



**Director of  
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# **National Intelligence Daily**

*Tuesday  
13 March 1984*

~~**Top Secret**~~

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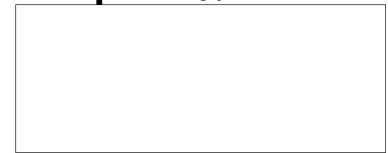
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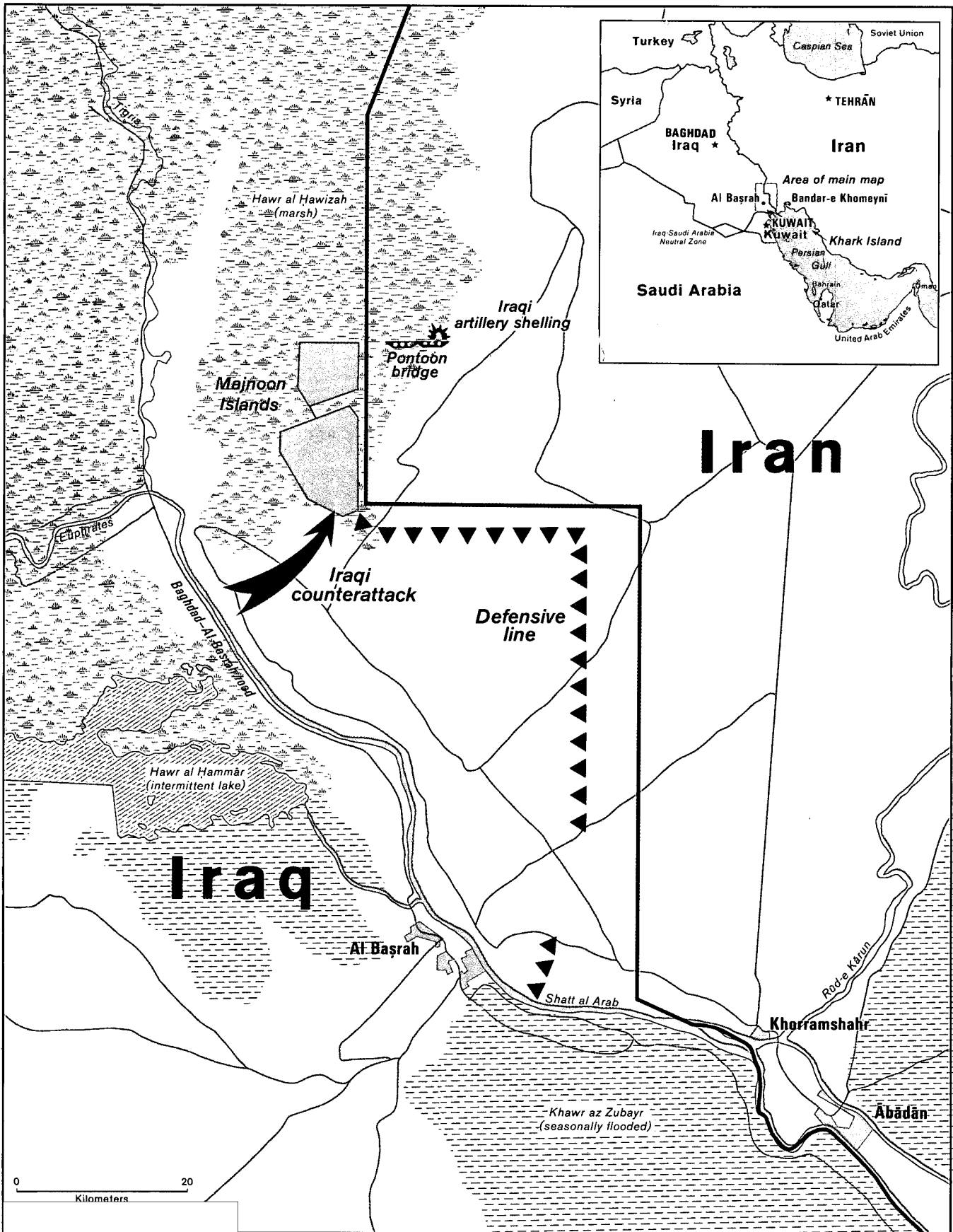


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**IRAN-IRAQ: Airstrikes on Majnoon Islands**

*Iraq probably will try to destroy the Iranian pontoon bridge to the islands before it can be completed late this week.* 

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Iraqi press reports claim that yesterday fighter aircraft and helicopters attacked Iranian positions on the islands. 

