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# The President's Daily Brief

*November 21, 1974*

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~~Top Secret~~ 25X1

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\*Information as of noon EST November 21, 1974.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

VIETNAM

*We have new information on Communist military intentions in Vietnam. What follows is an assessment by the intelligence community.*

The Communists are preparing to launch a new round of heavy fighting next month

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cently issued COSVN instructions for 1975 outline a Communist dry season campaign running through June, which could amount to the most serious military test for Saigon since the cease-fire.

These instructions call for widespread and heavy action, apparently to achieve a maximum shock effect, throughout much of the South Vietnamese countryside during the "first days" of the campaign. Subsequent action is to be concentrated in a relatively few "vulnerable" areas. The instructions emphasize that the campaign must get under way as soon as possible--between early and late December--in order to maintain the element of surprise and pre-empt any possible government dry season attacks.

Our Assessment

The COSVN guidelines appear to prescribe a level of fighting during this initial phase below that of the 1972 offensive. They suggest, however, that the Communists may be prepared to commit the forces and firepower already in the South more fully than they did during last summer's fighting in the hopes of achieving some quick and dramatic victories.

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[Redacted]

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The COSVN guidelines do not cover Hanoi's military plans for northern South Vietnam

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[Redacted]

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The Communists probably would be able to make and sustain major gains in only one area--the central highlands. The North Vietnamese could probably isolate and bring heavy pressure to bear on either Kontum City or Pleiku City, should they choose to make the effort. Communist forces elsewhere in central South Vietnam could tie down government forces by threatening population centers along the coast.

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[Redacted]

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Fighting of the magnitude described in the COSVN guidelines would appear to be within the framework of the strategy Hanoi adopted toward South Vietnam following the cease-fire.

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[Redacted]

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The COSVN instructions and an analysis of current North Vietnamese propaganda strongly suggest

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that Hanoi still hopes to use the cease-fire accords to its ultimate advantage rather than return to a total war posture and commit strategic reserve forces to an all-out offensive in the South.

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The North Vietnamese leaders have almost certainly decided that a further, if still measured, increase in military action would serve to encourage popular agitation in the South. North Vietnamese propaganda has indeed begun to talk about the need for "encouragement" of the "urban struggle" through military victories.

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The COSVN guidelines do not forecast that victory in the South can be achieved in 1975.

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USSR

*General Secretary Brezhnev has left Moscow for his meeting with you this weekend.*

Accompanying him were Foreign Minister Gromyko, Civil Aviation Minister Bugayev, Ambassador Dobrynin, Brezhnev's foreign policy adviser Aleksandrov, Tass director and press spokesman Zamyatin, and Georgy Korniyenko, the Foreign Ministry's chief expert on the US.

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Brezhnev interrupted his flight to Vladivostok for a stop in Khabarovsk, a major city on the Chinese border, where he held a meeting on November 21 with the party chiefs of all the principal Far East regions, except the region that includes Vladivostok.

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Meanwhile, Soviet media continue to play up the importance of the Vladivostok meeting for bilateral relations and for international detente. Moscow has reported your expressed hope for further progress at the summit on strategic arms limitation.

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USSR-FEDAYEEN

*The Soviets are seeking to dissociate themselves from the more extreme demands voiced by fedayeen leader Yasir Arafat during his UN appearance.*

While the USSR has given favorable notice to Arafat's appearance at the UN, it has avoided any hint of endorsing the maximum demands of the Palestine Liberation Organization and has reaffirmed the less extreme Soviet position.

The Soviets have:

- Obscured Arafat's call for a secular, united Palestine and attributed to him a position implicitly acknowledging Israel's existence.
- Emphasized in a variety of ways their views that a Middle East settlement should be based on the May 1967 boundaries and on Israel's right to exist.
- Suggested that a Palestinian state be established on territories occupied by Israel in June 1967.



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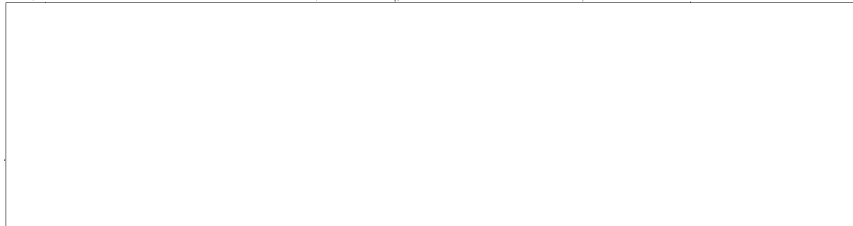
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USSR

*Production of raw sugar may fall 25 percent below Soviet requirements this year as a result of a much poorer sugar beet harvest than was forecast earlier. The Soviets may be able to produce only 9 million tons of raw sugar, about 6 percent less than last year.*

The USSR normally makes up shortages by importing sugar from Cuba, but the Cubans this year can provide only about 85 percent of Soviet needs. Rumors abound that the Soviets are buying other foreign sugar. No such purchases have been verified, but such rumors are helping drive up world sugar prices.

Sugar consumption in the USSR, which has doubled since 1960, will not be discouraged by current high world prices. Moscow has not changed domestic consumer prices, except for a few luxury items and vodka, for a decade and almost certainly will not change the price of sugar at this time.



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**FRANCE**

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GAS CARTEL

*Algeria and Iran have taken the first step toward organizing major exporters of natural gas under OPEC auspices.*

Early this month Iranian and Algerian experts worked over the fine points of a high-level agreement reached earlier on coordinated action in the marketing of natural gas.

It they act together, the two countries would be a strong force in negotiating gas prices, as they control the major share of Middle East reserves. Iranian gas reserves may be the largest in the world. This could bite Moscow, because almost all of Iran's current natural gas exports go to the USSR.

The Iranians and Algerians apparently want to bring other gas producers into their scheme and may bring the matter up at an early OPEC meeting. Such current or prospective gas exporters as Libya, Indonesia, and Nigeria would probably be interested.

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NOTE

Israel - Arab States: Israel may be getting ready to retaliate for Tuesday's terrorist attack on Beit Shean. [redacted] aircraft flew what appeared to be reconnaissance missions over southern Lebanon this morning. In addition, Israeli naval vessels were spotted on two occasions yesterday off the Lebanese coast.

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