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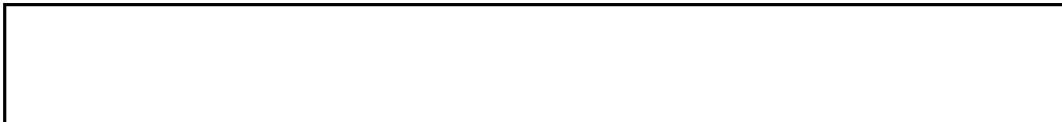
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[Vietnam: Ground fighting remained light on the eve of the Communists' seven-day cease-fire, which they announced would begin today.

Widespread reports continue to indicate the Communists are planning stepped-up offensive activity during or soon after the cease-fire period. Allied spoiling operations, especially in the provinces around Saigon, are disrupting Communist plans to some extent, however.

A militant Viet Cong broadcast on 13 February is in line with other indications that the Communists are on the verge of a period of increased offensive activity. The radio called for "continuous attacks" and singled out the allied pacification program, military units, logistics installations, and lines of communications for special attention. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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USSR-Berlin: Moscow has extended assurances that Allied rights in Berlin will not be challenged, but appears to be giving East Germany more leeway to harass the West Germans.

A note delivered to Chancellor Kiesinger on 13 February used considerably harsher language than earlier Soviet notes to the Allies in protesting Bonn's decision to hold the presidential election in West Berlin on 5 March. The Soviets did not spell out what harassment measures they or the East Germans might undertake, but implied that they might give Pankow a relatively free hand to take action against West German land access to West Berlin. Moscow has made no mention of any Communist intent to attempt to block Western air access to the city.

The note warned that the USSR would assume "only those responsibilities" which are specified in quadripartite agreements. According to the Soviets, their obligation to facilitate access to Berlin applies only to Allied travel, and not to the West Germans.

The wording of the note suggests a renewal of the persistent Soviet attempt to drive a wedge between the West Germans and the Allies. Ambassador Dobrynin's remarks at his first meeting with Secretary of State Rogers yesterday were cast in the same vein. Dobrynin said that Moscow did not want to jeopardize relations with the US, and that any measures taken would be only in direct reaction to Bonn's moves. Dobrynin said that no measures would be directed against President Nixon, but he warned that the Soviets would not allow the West Germans to "hide" behind the President.

In Moscow, the Soviets finally accepted a tripartite protest note yesterday, after evading acceptance on Thursday. The delay had evidently been

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used to formulate a reply, which was delivered to the Allied representatives immediately upon receipt of the Allied protest. The Soviet reply repeated earlier charges against Bonn and reiterated support for East German restrictions on travel by West German officials which were announced last weekend and are to take effect today.

Despite its assurances regarding Allied access, Moscow has apparently inspired rumors that Soviet and East German forces would soon begin maneuvers which would block the land access routes to Berlin, and that some action might be taken to impede air travel.

Current military activity in the Berlin area appears to be limited to normal training. Warsaw Pact commander Marshal Yakubovsky and most of the military representatives from each of the member countries who had been meeting in East Germany since 10 February returned home yesterday. [redacted]

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Pakistan: The government announced yesterday that the three-year-old state of emergency would be lifted Monday--the day President Ayub has proposed for talks with the opposition.

The state of emergency, which was declared in September 1965 during the war with India, permits the President to suspend fundamental rights and govern by ordinance. Ayub has come under increasingly bitter attack for continuing the state of emergency and using it to repress political opposition. This government concession is the latest in a series of gestures designed to improve the climate for talks. Opposition leaders are expected to respond today to Ayub's offer of negotiations.

Early reports indicate that the general strike yesterday, called by the new opposition coalition, brought activity in most cities to a standstill. Some violence occurred, the first incidents having taken place on the eve of the strike. The police apparently remained on the sidelines as much as possible, but the army reportedly was alerted and used in scattered instances.

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USSR-Japan: The USSR has agreed to let Japan Air Lines (JAL) operate flights using Japanese planes and crews from Tokyo to Moscow and Western Europe not later than 31 March 1970.

This service, which reportedly will use DC-8s, will enable JAL to reduce scheduled air travel time to Europe by about three hours. JAL thus will maintain its edge over other free world air carriers in operating the shortest air route between the Far East and Western Europe via Siberia. Since April 1967, the Moscow-Tokyo service has been operated under a "joint" arrangement by JAL and the Soviet airline Aeroflot, with both carriers using Soviet aircraft and crews.

In return for independent service, Tokyo acceded to Soviet requests for increased flights under the joint JAL-Aeroflot operation, which will remain in effect until independent JAL flights begin. Japan also agreed to the substitution of the Soviet IL-62 transport for the aging TU-114 currently in use.

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Nigeria: The federal government is apparently stepping up efforts to interdict Biafra's one operating airstrip where arms and relief supplies are flown to the secessionists nightly. In one federal bombing raid on the airstrip early this week, at least two relief aircraft were slightly damaged. Relief organizations have become more concerned with the Nigerian bombing raids and believe that the danger of flying into the Biafran airstrip has measurably increased. Even if the raids do not succeed in closing the airstrip, the danger posed by them could discourage pilots of both the arms and relief planes from flying. [REDACTED]

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Peru-US: The US fishing boat seized yesterday by a Peruvian gunboat was released within hours of its capture after paying a "symbolic" fine. The foreign minister tried to minimize the incident in a discussion with the US chargé, and denied that any damage had been done to the other ships involved. This incident, which apparently occurred without the foreknowledge of the military government, is the result of a long-standing dispute with the US over Peru's claim to a 200-mile limit to its territorial sea. [REDACTED]

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