



The President's Daily Brief

August 31, 1976

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

August 31, 1976

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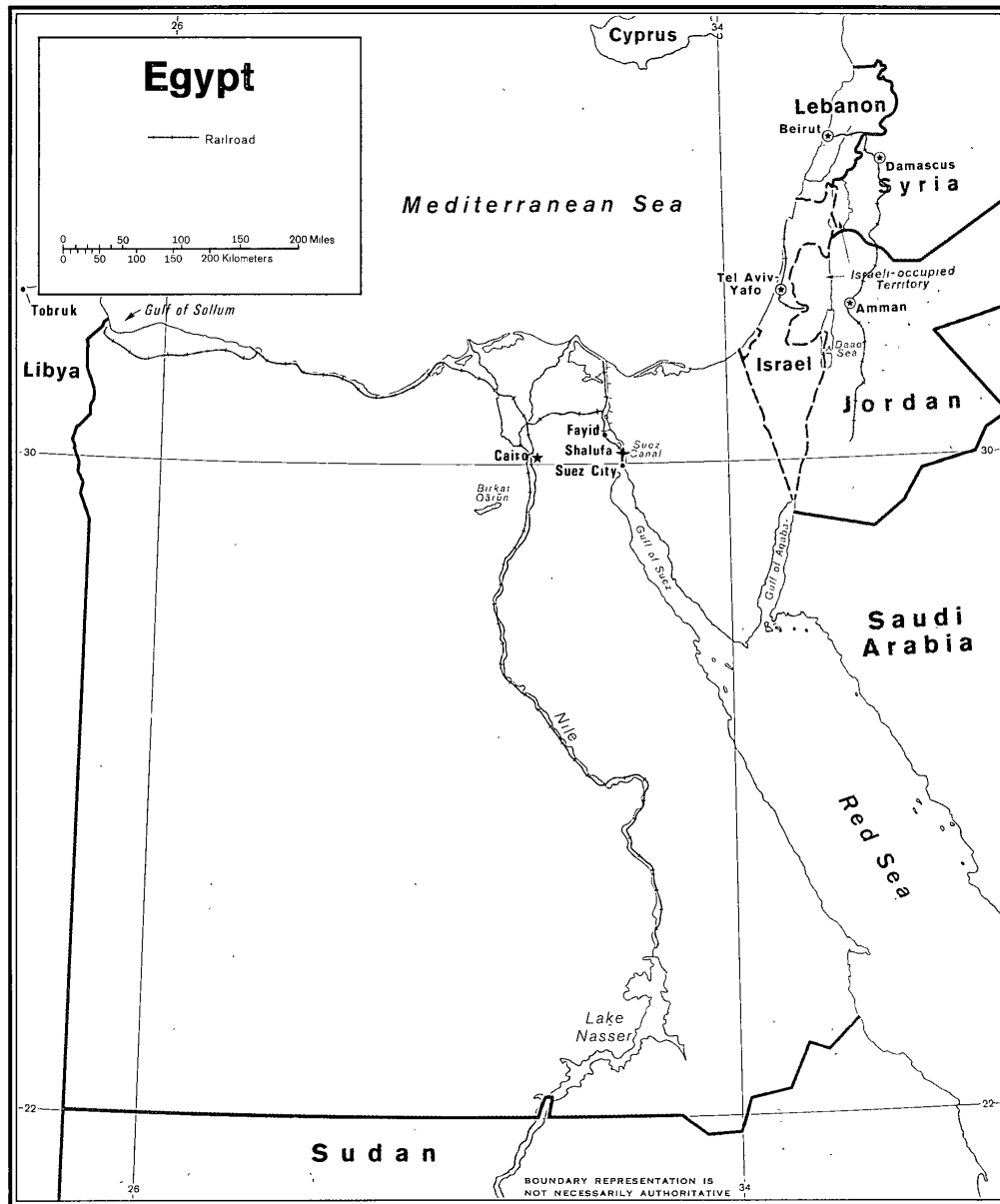
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EGYPT-LIBYA: *The Egyptians are apparently moving additional air defense units to the Libyan border.*

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Egypt already has the equivalent of three surface-to-air missile brigades of 13 firing battalions near the border.

