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The President's Daily Brief

April 10, 1976

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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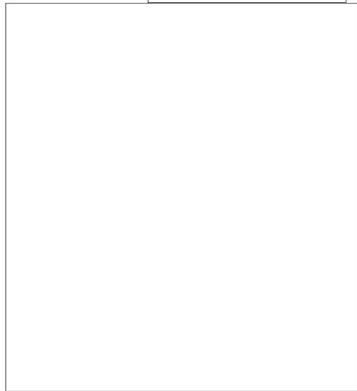
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LEBANON: [redacted]



Early this morning, [redacted]

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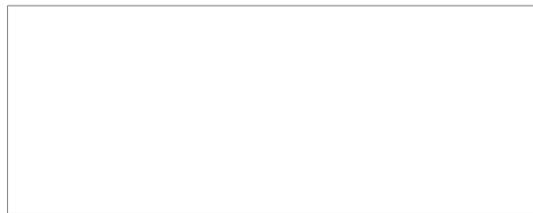
[redacted] a large convoy of transporters loaded with armored personnel carriers moving along the Damascus-Beirut road. The convoy included a few tanks and miscellaneous vehicles carrying ammunition, water, and fuel.

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[redacted] these forces are from the Syrian 3rd Armored Division, normally stationed just north of Damascus.

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The Syrian move so far has worked to stall rather than speed political progress in Beirut.



If a sizable portion of the Syrian 3rd Armored Division has in fact entered Lebanon, Israeli forces are virtually certain to go on high alert, reinforce the northern border area, and mobilize some reserves.

The Israelis may consider the presence of Syrian troops near Rash-ayya, and the size and composition of the Syrian force generally, to be a threat to their security. Tel Aviv's reaction will depend largely on how big the force is revealed to be today, how much armor it possesses, and whether it moves still farther south.

The Israelis may conclude that they must make limited incursions of their own into far southeastern Lebanon to take up good defensive positions.

We believe the Israelis are not likely--on the basis of the extent

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of Syrian intervention identified thus far--to resort immediately to more drastic measures such as the occupation of southern Lebanon or a preemptive strike on the Golan front.

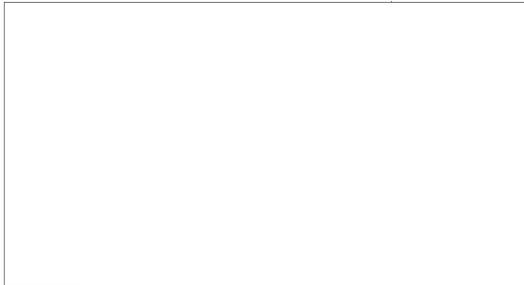
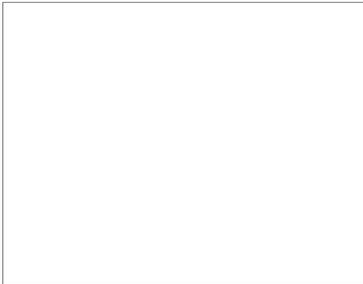
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Leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt, who earlier this week had offered cautious approval of Damascus' efforts, last night condemned Syria for "resorting to escalation at a time of truce without any justification."

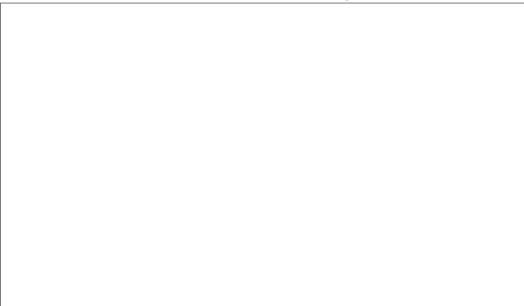
Jumblatt has not indicated that he will boycott the meeting of parliament today, but he almost certainly will be in no mood to compromise with Damascus on the question of who should replace President Franjiah.

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SOUTH AFRICA - ANGOLA:



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USSR-SOMALIA: Policy differences between the USSR and Somalia over the French Territory of the Afars and Issas are continuing.

In recent conversations with US embassy officials in Mogadiscio, Soviet Ambassador Samsonov said the Soviets favor self-determination for the territory and oppose any outside interference, including that of Somalia, in FTAI affairs.

The Soviets reportedly have cautioned Mogadiscio to limit its activities in the territory to insurgency and political subversion. In return for Somalia's restraint, Moscow has promised to work behind the scenes with Addis Ababa and Paris to try to fashion a political settlement that would satisfy both Somali and Ethiopian interests in the territory.

Somali President Siad apparently used his recent month-long visit to Moscow to try to drum up Soviet diplomatic and military support for a more aggressive Somali policy. The absence of a joint communique at the close of his visit suggests that he received considerably less than he had hoped for. According to one unconfirmed report, the Soviets tried to put pressure on Siad to seek an accommodation with the French on the future of the FTAI, but the Somali leader flatly refused.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

The rate of Soviet Jewish emigration for the first three months of 1976 is approximately 18 percent ahead of that for the same period last year.

Through March, 3,641 Soviet Jews were granted permission to go to Israel. In contrast to the first quarter of 1975, in which successive monthly totals declined, the trend this year has been one of rising figures.

This year's rise in emigration does not necessarily indicate a shift in Soviet policy; similar brief upswings have occurred in the recent past. In this instance, Soviet authorities may have opened the emigration tap a bit to reduce chances of embarrassing incidents during the 25th Party Congress.

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The West German cabinet has decided to go ahead with production of the multirole combat aircraft.

West Germany is the last of the three participating countries to give the go-ahead to the aircraft. The UK announced its favorable decision in late March. Although there has been no formal announcement from Rome, Bonn is already paying the relatively small Italian share of the program's development costs, and the German decision may speak for the Italians.

A successful debut by the aircraft in 1979 could be an important stimulus to the growth of collaborative weapons projects and to the principle of West European common procurement and standardization. Co-production is viewed as the only way for European companies to remain competitive with the US in advanced weapons development and sales in the 1980s.

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Panama [redacted]
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 [redacted] Vene-
 zuela [redacted]
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 [redacted] Cuba [redacted]
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