



The President's Daily Brief

3 March 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

We have received our first indication of North Vietnam's reaction to the Sino-US communiqué. *(Page 1)*

The presence of fedayeen in border areas of southern Lebanon increases the possibility of renewed Israeli-fedayeen clashes. *(Page 2)*

The Cypriot bishops are demanding that Archbishop Makarios resign as president of Cyprus. *(Page 3)*

Libya is asking the Mediterranean riparian countries to join in a plan for neutralizing Malta. *(Page 4)*

Sudan's relations with the USSR remain badly strained. *(Page 5)*

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**NORTH VIETNAM**

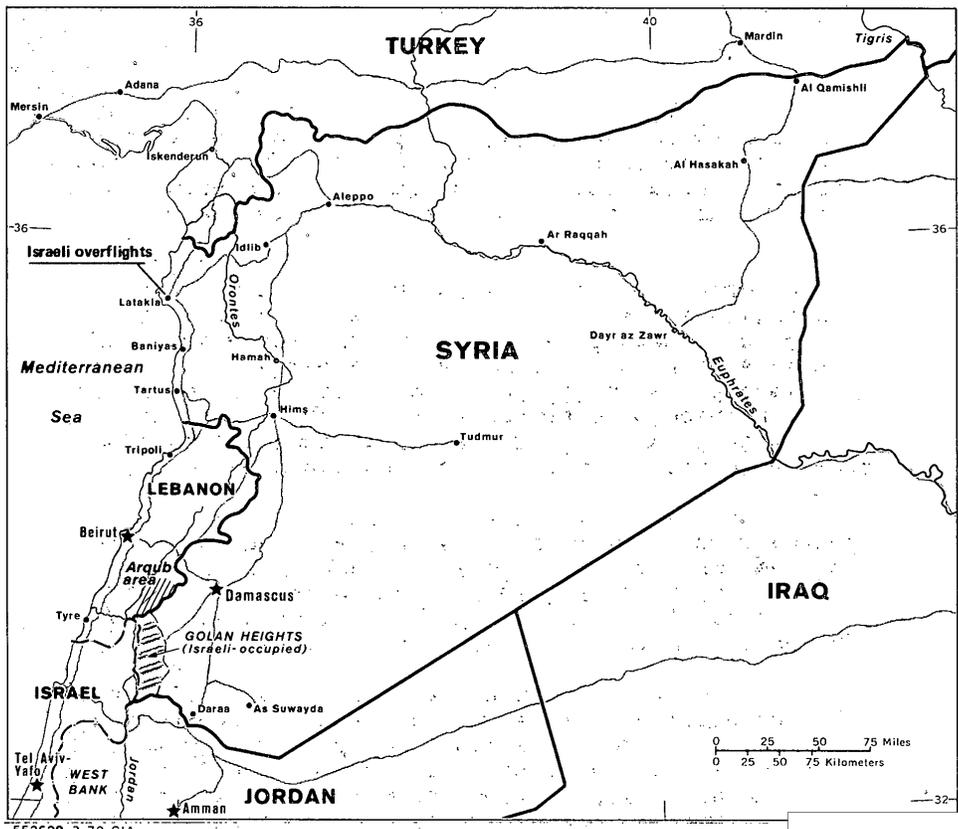
The first indication of North Vietnam's reaction to the Sino-US communiqué has come in a dispatch from the Hanoi correspondent of the French Communist paper *L'Humanité*. The article quotes "observers" in the North Vietnamese capital as complaining that China's statements on Laos and Cambodia were evasive and "juggled" the Pathet Lao and Cambodian Communist negotiating positions. The sources also criticized the section of the document dealing with force withdrawals for not adequately distinguishing between the "aggressor and the victim of aggression." The communiqué's call for total withdrawal of forces from the region was characterized as "hypocrisy" since it made no mention of a time frame for the action. This failure to set a deadline, said the observers, could lead to reinforcement of "puppet regimes" in Indochina under the guise of self-determination.

While the authenticity of a Communist correspondent's report is open to question, the criticisms and complaints surfaced in this dispatch center on issues about which we believe the North Vietnamese are sensitive.

The North Vietnamese Government has yet to make any official statement concerning the President's talks in China, but its concern has also been reflected in the media blackout of all news and commentary from Peking until after the President's departure for home. During this period, Radio Hanoi devoted many broadcasts to replaying earlier vitriolic press attacks on the US and President Nixon personally.

In contrast to the media blackout, Communist party communications links carried some news of the President's trip, mostly from foreign sources, to cadres in the countryside. "Elite" cadres were ultimately sent a copy of the final communiqué.

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ISRAEL-LEBANON-SYRIA

The presence of fedayeen in border areas of southern Lebanon increases the possibility of renewed Israeli-fedayeen clashes, which would most likely involve Lebanese forces.

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[redacted] the Lebanese Army has been unable to prevent the return of some 1,500 fedayeen to the Arqub--the area of southern Lebanon opposite the Golan Heights.

