



The President's Daily Brief

19 January 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Communist supply shipments through the Laos Panhandle toward South Vietnam are increasing rapidly. (Page 1)

North Vietnam's economic plan for 1970 differs little from last year's, except that there is more emphasis on the civilian sectors. (Page 2)

The Libyans are in the process of sending military forces to Egypt. (Page 3)

Despite Peking's recent public attacks on the Sato government, the Chinese seem ready to renew their annual trade arrangement with certain favored Japanese firms. (Page 4)

The Soviet guided-missile helicopter cruiser Moskva is operating in the Atlantic for the first time. (Page 5)

Nigerian police seem to be having little trouble extending the Lagos government's presence in former Biafran territory. (Page 6)

In Sudan

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LAOS - SOUTH VIETNAM

The Communists are putting heavy emphasis during this winter dry season on the shipment of supplies to South Vietnam through the Laos Panhandle. Increased logistic activity began early in December--about a month earlier than last year--and Communist rear-service messages have been calling for a "general offensive" in the movement of supplies this month.

The level of activity is well ahead of last year's. In fact, one important Communist logistics unit reported four times as much traffic last month as during December 1968.

The Communists have to move more supplies this year and move them faster because they did not maintain their stockpiles during the past rainy season. In addition, of course, any new military offensive in the south would require intensified logistic activity to build up stockpiles.

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NORTH VIETNAM

In a series of public announcements, Hanoi has revealed its economic plan for 1970. The new plan is basically the same as that of 1969, a year of only modest achievements, with some additional emphasis on the civilian sectors of the economy.

One notable difference between the 1970 plan and last year's is that there is less provision for expanding communication and transportation facilities. Substantial improvements since the bombing restrictions were introduced in March of 1968 have presumably permitted a reduction in the priority for this sector. Hanoi's pronouncements suggest that pre-bombing levels of output in some other sectors will not be regained soon, however.

The need to support the war effort has been a recurring theme in speeches on the plan by Vice Premier Le Thanh Nghi, who is also Hanoi's chief aid negotiator. For the first time in years, however, national defense is not specifically cited as North Vietnam's major goal. The continuing uncertainties of war seem to preclude long-range planning, as before, and Hanoi has said nothing about the direction the economy is expected to take after 1970.

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LIBYA

The Qaddafi government is assembling a "Libyan brigade" for duty in Egypt. [redacted]

[redacted] troops from artillery, armor, infantry, antiaircraft, and associated support units were ordered to be ready for the move by the 21st.

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The new regime in Libya has been anxious to participate more directly in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Nasir, who is taking a daily battering from the Israelis, may have called for help. Some of the military are known to be unhappy with Qaddafi's strong pro-Egyptian posture, which suggests that he may also take this opportunity to remove potentially disloyal troops from the country.

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COMMUNIST CHINA - JAPAN

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Chinese officials and Japanese trade representatives have begun to discuss arrangements for the annual round of trade talks in Peking.

