



The President's Daily Brief



August 7, 1976

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

August 7, 1976

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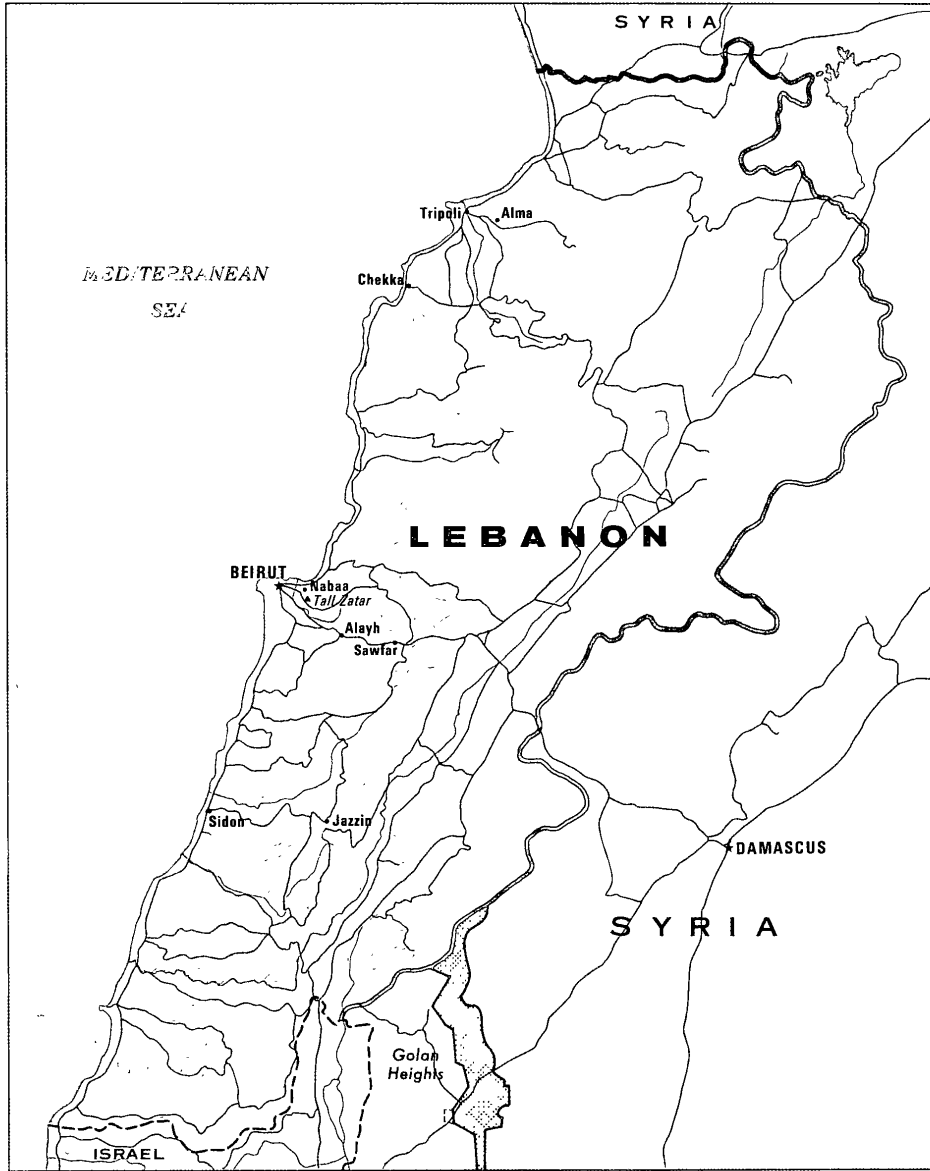
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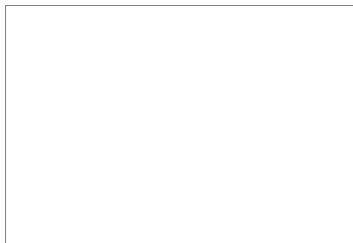
LEBANON: *Violations of the cease-fire occurred in most areas of the country yesterday. The Arab League has no immediate plans to position its forces in accordance with the agreement signed in Damascus a week ago.*

An attempt to evacuate more of the wounded from the Tall Zatar refugee camp was broken off abruptly yesterday when several hundred inhabitants tried to force their way into the Red Cross vehicles in an effort to get out of the camp. Each side is accusing the other of opening fire on the convoy to block the escape.