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 the Iraqis have shelled the eastern end of the bridge. 

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 Al Basrah remains Iran's objective, although other attacks will be launched along the border.  Iran has mobilized 300,000 to 500,000 men for the offensive, and  they have suffered 20,000 casualties in recent fighting. 

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**Comment:** Destruction of the pontoon bridge would keep Iranian forces on the islands partially isolated and increase the chances of recapturing them. The Iraqis apparently have been reluctant to send aircraft against the bridge so far because of Iranian air defenses around the islands and the difficulty of destroying a pontoon bridge. They may now be more willing to launch air attacks, however, since their ground attack on the island has stalled. 

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To prevent repair operations, they would have to make repeated attacks on the bridge and on the construction support areas at its eastern end. 

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If the bridge is completed, the Iranians could use it to move large numbers of troops to strengthen their defenses on the islands. This would leave them in a better position to launch new attacks across the marshes against the Iraqis that would threaten the strategic road between Baghdad and Al Basrah, as well as Iraqi troops east of Al Basrah. 

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**ARAB STATES: Token Support for Baghdad**

*The session over the weekend of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the emergency meeting in Baghdad today of Foreign Ministers of the Arab League are likely to provide only rhetorical support to Iraq's war efforts.* [Redacted]

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The Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman gathered in Riyadh over the weekend for the Council's quarterly meeting. The latest fighting and Iran's threat to the Persian Gulf states were high on the agenda, but results of the meeting are not yet known. [Redacted]

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Oman's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs told the US Ambassador in Muscat on Saturday that the members of the Council are reluctant to engage in collective military contingency planning with the US because they are afraid of Iran and of domestic criticism. They prefer instead discreet bilateral talks. [Redacted]

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Seventeen of the 22 Arab League members have agreed to Iraq's request for the emergency meeting of Foreign Ministers. A government-controlled Iraqi newspaper yesterday called for the Foreign Ministers to support Iraq and condemn Iran in accordance with the Arab League's charter and collective defense pact. Syria and Libya are among the states that have not announced if their representatives will attend. [Redacted]

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**Comment:** Any resolutions resulting from these meetings probably will be of little practical use to Baghdad. The six members of the Gulf Council thus far have had little success in interesting Tehran in mediation efforts. They are unlikely to increase substantially their financial assistance to Baghdad, because each faces financial constraints of its own. [Redacted]

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Syria, which supports Iran's war effort, probably will boycott the meeting. Its absence would increase the likelihood that the Arab League will issue a denunciation of Iran. [Redacted]

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**EGYPT: Regional Diplomacy and Politics**

*Cairo is unlikely to react to its formal reentry into the Islamic Conference by campaigning hard for readmission to the Arab League or by backing away from its peace treaty with Israel.* [Redacted]

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The chairman of the Islamic Conference, Morocco's King Hassan, declared in a letter sent to the organization's secretariat on Saturday that Egypt's readmission was "final and effective as of now." [Redacted]

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[Redacted] the secretariat told US officials that Cairo will routinely be invited to all meetings of the Conference and its committees. The next meetings will be held in late March or in April. [Redacted]

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President Mubarak said in an interview on Sunday that Egypt, despite pressure from Syria, will continue to adhere to the Camp David Accords. He said that Egypt would not reenter the Arab League at the price of abrogating its treaty with Israel, even though Tel Aviv violates the treaty every day. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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**Comment:** Egyptian officials repeatedly have said that the Arab states have to come to Egypt rather than the reverse. They believe that the Arabs already recognize Egypt's importance in regional politics. [Redacted]

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Cairo believes that the current state of relations with Israel serves Egyptian interests by improving the Israeli Labor Party's chances of success in an early election. As a result, Egypt is unlikely to send its Ambassador back to Israel in the near future or to make other moves that might strengthen Prime Minister Shamir's coalition. [Redacted]

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**NICARAGUA: Opposition Protests**

*The Sandinistas probably are embarrassed by the opposition's boycott of discussions of the draft election law.* [Redacted]

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The Social Christian Party withdrew from the Council of State's debate on the electoral law last week in order to protest approval of an article providing for presidential elections. A party official says many members believed that the party, by continuing to participate in the debate, was allowing itself to be used. Press reports state the remaining opposition parties and a labor confederation subsequently followed the lead of the Social Christians. [Redacted]