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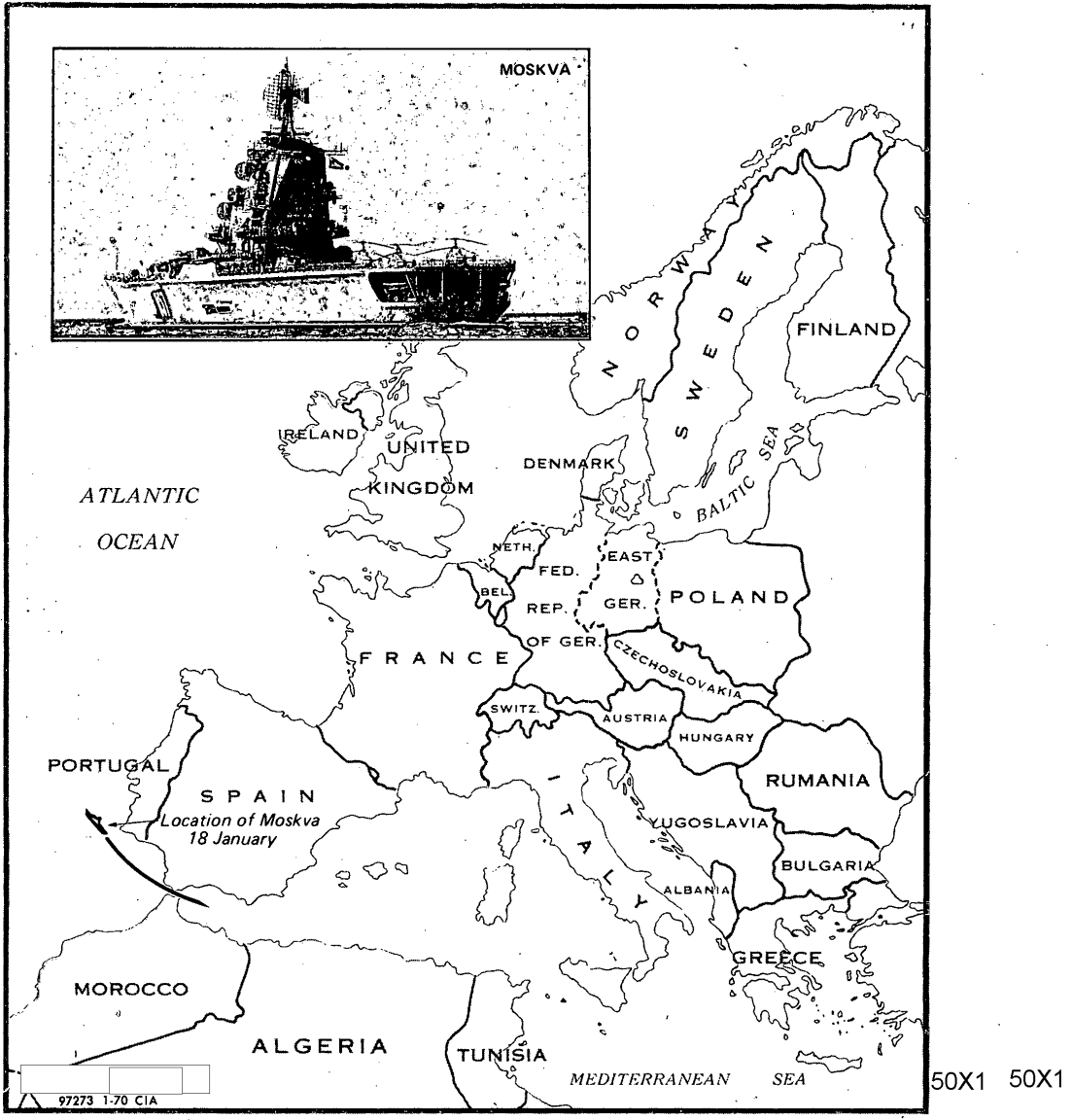
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This is the first solid evidence we have seen that the Chinese are prepared to renew the annual trade. Earlier, some Japanese had feared that Peking might call it off as a follow-up to its strongly negative public reaction to the Nixon-Sato communiqué of last November.

There have been other recent signs that China's policy toward Japan is not completely frozen. The Chinese recently indicated they were willing to accept another Japanese newsman in Peking. They have also released another Japanese detainee since the Nixon-Sato communiqué was issued.

MOSKVA Enters Atlantic



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USSR

The Soviet guided-missile helicopter cruiser Moskva, accompanied by two Kashin-class guided-missile ships, passed through the Straits of Gibraltar early on 17 January. This is the first time the Moskva has been in the Atlantic, and the little fleet is now heading northwest off the coast of Portugal.

We have no evidence describing the mission of the Moskva and its escorts, nor do we know their destination. Our best guess is that they will test their equipment and conduct antisubmarine exercises while in the Atlantic.

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NOTES

Nigeria: [redacted] the federal police are having little trouble as they move into the former Biafran territory, with minor resistance in only one isolated area disrupting the general calm. Gowon has sent the Biafran surrender team back to the enclave to help set up an administrative apparatus. This move is one of several by Gowon intended to reassure the Ibo people that they will not be mistreated.

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Sudan: [redacted]

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