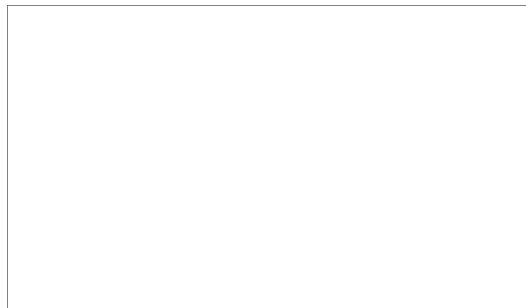
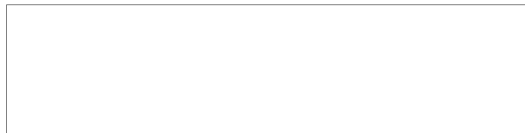
The pro-Christian radio has charged that the Palestinian leadership in the camp is allowing only Palestinian wounded, women, and children to leave, while forcing Lebanese to stay behind. The charges suggest the Christians may not permit further evacuations. As of yesterday, the Red Cross was planning no further attempts.

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SYRIA:

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Pressure on Asad to alter his Lebanon policy has increased with reported Soviet threats to impose sanctions on Damascus, the increased flow of arms to Palestinian forces, more explicit Libyan support for the Palestinians, and new signs of unrest in Syria. Two bombings occurred in Damascus early yesterday morning, and there have been bombings or political assassinations in three major cities within the past month.

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[Redacted]

A week-long delay in the announcement of a new Syrian cabinet, although possibly involving other political considerations, almost certainly was related to discussions within the regime over Asad's Lebanon policy.

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The increasing problems Asad faces are probably responsible for his decision to reduce, at least temporarily, Syrian military pressure on the Palestinians and Lebanese leftists in the Sidon area of southern Lebanon.

Syrian forces withdrew late last month from Sidon to Jazzin. This withdrawal helped reduce Arab criticism of Asad, facilitated the negotiation of the Syrian-Palestinian agreement July 29, and led to a reduction of fighting this week. It also permitted large-scale resupply of Palestinian forces through the port of Sidon, however, and is therefore likely to prolong the fighting even if the Syrians succeed in efforts to create a new Christian force in the area strong enough to retake former Syrian positions.

[redacted] the Syrians have already concluded that they made a mistake in withdrawing from Sidon. Most Syrian leaders believe the Palestinians are only stalling for time while seeking further external support. Presumably the Syrians are concerned that they may once again have eased up just before their strategy had achieved success.

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Soviet military deliveries to Syria evidently are going forward despite political problems between Moscow and Damascus.

A Soviet shipment of trucks and other military support equipment arrived in Latakia on August 2, possibly the first of several such deliveries.

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The delivery last week was the first confirmed shipment to arrive in Syria since July 12 although the [redacted]

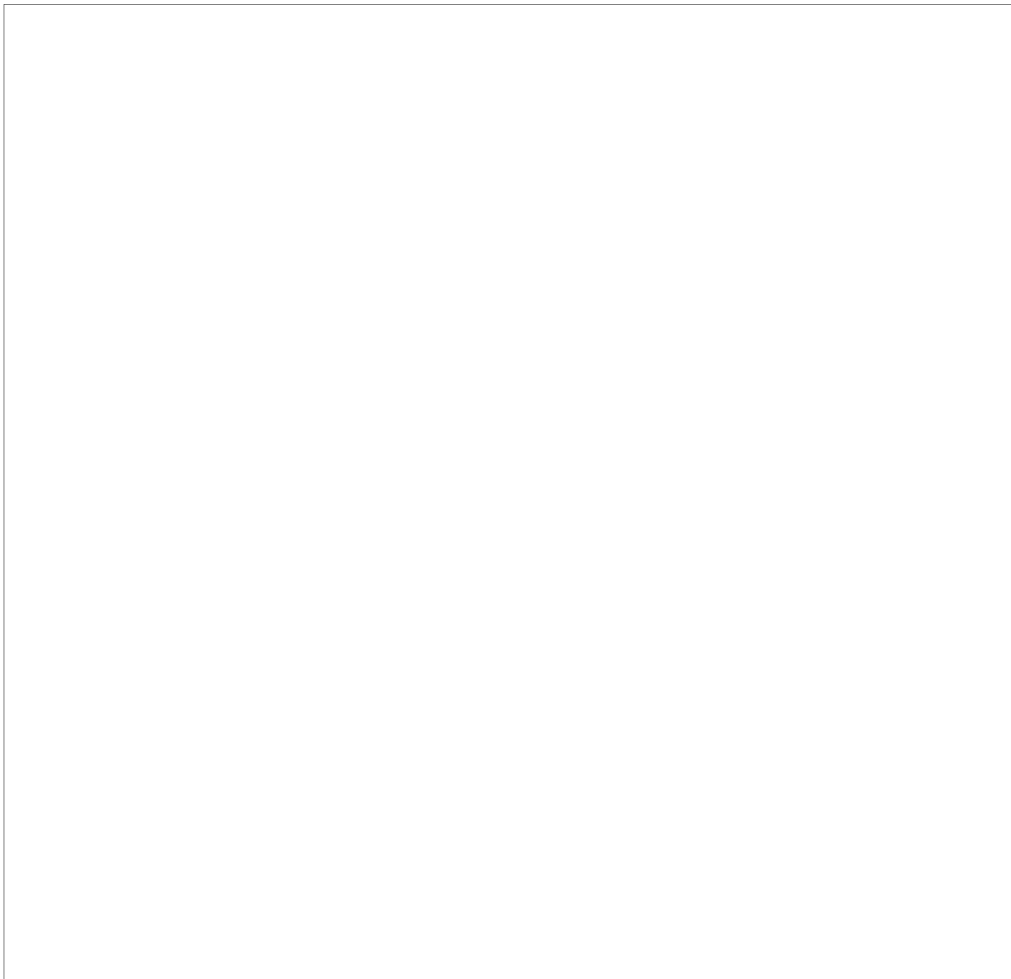
[redacted] received new Soviet military equipment late last month.

