chai missile complex. Construction began in this area in 1967 and the silo now appears about half complete. The only missile system identified so far at the complex is China's nominal IRBM, which has a range of about 1,400 nm.



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In addition, missiles were observed at the Wuwei surface-to-surface missile school in west China, apparently of the same type previously seen at Wu-chai.

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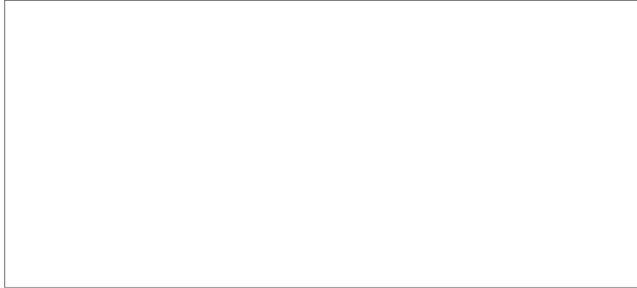
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USSR



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Statements by high Soviet officials and leading scientists over the past year or so have indicated a strong Soviet interest in long-term orbital stations, and recent Soyuz manned space flights have moved the USSR in this direction. For example, in January 1969 the Soviets rendezvoused and docked the Soyuz 4 and 5 spacecraft and claimed to have established the world's first manned experimental station. The spacecraft remained together less than five hours, but tested hardware and techniques for manned space stations, including the transfer of men from one capsule to another.

The Soviets almost certainly would not risk keeping men in orbit longer than 30 days because of the postflight medical problems experienced from the Soyuz 9 manned mission flown last June. This problem could be circumvented, however, by crew rotation.

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NORTH VIETNAM

North Vietnamese media are giving wide publicity to their official reactions to the US protest of the shootdown last Friday of an American reconnaissance aircraft over the North. The Foreign Ministry and Hanoi's delegation at the Paris talks denied that uncontested reconnaissance over the North was sanctioned by the 1968 "understanding" which led to the US bombing halt. The North Vietnamese describe the flights as blatant violations of sovereignty and assert that they would continue to be fired on.

Much of this is pro forma posturing, but the stiff reaction may also be prompted in part by genuine concern that the US might resume some level of air attacks against the North. Hanoi charged that the flights and Washington's statements show that the US is paving the way for such an escalation.

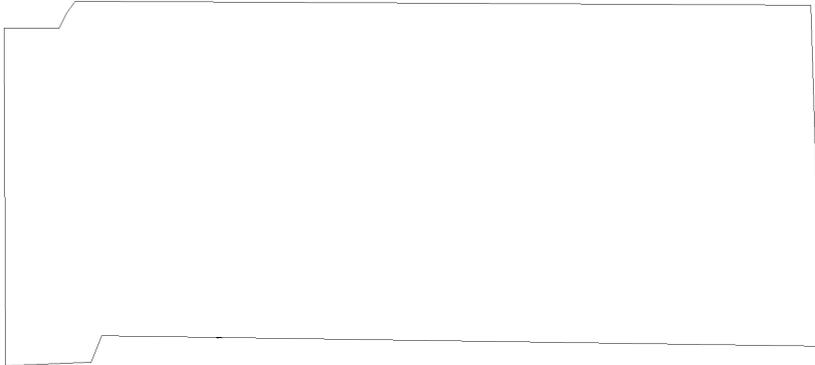
The Communists may be particularly concerned at this stage--the beginning of the dry season--that the heavily laden supply areas in North Vietnam and the infiltration routes into Laos present especially lucrative targets.

The North Vietnamese have been steadily building up their air defenses in the southern panhandle during the last few months. At least four and possibly eight surface-to-air missile batteries have been deployed to southern North Vietnam. There are signs, moreover, that MIG fighters are about to begin operating out of Vinh airfield in the heart of the panhandle. Recent intercepts suggest that a planeload of seasoned air defense officers and air controllers have arrived in Vinh, presumably to coordinate operations.

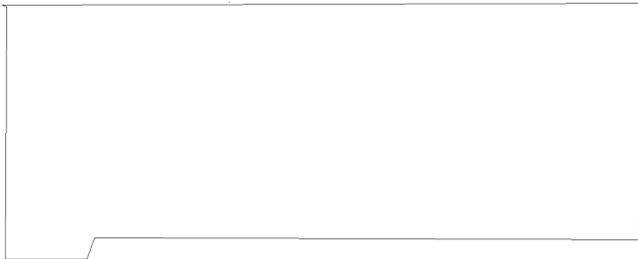
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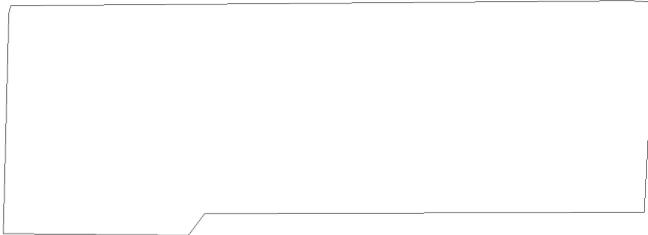
ISRAEL



