

*The President's Daily Brief*

5 December 1969

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Sino-Soviet border talks are stalled, but they are not likely to come to a full stop in the near future. (Page 1)

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vinogradov is having difficulty understanding his Arab allies. (Page 2)

Moscow

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

(Page 3)

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Some members of the Fatah General Command are planning to remove Yasir Arafat from his leadership role. (Page 4)

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COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

According to Western diplomatic sources in Peking, the Chinese have insisted that the Soviets agree on a mutual withdrawal of heavy military units 100 kilometers from tense border areas. The initial Chinese negotiating package is also said to include a proposal for a Sino-Soviet commission to oversee such a withdrawal and the removal of all Soviet forces from Mongolia.

Peking obviously realizes that Moscow has no intention of diluting its military advantage by taking such drastic steps. Although the Chinese may be prepared to compromise, they probably intend to press for some form of preliminary agreement on a military stand-down and disengagement along the frontier before the talks go any further.

*The impasse has been accompanied by an increase in the exchange of polemics. In spite of the deadlock, Peking and Moscow seem to have little to gain by breaking off the discussions. Both sides probably are prepared for a protracted stalemate.*

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USSR - MIDDLE EAST

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vinogradov, who is in charge of Near Eastern affairs, recently complained [redacted] that he has the toughest job in the Foreign Ministry. He said he finds the job particularly difficult because he has no experience in the area and it is hard for him to understand the Arab mentality. Vinogradov frankly admitted that Nasir had miscalculated in provoking war in 1967, and added wryly that "blunder" was a more apt description. Vinogradov insisted, however, that Israel stop demanding direct negotiations, which he said the Arabs "will not and cannot" accept.

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*Vinogradov's candid remarks have the ring of sincerity. His view that the Arabs will not negotiate directly with Tel Aviv is probably accurate. Dealing with the Arabs is often a trying experience for the Russians, and Vinogradov probably is not looking forward to the next round of bilateral consultations which may begin today. On 3 December an Egyptian foreign ministry official said he expected to be going to Moscow on 5 December as part of a UAR delegation.*

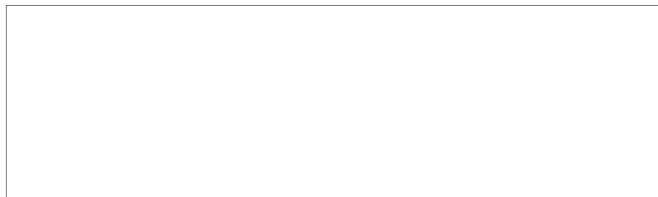
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USSR



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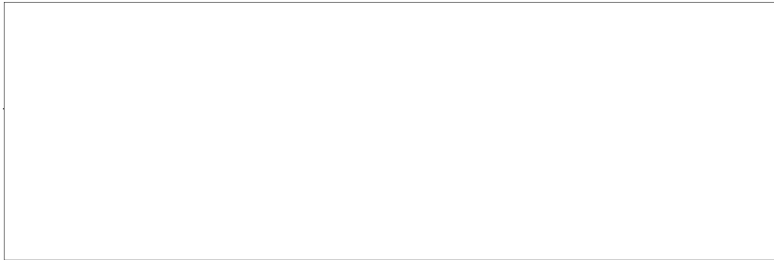
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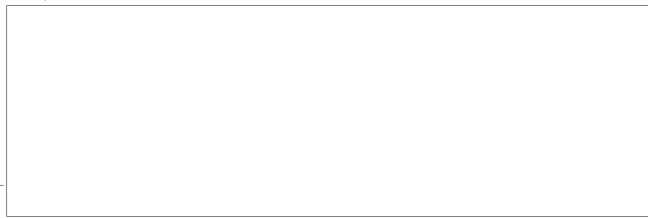
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ARAB STATES



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NOTE

South Vietnam: An intercepted enemy message has disclosed the text of what appears to be a forthcoming Communist announcement calling for two three-day cease-fires to mark both Christmas and New Years. The message indicated the necessary decisions on this matter had been taken, but it did not specify the timing of the announcement. Unlike many previous years the South Vietnamese Government has publicized its cease-fire plans first. Yesterday Saigon announced that its forces would observe a 24-hour truce on both holidays.

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