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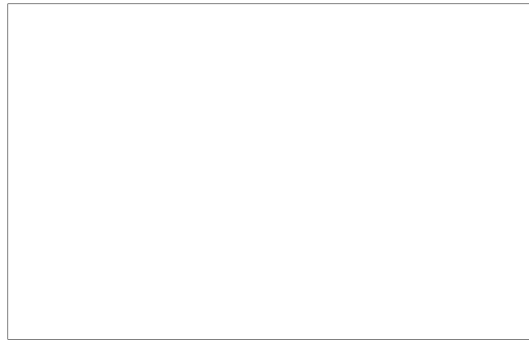
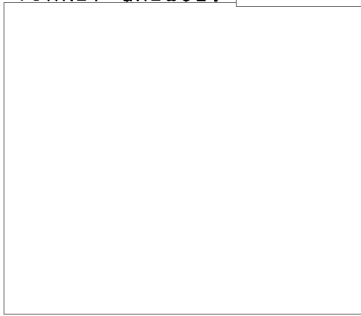
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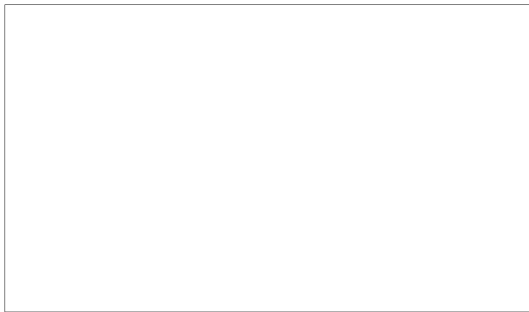
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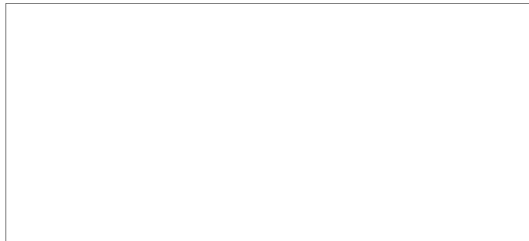
TURKEY-GREECE:



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ITALY: *Prime Minister Andreotti's Christian Democratic minority government won a vote of confidence in the Senate yesterday.*

The Communist Party's announcement that it would abstain in the confidence votes means that the Christian Democrats--the only major party to vote affirmatively--will also be able to muster a majority in the Chamber of Deputies. A vote is expected there early next week.

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The Communists made it clear in the Senate debate that they are not giving Andreotti a "mandate" and that the party views his government merely as an "intermediate phase." The statement is probably designed in part to reassure the Communist rank and file that the party has not sold out to the Christian Democrats. On the other hand, the Communists appear to be signaling that they will only cooperate with Andreotti for a limited time and will demand further concessions as the price for continued support.

The Communists have scored an important success in local politics by gaining a place in Rome's municipal government for the first time.

The capital has been without a government since June, when the municipal election made the Communists the largest party in the city but failed to produce a majority for the left as a whole. The stalemate was broken when the Communists, Socialists, and Social Democrats agreed to form a leftist administration that will rely for its majority on abstention in the city council by the small Republican Party. The council is expected to elect a mayor on Monday, and the post is reportedly slated to go to a Communist.

When the Roman administration is installed, the Communists will be participating in the governments of eight of Italy's ten largest cities. The Communists won governing roles in Milan, Turin, Venice, and Naples following the party's sharp gains in the round of municipal elections held in June 1975.

