



# The President's Daily Brief

*June 8, 1976*

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Table of Contents

Lebanon-Syria: Syrian ground forces, supported by aircraft, moved deep into Lebanon yesterday with the apparent objective of securing the main coastal cities and roads leading into the country from the east. (Page 1)

Israel-Syria-Lebanon: Prime Minister Rabin appears under relatively little pressure to react militarily to Syria's moves in Lebanon. (Page 2)

Arab States: The Arab League foreign ministers will convene in Cairo today to discuss Syria's intervention in Lebanon. (Page 2)

USSR: [redacted] 25X1

Egypt-Israel: [redacted] 25X1  
[redacted] 25X1

Cuba-Angola: Prime Minister Fidel Castro announced in Havana Sunday night that Cuba is gradually withdrawing military personnel from Angola. (Page 5)

EC: Belgium, Luxembourg, and the EC Commission have protested to Washington that the presence of only the four largest EC members at the forthcoming economic summit in Puerto Rico will adversely affect community solidarity. (Page 6)

Note: USSR-China (Page 7)



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LEBANON-SYRIA: *Syrian ground forces, supported by aircraft, moved deep into Lebanon yesterday. Their objective apparently is to secure the main coastal cities, including Beirut, and the roads leading into the country from the east.*

We are still not certain about the size of the Syrian force. Military authorities in Tel Aviv reported yesterday that the entire Syrian 3rd Armored Division is participating. In addition to this division, several battalions of infantry and armor that were in Lebanon before yesterday's push are probably involved.

Syria's increasing military involvement in Lebanon prompted widespread clashes yesterday between fedayeen from the Syrian-controlled Saiqa group and the larger independent Fatah group. Fatah and Lebanese leftist forces apparently also clashed directly with Syrian troops in towns north and west of the Baydar Pass. Fatah, which has attempted to avoid a military showdown with the Syrians, may no longer be able to do so as the result of heavy air attacks and shelling yesterday of almost all Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut.

Fatah chief Arafat's prestige will be diminished by his inability to prevent or effectively counter Syrian action. Radicals within his own organization will call for still more active resistance to Damascus' military initiative.

There were tenuous indications that the Palestinians and Syrians had agreed to a truce last night. Damascus radio quoted an "official source" in the Palestine Liberation Organization as saying that the two sides had agreed to "halt firing throughout Lebanon."

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ISRAEL-SYRIA-LEBANON:

*Prime Minister Rabin appears under relatively little pressure to react militarily to Syria's moves in Lebanon.*

Two of his prominent conservative critics, Moshe Dayan and Menahem Begin, leader of the Likud opposition in the Knesset, joined Israeli government leaders last weekend in saying that Israel should stay out of the Lebanese conflict. Dayan told the press that he opposes Israeli intervention even if the Syrians occupy Beirut and go below the so-called "red line" the Rabin government has repeatedly warned Damascus against crossing.

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ARAB STATES: *The Arab League foreign ministers will convene in Cairo today to discuss Syria's intervention in Lebanon. The meeting is in response to a call last week by the Palestine Liberation Organization. Syria will undoubtedly boycott the meeting.*

Fifteen of the 20 Arab states have thus far agreed to attend. Most Arab states have been reluctant heretofore to interfere with Syria's handling of the Lebanon crisis. Their consent now evidences growing apprehension about Syria's actions and particularly about its confrontation with the Palestinians.

Saudi Arabia is among the respondents, suggesting some slackening of Riyadh's general support for Syria's role in Lebanon.

Egypt will press at the meeting for the formation of a joint Arab military force to replace or at least balance Syria's forces in Lebanon. The other Arabs, however, will be reluctant to participate in a pan-Arab force in the face of Syrian opposition, and the logistical problems involved in forming and transporting such a force would be extremely difficult.

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The Arabs will most likely opt first for a serious negotiating effort to bring about a Syrian withdrawal, possibly using the threat of Arab intervention to force a pullback. PLO leader Yasir Arafat, in fact, has already called for an Arab summit to follow the foreign ministers' meeting.

If negotiation should fail and Syria appeared on the point of neutralizing the Palestinian movement, in the fashion of Jordan's moves in 1970 and 1971, several of the Arab states might be willing to use force.

Iraq already seems prepared to use at least the threat of force to intimidate Syria.

