

Top Secret 233

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Saturday October 9, 1976 CI NIDC 76-238C

[Redacted box]

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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DIA review(s) completed.

State Dept. review completed

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Approved For Release 2007/03/07 : CIA-RDP79T00975A029400010016-8

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Saturday, October 9, 1976.

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The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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LEBANON: Situation Report

25X1 [redacted] Palestinians and leftists are continuing to brace for a Syrian-Christian offensive, despite talk of a possible renewal of negotiations between representatives of the Syrians, the Palestinians, and Lebanese President Sarkis.

25X1 [redacted] Arab League mediator Hasan Sabri al-Khuli announced yesterday that Damascus had agreed to attend another round of talks today in Syrian-occupied Shaturah. The Syrians have not yet named a delegate to the conference, however, and it is possible they have no real intention of attending.

25X1 [redacted] //Most reports indicate that the Syrians expect nothing to come of continued contacts with the Palestinians and are planning to resume military operations in the near future.

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25X1 [redacted] Although the Syrians could agree to attend a new round of talks in Shaturah as a public relations exercise--they have typically been careful to place the onus for stalemated negotiations on the Palestinian camp--new discussions are unlikely to produce a breakthrough.

25X1 [redacted] There were clashes along Beirut's confrontation line yesterday, with heavy shelling in the area of the port and the commercial district. Alayh was hit by sporadic artillery fire; shelling and small-scale clashes took place near Tripoli in the north. The Palestinians and leftists are continuing to reinforce their fortifications near Rum and Sidon in anticipation of renewed Syrian-Christian attacks. [redacted]

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CHINA: Hua's Position

25X1 [] A reference in Chinese media to the Politburo "headed by Comrade Hua Kuo-feng" tends to boost Hua's public stature, but probably does not mean that an official decision has been made to name him the new head of the party.

25X1 [] Until they used this terminology yesterday, the media had been scrupulous in referring to Hua by his official title as first vice chairman of the party. In that position, Hua has in fact headed the party since Mao's death on September 9, and the use of the new formulation confirms a situation that has existed for the last month.

25X1 [] Nevertheless, the decision to refer to Hua as heading the Politburo, in media pronouncements aimed at both domestic and foreign audiences, raises his political stock and could prove useful when the party meets formally to name a new leader.

25X1 [] There is no evidence that a major party meeting has yet taken place, but the Politburo, which apparently met for a lengthy time following Mao's death, seems to have resolved some of the immediate questions posed by that event. Peking announced on Friday that Mao's body will be put on public display in a memorial hall in Peking. The delay in making this announcement suggests the disposition of Mao's body may have been a contentious issue.

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[redacted] Peking also announced yesterday that preparations were being made for the publication of the collected works of Mao. Mao's works have never been compiled and published in their entirety, and this undertaking may prove politically sensitive. There is undoubtedly much in Mao's unpublished works that various party leaders may prefer to keep out of the public eye.

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[redacted]

USSR-ANGOLA: Friendship Treaty Signed

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[redacted] Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev and Angolan President Neto signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation in Moscow yesterday.

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[redacted] The USSR has concluded such treaties with only a few third-world countries--India, Egypt, Iraq, and Somalia. The text of the new treaty has not yet been published, but a Tass summary indicates that it generally follows the format and substance of the other treaties with third-world states, outlining a commitment to cooperate in a wide variety of fields.

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[redacted] Neto's talks in Moscow have apparently focused on strengthening party ties and on the needs of Angola's economy. The Angolans seem anxious to see Moscow play a greater role in their country's postwar development, but the situation in Angola limits the amount of useful assistance the Soviets can provide.

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[redacted] Angola needs access to the West if it is to benefit fully from its oil, agricultural, and mineral resources. Neto has in fact been making efforts to expand ties with the West--most recently exchanging ambassadors with Sweden and resuming diplomatic relations with Portugal.

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[redacted] The treaty apparently provides for strengthening military cooperation--implying continued Soviet military aid. It is possible that under this clause the Soviets will try to gain access to military facilities in Angola. //There are indications, however, that Neto will not agree with such access.//

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[redacted] In signing the treaty, Moscow certainly has an eye to the rest of southern Africa, especially the insurgent movements in Namibia and Rhodesia. [redacted]

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ITALY: Christian Democratic Meeting

25X1 [redacted] The leadership of Italy's Christian Democratic Party will meet this weekend for its first full-scale strategy session since the parliamentary election in June.

25X1 [redacted] Debate is certain to center on how to manage relations between Prime Minister Andreotti's Christian Democratic minority government and the Communist Party, whose cooperation in parliament is essential to Andreotti's survival.