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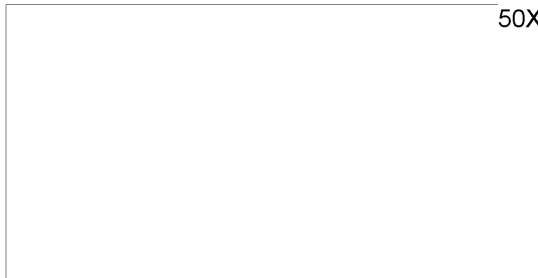
USSR: *The USSR apparently is preparing to launch a lunar mission next week, possibly by Monday.*

We believe the Soviets may try to place a spacecraft into a polar orbit around the moon. Such a mission, never attempted by either the USSR or the US, probably would provide data on variations in lunar gravity as well as photographic coverage of the moon's poles and extreme latitudes.

The Soviets have launched 13 unmanned lunar probes since 1969. The program has included missions which returned lunar soil samples, put spacecraft into low orbits around the moon, and deployed a lunar rover. Only six of these have been successful.



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KENYA-UGANDA: *A preliminary agreement reached yesterday on ending the month-long dispute largely satisfies Nairobi's conditions for improving relations. The accord is subject to ratification by presidents Kenyatta and Amin.*

After three days of talks in Nairobi, the two sides agreed to withdraw troops from the border, to halt threats to use force, and to cease their propaganda war. Intercepts indicate that some Ugandan troops on the border were ordered to withdraw earlier this week.

The agreement includes guarantees for an end to the harassment of

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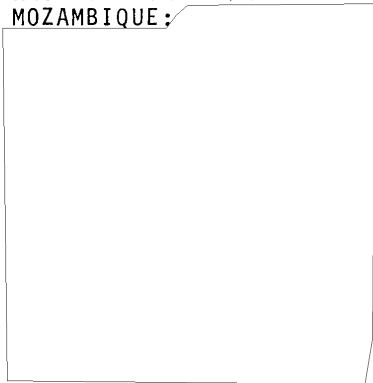
Kenyan in Uganda and compensation for Kenyan property seized by Uganda. The Ugandan government recognized a general obligation to pay its debts, and a special committee is to be established to arrange for the payment of money Nairobi says Uganda owes.

A provision for the free flow of traffic between the two countries apparently will require Kenya eventually to end its restrictions on deliveries of fuel to Uganda, and will obligate Uganda to stop confiscating goods bound from Kenya for other African countries.

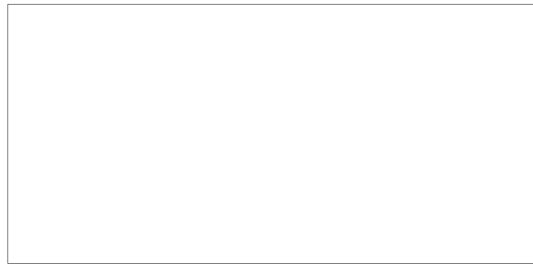
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RHODESIA-TANZANIA-MOZAMBIQUE:



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South Africa

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NOTES

The Soviet aircraft carrier Kiev is north of the British Isles and should arrive in Northern Fleet waters early next week.

Two surface warships and an oiler rendezvoused with the Kiev last Tuesday to escort it on the final leg of its voyage to the Northern Fleet.

The Kiev will probably remain in the Northern Fleet area for exercises and weapons familiarization tests but is expected to return eventually to the Black Sea.

The two destroyers that escorted the Kiev out of the Mediterranean parted company with it last Tuesday. The two ships have moved north of the Azores to refuel from a tanker and probably will sail to Cuba. Soviet naval ships have not visited Cuba since June 1975.

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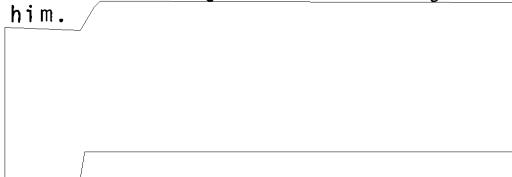
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The Spanish government appears likely to delay in deciding whether to permit exiled Spanish Communist Party leader Santiago Carrillo to return home.



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Carrillo's return is a political question and not a legal one. No criminal charges now stand against him.



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Thai Foreign Minister Phichai concluded his visit to Hanoi with an announcement that diplomatic relations have been established between Thailand and Vietnam.

The communique on diplomatic recognition essentially follows the four-point formulation Vietnam used with the Philippines--peaceful coexistence; no bases to be used by foreign powers against the other party; the resolution of all disputes through negotiations; and the promotion of regional cooperation in the "interests of independence and neutrality."

Thailand was the last of Hanoi's Southeast Asian neighbors to normalize relations. Two issues that were significant roadblocks in the past--the return of Vietnamese refugees living in Thailand since the end of the French Indochina war and the return of South Vietnamese aircraft flown to Thailand at the end of the Vietnam war last year--were apparently set aside.

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