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USSR:

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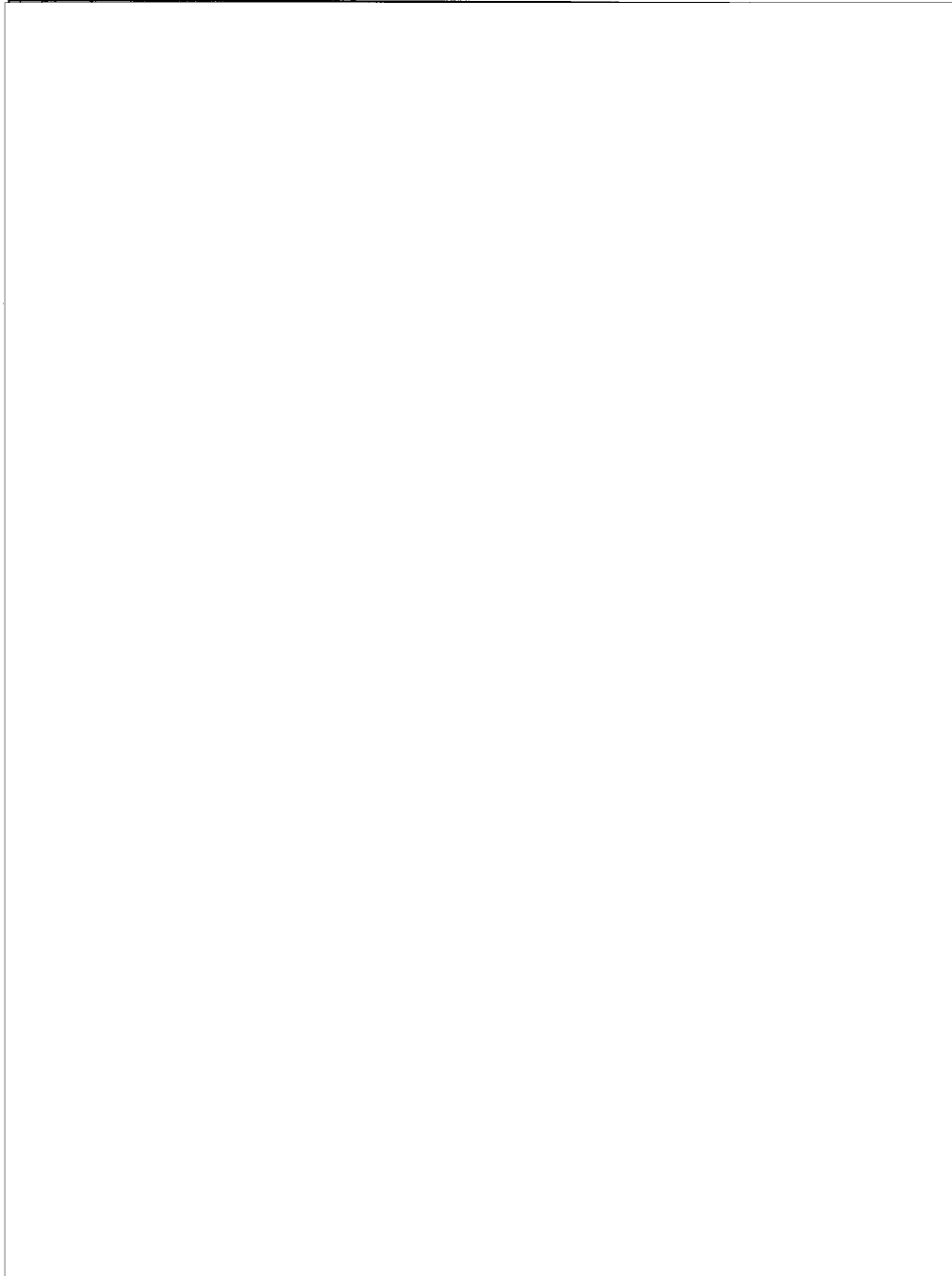
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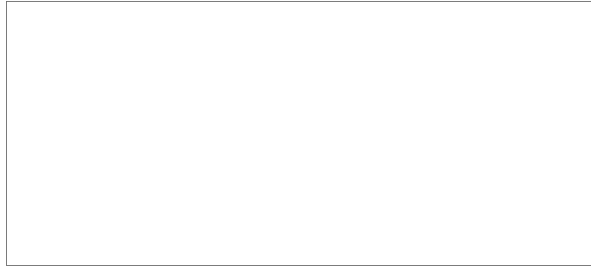
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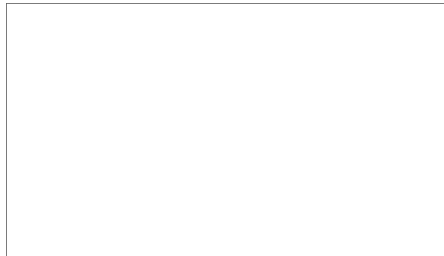