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[redacted]

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Meanwhile, demonstrations planned by the fedayeen and their leftist supporters in southern Lebanon yesterday did not take place. Elements of the local population who fled the area during the height of this week's fighting have now returned and are described by Lebanese officials as pleased to see the army occupying positions in the towns and villages. Some anti-government demonstrations did occur in Beirut, but they were brief and without incident.

Israel has not retaliated for Syria's air strike on Tuesday, but did conduct overflights yesterday of northern Syria including the port city of Latakia. Tel Aviv has made it clear that future incidents will draw an Israeli response.

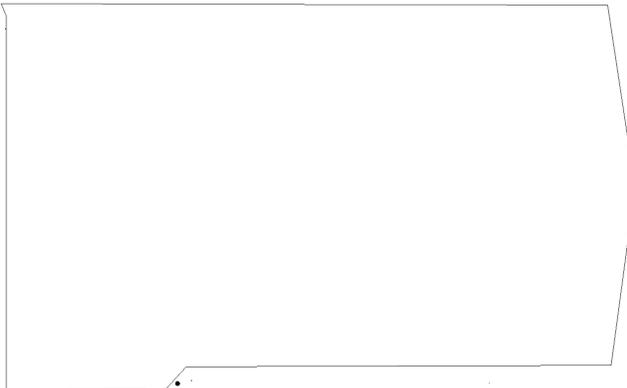
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CYPRUS

Yesterday Archbishop Makarios was formally asked to resign as president of Cyprus by the three other bishops of the Cypriot church--ostensibly because his exercise of temporal authority conflicts with his spiritual role. [redacted]

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[redacted] the bishops acted under pressure from Athens. Makarios has asked for time to consider the request and has called an immediate emergency meeting of his cabinet.



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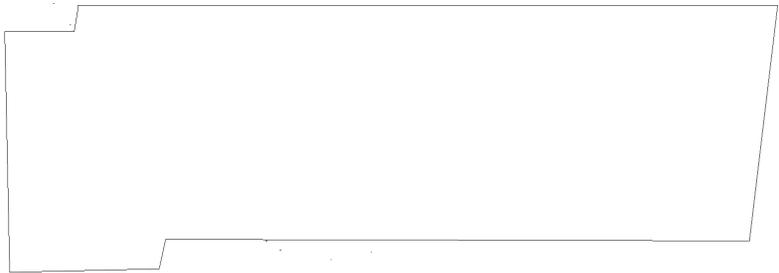
In past confrontations with the bishops, who under canon law could strip Makarios of his ecclesiastical functions, the archbishop has had no trouble in outmaneuvering them. As a first step, he is most likely to stir up popular sentiment against the bishops and mass demonstrations in support of Makarios are planned in Nicosia today. He might eventually resort to a resignation and a plebiscite in full confidence that he retains the support of most of the Greek Cypriots.

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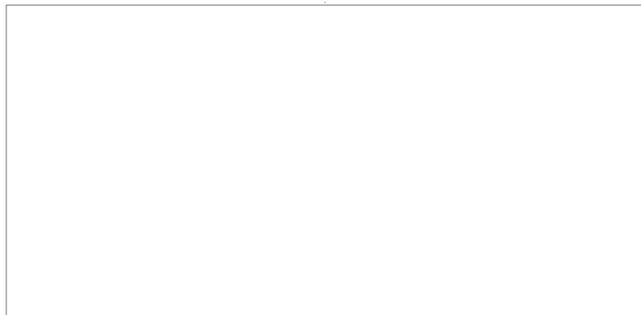
LIBYA-MALTA

Libya is asking the Mediterranean riparian countries to join in a plan for neutralizing Malta and "ridding it of foreign bases." The Libyans are soliciting both political and financial support for such an effort and are planning to call a conference to get things going if reactions are favorable.

The only response of which we are aware thus far is from France. The French reported to NATO yesterday that they had recently been sounded out by the Libyans and noted that Paris was replying negatively.



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NOTES

Sudan-USSR: President Numayri's characterization of relations with the USSR as "very bad" in a press interview yesterday indicates that recent Egyptian efforts to mediate between the two have failed. Numayri is angry that the USSR has delivered no arms to Sudan since the coup in July; he threatened that he would scrap what weapons he has if the Soviets fail to deliver spare parts. Numayri is still resisting the posting of a Soviet ambassador to Sudan, even though on 11 February TASS announced that a new one had been appointed and implied that he would soon arrive on station.

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Pakistan: President Bhutto has announced a new program that will reduce the amount of land any single individual can own by 70 percent. The government will transfer excess holdings without charge to tenant farmers and small plot holders. Bhutto may reap some political advantage by this seemingly radical move, but because the ceilings apply only to individuals, many large family holdings are likely to go untouched. The million acres estimated to be involved will by no means satisfy the needs of the three to five million landless farmers.

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