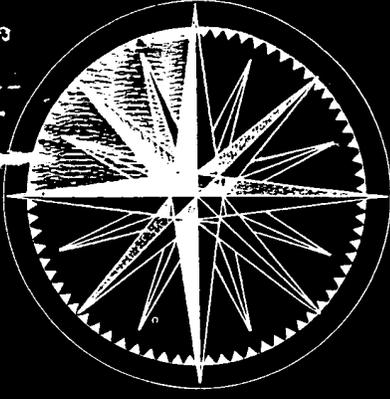


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~~2 August 1963~~

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WEEKLY SUMMARY

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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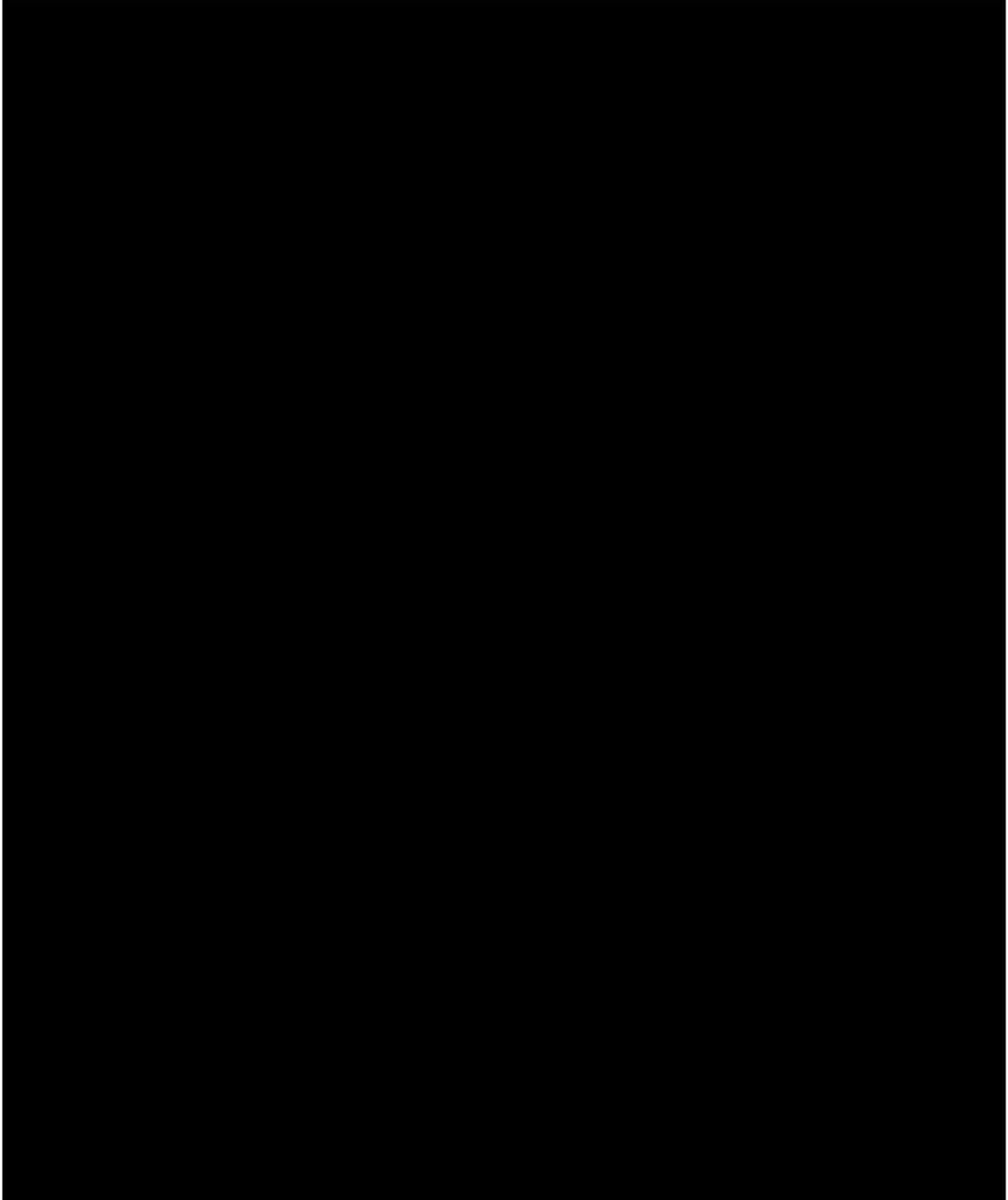
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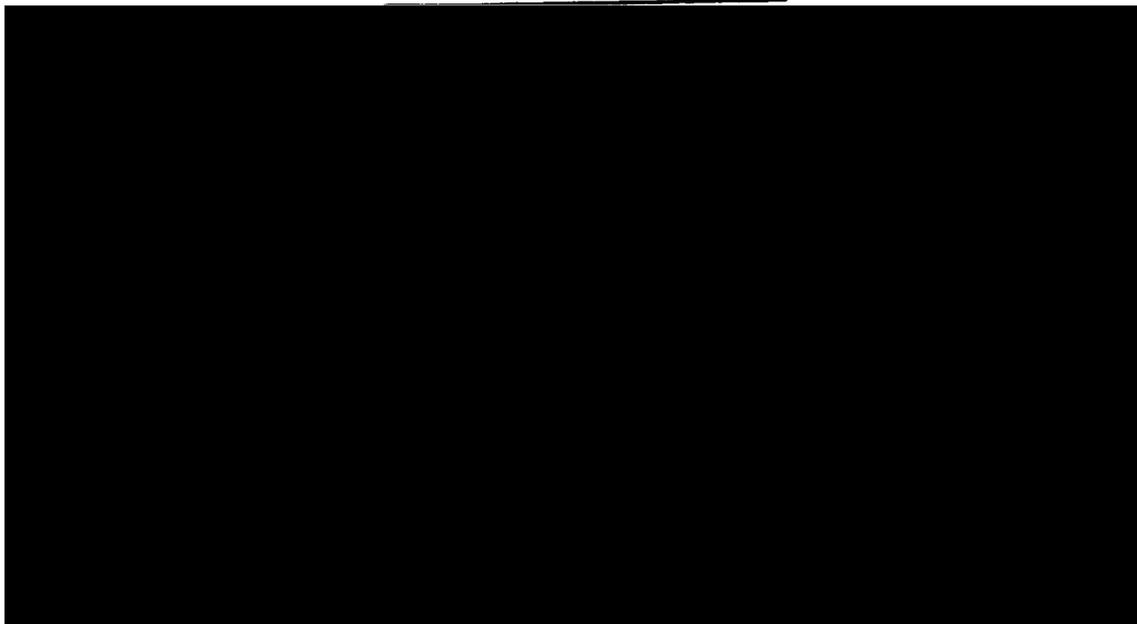
