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The President's Daily Brief

August 17, 1976

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~~Top Secret~~

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declassification schedule of E.O. 11652
exemption category 5B(1),(2),(3)
declassified only on approval of
the Director of Central Intelligence

LATE ITEM

LIBYA: A large number of troops, armored personnel carriers, and tanks reportedly are moving from both eastern and western Libya in the direction of the capital of Tripoli. We are not certain what this activity portends.

There are several possible explanations: The troops may be used to intimidate potential opponents of President Qadhafi during his absence--Qadhafi is attending the nonaligned conference in Sri Lanka; the troops' final destination may be the Libyan-Egyptian border--the two countries continue to exchange propaganda attacks and the Egyptians have built up their forces on the border; the troops may be practicing for a military parade planned for September 1; or, a possible coup attempt may be under way.

The US embassy in Tripoli believes this last explanation is the least likely, and we have seen no other indications that a coup is being attempted. As of 0600 EDT, Libyan radio transmissions monitored by FBIS remained normal.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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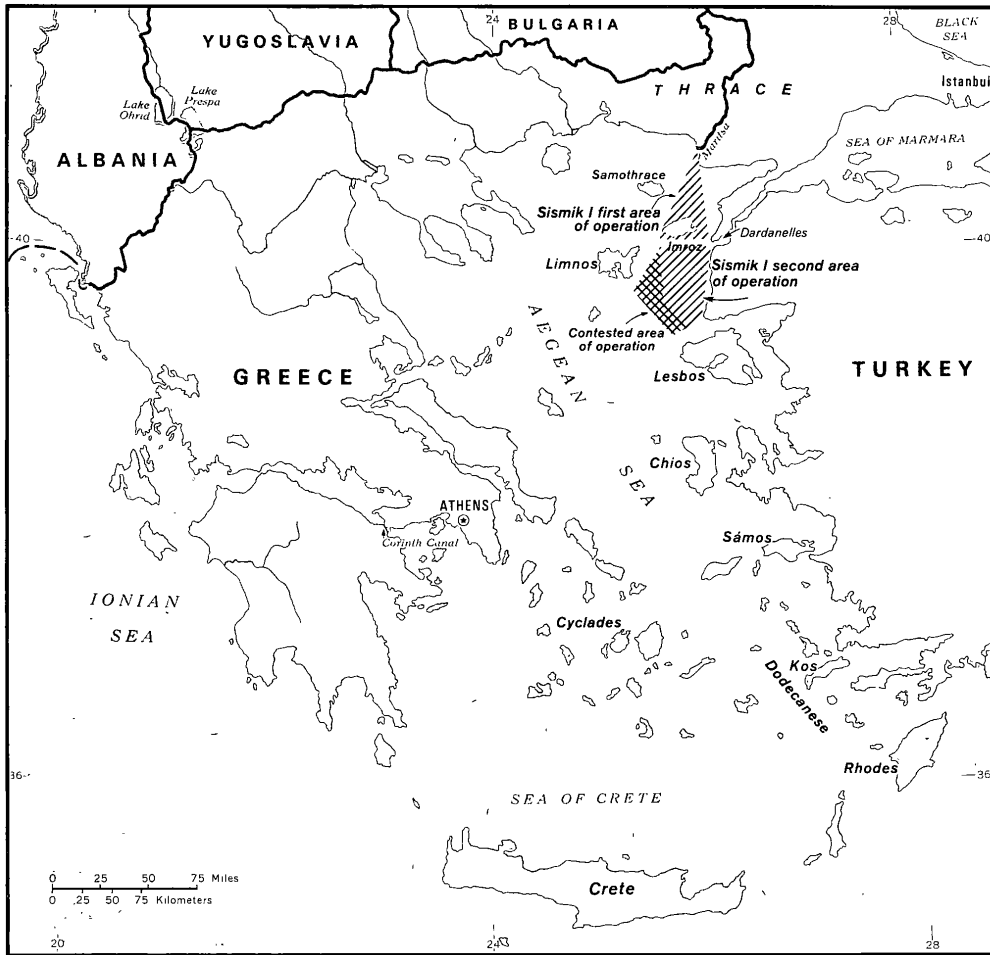
Greece-Turkey: Turkish Prime Minister Demirel announced yesterday that the Sismik will begin surveying Thursday in an area of the Aegean about which Greece may be especially sensitive. (Page 1)

Lebanon: Arab negotiators have renewed attempts to reinvigorate the Syrian-Palestinian accord signed in late July. (Page 2) 50X1

Cuba-Iraq: [Redacted]

France: [Redacted] 50X1

Notes: Rhodesia-Mozambique-Zambia; Rhodesia-Libya; USSR-Namibia; Thailand (Pages 4, 5, and 6)



