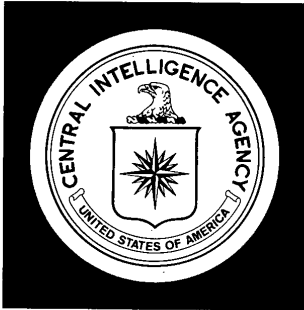


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The President's Daily Brief

November 19, 1974

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~~*Top Secret*~~



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

November 20, 1974*

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*Information as of noon EST November 19, 1974.

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MIDDLE EAST

Military activity was at a generally low level yesterday.

The Israelis flew several reconnaissance missions along the Suez Canal, but [redacted] no unusual reconnaissance along the border with Syria and Lebanon.

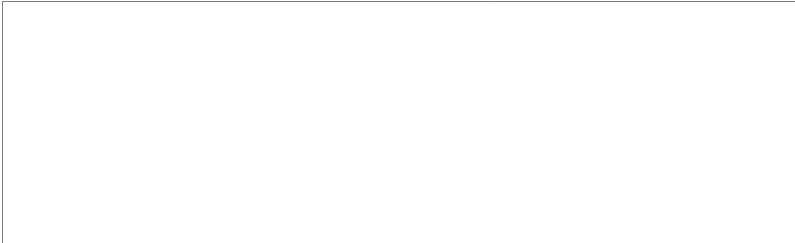
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Some Egyptian air force and navy reservists began reporting for active duty on November 16. Some commando reservists were recalled "for training" for only a two-week period from November 6, and the navy reservists called up last week are scheduled for demobilization on Friday. The call-up probably involves all branches of the armed forces, but apparently is limited to personnel discharged from active duty in May of this year. Egyptian reservists are periodically called up for one or two weeks active duty training.

In Syria, there does not appear to be any unusual military activity, according to the US embassy. Western diplomatic personnel touring the countryside over the weekend encountered generally normal levels of military activity.



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Israel-Fedayeen

The four Palestinian terrorists who seized an apartment house only four miles from the Jordanian border yesterday morning apparently hoped to take hostages to exchange for Arab prisoners held by the

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Israelis. Before Israeli troops stormed the building and killed the guerrillas, three Israeli civilians were killed and a number wounded. The Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP), a Marxist-oriented group that has aligned itself with PLO leader Yasir Arafat, has claimed credit for the attack.

The Israeli government will be under intense pressure to react to the attack. Despite the fact that the operation was mounted from Jordan, an Israeli retaliatory attack is most likely against fedayeen bases or Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. Following the PDFLP attack on Maalot last May, the Israelis responded with heavy airstrikes on two refugee camps.

The Israelis are aware that the Jordanians have consistently attempted to intercept guerrilla bands crossing Jordan to mount operations into Israel or the Israeli-occupied West Bank. An Israeli warning strike into Jordan cannot, however, be ruled out.

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WESTERN EUROPE--OIL

The major Western European states are reacting favorably to most of Secretary Kissinger's recent proposals for cooperation among oil-importing countries. They are also showing interest in the French suggestion for a conference of oil producers, oil consumers, and developing states.

The French reaction to the US proposals has been particularly interesting. Paris has come out against speculation in the French press that the US initiative amounts to outright rejection of France's own plan. A French foreign ministry official has told a US embassy officer that the French have decided to give primary attention to the parts of Secretary Kissinger's recent speech that are consistent with French views; he stressed that Paris wants to keep the door open to a producer-consumer conference. The official said Paris would put aside plans for a preparatory meeting this month, but would continue to seek agreement on holding a producer-consumer conference.

West German Foreign Minister Genscher has endorsed the US proposals. In a recent speech in Bonn, Genscher laid particular stress on energy conservation measures, but implicitly warned that it will be more difficult for Europe to trim energy consumption than for the US.

Genscher re-emphasized Bonn's commitment to finding international solutions to problems caused by the increased cost of energy. He gave strong support to the French proposal for a conference and reminded his audience of the call for a producer-consumer conference made in the final communique of the Washington Energy Conference last February.

British reaction to the US proposals has been similar to that of the West Germans and the French. EC Finance Ministers also discussed the Secretary's speech at their meeting in Brussels on Monday and decided that the recycling proposal would be one of the issues taken up at next month's summit of EC leaders.

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There has been little specific reaction to the proposal to set up a \$25 billion fund to provide loans to oil-importing states suffering serious balance-of-payments problems. West European governments are apparently awaiting further details.

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UNITED NATIONS

Procedural maneuvering over the timing of debate on Cambodian representation and on continuation of the UN Command in Korea could affect the final vote of these issues.

