



The President's Daily Brief

14 November 1969

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

14 November 1969

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Moscow's attempts to ease the quarrel with Peking have been motivated largely by its belief that the West will exploit the dispute to Moscow's disadvantage.
(Page 1)

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The USSR is becoming involved in supporting guerrilla organizations formed by Arab Communist parties.
(Page 2)

50X1

Australian Prime Minister Gorton has strengthened his political position. (Page 5)

President Marcos is preparing to reduce the Philippine presence in Vietnam. (Page 6.)

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USSR

The USSR continues to be deeply worried that other countries, and particularly the US, will exploit the Sino-Soviet conflict to Moscow's disadvantage. This concern is a large part of the reason for current Soviet efforts to ease the confrontation with Peking.



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USSR - MIDDLE EAST

The USSR is becoming involved in supporting fledgling commando organizations formed by Arab Communist parties.

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Moscow's decision to become directly connected with guerrilla warfare in the Middle East represents a departure from its previous no-contact policy. The Soviets have extended aid to the fedayeen through Arab governments and other third parties but have scrupulously avoided close involvement.

Moscow may have decided to make an exception with commando groups sponsored by Communist parties because they will be more responsible to Soviet control than the fedayeen and will confine their operations to occupied territories. The USSR is unlikely to abandon the fedayeen, however, even though their wide-ranging terrorist tactics have been a source of concern for Moscow.

The new step by the Soviets does not necessarily indicate that Moscow's interest in a political settlement has faded. Moscow's action may be partially motivated by a concern for the future image of Arab Communist parties if they do not become more identified with the military action against Israel.

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PAKISTAN-JORDAN

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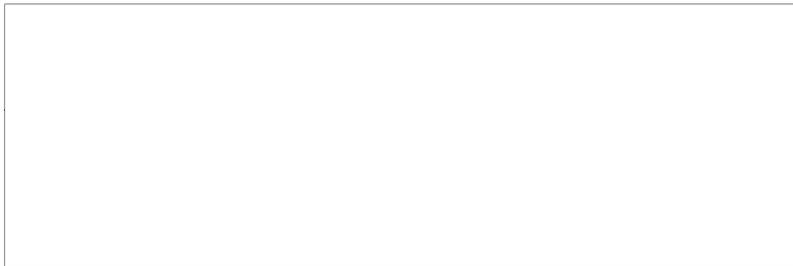
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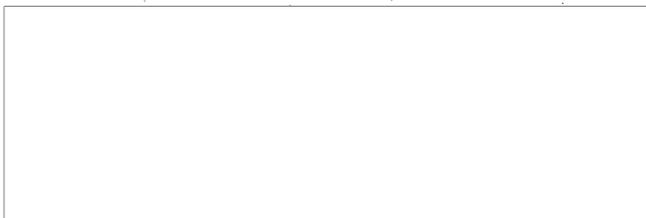
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ISRAEL - WEST GERMANY