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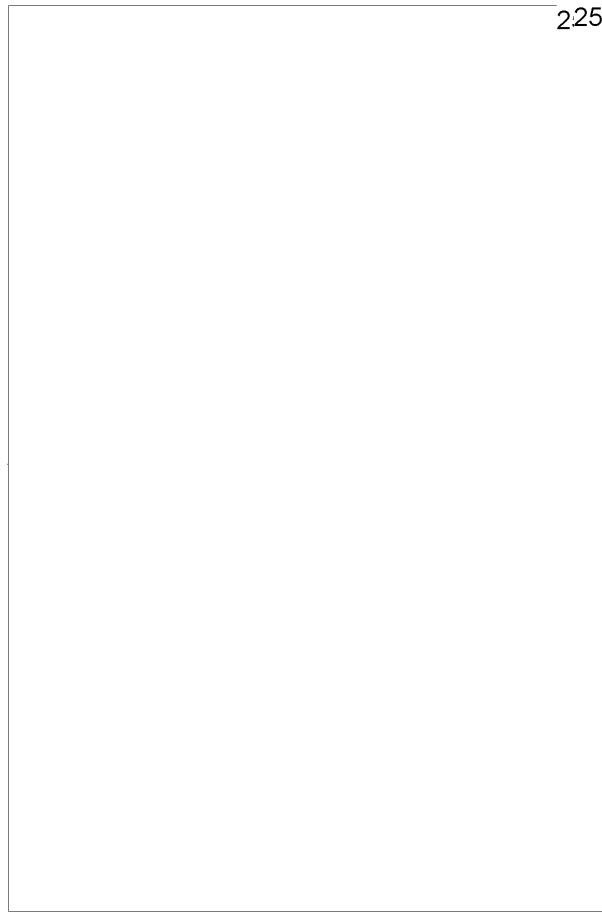
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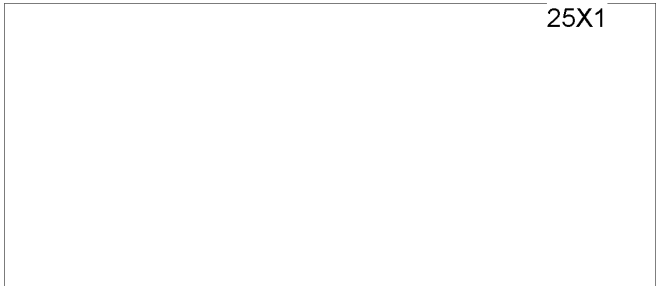
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CUBA-ANGOLA: Prime Minister Fidel Castro announced in Havana Sunday night that Cuba is gradually withdrawing military personnel from Angola in accordance with an agreement with the Angolan government.

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Castro emphasized the long-term nature of the pullout [redacted]



[redacted] and tied its completion to the length of time needed to organize, train, and equip a professional Angolan military establishment.

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He reiterated that Cuban civilian aid to Angola is increasing but indicated that the number of civilians would never approach the strength of military personnel when at its peak. He gave no figures for Cuba's future military presence in Angola. He said only that the remaining force would be strong enough to guarantee Angola's external security until the Angolans were able to defend themselves.

Armed Forces Minister Raul Castro visited Angola, Congo, and Guinea over the past week. He probably explained the Cuban action and tried to resolve any concerns it may have raised among Black African leaders.

A convoy, apparently returning from Angola, was to arrive in Cienfuegos, a major port on Cuba's southern coast, last night.

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If it is bringing troops home, a welcoming demonstration would give Castro an opportunity to reinforce his pledge to withdraw.

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITY:

*Belgium, Luxembourg, and the EC Commission have protested to Washington that the presence of only the four largest EC members at the forthcoming economic summit in Puerto Rico will adversely affect community solidarity.*

Similar demarches apparently have been made to London, Bonn, Paris, and Rome. The smaller members believe that the EC's existence should be recognized at the summit. Luxembourg's Prime Minister Thorn, in his capacity as current EC president, has asked to be invited.

The EC foreign ministers are due to discuss likely summit issues informally in Luxembourg this Saturday. The larger members probably will assure their smaller partners that no commitments will be made in Puerto Rico which would violate EC responsibilities. They probably also will offer to give prompt briefings on the results of the summit.

It is uncertain whether such face-saving measures will satisfy Brussels and Luxembourg. Moreover, Dutch officials were suggesting last week that The Hague would not consult on summit matters unless some provision was made for community representation.

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

NOTE

*The opening of the shipping season on the border rivers between the USSR and China has again been accompanied by incidents--none of which seem to have been unusually serious.*



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