

Top Secret 231

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Friday June 11, 1976

CI NIDC 76-137C

DIA review(s) completed.

State Dept. review completed



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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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[Redacted]

National Intelligence Daily Cable for Friday, June 11, 1976

[Redacted]
[Redacted] The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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LEBANON

[Redacted] Syrian forces began an armor and infantry assault last night against a Palestinian position on the outskirts of Beirut, according to press reports. This followed a day of quiet on the major Lebanese battle fronts.

[Redacted] Prior to the assault, fighting had been at a relatively low level, with clashes between Syrian and leftist forces reported in Sidon but little military activity noted in Beirut and Tripoli. [Redacted]

[Redacted] leftist forces beat back an attempt by Syrian armored units to enter Sidon.

[Redacted] //Syria has strengthened its forces near Sidon with new troops from Syria. Military authorities in Tel Aviv reported yesterday that a mechanized brigade of the Syrian 7th Infantry Division had entered Lebanon and was moving toward Sidon. Support vehicles of the division were seen entering Lebanon yesterday by the US defense attache in Syria. This is the first firm indication that Syria has begun to draw directly upon its forces confronting Israel on the Golan Heights.//

[Redacted] //The US attache saw empty tank transporters moving south from the capital. These probably will pick up armor from one of the Syrian armored units along the Golan front for use within Lebanon.//

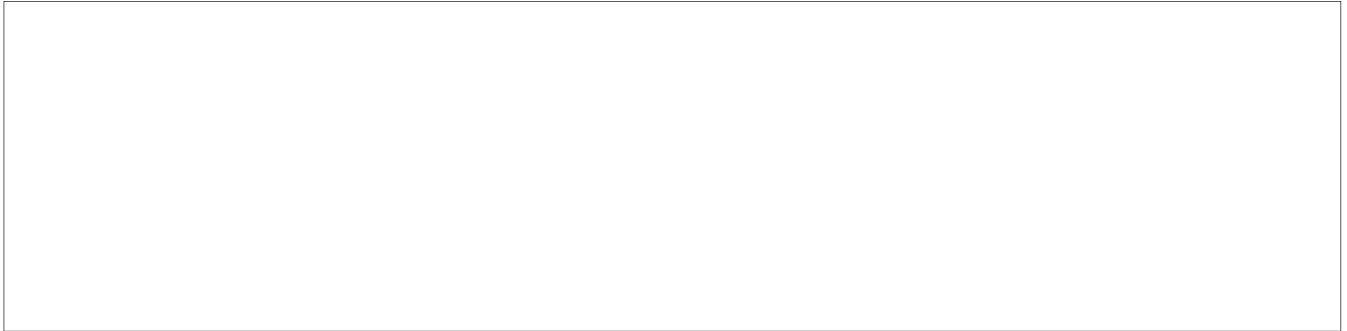
[Redacted] //The introduction of the new unit into Lebanon brings the total number of regular Syrian troops inside the country to about 12,000, with another 5,000 or so in support roles in adjacent border areas.//

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



Potential Iraqi Role



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Although a Syrian foreign ministry official said yesterday that he believed the Iraqis were only "showing off," Damascus predictably is not giving Baghdad the benefit of the doubt. Foreign Minister Khaddam yesterday informed Arab ambassadors in Damascus that Syria would take "suitable measures" to counter any Iraqi troop movements.

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The Syrian Baath Party newspaper reported yesterday that Damascus had replied to the recent Iraqi request that Syria open its border to Iraqi troops by warning Baghdad against any "provocation or act of aggression" in the border area.

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Baghdad's press, quoting "informed sources," accused Damascus of having reneged on its approval of the entry of Iraqi forces into Syria during Libyan Prime Minister Jallud's tour of the area in mid-May. Iraqi strongman Saddam Husayn, however, reiterated his earlier statement to the press that the deployment of Iraqi troops to Syria is conditional on Damascus' consent.

