



The President's Daily Brief

28 September 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

28 September 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Soviets appear to be testing changes made in their Soyuz spacecraft since 1971, when three cosmonauts were killed during re-entry. (Page 1)

France [redacted]
[redacted] (Page 2)

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One US citizen was wounded during a terrorist strike in Eritrea yesterday [redacted] (Page 3)

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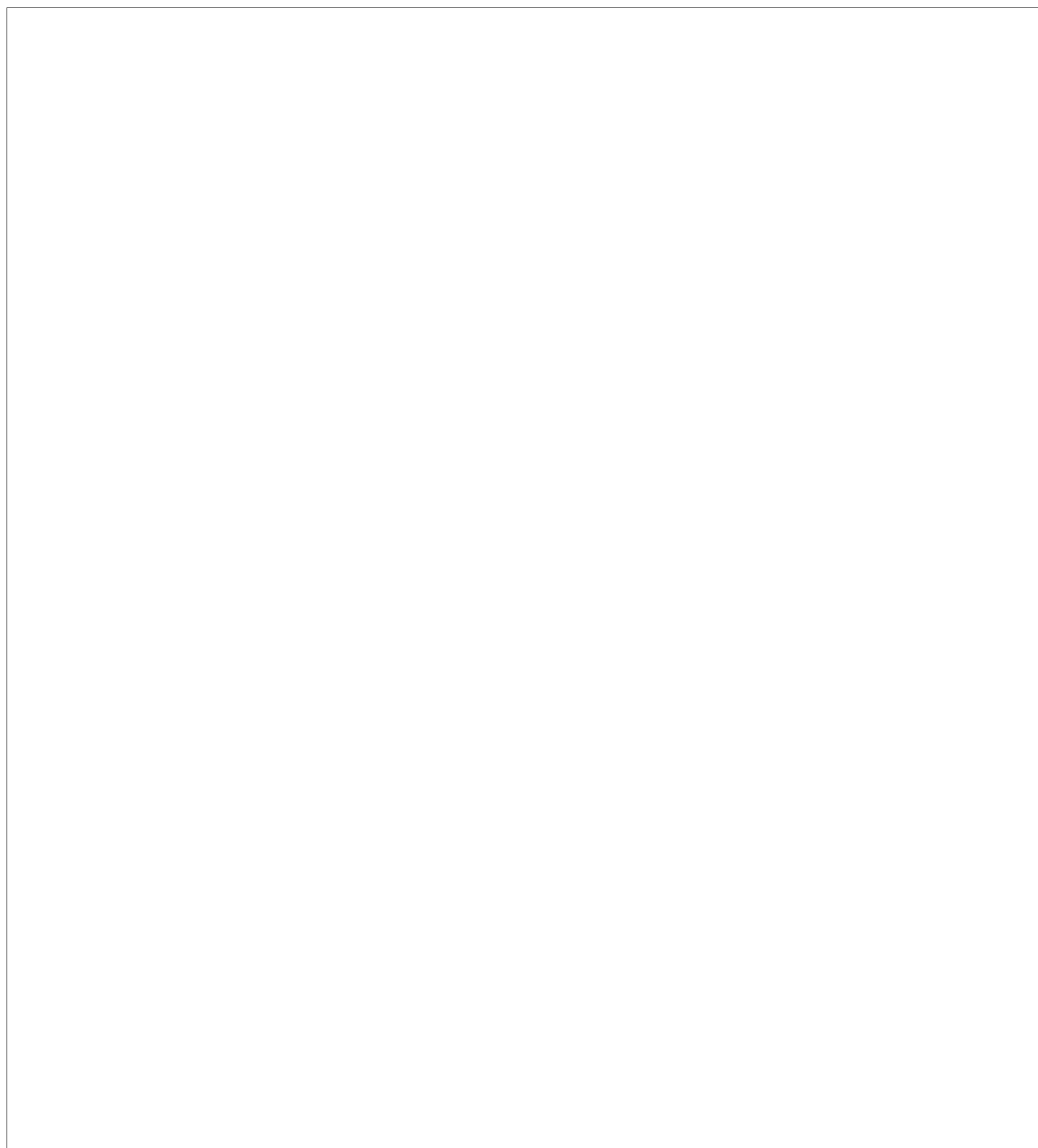
Iceland has told the UK to withdraw from its waters by October 3, or face a break in relations. (Page 4)

Harold Wilson, chief of the British Labor Party, may be thinking of softening his party's opposition to participation in the EC. (Page 5)

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USSR

With yesterday's launch of a Soyuz spacecraft, Soviet cosmonauts have returned to space after an interval of more than two years. TASS announced that the Soyuz and its two passengers will spend two days in earth orbit and will conduct scientific experiments as well as checks on their own operations.

The Soviets presumably are primarily interested in testing changes made in the spacecraft since June 1971, when three cosmonauts aboard Soyuz 11 died during re-entry. An unmanned Soyuz launched last June apparently was also a test of modifications to the spacecraft.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FRANCE

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ETHIOPIA

Yesterday terrorists of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) fired on government buildings in Asmara for about an hour. A small number of soldiers and civilians were killed; several were wounded, including one US citizen.

The attack occurred on Ethiopia's most important religious holiday and was intended to embarrass the government. The ELF had distributed leaflets the day before implying that an attack would be made.

Recently there has been an upsurge in ELF activity, including the ambush of the deputy commander of Ethiopian troops in Eritrea, indicating that the insurgents may be emerging from a fratricidal rift that has been in progress for two years. The rebels are not yet united, but their ranks have been augmented by disgruntled students, and sympathetic Muslim states continue to provide arms and money.

Even as happened yesterday, the ELF so far has avoided US interests in Eritrea

[redacted] and 2,000 US citizens residing in the province.

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ICELAND-UK

As a result of last week's incident at sea, Reykjavik decided yesterday to break diplomatic relations if London does not withdraw its frigates by October 3 from waters claimed by Iceland.

The British will probably attempt to temporize. Following NATO Secretary General Luns' personal intervention in the dispute earlier this month, the British did acknowledge that they needed to be more flexible.

The ultimatum will expire on the same day that Icelandic Foreign Minister Agustsson arrives in Washington to begin formal negotiations on the future of the US-manned Icelandic Defense Force. The hardening of positions in the cod war will make Agustsson's efforts to preserve the Force--even on a reduced scale--more difficult than ever.

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UK

Labor Party leader Harold Wilson met in London late last week with a delegation of French Socialists led by Francois Mitterand--the first in a series of talks he plans with other European socialist parties. The two men discussed Wilson's pledge to "renegotiate" the terms of EC entry if his party comes to power. Wilson said that a future Labor government would make every effort to reform and reduce the common agricultural policy (CAP) and would try to get a better deal on other agricultural issues. Mitterand responded that he was "sympathetic" because CAP also hurt French industrial workers; it was up to each member of the EC to set its own priorities and fight for them.

Wilson meets next month with the Dutch and the Germans, who are more pro-EC than his party. He probably hopes that holding these talks will strengthen the position of moderates at the party's annual meeting next week, where left-wing and anti-EC forces are likely to attract more support than they did last year. The recent convention of the Trades Union Congress voted to reject participation in EC institutions now and to continue opposition to EC membership.

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NOTE



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