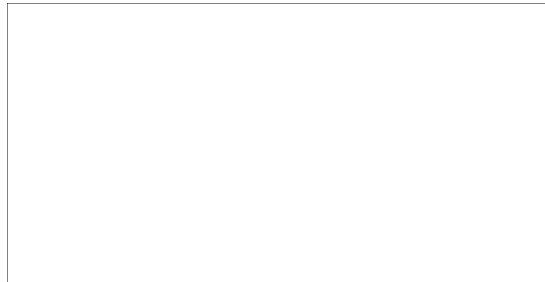
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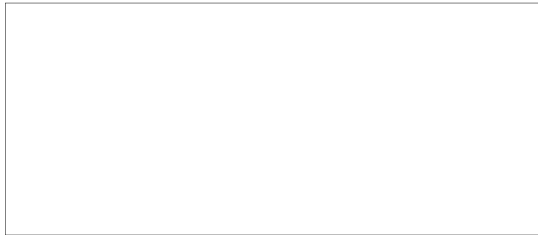
GREECE-TURKEY: *Turkish Prime Minister Demirel announced yesterday that the Sismik will begin surveying Thursday in an area of the Aegean about which Greece may be especially sensitive.*

Turkey has not revealed the ship's precise itinerary, although it has committed itself to do so 48 hours before the ship's departure.

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Prime Minister Caramanlis, however, has left open an option for a change in policy should Ankara^{50X1} send the Sismik into Greek claimed waters or into sensitive areas.



The International Court of Justice met yesterday to consider Athens' unilateral appeal over the dispute.

The Court is likely to take several weeks before ruling on the Greek request for interim measures and several months to decide on the substance of the dispute.

The UN Security Council will resume its debate on the issue today.

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LEBANON: Arab negotiators have renewed attempts to reinvigorate the Syrian-Palestinian accord signed in late July. No coordination is evident, however, among the several Arab attempts to restart negotiations.

A Palestinian delegation talked with Syrian officials over the weekend about the agreement with no apparent result. The Libyans have also reinserted themselves in the negotiating picture. Libya's acting foreign minister arrived in Lebanon yesterday for discussions with Palestinian and leftist leaders on reviving the quadripartite truce committee. He had talked with the Syrians in Damascus on Saturday.

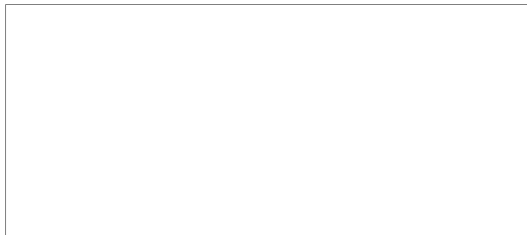
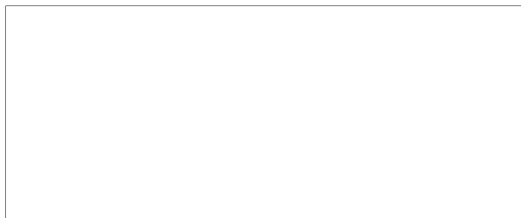
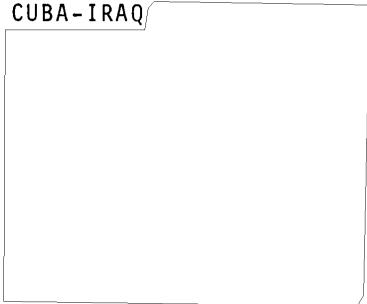
Christian forces have intensified their offensive against Palestinian positions in the mountains east of Beirut.

The commander of the Arab League security force is reported to be discussing with Christian and Palestinian leaders the possibility of moving some of the force to the mountains east of Beirut to separate Christian and Palestinian forces there. The Christians were reported yesterday to be reinforcing their militia and continuing heavy attacks on Palestinian positions.

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CUBA-IRAQ

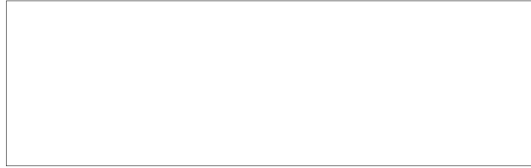


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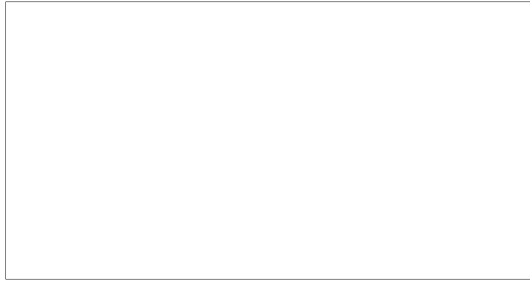
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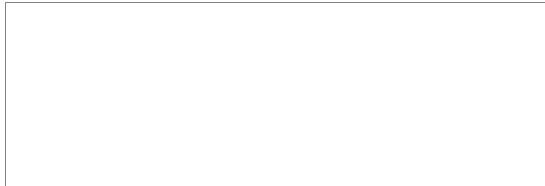
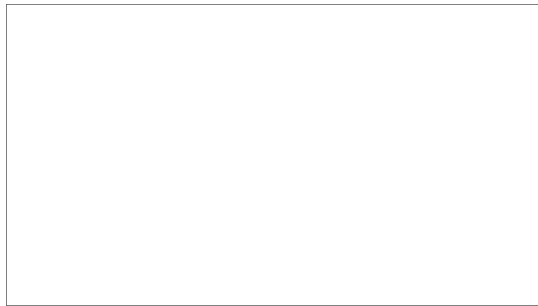
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FRANCE:

