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The President's Daily Brief

February 11, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

February 11, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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A meeting of the heads of state of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Syria is tentatively scheduled for February 13 in Aswan [redacted] President Sadat, King Faysal, and President Boumediene hope to nudge Syria's President Asad toward talks with Israel on disengagement. (Page 1)

The long-term agreement between France and Iran signed on Saturday offers France the prospect of major sales of industrial equipment, but it will be a year or two before French earnings will be significant. (Page 2)

The EC foreign ministers are likely to approve, at their meeting on February 14, proposals for cooperation with Arab nations in a wide range of fields. If the Arabs respond favorably to the plan, mixed EC-Arab working groups would eventually be established. (Page 3)

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MIDDLE EAST

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A meeting of the heads of state of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Syria is tentatively scheduled [redacted] in Aswan, Egypt [redacted]. The presence of Syria's President Asad remains in doubt.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmi so far has denied press reports of the meeting. [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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The meeting is beginning to surface in the press. According to a Cairo press report, the heads of state will also discuss the oil embargo and plans for political negotiations after the disengagement of forces is completed.

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FRANCE-IRAN

The long-term French-Iranian agreement signed on Saturday offers France the prospect of major sales of industrial equipment. The French can also point to the deal as a success in their policy of concluding government-to-government deals with the oil-producing countries.

Even if most of the proposed projects are built, however, it will be a year or two before French earnings will be significant. France will receive some payment in the form of natural gas and oil-exploration rights, but oil trade was not specifically mentioned [redacted]

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[redacted] several contracts worth about \$3 billion are in an advanced stage of negotiation and that the latest talks added projects worth an additional \$1.5 to 2 billion. The projects include nuclear power plants, a liquefied natural gas plant, a petrochemical complex, and liquefied natural gas tankers. No schedules for beginning the projects were released.

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As part of the package, France indicated an interest in building a natural gas pipeline from Iran to Europe. This long-standing notion, reflecting the ambitions of French industry, was touted as an opportunity for European cooperation.

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EC - ARAB STATES

The EC foreign ministers, at their next meeting on February 14, are likely to approve the proposals for cooperation with Arab nations which the EC political directors agreed to last week. The proposals would offer cooperation between the EC Nine and the Arabs in such fields as transportation, industry, agriculture, technical training, and science.

France suggested the present plan, essentially as it now stands, at a political directors' meeting in January. It is a response to the Arab request last December for "cooperation with Europe in all fields on the basis of mutual respect and benefit." Should the Arabs respond favorably to the plan, mixed EC-Arab working groups would be established, and an Arab-European conference would be convened, probably this fall.

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