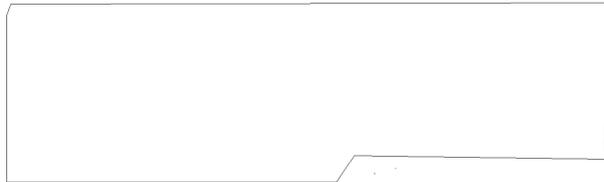
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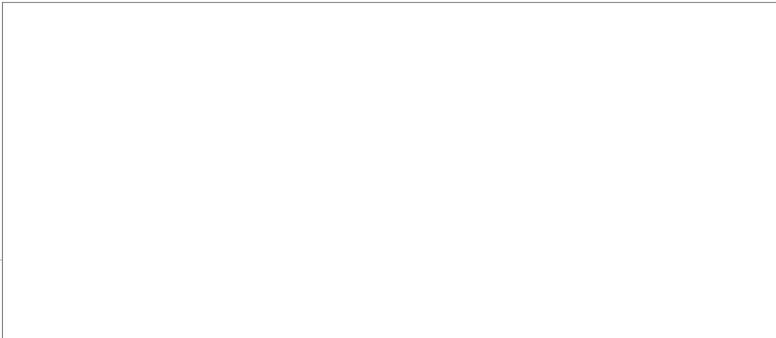
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MIDDLE EAST

Israel has threatened to take reprisals against three southern Lebanese villages where commando offices have recently reopened, according to our embassy in Beirut. The threat was conveyed to the Lebanese at the latest meeting of the mixed armistice committee meeting. According to Lebanon's chief of staff General Naujaim--who asked the US to intercede to cool off the Israelis--the fedayeen have set up "political offices" in the villages but they possess only light arms and "nothing in the way of mortars or rockets." The Lebanese Army has put 3,000 men on the border and is confident that it can contain most fedayeen cross-border operations that would involve heavy weapons, but Beirut fears that Israel may not be satisfied with these measures and might undertake air strikes. An Israeli Foreign Ministry official has acknowledged that Israel is anxious about signs of fedayeen resurgence in southern Lebanon, but he doubts that a punitive air strike is likely in the near future.

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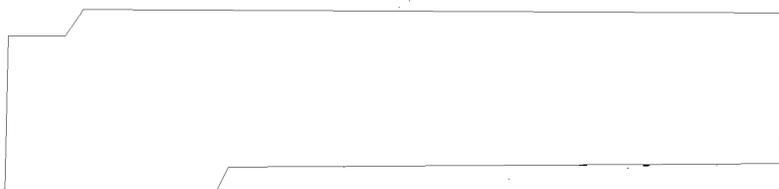


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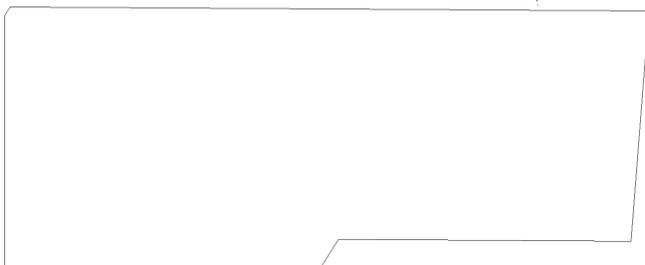
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ISRAEL-EGYPT



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NOTES

Syria: Defense Minister Asad, after moving cautiously for several days, has named himself prime minister and temporary secretary general of the Syrian Baath Party. He has replaced Atasi, the former chief of state, with Ahmad al-Khatib, a figurehead. Khatib is a minor party member who was dean of the Syrian Teachers' Federation at the time of his appointment. Asad has moved further to consolidate his position by bringing a dozen of his supporters into the provisional party leadership. According to press reports from Beirut, many of the ousted leaders will be exiled to other Middle Eastern countries. There is no indication yet of any significant public reaction to Asad's moves.

Chile: Moves toward closer ties to Cuba are appearing on several fronts. The state-owned airline is studying the possibility of adding Havana as a stop on its routes to the US and Europe. Next week the head of the conservative farm owners' organization will travel to Cuba to look into the chances of tripling trade planned for next year to \$30 million. Meanwhile, Marxists continue to receive appointments to key jobs in economic agencies, including the directorships of the presidential planning office, the price control agency, the national railways, and the state bank all now held by men who have been advisers to Fidel Castro.

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