Egyptian naval exercises scheduled to begin in the Gulf of Sollum on Sunday have been postponed, [Redacted] 25X1

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[Redacted] *Egypt* [Redacted]
[Redacted]

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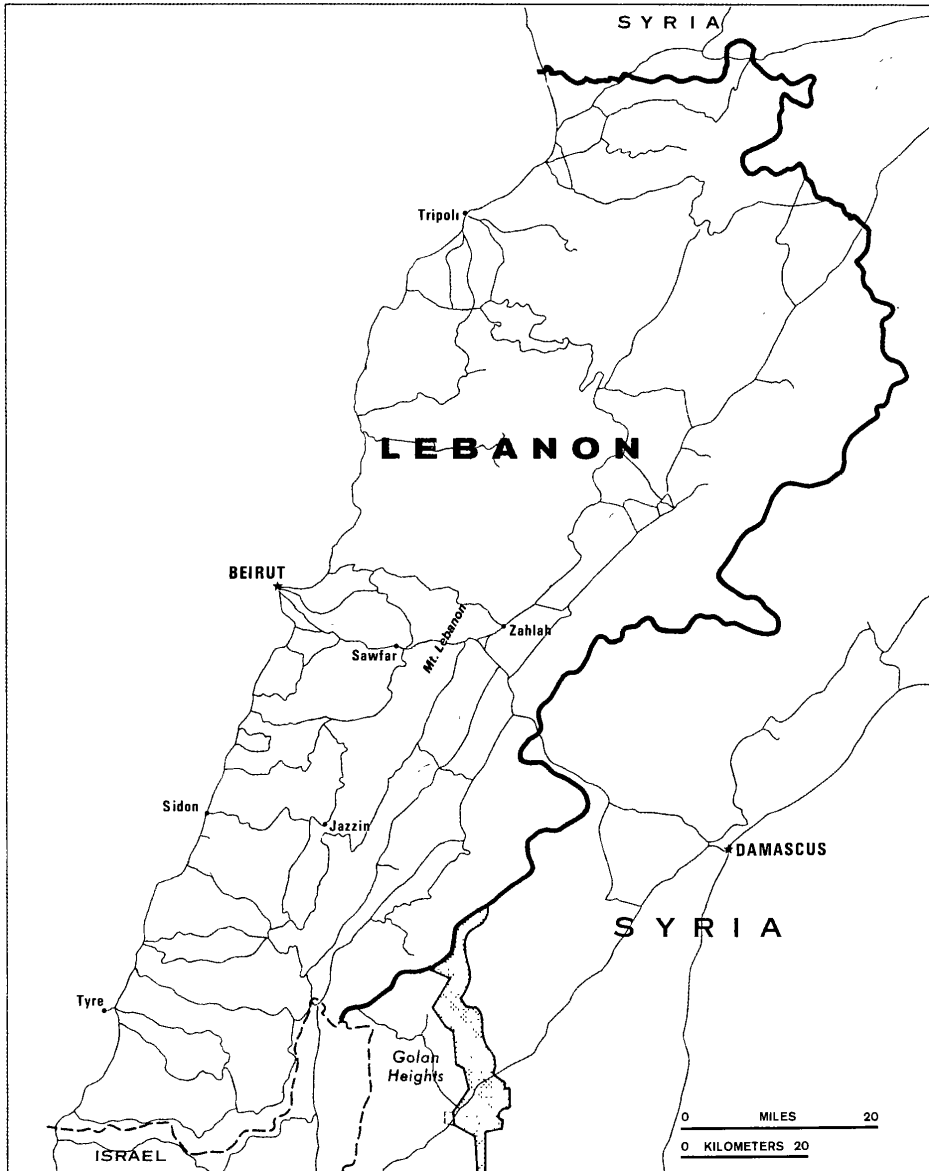
[Redacted]

All units of the Libyan armed forces were placed on increased alert yesterday.

Libyan ground, air, naval, and air defense units in the Tobruk area have been on increased alert since August 24.

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LEBANON: *Efforts to arrange some kind of peace settlement in Lebanon continue, but there is no sign of progress.*

Arab League mediator Hasan Sabri al-Khuli flew from Damascus to Cairo yesterday, presumably to consult with Arab League officials on the status of the peace plan he has been pushing for the past week. The plan, according to press accounts, provides for balanced withdrawals from the Mount Lebanon area by both the Palestinians and the Christians. The Christians are unlikely to accept such a proposal, although they have withheld an answer pending a Syrian response.