General Assembly President Bouteflika wants consideration of Cambodian representation moved up to come immediately after the Palestine debate concludes later this week. He is trying to capitalize on the atmosphere created by the debate on the Palestinian and South African questions.

Bouteflika's proposal would delay the Korean debate until after that on Cambodia. A victory for Sihanouk in the assembly could in turn be exploited to obtain the votes necessary for a resolution favorable to North Korea.

The chairman of the political committee and supporters of South Korea are so far resisting Bouteflika's efforts. The political committee earlier had set November 25 for the beginning of debate on the Korean question. That debate was expected to end by early December, after which Cambodian representation would have been taken up.

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SAUDI ARABIA

The death last week of Omar Saqqaf, Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs, may have significant repercussions on King Faysal's handling of foreign relations and, in particular, on the extent of US influence within the country. Over the past year, Saqqaf had become an advocate of Secretary Kissinger's approach to a Middle East settlement and apparently was able to modify Faysal's personal inclination to press for immediate satisfaction of the Arabs' maximum demands.

Saqqaf believed Saudi interests lay in close ties with Washington, and he was often able, according to Ambassador Akins, to sell US policies to the King. Saqqaf also saw to it that US views were given a hearing in Arab councils, where he acted as a voice of moderation.

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The King will have difficulty finding a capable replacement for Saqqaf

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Interior Minister Prince Fahd reportedly has asked for the job; he would want to be foreign minister, not merely minister of state. (Faysal himself is presently foreign minister as well as prime minister.) Petroleum Minister Yamani has similar ambitions, and Ambassador Akins believes Yamani may get the post. His accession would probably leave the petroleum ministry to the King's son, Saud, one of the most competent of the younger generation. In any case, Faysal would continue to call the shots on key issues, but day-to-day decision making will become even more complicated, at least for a while, in the absence of Saqqaf.

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NOTES

North Vietnam: Hanoi is conducting its second conscription drive in four months. Probably few of the new conscripts will be ready to move south until early 1975. According to propaganda and intercepted messages, the latest induction campaign began in mid-October. It appears to be widespread, but there is no reporting suggesting any urgency about the drive. This campaign and the one that preceded it in late summer should provide Hanoi enough manpower to sustain a moderate to heavy flow of troops to the South during the dry season which has just begun.

Argentina: Leaders of the two principal leftist terrorist groups reportedly have decided to attack US embassy personnel in retaliation for their alleged support for the activities of right-wing death squads. This decision was reached at a high-level meeting last week. The terrorists involved have demonstrated that they are capable of carrying out such attacks; US Ambassador Hill has been informed.

Cyprus-Greece: Acting Cypriot President Clerides will reportedly meet with Makarios in London on November 20. Clerides is expected to urge Makarios to postpone his return so as to avert clashes such as the one last week in Larnaca between pro and anti-Makarios camps. Clerides will also want to clarify his own status as negotiator for the Greek Cypriot side. The timing of Makarios' return will probably not be decided until next week's summit in Athens between the two men and Karamanlis. The Greek prime minister's landslide victory in Sunday's election has strengthened his hand considerably in dealing with Cyprus; he is now in much better position to put pressure on Makarios to delay his return.

Palestinian Terrorists: The 15 terrorists arrested in Rabat last month for planning to kill Jordan's King Husayn and other top leaders at the Arab summit are now in a Cairo jail, according to a pro-fedayeen newspaper in Beirut. Moroccan authorities got rid of the group last week, rather than risk another attack by Black September terrorists to free their colleagues. The Beirut newspaper said that the terrorists were to be turned over to the Palestine Liberation Organization, but that they were arrested by the Egyptians upon arrival in Cairo. In refusing to turn them over to the PLO, Egyptian authorities have explained that President Sadat has a personal interest in the case. And well he may. According to some accounts, Sadat was among those marked for assassination in Rabat.

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France:

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Canada-France: The two countries have agreed in principle to build a uranium enrichment plant in Canada, probably using cheap hydroelectric power from Quebec and French gaseous diffusion technology. Canada uses natural uranium in its nuclear reactor program, so the plant would probably produce only for export. The French see the new plant as a secure source of enriched uranium and one which would lessen their dependence on the US as a supplier.

Ethiopia: General Aman twice threatened to resign over the weekend but has been persuaded to stay on by members of the Armed Forces Coordinating Committee. Aman has had differences with members of the committee over how to respond to the recent US decision to grant additional credits for military assistance and how to deal with insurgency in Eritrea. The coordinating committee probably urged Aman to stay because it values him as a unifying symbol, but it nonetheless considers him essentially a front man and his relations with the committee remain tenuous.

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