

The President's Daily Brief

4 April 1973

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TOP SECRET

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

April 4, 1973

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The new Soviet space station orbited yesterday appears to be functioning satisfactorily. *(Page 1)*

The EC political committee, in discussing MBFR for the first time, underscored Western European reservations about force reduction. *(Page 2)*

The Vietnamese Communists are streamlining their rear services logistic system in south Laos and adjacent areas. *(Page 3)*



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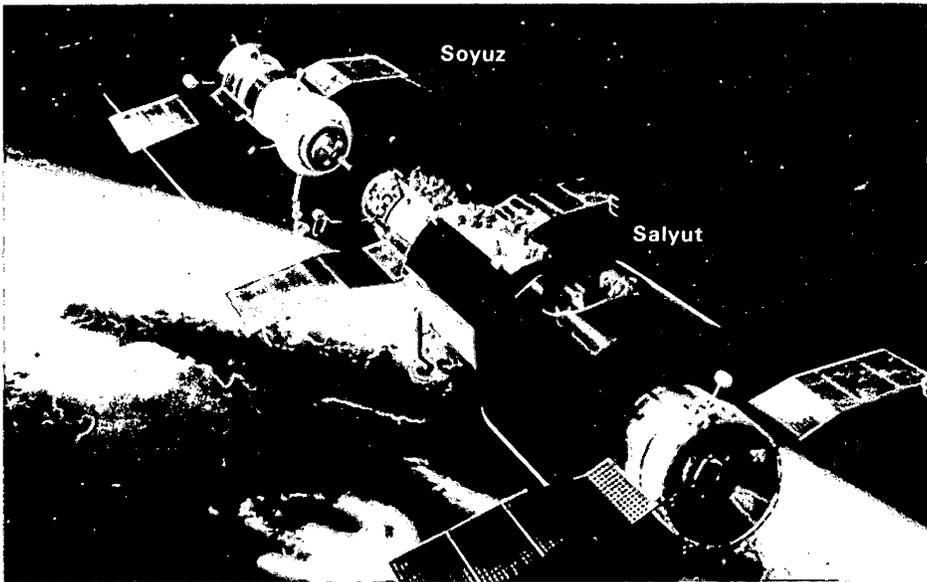
A ranking official in the Soviet Foreign Ministry says that recently there has been neither an improvement in Sino-Soviet relations nor any serious border incident. *(Page 5)*

The dollar yesterday reached its highest level since the joint float was introduced in Europe. *(Page 6)*

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Soviets Launch Another Space Station

Soviet Sketch of Soyuz Spacecraft Preparing to Dock With First Salyut Space Station



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USSR

The new Soviet space station orbited yesterday ap-
pears to be functioning satisfactorily. [redacted]

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[redacted] Salyut-1, orbited in April 1971,
weighed approximately 46,000 pounds and was about
43 feet long--substantially smaller than the US
Skylab scheduled to be launched next month.

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A team of cosmonauts most likely will be launched
to the space station for an extended mission of
two to four weeks. If their mission is successful,
a second team probably will be sent for a longer
flight aboard the Salyut-2. The ill-fated crew
of Soyuz-11 spent 23 days aboard the first Salyut
in June 1971 before perishing during the deorbit
of the spacecraft.

The timing of the launch of the cosmonauts is un-
certain [redacted]

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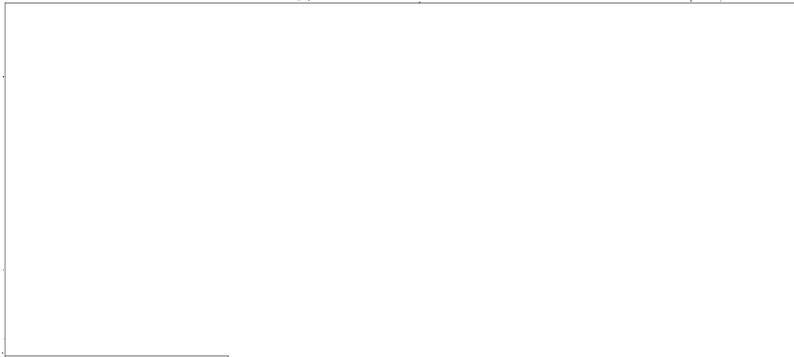
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[redacted] About two weeks of such preparatory
activity would be expected prior to launch. A
number of the Soviet support ships are still a week
away from their monitoring positions in the Atlan-
tic and Pacific oceans, and they normally would
arrive at these positions a few days before launch.

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EC-MBFR

The EC political committee, in discussing MBFR for the first time, underscored Western European reservations about force reduction. The committee seems to have concluded that it should continue to talk about those aspects of MBFR that bear on future West European integration while NATO should deal with MBFR military matters.



