

The President's Daily Brief

14 January 1970

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

General Gowon seems dedicated to the peaceful reconstruction of Nigeria

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Hanoi may be preparing for special air operations in the southern part of North Vietnam. (Page 3)

Recent Israeli air strikes near Cairo seem designed to make Nasir's domestic position uncomfortable. (Page 4)

Communist China's first major rail construction in over a decade is under way. (Page 5)

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NIGERIA

General Gowon is determined to disarm all the secessionist soldiers and to establish a federal presence throughout Biafra [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Most, if not all, of Biafra's major towns have already been captured. Any remaining Biafran troops in the field should soon run out of ammunition or possibly just dissolve into the bush.

Gowon has so far ignored Biafran leader Effiong's offer to send an emissary to negotiate Biafra's return to the federation. Gowon probably wishes to avoid giving any hint that Biafrans will be given special status in the federation. Effiong yesterday made a second appeal to Gowon to stop the federal advance.

The Nigerian Government has directed that all foreign relief be channeled through federal authorities. The Nigerians are clearly sensitive about foreign concern over the relief problem. In an effort to capitalize on this Nigerian sensitivity, the Soviets have charged that Western relief aid is interference in Nigeria's affairs.

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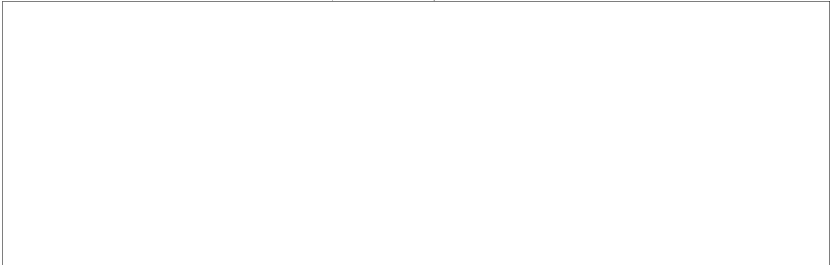
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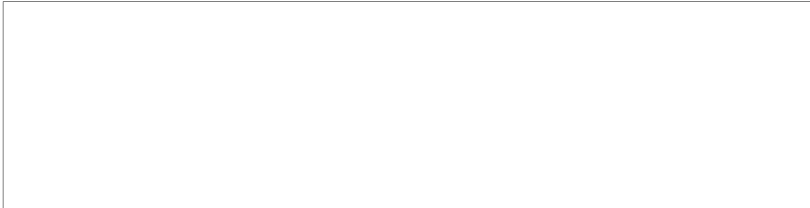
SOUTH VIETNAM