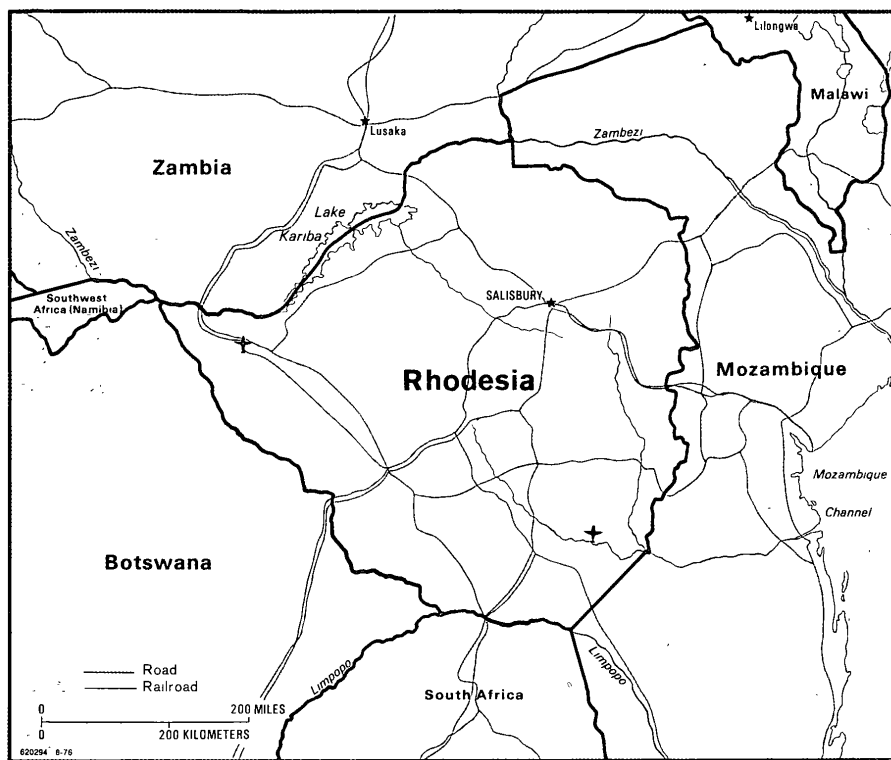


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NOTES

Satellite photography shows that Rhodesia is building two airstrips-- one near the Mozambican border and the second near the Zambian border. Both will be capable of handling jet aircraft.

Coverage [redacted] showed a 3,000-meter (9,480-foot) graded runway in the early stages of construction in southeastern Rhodesia. According to satellite photography of the last 18 months, work has also been done on an airfield in the northwest, only 54 kilometers (34 miles) from the Zambian border.

The proximity of the new airstrips to areas of anti-guerrilla operations will give Rhodesian aircraft longer operating time over targets in both Mozambique and Zambia and would permit strikes against more distant targets in Mozambique.

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desia
[redacted]
Libya [redacted]
[redacted]

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The USSR has reportedly agreed to provide additional military aid to Namibia's South-West Africa People's Organization.

A SWAPO delegation met with Soviet party secretary Ponomarev in Moscow last week.

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[redacted] the delegation requested--and the Soviets promised--additional arms.

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The arms talks may have been timed to coincide with a constitutional conference now underway in Namibia. According to press reports, South African Prime Minister Vorster might back a move to invite representatives of SWAPO to attend. Moscow may reason that additional military support at this time would ensure SWAPO's refusal to participate. The Soviets regard the conference as a South African attempt to forestall Namibian aspirations to independence.

The USSR could also be trying to weaken SWAPO's dependence on Chinese arms by increasing its military support.

* * *

The Thai government, concerned that the return of exiled former deputy prime minister Praphat could set off student protests, said today there is no substantial evidence Praphat is in Thailand.

The statement followed an emergency cabinet meeting called to discuss the matter, and it flatly contradicts Prime Minister Seni's statement yesterday [redacted]

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Praphat was a target of student protests in 1973, which brought down then-prime minister Thanom's military regime. Government officials are worried that Praphat enjoys support within the Thai military, which has shown increasing impatience with the civilian government.

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