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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**VIETNAM**

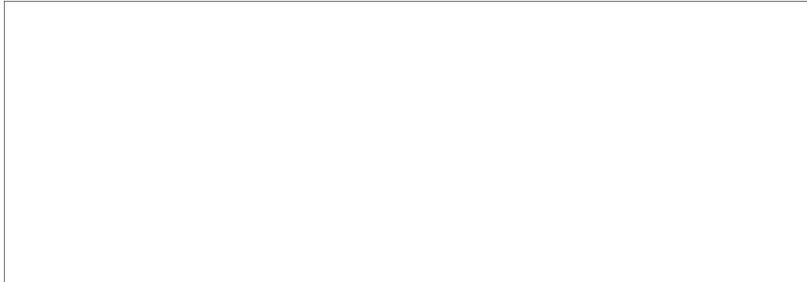
The Communists are streamlining their rear services logistic system in south Laos and adjacent areas. The regiment-level units (called Binh Trams) that have been the key elements in the network appear to be the focus of the reorganization. Until recently each Binh Tram was responsible for all aspects of the logistic and infiltration effort in one relatively small territorial part of the system. They are now being converted into units with narrower functions and broader geographic areas of responsibility. For example, one Binh Tram has become an anti-aircraft regiment, and another is now an engineer regiment.

Hanoi apparently believes it is no longer necessary to maintain the tight-knit control structure that developed during the years of bombing. Such a structure made easier the constant adjustments that were necessary to keep up the flow of men and materiel, but it was also expensive and inefficient because innumerable transshipments were required as goods moved south. The Communists probably believe that without the hazards of air raids, they can cut down on the number of men in the system.

The reorganization gives no hint of the level of resupply that Hanoi is aiming at, but it does indicate that the Communists intend to maintain a substantial logistic capability.

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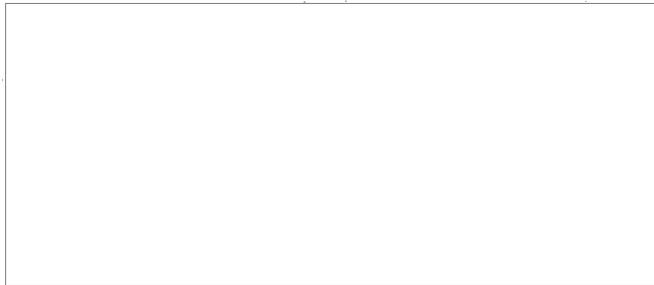
WESTERN EUROPE



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USSR-CHINA

Michail Kapitsa, one of the leading Sinologists in the USSR and a ranking official of the Foreign Ministry, says that recently there has been neither an improvement in Sino-Soviet relations nor any serious border incident. Kapitsa acknowledged to a US Embassy official that the border talks in Peking are still stalemated by the same issues that have hampered progress since discussions began in 1969. He claimed Moscow had tried to allay Chinese concerns about negotiating under duress. The Soviet Union had not only proposed agreements on non-aggression and non-use of nuclear force, but had also suggested that the 1950 mutual defense treaty be "reconfirmed." According to Kapitsa, the Chinese rejected or turned aside all these proposals.

This is no surprise. The Soviet offers were almost certainly phrased to make them unacceptable to the Chinese.

Kapitsa predicted that trade negotiations now under way in Moscow would lead to an agreement of at least the same magnitude as last year's--some \$250 million.

Kapitsa's remarks, which generally jibe with other information on the current state of Sino-Soviet relations, are chiefly intended to dissuade the US from trying to capitalize on Sino-Soviet differences.

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NOTES

USSR-China-UN: Soviet UN delegates have begun circulating their draft proposal on non-use of force to non-aligned members of the Security Council. The USSR plans to seek inscription of the item on this month's agenda. The Chinese will fight inscription and will vigorously oppose the resolution if it reaches the Security Council. On the basis of past voting records, chances are good that the proposal will be inscribed. The Soviets apparently hope the Chinese will eventually be forced to veto the proposal.

International Monetary Developments: The dollar yesterday reached its highest level since the joint float was introduced in Europe. Some of the dollar's strength came from the demands of speculators divesting hard currencies acquired during the crisis, but there was also evidence of a growing commercial demand. The mark is still the weakest currency in the joint float. The Bundesbank yesterday sold as much as \$20 million worth of French, Norwegian, and Danish currencies, to support the mark. Italy's lira, which has been floating independently, is showing increasing weakness, and is now pegged slightly below its Smithsonian level.

Libya-Egypt:

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UN: Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim has assured US officials that he will refuse the request of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Vietnam for observer status at the UN in New York. Waldheim has not acknowledged the PRG's recently appointed UN representative. Waldheim apparently still hopes to establish some contact which might give the UN a role in Vietnam reconstruction, and he may be considering granting the Viet Cong a liaison office in Geneva. The PRG has notified Waldheim it will soon appoint a Geneva representative.

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