

*The President's Daily Brief*

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

## SOVIET AFFAIRS

The Soviet press gives an impression that Moscow is undecided about how to deal with the US these days. A recent issue of Izvestia, commenting on the closeness of the Senate ABM vote, interpreted it as a sign that public opinion had the "military-industrial complex" on the run. It suggested that the USSR might be able to negotiate seriously with Washington on limiting arms. On the other hand the weekly Za Rubezhom (Life Abroad) took a more standard and critical line, warning of the difficulties involved in doing business with the US. Pravda has hit the same note.

This is the closest to a public debate we are likely to see in the USSR. We do not know which individuals or factions sponsor the various articles but they suggest that considerable heat has been generated in the Soviet leadership.

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An article in Pravda yesterday gave the strongest public Soviet endorsement yet to the present Czechoslovak leadership. It referred approvingly to the "measures taken by the party and state" and asserted that the Czechoslovak party is in "complete command of the situation"--the first time the Soviets have made such a statement. Pravda also stated, however, that anti-Soviet elements had "morally put themselves in the dock as criminals," suggesting that Moscow expects Husak to suppress the remaining vestiges of liberal opposition.

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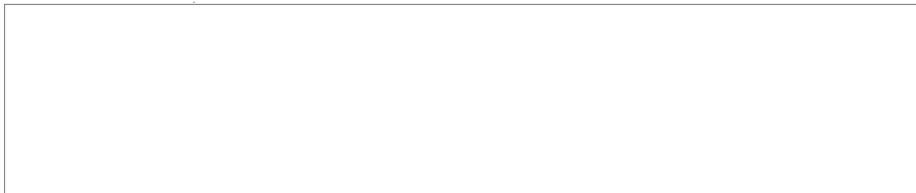
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MIDDLE EAST

Notwithstanding the continuing Arab furor over the al-Aqsa mosque, the Israelis clearly consider the case closed and are giving priority again to their more usual concerns.

For instance:

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--An Israeli spokesman has called attention to what he termed a record number of incidents in the past week along the frontiers with Syria and Jordan. The implication is clear that some kind of Israeli action is in prospect here, too, and that it will be more extensive than the air strikes against Jordan of the last two days.

SOUTH KOREA

President Pak has snuffed out opposition within his own party to the constitutional amendment allowing him a third term in office. Even opposition legislators now agree the amendment will be approved by the National Assembly and confirmed in the subsequent referendum. The only significant opponents still in the field are the students. The government knows this and is strengthening the security forces accordingly.

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