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Earlier last week the regime had shown some sensitivity to non-Sandinista concerns, agreeing to drop a proposed requirement that a political party obtain 5,000 signatures on a petition to qualify for the election. The Sandinistas also appointed a special committee to rewrite an article on the parties' access to the media, after the opposition attacked a proposal that all parties divide one hour of television time each week. [Redacted]

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Opposition sources say that prominent exiled politicians Arturo Cruz and Alfredo Cesar plan to return to Nicaragua next week to test the political climate. The Sandinistas have said they will be allowed to return but they also have published items linking Cruz to the insurgents. [Redacted]

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**Comment:** The opposition's decision to walk out over a fairly unimportant issue underscores its threat to boycott the election. The Sandinistas may make some overture to entice the opposition to return to the debate, but they will not relax their overall control of election planning. [Redacted]

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The Sandinistas probably calculate that the return of Cruz and Cesar will help legitimize the election process. Although neither has a popular following, the government apparently is putting itself in position to counteract whatever support they might gain. [Redacted]

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**POLAND: Pressure on Cardinal Glemp**

*Cardinal Glemp, who is under increasing pressure to be less accommodating to the regime, will have a chance to defend his policies during a special mass tomorrow in Warsaw's cathedral.* [Redacted]

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Glemp returned yesterday from a monthlong visit to South America. He faces a renewed hunger strike in a suburban Warsaw parish protesting his transfer of a pro-Solidarity priest. He also has to deal with a controversy over the removal of crucifixes from a state agricultural academy and with the student demonstration that followed that action. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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Meanwhile, US Embassy officers at the Vatican report a resurgence of speculation that Glemp will be reassigned to a position in the Vatican bureaucracy as a means of "gracefully" removing him as head of the Polish church. [Redacted]

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**Comment:** Glemp is likely to face more challenges to his authority as the faithful and local priests increasingly come to view his willingness to accommodate the regime as a sellout. He may be able to restore some of his credibility, however, if he defends displaying crucifixes in schools and public buildings. In the past, the Church's hierarchy has supported this policy. [Redacted]

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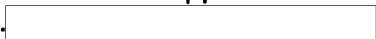


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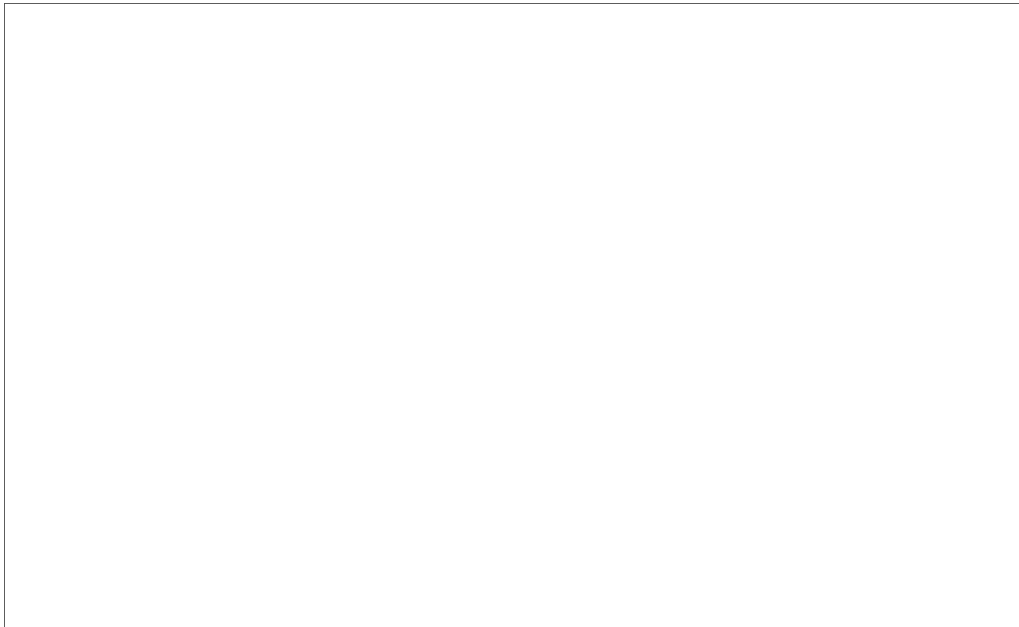
**SYRIA: New Government Named**

President Assad's appointment of his brother, Rifaat, and two other officials as vice presidents may ease tensions in Damascus temporarily. Three decrees issued on Sunday named former Foreign Minister Khaddam, Rifaat, and Baath Party leader Mashariqah to be vice presidents in that apparent order of precedence. Assad also approved a new government under Prime Minister Kasm. The cabinet includes Khaddam's deputy, Faruq al-Shar', as the new Foreign Minister, and indicates that Defense Minister Talas has gained an additional post as deputy prime minister. 

