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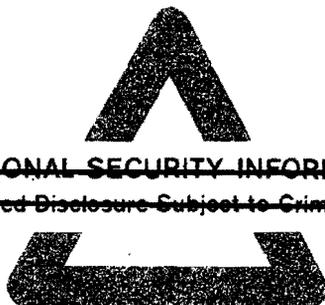
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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
11 JANUARY 1969

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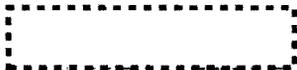
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E.O. 13526, section 3.3(b)(3)

2. Soviet Union

[Redacted] indi-
cates that the much-publicized flight
by the Soviet supersonic transport on
31 December was its second. We do not
know why the Soviets did not announce
the first flight on 17 December, but we
can only speculate that they did not
want to compete with the upcoming Apollo
8 flight for media coverage.

At Annex we discuss the design and
performance problems the plane is encoun-
tering.



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ANNEX

Soviet SST Has Problems

By getting their supersonic transport into the air first, the Soviets have stolen a propaganda march on the West. We doubt that buyers will be flocking to Moscow, however, and the plane could turn out to be a real lemon.

E.O. 13526, section 3.3(b)(1)

████████████████████ suggests that its range will probably be no greater than 2,500 miles, rather than the 3,500 miles claimed by the Soviets. This means it cannot fly the major transatlantic routes. It could reach European capitals from Moscow, but only if sonic-boom problems are ignored or somehow alleviated. Thus there is a possibility that the plane will be restricted to flights in the Soviet Union and to international routes which do not touch countries that have stringent noise and safety regulations.

Like the Anglo-French Concorde, which it resembles, the Soviet aircraft has run into weight and wing-design problems. Because of these and other difficulties, one Soviet scientist recently admitted that it would probably not go into service before 1972 or 1973, notwithstanding Moscow's claim of 1970 or 1971.