

The President's Daily Brief

9 October 1969

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

9 October 1969

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Soviets appear almost ready to conduct their next space mission; [redacted]

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In the Middle East, Israeli forces have carried out operations against islands near an Egyptian naval base. (Page 2) [redacted]

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(Page 3)

Panama's military government plans to mark its first anniversary on Saturday with major policy statements. (Page 4)

The Soviets have established an airlift capability for troops at two installations near the Sino-Soviet border. (Page 5)

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USSR

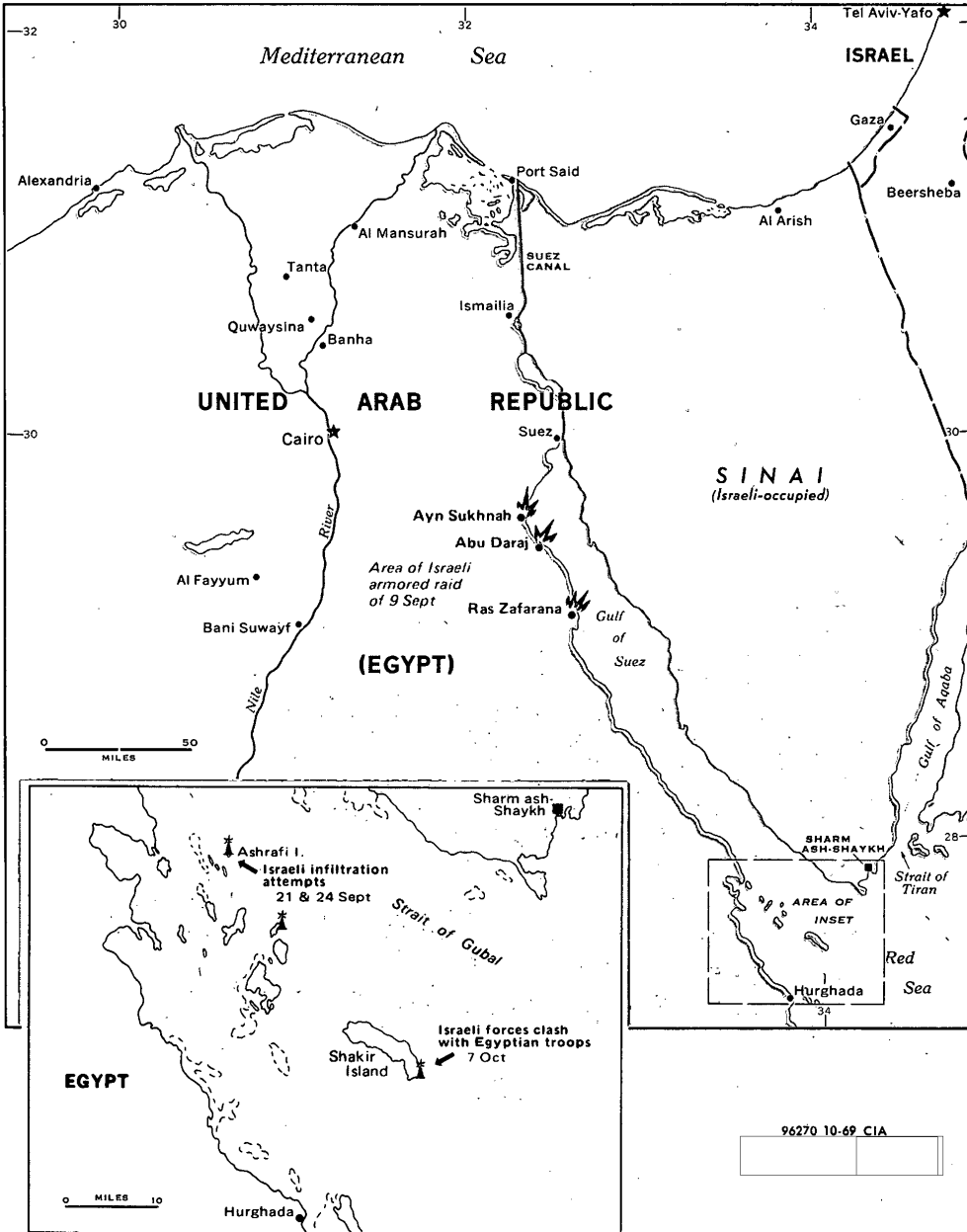
Preparations appear nearly complete for the forthcoming manned space mission, and the operation probably will start within the next few days.



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The Soviets probably intend this flight to make further advances toward the establishment of a permanent manned space station. The planned duration of the mission is not known, but the Soyuz spacecraft is believed capable of supporting its crew in orbit for about 30 days.

Israel Continues Military Pressure on Egypt



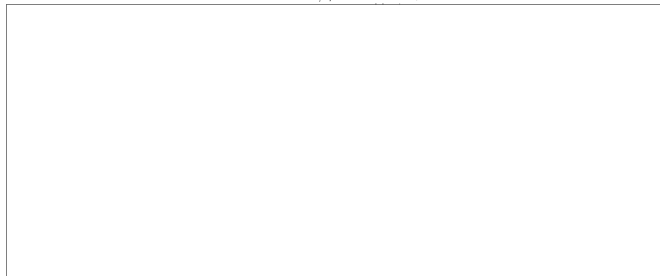
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ISRAEL-EGYPT

Intercepted Egyptian messages on Tuesday night indicated that Israeli forces were clashing with Egyptian troops on an island near the Egyptian naval base of Hurghada. Other Egyptian intercepts of 21 and 24 September reported Israeli infiltration attempts on another island in the same region.