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**Comment:** Rifaat may order the troops of his defense companies to return to their barracks, but tensions are likely to reemerge when he tries to assert his authority over the military and security forces. Although the President apparently has acceded to Rifaat's ambitions for a more prominent role, he has kept his own team of advisers intact. Only six of the 36 positions in the cabinet are filled by new appointees, and there is no indication that Rifaat's opponents have been moved to less powerful positions. 

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**EL SALVADOR: Strikes End Temporarily**

Employees in the public sector have returned to work, but they are threatening to strike again later this week if their demands are not met. The US Embassy reports that labor-management negotiations continue and that one union is asking for a 25-percent increase in wages, well above the 10 percent specified by the government's new wage decree. Although most of the unions currently involved are affiliated with the leftist labor front, labor leaders claim that democratic unions also may strike. [Redacted]

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**Comment:** Democratic labor has endorsed Christian Democratic presidential candidate Duarte, and continuing labor strife at this stage of the presidential campaign probably would benefit rightist candidates. If the situation gets worse, the Army may intervene. This would give the insurgents a propaganda windfall just before the elections on 25 March. [Redacted]

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**USSR-INDIA: Results of Ustinov's Visit**

Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov has ended his six-day visit to India with broad agreement on regional security problems but no new arms deals. According to the US Embassy, Ustinov and Prime Minister Gandhi expressed concern about US military sales to Pakistan and the US Navy's buildup in the Indian Ocean. A high-level Indian military delegation is scheduled to go to Moscow soon to follow up on Soviet offers of a wide range of weapons on favorable credit terms. [Redacted]

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**Comment:** The visit reaffirmed Moscow's desire to strengthen and diversify bilateral relations. Most of the arms the USSR is offering, including a new MIG fighter, have been under discussion for some time. The Indians have been slow deciding on a major new agreement with the Soviets. They want to have the flexibility of acquiring some arms from Western sources and to try to obtain better terms from the Soviets. [Redacted]

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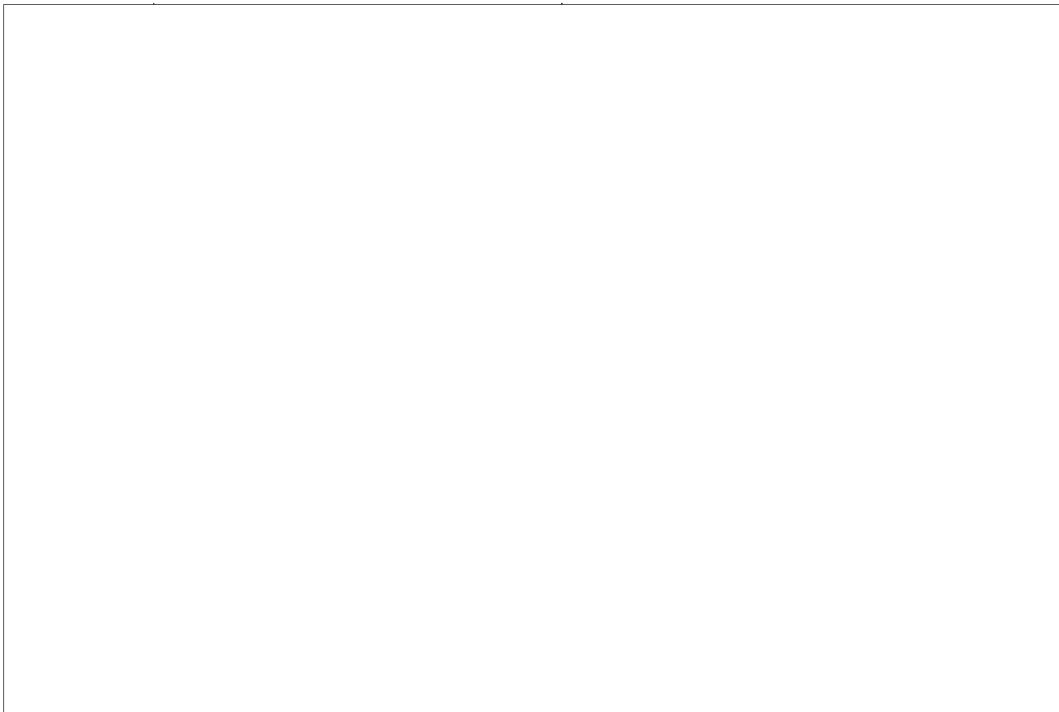
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**IRAN: Legislative Elections Scheduled**