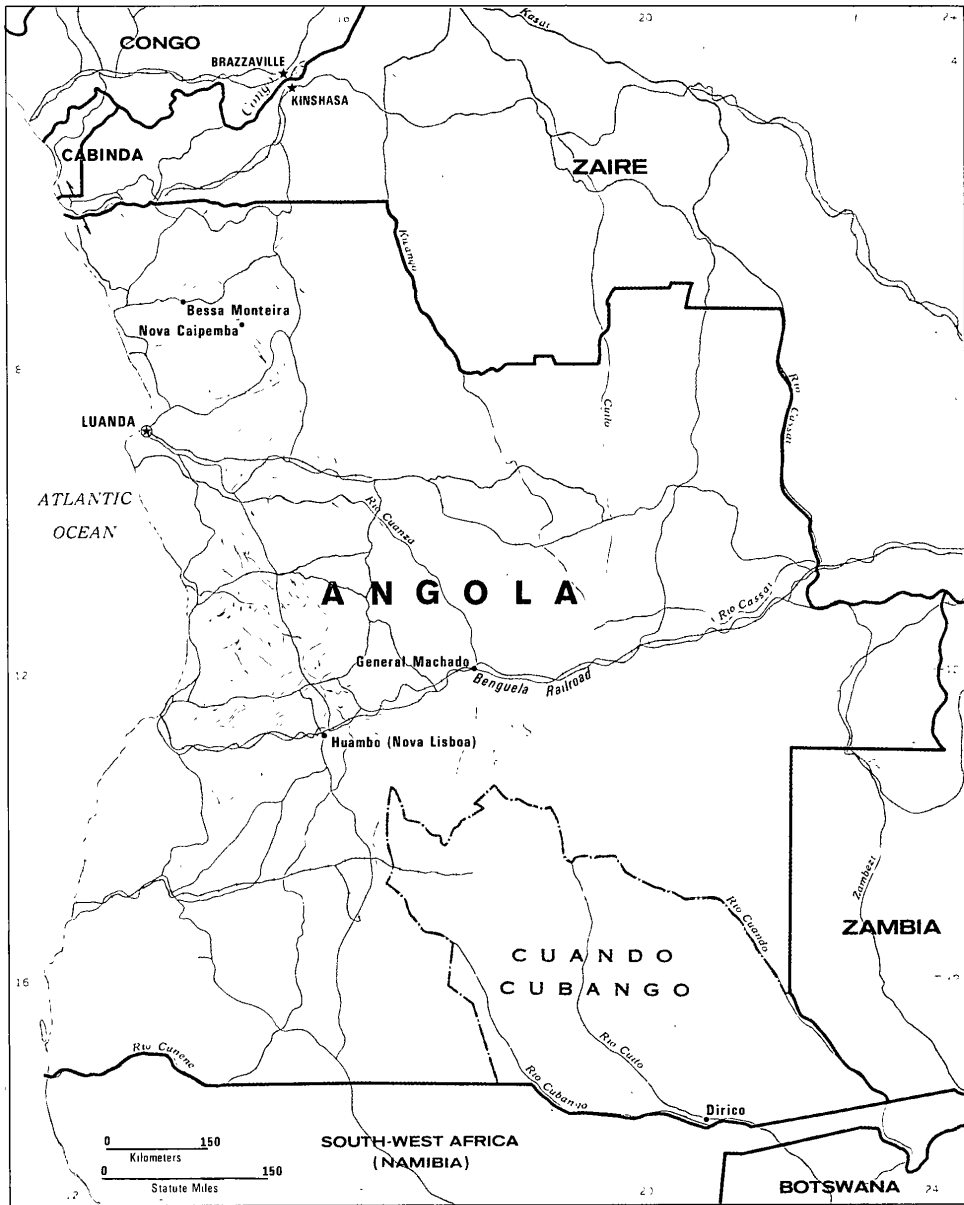
Twelve countries--one more than the necessary majority--are reported to have notified the Arab League of their willingness to attend an emergency summit on Lebanon. The foreign ministers' meeting that is to prepare the agenda for the summit is scheduled for September 4.

The Palestinian Political Council has published a communique requiring all Palestinian males between 18 and 30 to report for mobilization by today.

This move is, in effect, an acknowledgment by the Palestinians of their difficult military position. Conscription could reinforce Palestinian ranks but only with ill-trained and less effective fighters. The Palestinians may hope that one effect of the announcement will be to persuade the Christians of Palestinian readiness to fight in the Mount Lebanon area if current negotiations to arrange a withdrawal fall through.

The siege of Tripoli by Syrian and Christian forces continues to tighten, and new fighting was reported around the port yesterday. In Beirut, clashes occurred in the commercial area, and artillery

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fire was exchanged in the mountains to the east. [redacted]

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[redacted] the Syrians have been consolidating their forces in Sawfar and Zahlah. The Syrians also seem to be reinforcing their positions near Jazzin.