Cease-Fire Efforts

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Libyan Prime Minister Jallud, meanwhile, continued his efforts yesterday to work out acceptable terms for a cease-fire in Beirut, and Arab League Secretary General Riyad visited Damascus to make preliminary arrangements for the introduction of the six-party Arab security force into Lebanon. After talks with Syrian President Asad, Riyad announced that an Arab League military mission would go to Damascus within the next two days for detailed talks with Syrian officials.





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[Redacted] The Arab League delegation presumably will be led by Egyptian chief of staff Fahmi, who is the assistant to the secretary general for military affairs. Riyadh yesterday instructed Fahmi to begin forming the Arab force.

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[Redacted] Actions taken by Riyadh and Fahmi are likely to reflect the wishes of Egyptian President Sadat, who will probably push for the early commitment of a substantial force. This will be opposed by Damascus; Asad has agreed to accept a symbolic force, but will attempt to prevent the Arab unit from replacing or interfering with Syrian forces already in Lebanon.

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[Redacted] Asad preempted the Arab League before its session on Tuesday by arranging for a Libyan-Algerian force to proceed immediately to Syria. According to press reports, some Libyan and Algerian troops may already have moved from Syria into Lebanon.

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[Redacted] There are indications that the conservative Arabs are unhappy that they were outmaneuvered, but they and Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat apparently decided that their best strategy would simply be to add other Arab contingents to the Algerian-Libyan team.

Arab, Israeli Reactions

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[Redacted] Arab moderates apparently are concerned that Damascus, despite its acceptance of the Arab League resolution, may try to preserve a distinction between the Libyan-Algerian force and what it calls the "symbolic" Arab force.

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[Redacted] Syria's Baath Party newspaper, in an effort to minimize the importance of the Arab League action, yesterday was still referring to the cease-fire in Lebanon as a product of Libyan and Syrian mediation in Beirut, rather than as a result of the Cairo meetings.

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[Redacted] Damascus' success in eliciting from the Arab League foreign ministers a declaration that the joint military force will be used only "within the framework of Lebanon's sovereignty" provides Syria another way to restrict or even prevent implementation of the League resolution. Syrian spokesmen have insisted publicly that Lebanese approval is necessary before any joint Arab force can be used.



[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Lebanese President Franjyah, who recently has been cooperating closely with Damascus, has denounced the Arab League resolutions, and leaders of the major Christian militias apparently are following his lead. President-elect Sarkis, who is more immediately responsive to Damascus, has said nothing.

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[REDACTED] Israeli defense and foreign ministry officials denied reports yesterday that the Rabin government was revising its hands-off policy toward Lebanon. According to one press report, government sources indicated that Israel could accept a "symbolic" Arab peacekeeping force in Lebanon provided, as usual, that it does not threaten Israel's security. [REDACTED]

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CUBA-ANGOLA

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[redacted] A contingent of Cuban troops arrived in Havana from Angola on Wednesday, according to a Yugoslav press report. [redacted]

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[redacted] The size of the contingent was not given; the press item said only that the troops were seen aboard a "column of buses" in Havana that afternoon.

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[redacted] Havana has not officially announced the arrival of the troops noted by the Yugoslav press report. Cuba's large-scale intervention in Angola has been an irritant in its relations with Belgrade, and it is possible that the Cubans gave the story to the local Yugoslav press representative to make sure the news got back to Belgrade quickly.

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[redacted] Havana may have intended to use Belgrade's wire service for nonaligned countries to disseminate the story rapidly in the third world. [redacted]

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ITALY

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[redacted] As the Italian election campaign heads into its final week, debate is centering on three major issues: the Christian Democrats' record in government, the future role of the Communist Party, and the sharp increase in politically motivated violence.

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[redacted] The Christian Democrats are under attack from all sides. The Communists are coupling their demand for participation in the government with the charge that Italy's problems stem from



[redacted]

30 years of "bad government" by the Christian Democrats. Most of the Christian Democrats' previous coalition partners--the Socialists in particular--cite Christian Democratic government as the root cause of Italy's problems. The Christian Democrats have responded by emphasizing the uncertainties that would accompany Communist entry into the government rather than defending the Christian Democratic record.