Tehran has announced that elections to the Consultative Assembly will be held on 15 April and has decreed that members of the government who want to run have to resign their posts by Thursday. [redacted] Iranian merchants are funding a drive to elect as many representatives as possible in order to counter radical candidates who are unsympathetic toward the private sector. [redacted]

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**Comment:** Cabinet ministers in Iran are not required to have seats in the legislature, but some ministers who do not expect to retain their portfolios may resign to run. The elections have been delayed for several weeks, probably because of disagreements over procedure and the government's preoccupation with military operations. Efforts by the commercial sector to gain seats could result in a contentious campaign in some districts and perhaps make the conduct of the war an issue. [redacted]

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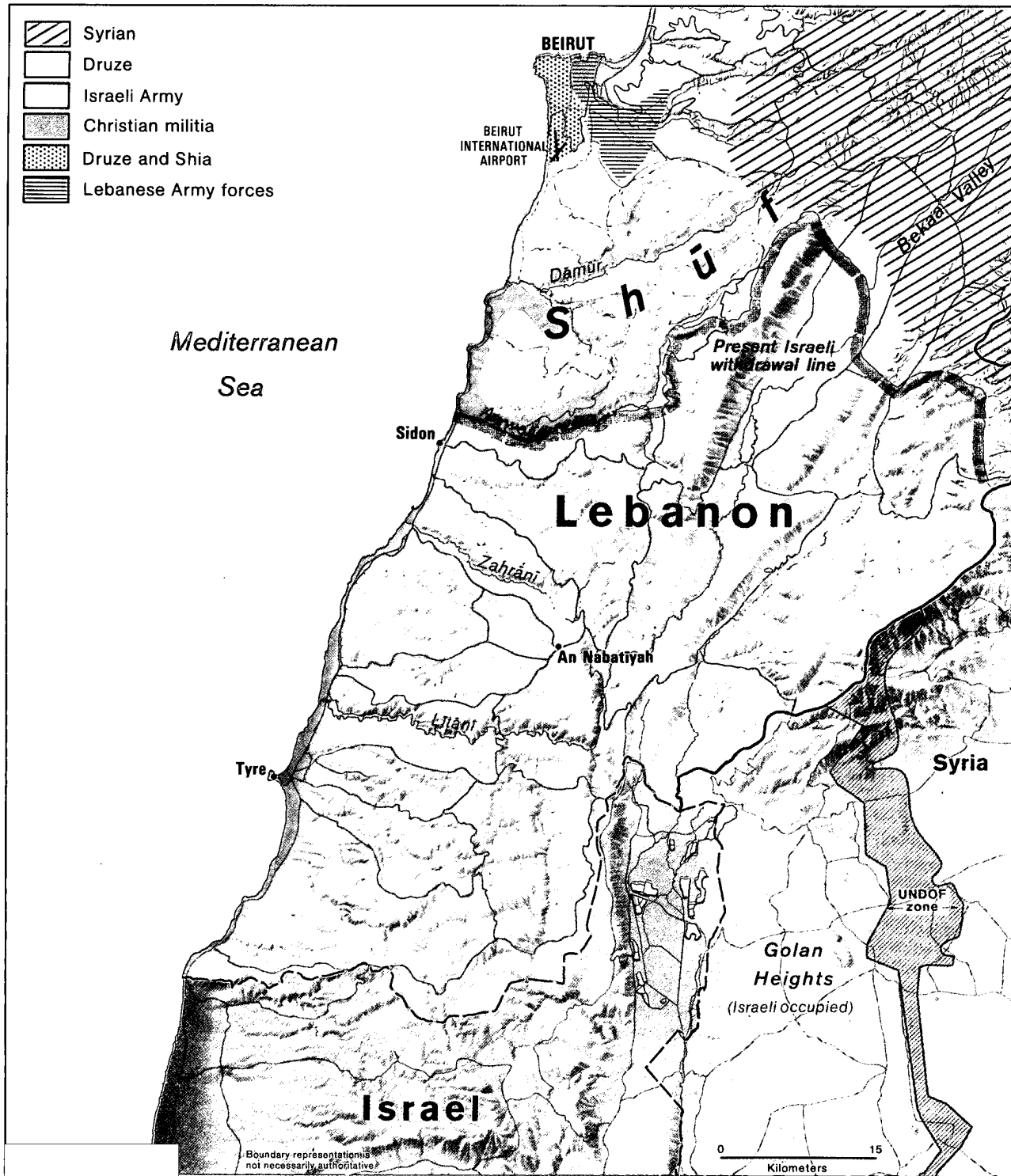
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### Present Areas of Control