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Egypt



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EGYPT

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Three [Redacted] TU-16s have been moved temporarily from Aswan to Jiyanklis airfield, according to intercepts.

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PANAMA

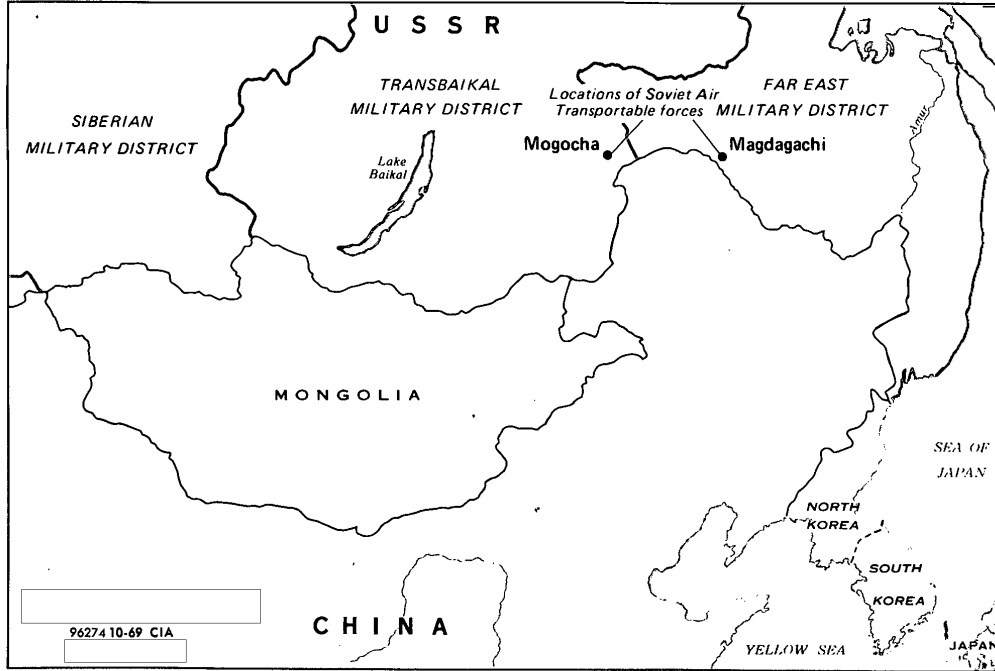
The provisional junta government is planning to make three major policy pronouncements on Saturday, the first anniversary of the military coup. [redacted] the government will announce the immediate restoration of constitutional guarantees, including freedom of the press. All political prisoners except suspected guerrillas will be released, and election of a constitutional assembly--to be charged with revising the constitution and ratifying a new canal treaty with the US--will be scheduled for October 1970.

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These initiatives apparently are designed to alleviate major popular grievances, but it seems clear that the present leaders have no intention of relinquishing power in the near future. All political parties have been dissolved and the government is organizing in their place a broadly based unitary political organization patterned on the Mexican example.

Torrijos apparently is also going to push for a new set of canal treaties more favorable to Panama than those so carefully negotiated and drafted in 1967. He hopes thereby to strengthen his position; ultimately he wants to compete for power "constitutionally."

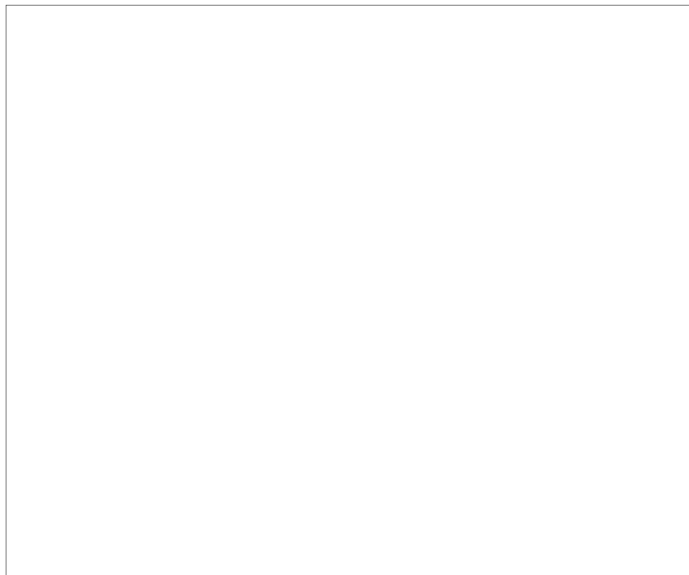
Soviet Air Transportable Forces Identified Near Sino-Soviet Border



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NOTES

USSR - Communist China: Recent satellite photography shows air transportable equipment and vehicles and some 90 helicopters at two Soviet installations near the border opposite Manchuria. The installations do not have the transports or jump training equipment of airborne units, however, or the heavy combat equipment of conventional ground force units. This airlift capability almost certainly was established to permit the Soviets to react quickly to border incidents in rugged terrain. Additional units of this type probably will appear in other areas along the border.

USSR: The annual Northern Sea Route convoy, which left for the Soviet Far East early last month, did not include any combat ships this year. Combat ships are being transferred to the Pacific Fleet via the Cape of Good Hope and the Indian Ocean, and we suspect this may be the rule in the future. The southern route is a good deal longer, but the ships will be able to show the flag and gain valuable operational experience en route.

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