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NORTH VIETNAM

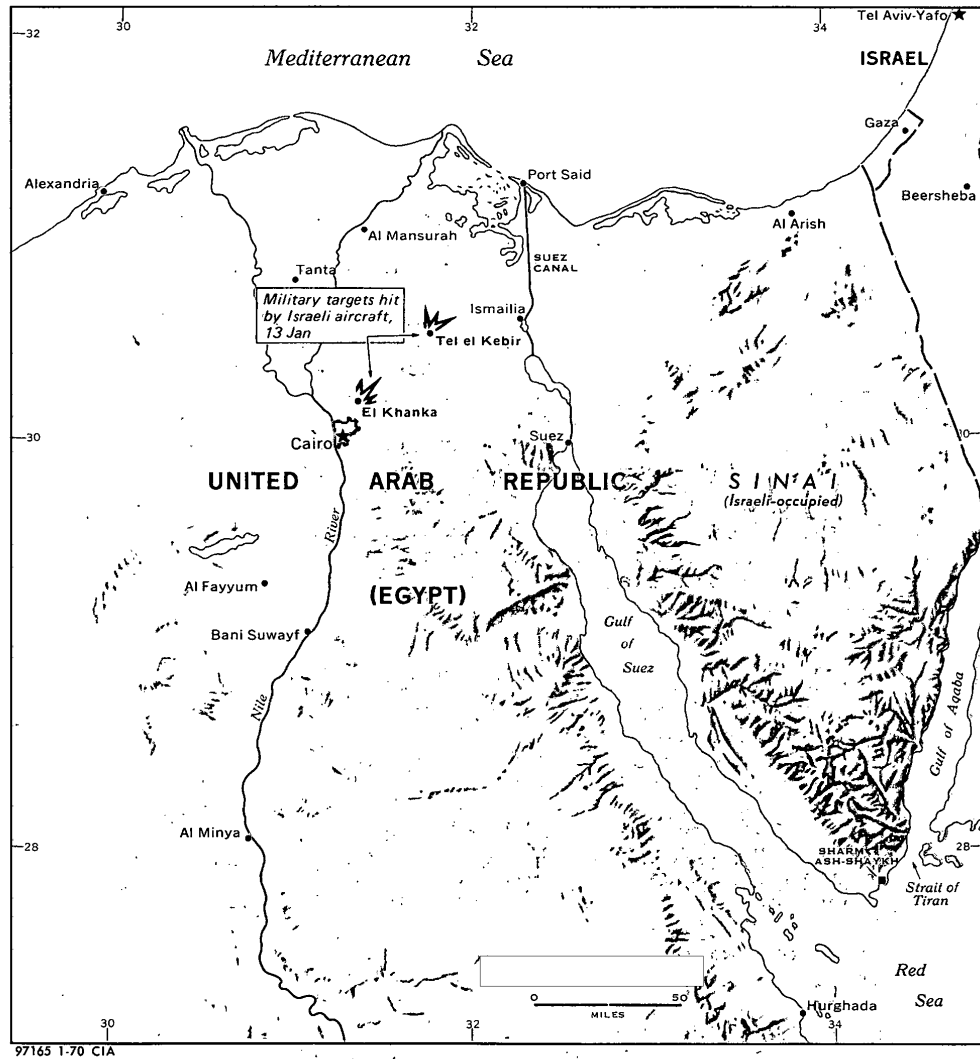
The North Vietnamese appear to be preparing for special air operations and improving their air defenses in the southern part of their country. Communications intelligence indicates that fighter aircraft--perhaps including nine MIG-19s--will soon be redeployed. They seem to be destined for Vinh airfield in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam. Two late-model MIG-21s and a high-level ground control intercept team recently arrived at the same airfield. These moves coincide with the positioning of some heavy antiaircraft guns and surface-to-air missiles in the panhandle near the Laotian border.

If the additional aircraft do indeed arrive at Vinh airfield, it could mean that Hanoi is planning hit and run attacks against US aircraft, including B-52s operating over Laos.

* * *

Since our last report on infiltration (The President's Daily Brief of 8 January), only one clearly identifiable battalion-size replacement group has been noted on the move in North Vietnam. Its numerical designator suggests, however, that two others are also moving south. During the same period, three units of battalion size were detected in communications intelligence, but their numerical designators were not intercepted. Thus it is not clear whether these units include the two mentioned above. If there are six units, they would number about 3,600 troops. This would not be out of line with the trends of the past two months, which show infiltration at a level well below that for the same time frame in 1968 and 1969.