-  Syrian
-  Druze
-  Israeli Army
-  Christian militia
-  Druze and Shia
-  Lebanese Army forces



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**Special Analysis**

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**ISRAEL-LEBANON: Security Options in Southern Lebanon**

*The Israeli Government is under increasing domestic pressure to redeploy its forces at least out of the heavily populated areas of southern Lebanon. Tel Aviv still hopes to work out effective security arrangements that will eventually allow it to withdraw its troops completely, but Israeli officials are pessimistic that they can rely on Lebanese surrogates alone to maintain security along the border. As a result, Israel probably will have to maintain a military presence in the area for an extended time.* [Redacted]

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[Redacted] most Israeli military and government officials favor a substantial redeployment of their forces from the western, more heavily populated area of the south. They see Lebanon as a drain on valuable financial and material resources and a highly disruptive factor in the training cycle of Army reserves. The officials believe that Israel's occupation of the predominantly Shia areas of the south actually fosters the goals of Shiite radicals. [Redacted]

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Only a minority of officials, including former Defense Minister Sharon, favor remaining along the Awwali River. They argue that partial or complete withdrawal now would be interpreted by Syria as another sign of Israeli weakness. [Redacted]

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The officials contend that standing fast helps to put direct pressure on the Druze to prevent the Palestinians from reentering the southern Shuf. They also argue that the Army is now best situated to strike at Palestinians who come near the Israeli-imposed "red line" at the Damur River. [Redacted]

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**Where To Draw the Line**

Political considerations prevent Prime Minister Shamir's government from ordering a complete withdrawal. The Labor Party is using Israel's continued presence in Lebanon to attack the government. Labor argues that the security of northern Israel would be protected best by a complete withdrawal and that Israel should go ahead and unilaterally implement the security provisions of the scuttled withdrawal accord. [Redacted]

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The government says that, without substantial security arrangements in the south, a sudden withdrawal to the border would subject northern Israel to renewed shelling and infiltration by the Palestinians. Its view is that Israel requires a buffer zone along the border to prevent a return to the situation that existed before the invasion. [Redacted]

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Israeli officials are examining several alternatives for a partial withdrawal. Shamir and Defense Minister Arens favor a limited pullback from the Sidon area, which the Army describes as a "hornets' nest." [Redacted]

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A withdrawal from only Sidon, however, probably would not result in substantially fewer Israeli casualties over the long run. A large number of attacks against Israeli soldiers occur on the coast road south of the city, or in Tyre, Nabatiyah, and other heavily populated areas. By opening Sidon to traffic from the north, Israel also would make it easier for its opponents to smuggle arms and explosives into the south. [Redacted]

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Most members of the cabinet prefer a larger pullback to either the Zahrani or the Litani Rivers. The Litani is the easier to defend, and a withdrawal to it would remove Israeli soldiers from most of Lebanon's heavily populated coastal region. [Redacted]

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**Other Security Arrangements**

Tel Aviv will continue its efforts to build up the Army of Free Lebanon as the primary security force in the south. Israel is trying to integrate members of the Lebanese Forces stationed in the south into the Army of Free Lebanon. Although most of its efforts to establish local Shiite militias have failed, Israeli officials still hope to reach agreements with local Druze, Shias, and Sunnis to help maintain security in the south. [Redacted]

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Tel Aviv is not now contemplating any pullback of its forces from the Bekaa Valley. Israeli officials probably would be willing to consider an agreement with Damascus on a mutual reduction and disengagement of forces in return for Syrian pledges to prevent terrorist attacks against Israeli targets in southern Lebanon and across the border. [Redacted]