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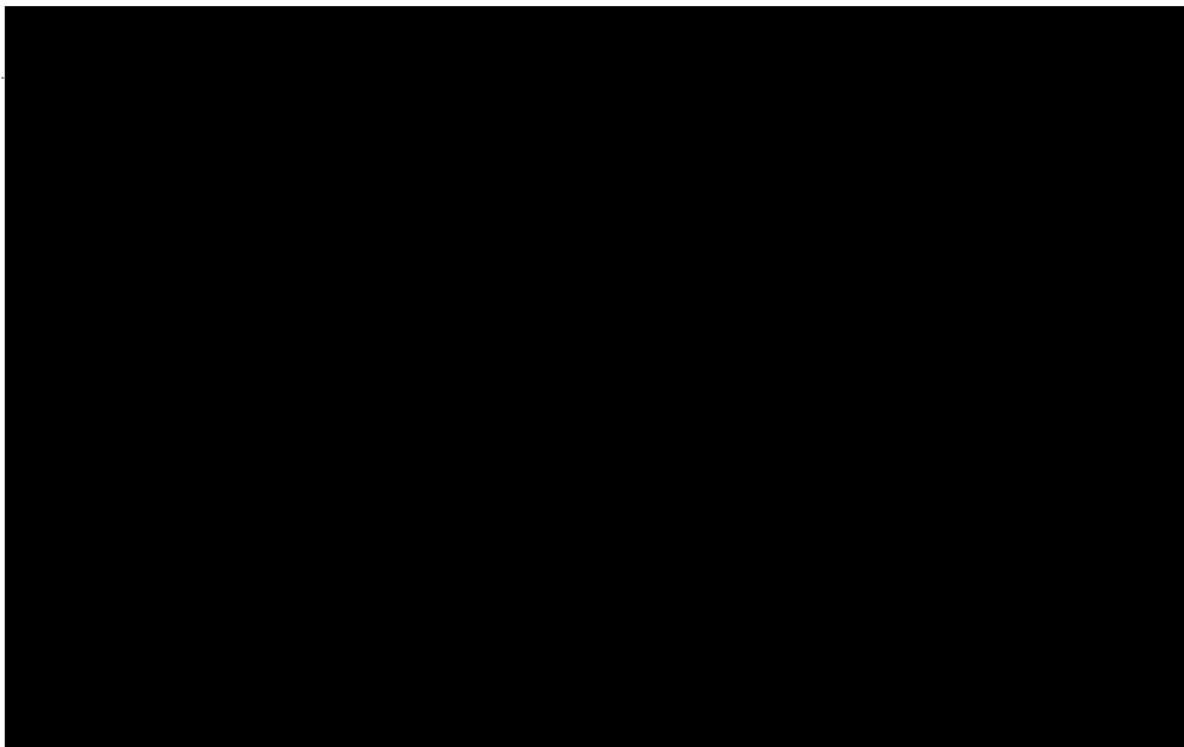
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ASIA-AFRICA (continued)

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HARD-LINE BAATHISTS CONSOLIDATE CONTROL IN SYRIA 12
Major General Hafiz became chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council on 27 July and holds most other key government positions.



