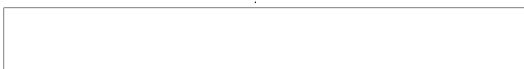


The President's Daily Brief

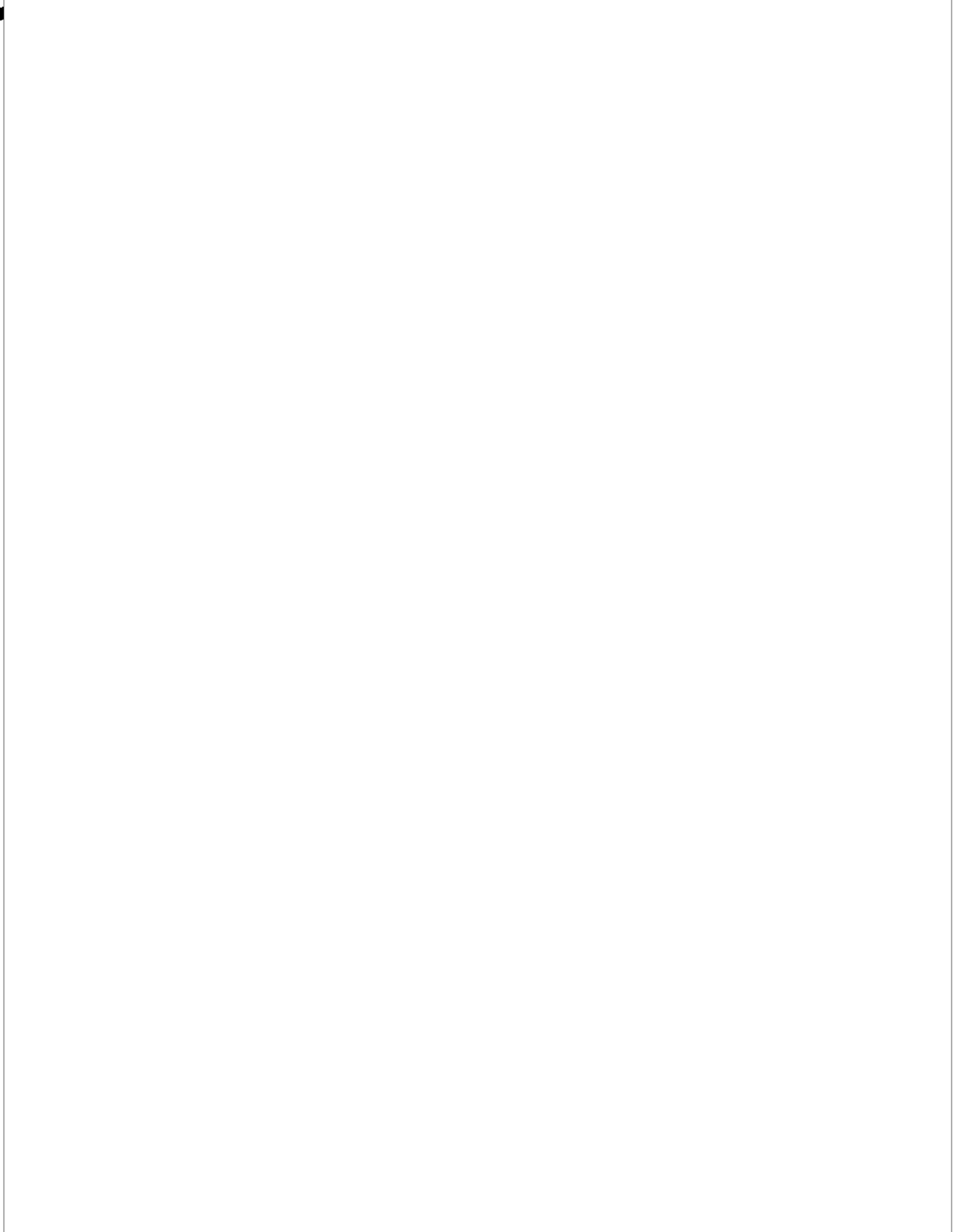
15 March 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

15 March 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Soviets are making preparations for a manned space mission. (Page 1)

King Husayn's commutation of the death sentences of 17 Black September terrorists probably will win him the gratitude of other Arab leaders, but it is doubtful that this step will reduce fedayeen animosity toward Jordan. (Page 2)

President Lon Nol has repeated his offer to hold new legislative elections with the participation of all political elements--including the insurgents. (Page 3)

Although the Security Council meeting will not produce strong international support for Panama's position on the canal, General Torrijos believes it will fulfill his purpose of focusing world attention on Panama's demands. (Page 4)

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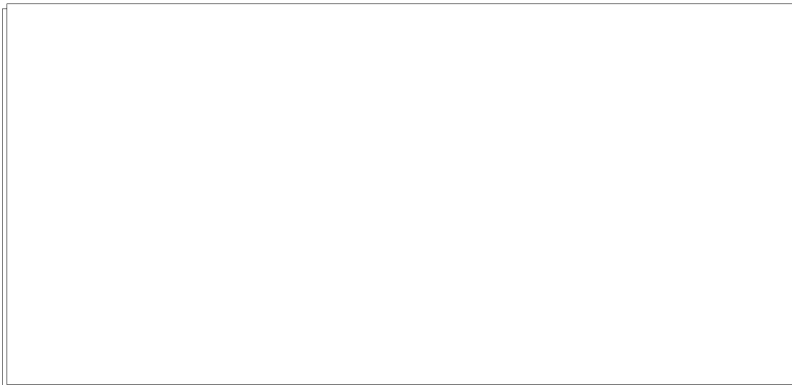
The Turkish parliament has postponed further presidential balloting until tomorrow. (Page 5)

A USSR military delegation is in Peru this week to negotiate sales of Soviet equipment. (Page 5)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR

The Soviets are making preparations for a manned space mission.