25X1 [redacted] The Christian Democrats seem to have submerged their internal differences in an effort to retain their position as Italy's largest party.

25X1 [redacted] Despite the Communists' insistence that no effective government can be formed without them, there are signs that the party will not press the issue unless it achieves massive gains.

[redacted] 25X1

[redacted] the Communists would prefer to remain out of the government at least until after the US and West German elections this fall. Berlinguer is reportedly open to an agreement under which the Communists would support the government on specific programs--an idea pushed by the Socialists and favored by some Christian Democratic leaders.//

25X1 [redacted] The assassination in Genoa this week of the city's politically conservative public prosecutor, presumably by left-wing extremists, ensures that political violence will remain a hot issue. All parties condemn the violence that has occurred during the campaign but disagree over who is best qualified to deal with it. The Christian Democrats portray themselves as the only party able to maintain public order but the Communists charge that the Christian Democrats, by virtue of their long domination of the government and their stress on anti-communism in the campaign, are to blame for the climate that encourages violence.

25X1 [redacted] The director of Italy's principal public opinion organization has reportedly concluded from his research that the law-and-order issue now favors the Communists--a finding consistent with other evidence that the Communists are increasingly seen by the middle class as better guarantors of public order than the Christian Democrats. [redacted] 25X1

ROMANIA

25X1 [redacted] One of Romanian President Ceausescu's closest advisers, party secretary Stefan Andrei, will arrive in the US on Sunday for a visit of about 10 days. //Andrei is the youngest member of the party's political executive committee, which is roughly equivalent to the Soviet Politburo.//

25X1 [redacted] //Andrei has told US diplomats that he is carrying a message from Ceausescu to President Ford and that Ceausescu has asked him to seek President Ford's views on "one or two issues of major interest."//

25X1 [redacted] The Romanian will arrive shortly after attending the current preparatory session for the proposed European communist party conference and briefing Ceausescu on the outcome. The timing of the visit illustrates Ceausescu's tactic of balancing Romania's contacts with the superpowers.

25X1 [redacted] //Andrei has been party secretary for foreign and interparty relations since April 1972. He is second only to Ceausescu in the formulation of Romania's delicately balanced foreign policy.//

25X1 [redacted] //Since the death last January of party elder statesman Emil Bodnaras, Andrei's credentials as a kind of "super foreign minister" have been enhanced. He clearly outshines Romanian Foreign Minister Macovescu.//

25X1 [redacted] //Andrei has drive and personality. Unlike others around Ceausescu, he is willing to voice his opinions on selected issues. He is impatient with protocol and small talk, and does not like to waste time. His manner is crisp and no-nonsense, sometimes even brusque, but he is able to turn on personal charm.//

25X1 [redacted] //In recent years, Andrei has been an articulate spokesman for Romania's maverick brand of national communism, particularly at the preparatory talks for the European party conference. For this reason, he is reportedly not well liked by his Soviet and East European counterparts, who find him tough and even abrasive.//

[redacted]

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[redacted] During his talks in Washington, Andrei can be expected to deal directly with whatever topics arise. He will stress the good state of US-Romanian relations but probably will also voice displeasure over the "spheres of influence" that Bucharest believes the two great powers want.

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[redacted] Andrei is likely to be somewhat defensive about Romania's record on emigration and the problem of divided families. He will no doubt express his gratitude to the President for recommending to Congress that Romania continue to enjoy most-favored-nation privileges, but will make clear that Bucharest does not tolerate interference in its internal affairs.

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[redacted] Andrei will almost certainly be willing to discuss in detail Soviet-Romanian relations. He is apt to discuss recent Soviet pressures, including the ideological and historical attacks that Romanians believe call into question the legitimacy of the Romanian nation. [redacted]

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USSR-MBFR

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[redacted] //For the first time in the MBFR negotiations, the Soviets have provided some data on the strength of the Warsaw Pact forces. The information appears to be incomplete, however, despite a Soviet assertion that the "figures covered all categories of military servicemen."//