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AUSTRALIA

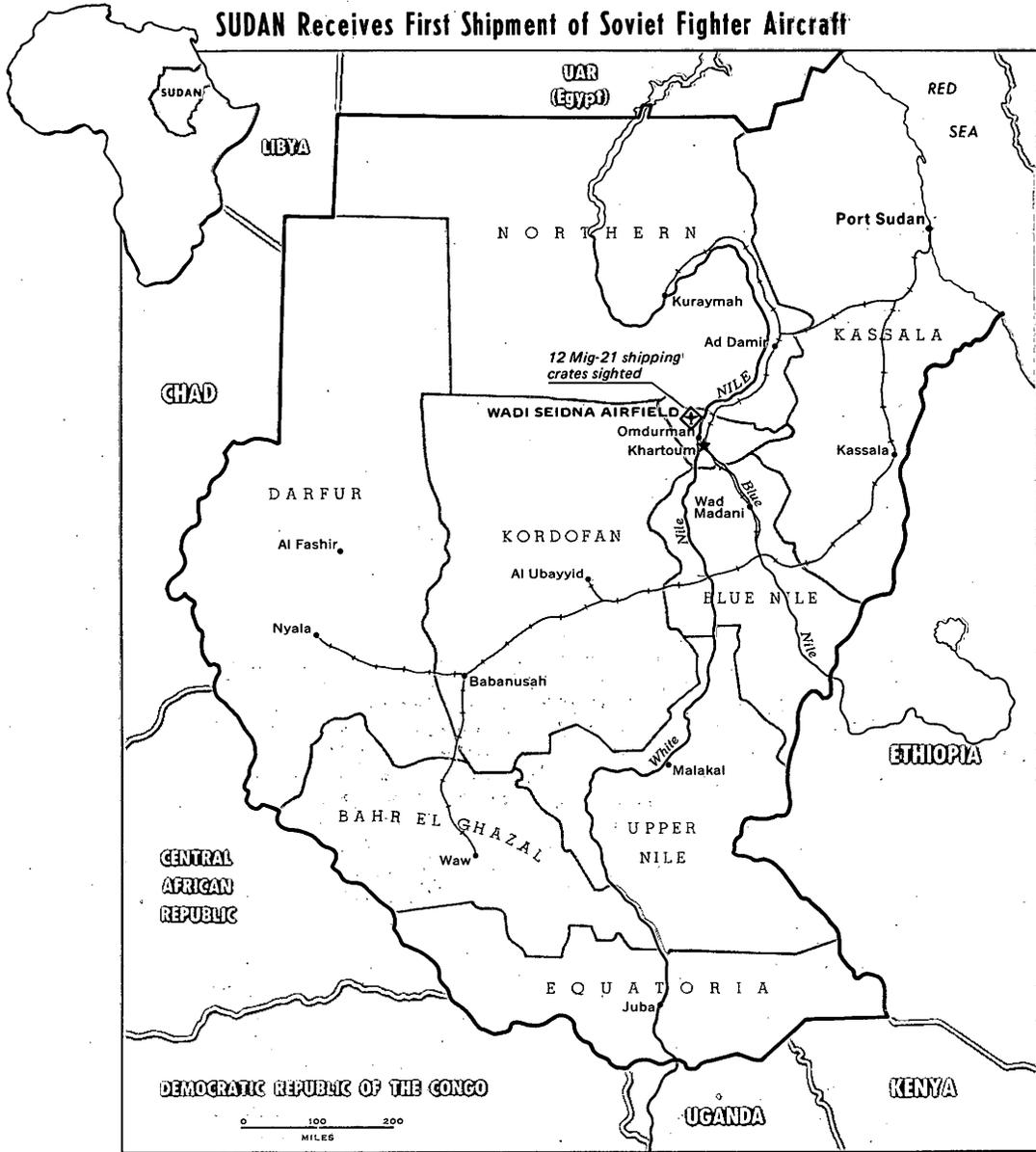
Prime Minister Gorton, having weathered the challenge to his leadership within his own party, moved further this week to strengthen his political position in naming a new cabinet. The two most influential members, Treasury Secretary Leslie Bury and Defense Minister Malcolm Fraser, are Gorton supporters. Gorton's strongest opponent, William McMahon, was shifted from the treasury to external affairs, a portfolio overshadowed by Gorton's own firm control of foreign policy.

Gorton may feel ready to work more closely with the cabinet now that he has a clear, if narrow, majority of personal supporters within it.



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SUDAN Receives First Shipment of Soviet Fighter Aircraft



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NOTES

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Vietnam-Philippines: President Marcos is preparing to reduce the Philippine presence in Vietnam. He has called a meeting of his cabinet to discuss a plan to withdraw most of the 1,500-man Philippine civic action team, leaving in place only a small medical contingent. Marcos probably calculates that such a compromise arrangement would satisfy congressional critics of Philippine involvement in Vietnam and boost his chances of getting favorable action on his legislative program. At the same time, he hopes that keeping even a small Philippine presence will give Manila a voice in future discussions on Vietnam.

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