

TOP SECRET UMBRA

Panama Canal Zone in perpetuity. This was an arrangement fit for a dominant colonial power, but there was an achilles heel. The American public was well known to have a conscience, and the Panamanians played to it.³⁴

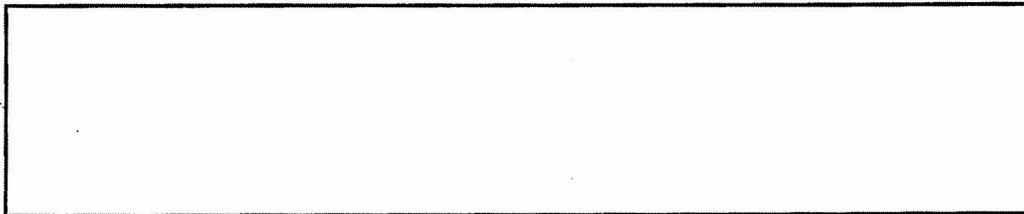
(U) Trouble began under Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s. Panamanian nationalists began agitating for a better deal, and in 1967 mobs entered the Zone and precipitated bloody riots that the U.S. had to suppress with force. Following this fiasco, the Johnson administration agreed to negotiations to change the provisions of the treaty. But Johnson was preoccupied with the war in Vietnam, and Panama lacked the power to press its case.

(U) In 1968, a messianic officer of the Guardia Nacional named Omar Torrijos overthrew the left-leaning civilian government of Arnulfo Arias. Torrijos immediately took up the struggling negotiations with the United States as a personal call, and he guided his nation through relations with four American presidents (Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter). Employing secret threats, bald intimidation, and diplomatic maneuvering that would make Machiavelli blush, Torrijos had, by 1977, placed the United States in a most uncomfortable position. Carter arrived in Washington determined to rid the United States of the festering sore of Panama.



(U) President Carter and Omar Torrijos

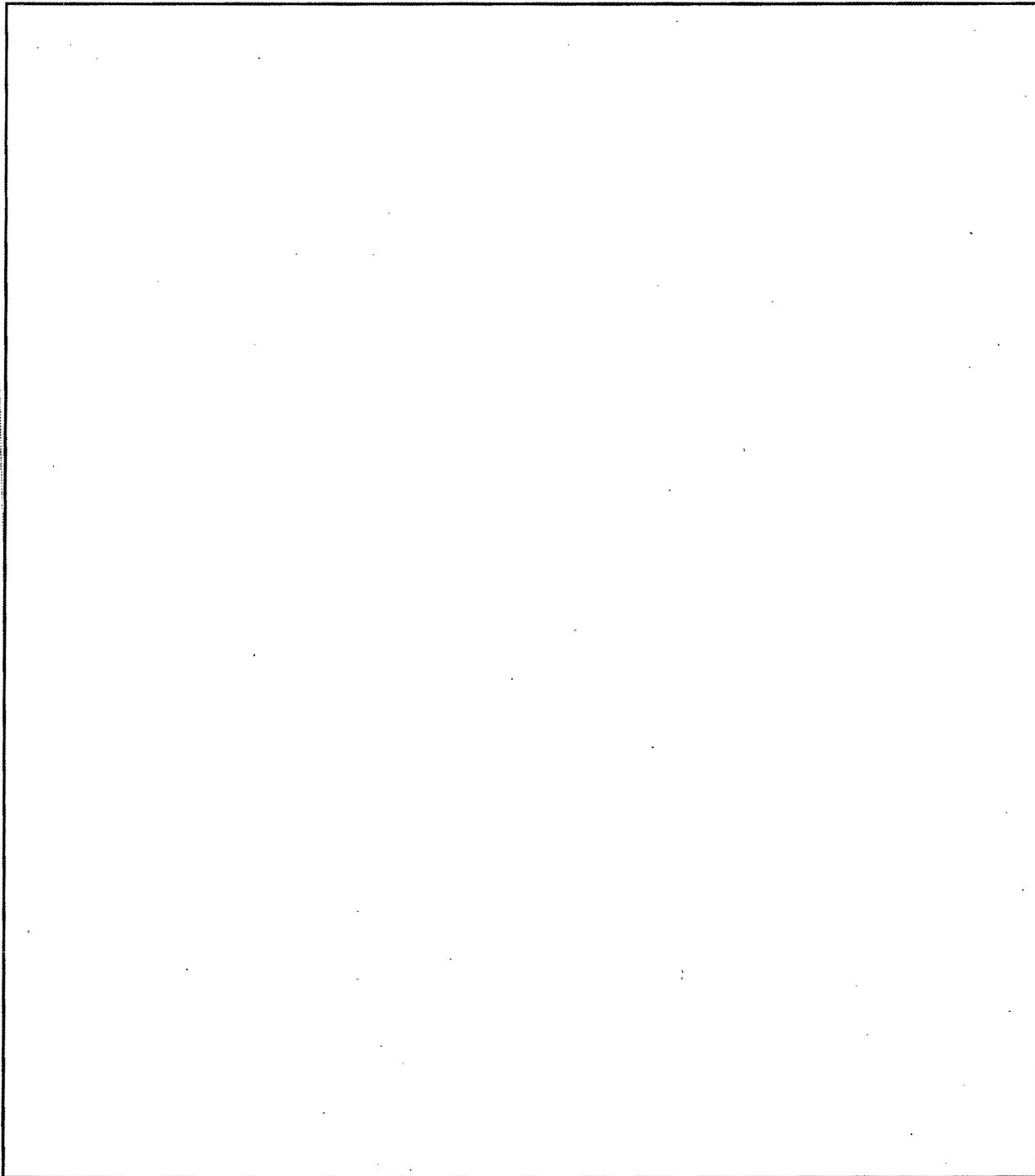
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~~HANDLE VIA TALENT KEYHOLE COMINT CONTROL SYSTEMS JOINTLY~~