Israeli Aircraft Strike Closer to Cairo



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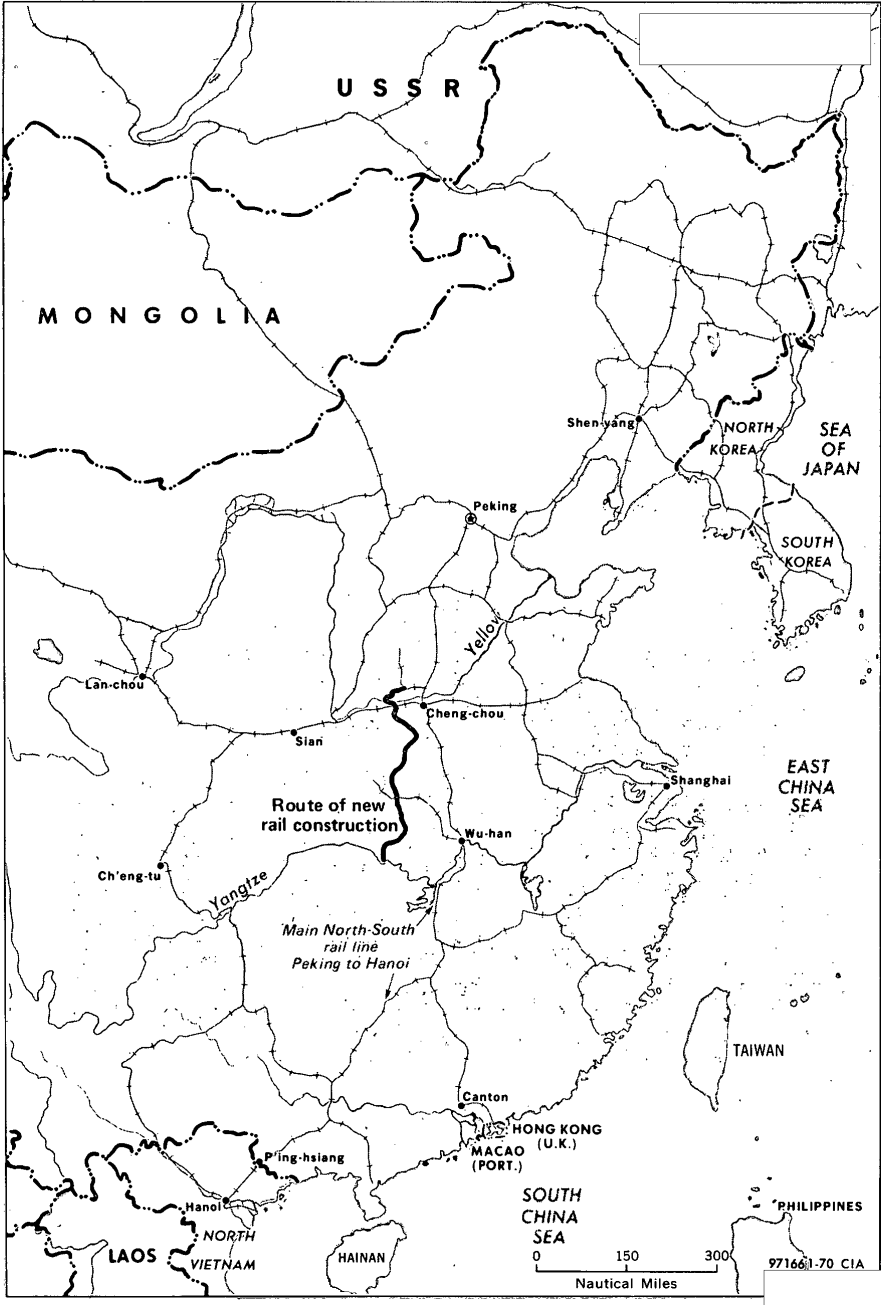
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ISRAEL-EGYPT

Recent Israeli air strikes near Cairo appear to be part of a campaign to create serious domestic problems for Nasir, which Tel Aviv hopes will eventually result in his downfall. The air strikes are intended to demonstrate Israel's ability to fly almost unmolested over Egyptian territory. It will be difficult for Nasir to minimize these Israeli military actions--as he has done others--because they are visible to Cairo's populace. The Israelis are also anxious to lure the Egyptian Air Force into combat.

Most Israeli leaders apparently are convinced that Nasir is the primary obstacle to a satisfactory peace settlement and the main instigator of Arab hostility toward Israel. Whether this is true or not, Israeli conviction that it is so governs their policy.

Communist China: Major New Rail Construction



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COMMUNIST CHINA

Satellite photography of December 1969 has revealed the first major new rail construction in more than a decade. When completed, the 400-mile line will traverse one of the China's most densely populated but least developed regions between the Yellow and Yangtze rivers.

The new line parallels China's main north-south line, which has ample capacity to handle national traffic and rail borne supplies transiting to the North Vietnam border. Its construction probably indicates that China is returning to long-term economic planning after the upheavals of the Cultural Revolution.

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