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The Soviet manned space program has suffered several setbacks during the past two years. Since the Soyuz 11 accident in 1971 that killed three cosmonauts, the only successful mission in this program has been an unmanned Soyuz spacecraft orbited for engineering tests in June 1972. A later attempt to orbit another Salyut space station resulted in failure, and a Soyuz mission scheduled for last fall was canceled. The forthcoming mission could begin within the next several weeks.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

JORDAN-FEDAYEEN

King Husayn commuted the death sentences yesterday of Black September leader Muhammad Awadh and 16 of his followers. Husayn said he had issued the order in the hope that it would bring about a new understanding between Jordan and the rest of the Arab states as well as the fedayeen.

The move is almost certain to win King Husayn the gratitude of other Arab leaders, many of whom appealed to him not to execute Awadh. Whether the step will reduce fedayeen animosity toward the King is much more doubtful.

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The fedayeen rejected the King's offer out of hand.

Husayn's leniency may also make it more difficult for Sudanese President Numayri to deal harshly with the Khartoum terrorists.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

President Lon Nol has repeated his government's offer to hold new legislative elections with the participation of all political elements--including the insurgents. His statement did not include two preconditions mentioned in a similar proposal floated in early February--the prior withdrawal of all Vietnamese Communist troops from Cambodia and the exclusion of Sihanouk from any political role.

Lon Nol's offer appears partially in line with a new initiative, now being considered, aimed at starting peace talks. First Minister Hang Thun Hak told the US Ambassador on 13 March that this would include elections, the free formation of political parties, and the retention of Lon Nol in office. The question of Sihanouk's participation in a new government would be sidestepped, although the re-establishment of the monarchy would be explicitly excluded. Hak wanted US help in contacting Peking and Hanoi to see whether they would act as intermediaries with the insurgents, who so far have shown no interest in compromise with Lon Nol.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

PANAMA

The Security Council meeting which opens today will not produce strong international support for Panama's position on the canal. General Torrijos believes, however, that the meeting will fulfill his main purpose of focusing world--and particularly US--attention on Panama's demands.

Since only Peru and Cuba seem enthusiastic about a strong anti-US stance, Panama has considerably toned down its expectations. The Council's president--Panama's Aquilino Boyd--seems resigned to a mildly worded summary of the first two days of general debate.

The last two days are reserved for Latin American topics. A paper apparently prepared by Panama and Peru, which has been circulated to selected delegations, calls for ending the US presence in the Canal Zone, closing all military bases not related to Canal defense, and neutralizing the Panama Canal. It also demands an end to the economic and political isolation of Cuba and an acceleration of "decolonialization" in Latin America in compliance with an earlier General Assembly resolution.

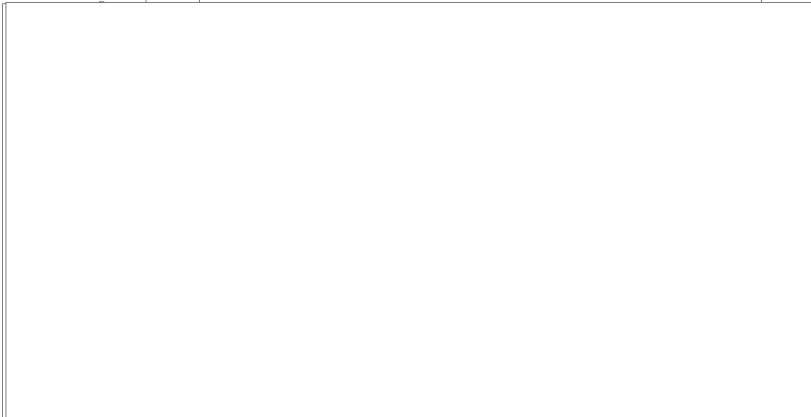
Although this paper may be softened by Torrijos--who seems to realize that involving the United Nations in a bilateral negotiation would be unacceptable to the US--considerable anti-US rhetoric is still bound to develop. Nevertheless, the final outcome is likely to be a bland citation of the "spirit of the charter" as a guide for further bilateral talks.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

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Turkey: Parliament has postponed further presidential balloting until 16 March. The 48-hour delay gives the politicians and generals time to find a way out of the impasse that developed on 13 March when no candidates won the required majority after four ballots. The Turkish press is speculating that party leaders are trying to come up with a new candidate who would be acceptable to both the parliament and the military high command.

USSR-Peru: A Soviet military delegation headed by Deputy Defense Minister Sokolov is in Peru this week to negotiate sales of Soviet equipment. Peru appears to be most interested at present in T-54 tanks. Top-level Peruvian military officers, including General Edgardo Mercado, who is prime minister and acting president, have inspected many other types of Soviet hardware [redacted]

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[redacted] The Peruvians have often vented their displeasure at the US for its one-year suspension of military sales last December and have alleged that other free world suppliers have not matched the credit terms offered by the USSR.

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