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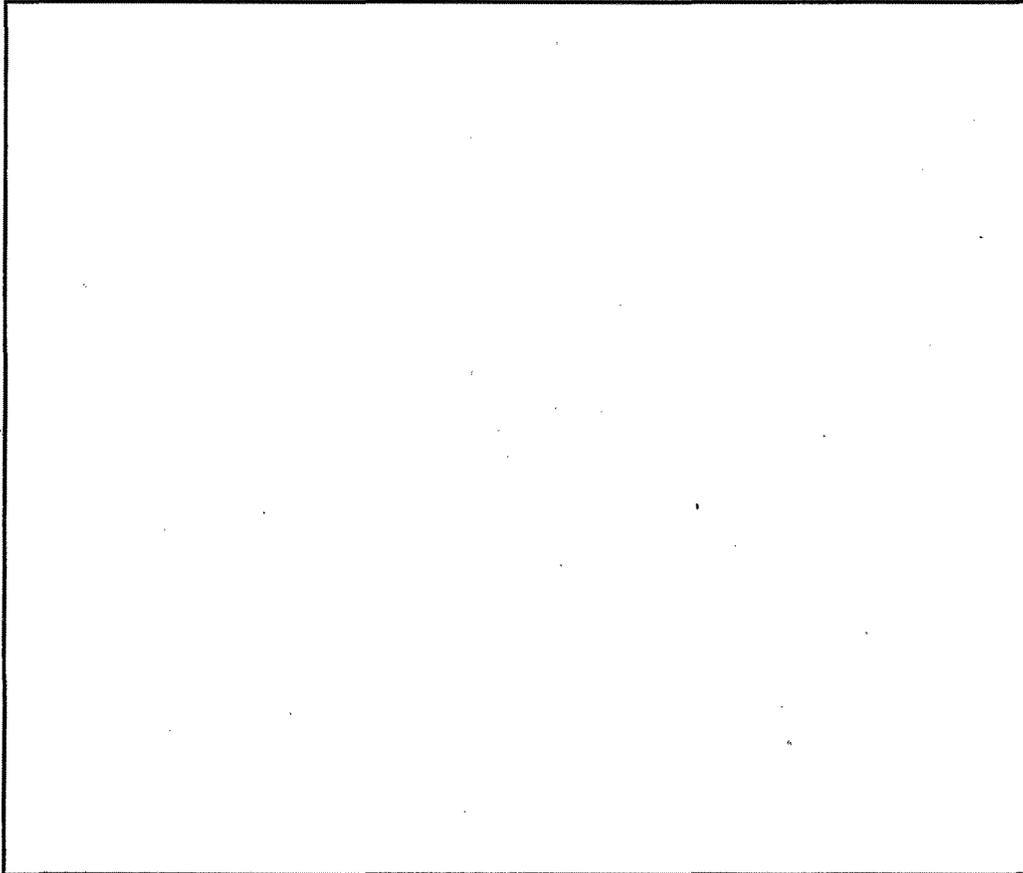
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(U) SALT II

(U) The SALT I treaty of 1971, coupled with the Vladivostok Accords of 1974, helped turn NSA's sources back onto the Soviet problem. But SALT I was just a beginning. Both sides specifically averred that a more comprehensive treaty would be negotiated.

(U) The Carter administration brought a completely new look to strategic arms negotiations. Carter placed the issue in the context of his dovish views on the arms race and human rights, and he began his administration with the declaration that he would scrap the Vladivostok Accords and go for deep cuts in overall levels. Given the charge, his negotiators fashioned a proposal that would bring the overall level of launchers from 2,400 apiece to something between 1,800 and 2,100. Rather than the 1,320 MIRVed launchers permitted by the accords, Carter would try for a limit of between 1,100 and 1,200. The original Carter proposals contained myriad details relating to strategic bombers, shorter range missiles, and mobile missile development, all of which leaned toward a smaller strategic force.³⁷

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