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**Special Analysis**

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**UK: Thatcher and the Unions**

*Trade unions and the government are trying to achieve some degree of cooperation, or at least reduce the hostility that has marked their relationship since Prime Minister Thatcher was elected in 1979. Although Thatcher has taken a number of actions to deprive the unions of their economic and political influence, she has been under pressure recently to modify this stand. The Trades Union Congress is reexamining its ties to the Labor Party because of the changing political and economic climate.*



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Thatcher burnished her reputation for toughness recently by refusing to back down from the government ban on union membership at the Cheltenham signals communications facility. The employees were given until 1 March to renounce their memberships or cease working at the installation.



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Thatcher reportedly took this action in order to eliminate the possibility of further strikes at the facility, which she claims damage national security. Civil service unions have appeared reasonable in the dispute and evidently have offered a "no strike" guarantee in exchange for lifting the ban.



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Thatcher has claimed that up to 90 percent of the employees at the facility have agreed to give up their union ties. Nonetheless, she apparently was surprised by the strength of opposition to her action, and some observers, including many Tories, remain doubtful that the confrontaton was necessary.



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The Trades Union Congress says the government's position demonstrates its unwillingness to accommodate the unions. It is threatening to withdraw from talks under way on a broad range of government-labor issues.



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**Thatcher's Position**

Until recently, the Prime Minister had refused all contact with union leaders, and in 1980 and 1982 she led a drive to enact restrictive labor laws without consulting leaders of the Trades Union Congress. Some of her colleagues are urging her to keep pressure on for labor reform while the unions lack the power to impede it.



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The Prime Minister, however, recently authorized limited talks with Trades Union Congress leader Murray. She presumably sees no current political benefit in union "bashing." She also may believe that further labor legislation, particularly without prior consultation with union leaders, might prompt public sympathy for the unions, as occurred in the Cheltenham affair. [redacted]

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Thatcher's approach seems to be producing results. Press reports state that the Trades Union Congress has agreed to ask member unions to recommend voluntary pay deductions for union political funds—the lifeline of the Labor Party. If this change were implemented, it probably would satisfy some of Thatcher's concerns about democracy in union procedures. [redacted]

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**The Changing Atmosphere**

There are several reasons for the decision by the Trades Union Congress to engage in a dialogue with the government. The work force recently has gained many more white collar members, and many of the older and more militant unions have been put on the defensive by the poor economic situation. The current unemployment rate of 13 percent has caused substantial job losses in highly unionized industries and the public sector. [redacted]

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Union membership had fallen to below 10 million at the end of 1983, the lowest figure since 1971. Unemployment is likely to grow, however, and the unions are seriously considering a government proposal to trade lower pay for more jobs. [redacted]

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Declining union membership, however, has altered the balance of power in the Trades Union Congress in favor of more moderate unions. Moreover, the rank and file in a number of militant unions have repeatedly refused to endorse strike decisions over the past few years. [redacted]

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The Labor Party's disastrous showing in the general election last June, when an estimated 60 percent of union members voted against the party, has prompted the Trades Union Congress to take another look at its traditional links to Labor. Trade unionists reportedly want to distance themselves from the Labor Party because it has become increasingly a captive of its left wing. [redacted]

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**Looking Ahead**

Thatcher is likely to continue her antiunion position, but she also will try to maintain a dialogue with the Trades Union Congress. Whether the unions will continue to be conciliatory depends in part on their assessment of the economy. Economists are predicting an improvement over the next few months, which, according to the US Embassy, should encourage unions to be more demanding as they try to make up for ground lost since 1979. [Redacted]

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The future of the Trades Union Congress's links to the Labor Party may also have a considerable impact on the political scene. The Trades Union Congress almost certainly will not bolt the party any time soon, but union leaders probably will take a more independent and pragmatic stand, especially if the party fails to regain its position as the only serious alternative to the Conservatives. [Redacted]

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Neil Kinnock, the new chief of the Labor Party, is trying to project a more moderate image on domestic issues, in part to avert a break with the unions. His efforts have improved Labor's standing in the polls, and this probably ensures that the relationship will continue for the time being. [Redacted]

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The chances of a split are remote, but in the unlikely event that it occurs, the Labor Party would be seriously weakened. This would ensure continuing rule by the Conservatives, or usher in a long period of political uncertainty. [Redacted]

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