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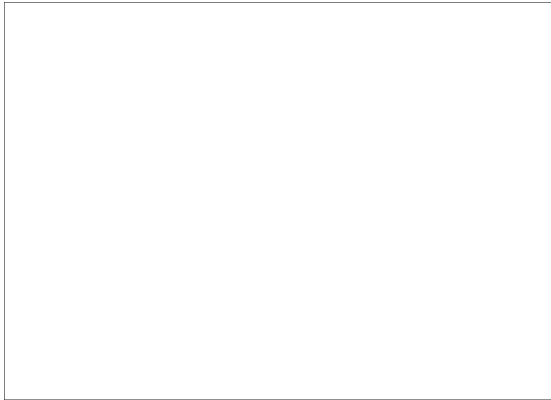
ANGOLA: The liberation groups defeated in the Angolan civil war have recently expanded their operations. Their activity does not seriously threaten the Angolan government; it does, however, provide reason for the continuing use of Cuban troops.

[redacted]

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National Front guerrillas are scattered in small units along the northwestern coast and apparently have established base camps near Nova Caipemba and Bessa Monteiro. These locations place them in a good position to disrupt government efforts to revive the country's coffee industry. The National Front, which no longer enjoys the active support of Zairian President Mobutu, is hampered, however, by shortages of ammunition and food.

The bulk of the government's forces have no experience in counterinsurgency operations. The Cubans, who are leading the operations, have recently fielded several specially trained units.



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Quando Cubanga Province, sparsely populated and remote from Angola's major centers of activity, has become the National Union's major staging area. The South African press reported last Friday that Cuban-led Angolan forces occupied Dirico, near the Namibian border, perhaps as an opening move in the government's drive.

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NOTES

Saudi Arabia has formally confirmed its agreement to finance the US air defense package for Jordan.

The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs notified the US embassy in Jidda on August 28 that Saudi Arabia would pay \$540 million for the 14 batteries of improved Hawk surface-to-air missiles and 100 Vulcan self-propelled antiaircraft artillery guns. The agreement climaxes months of talks and removes the major obstacle to the sale of the US package that was approved for Jordan last year.

* * *

North Korea is playing down its seizure yesterday of a South Korean fishing boat.

The North Korean news agency described the boat simply as an "unidentified ship" that intruded into the North's coastal waters. Pyongyang apparently has decided, at least initially, that this incident does not lend itself to exploitation as another "war provocation" by South Korea and the US.

Pyongyang normally detains captured South Korean boats and crews for at least several months. Seoul may try to link the seizure of the boat to the current talks at Panmunjom and may urge the US to suspend consideration of North Korean proposals regarding the Joint Security Area until the boat and crew are returned.

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We cannot confirm a London Evening News story that Soviet Premier Kosygin was saved from drowning after suffering a stroke.

Kosygin's most recent publicly announced activity was on July 22, when he received the Algerian minister of agriculture. There has been no information on his activities since July 30.

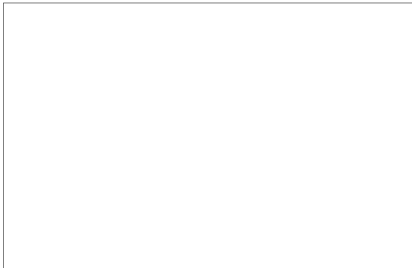
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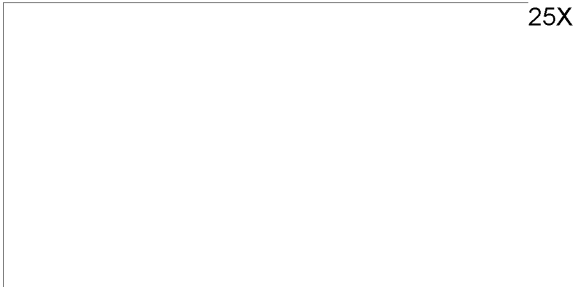
This is the second time we have picked up such a story. In mid-August, the Romanian ambassador to Moscow, probably passing on second- or third-hand gossip, told Canadian Ambassador Ford that Kosygin had an accident while on vacation near Pitsunda. He thought that the accident occurred on a pleasure craft on the Black Sea. The London Evening News version may be a variant of this story and cannot be regarded as confirmation of it.

According to a Japanese news agency, a Japanese business delegation visiting Moscow was told on August 10 that Kosygin would not be able to receive them because he was "recuperating" from a "slight cold."

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