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[redacted] //The Soviet ambassador to the MBFR negotiations, Oleg Khlestov, said yesterday at a formal plenary session that the Warsaw Pact overall force strength in the NATO Guidelines Area--which includes East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia--is 987,300 men, including 805,000 in the ground forces.//

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[redacted] //The Soviet ground force figure is 144,000 lower than the NATO estimate. It appears that the Soviets have excluded certain non-combat forces and have used definitions of forces that have not been accepted by the West. There has been no agreement at the MBFR talks on which categories of forces should be counted or on how to reconcile differences in the relative manpower strength of ground and air forces of the Warsaw Pact and NATO.//

[redacted]

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

//The Soviets may have:

--Counted the manning of Soviet units at less than the strength that NATO claims they maintain.

--Excluded non-combat uniformed support personnel, such as those assigned to academies and provincial staffs, which are included in the Western figures.

--Defined ground and air force units by function rather than by service designation. The Soviets, for example, want to assign all territorial air defense personnel to the air force, while NATO currently counts most of them as ground forces.//

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[Redacted]

//According to NATO estimates, the Warsaw Pact ground forces in the NATO Guidelines Area have about 160,000 more troops than NATO. The Soviets have not yet presented their estimate of NATO strength, but it is likely that their data will show a smaller disparity between Warsaw Pact and NATO ground forces than do Western figures.//

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[Redacted]

//Current MBFR proposals from both sides call for a reduction of US and Soviet forces during the first phase. All other NATO and Warsaw Pact participants would be involved in later reductions.//

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[Redacted]

//The US has contended that, because Warsaw Pact forces in the NATO Guidelines Area are larger than NATO's, there should be an asymmetrical reduction leading to a common ceiling of about 700,000 for the ground forces of each side.//

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[Redacted]

//The Soviets have insisted that there is already an appropriate "correlation of forces" and that reduction should be approximately equal. This approach has been a basic tenet of the Soviet negotiating position during the 33 months of talks.

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LIBYA

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 Libyan President Qadhafi has launched a major new effort to increase the size of the Libyan armed forces, according to the US embassy in Tripoli. Processing of eligible draftees is said to be under way, and the first call-ups are expected in the next two weeks.

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  Qadhafi's efforts to build up a large volunteer army have been frustrated because of the small population base on which to draw--about 2.5 million--and a general lack of interest on the part of eligible males.//

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[redacted] Qadhafi has been planning for some time to expand the armed forces to man his growing stocks of Soviet and West European weaponry. At present, the Libyans do not have enough trained manpower to operate much of the equipment.

[redacted] Even a plan limited to the conscription of government workers is likely to have a severe impact on Libya's economy, which already suffers from a serious shortage of skilled manpower.

[redacted] According to the US embassy, at least two branch banks have already been closed because their staffs are to be drafted, and Qadhafi has been besieged with pleas for exceptions from cabinet ministers and department heads fearful that their offices will cease to function. The draft would involve almost 20 percent of the Libyan bureaucracy.

[redacted] Libya's domestic labor force currently encompasses less than one quarter of the population, and a large proportion of this force is illiterate and unskilled. Labor shortages have been compensated for by a large foreign work force, which is estimated to be roughly equal in size to Libya's.

[redacted] Recently the economy has been adversely affected, however, by the expulsion of about 30,000 Egyptian and Tunisian workers and by continuing problems with the renewal of foreign laborers' work permits. [redacted]

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BOLIVIA


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 Workers at two of Bolivia's major tin mining complexes have begun an indefinite strike to protest the state of siege declared on Wednesday. There has been no violence thus far, and the government's earlier precautions--arresting leaders of the mineworkers' federation and using mainly experienced troops to occupy the mining districts--will probably keep the lid on.

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 In other areas the occupied mines are quiet; one report indicates that troops have withdrawn five kilometers (three miles) from the mine complex at Huanuni following an accord with the miners.

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 President Banzer originally declared the state of siege to deal with a number of unrelated demonstrations throughout the country. Banzer may be taking advantage of these disparate disturbances to move against the militant miners who were threatening a crippling national strike over wage increases.

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 Banzer has canceled a trip to Panama, but the government appears in control of the situation. 



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