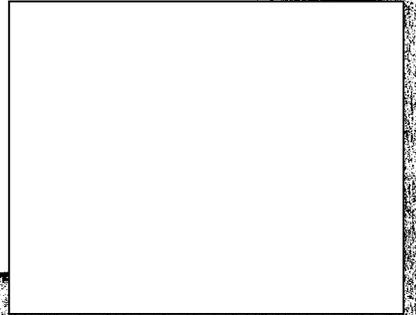


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Director of
Central
Intelligence

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National Intelligence Daily

Friday
7 March 1980

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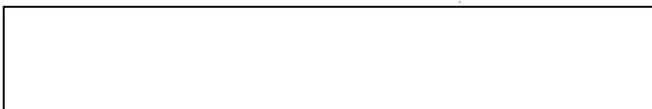
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The decision of the militants at the US Embassy to turn the hostages over to the Revolutionary Council headed by President Bani-Sadr almost certainly reflected pressure from Ayatollah Khomeini. [redacted]

Bani-Sadr returned from a provincial visit early yesterday to meet with Khomeini and his son Ahmad. The militants later were refused a similar audience with Khomeini. [redacted]

The President probably attempted to persuade Khomeini that the militants' continued refusal to allow the UN Commission to meet the hostages was undercutting his efforts to resolve the crisis and his government's efforts to consolidate its power. Foreign Minister Ghotbzadeh's successful last-minute appeal to the Commission to stay in Tehran also suggests high-level intervention. [redacted]

It is unclear how Khomeini's apparent backing of Bani-Sadr will affect the power struggle in Tehran. The militants' clerical supporters, especially Ayatollah Khomeini, probably will try to find some way to maintain their influence. [redacted]

The captors' announcement indicates that they still oppose a meeting with the UN Commission and have decided only with reluctance to give up the hostages. Following the Council's meeting last night, a spokesman said that the Commission members will meet the hostages. Arrangements have not been completed for the turnover, and the militants could yet reverse themselves, especially if their clerical supporters organize demonstrations. [redacted]

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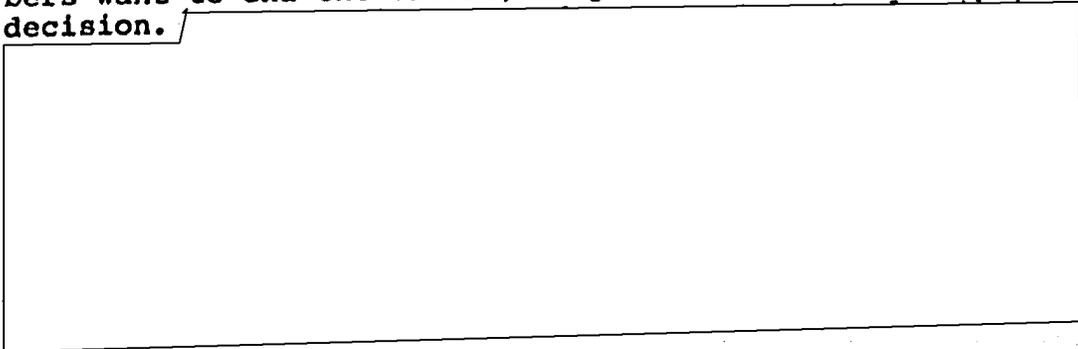
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In any case, unless Khomeini reverses his decision of 23 February to give the yet-to-be-elected National Assembly responsibility for the hostages, there is little prospect they can be freed soon. While most Council members want to end the crisis, they have endorsed Khomeini's decision.



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