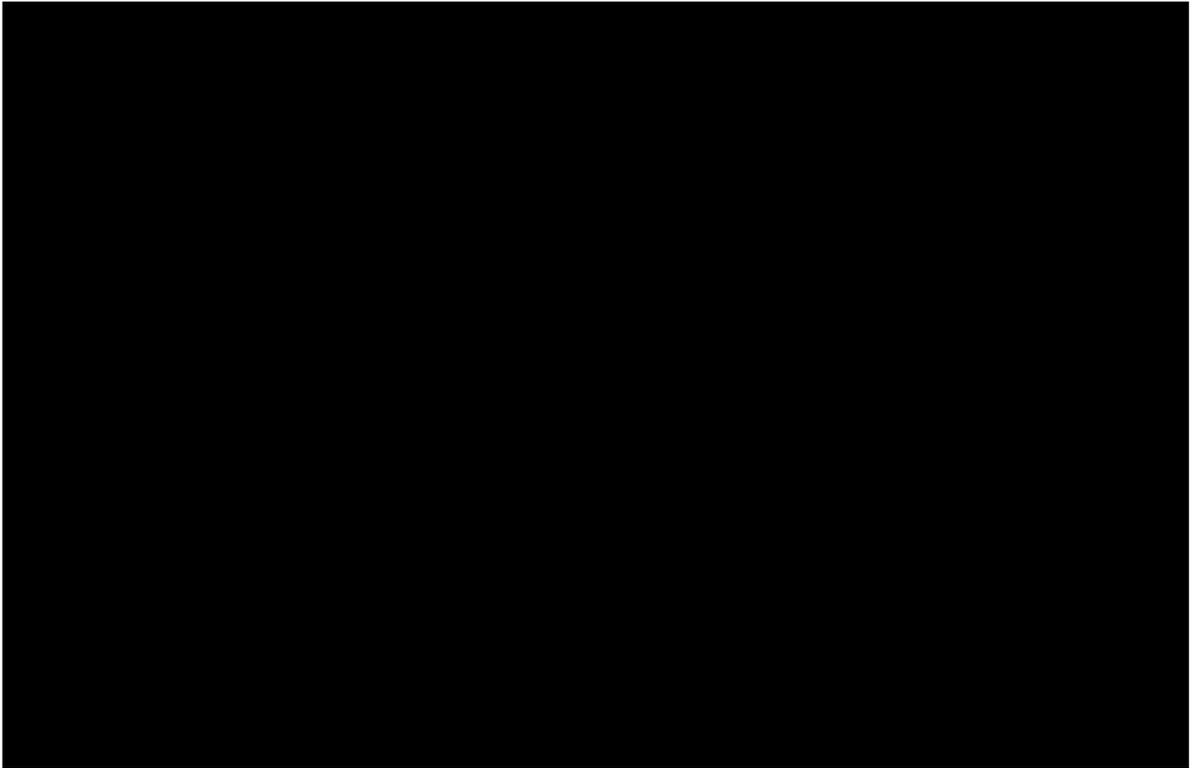
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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

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HARD-LINE BAATHISTS CONSOLIDATE CONTROL IN SYRIA

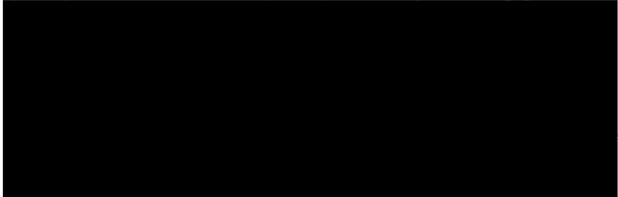
Major General Hafiz' elevation to the chairmanship of Syria's Revolutionary Command Council on 27 July appears to solidify hard-line Baathist control of Syria's government.

Hafiz, who is believed responsible for the regime's recent bloody suppression of pro-Nasir and other anti-Baathist elements, now holds most of the key positions in the government. Besides holding the chairmanship of the Command Council, he is army commander in chief, minister of defense and interior, and deputy to civilian Premier Salah Bitar.

Former chairman and army chief Atasi's conciliatory policy toward the regime's enemies, including Nasir, was probably the cause of his removal. Hafiz' rise appears to

be a portent that the younger and tougher military faction of the Baath is in the ascendancy and already may dominate the party. It also puts in doubt the future of Bitar, who has reportedly been losing support among the Baathist membership.

Egypt's attitude toward the change is probably foreshadowed by the reaction of the Cairo-controlled Middle East News Agency, which calls Hafiz Syria's "absolute ruler." The agency claims the change means that the Baathists intend to continue the "killings and arrests of the Syrian people."



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