25X1 [redacted] Many Christian Democrats probably share a concern voiced this week by Republican leader La Malfa, whose party is among those the Christian Democrats hope eventually to draw into another non-Communist coalition. He took Andreotti to task for leaving too many important details of his economic program for parliament to decide and charged that this practice is leading to Christian Democratic - Communist collusion in the legislature.

25X1 [redacted] There is doubtless some concern in the Christian Democratic Party that the precedents being set by the Prime Minister could lay the basis for Communist chief Berlinguer's "historic compromise"--a governing partnership between the two parties.

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25X1 [redacted] Many Christian Democrats blame party secretary Zaccagnini for the uncertain state of the party's relations with the Communists. Although he enjoys wide popular appeal, Zaccagnini is regarded by his rivals in the party as a poor manager, inclined to give too much weight to the views of a minority in the party that favors a more flexible policy toward the Communists.

25X1 [redacted] Critics of Zaccagnini are probably responsible for an expected move to install former prime minister Aldo Moro as party president at the meeting. Christian Democrats supporting Moro--Zaccagnini's mentor in the party--apparently assume that Moro will be able to dominate the leadership and serve as a steadying influence on the party secretary.

25X1 [redacted] In exchange for giving up the party presidency, veteran Christian Democratic conservative Amintore Fanfani is expected to insist on naming his lieutenants to fill vacancies in the party hierarchy. Fanfani is apparently aiming to dilute the influence of a left-wing faction leader who has become Zaccagnini's closest adviser. [redacted]

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FRANCE: Strike Draws Limited Support

25X1 [redacted] The nationwide strike on Thursday--called to protest the anti-inflation measures of Prime Minister Barre's economic stabilization program--failed to obtain the massive labor support the strike organizers had anticipated, suggesting that French workers are concerned for their jobs and may be taking a wait-and-see attitude toward the government's program.

25X1 [redacted] The US embassy estimates that some 75,000 demonstrators participated in the protest march in Paris organized by the Communist-led labor federation, the left-wing Socialist federation, and the teachers' organization.

25X1 [redacted] Although the turnout was greater than similar demonstrations over the past few years, the crowds appeared dispirited and poorly organized. Members of the Communist-led labor federation dominated the proceedings; banners from the non-Communist groups were sparse.

25X1 [redacted] Strike participation was greater among workers in the public sector than in private industry. Subway and bus service in Paris was sharply curtailed, and about half the workers in the Post, Telephone, and Telegraph Service, a volatile government agency because of the number of extreme leftists within it, joined the strike. Many gas and electrical workers struck, but there were no outages because several industrial plants had closed for the day.

25X1 [redacted] The strike was more effective in the industrial areas of Lyons and Le Havre. There were large demonstrations in Lyons and Marseille, and possibly in other provincial cities.

25X1 [redacted] //Except for plans to participate in a demonstration set for October 23 protesting unemployment among youth--supported jointly by the leftist Socialist and the Communist-led federations--there is no sign that the unions are planning further work stoppages.// [redacted]

SWEDEN: New Cabinet

25X1 [redacted] The cabinet appointed Thursday by Prime Minister Thorbjorn Falldin consists largely of leaders new to the national political scene, although most of them have served in responsible positions in the bureaucracy.

25X1 [redacted] Falldin's own Center Party received eight of the portfolios, the Conservative Party six, and the Liberal Party five. Although the Liberal Party has fewer seats in the newly elected Parliament than the Conservative Party, the Liberals appear to have received the more important posts.

25X1 [redacted] In addition to being named labor minister, the Liberal Party leader, Per Ahlmark, was named deputy prime minister, a newly created slot that makes him the number-two man in the government. The Conservative Party leader, Gosta Bohman, was assigned the post of minister of economy, the one of two new posts created by splitting the Finance Ministry.

25X1 [redacted] An innovative step was the creation of a subcabinet post--assistant industries minister--to coordinate Sweden's energy policy. Falldin's decision to claim this post for his own party suggests that he intends to monitor closely developments relating to nuclear energy, the issue upon which he based his election campaign.

25X1 [redacted] During the negotiations for a government, the Liberals and Conservatives apparently persuaded Falldin not to block the start-up of one new nuclear plant. The fate of five others under construction and one that was to be fueled soon is not clear.

25X1 [redacted] Falldin also departed from the practice of his Socialist predecessors by appointing a woman, Karin Soeder, as foreign minister. Soeder has been the second deputy chairman

of the Center Party since 1971 and has served as a member of the Foreign Relations Council, an advisory body to the Prime Minister that includes representatives from all parties except the Communists. The Council circumvents the parliamentary Foreign Relations Committee, which includes members of the Communist Party. [REDACTED]

SAUDI ARABIA - SYRIA: Saudi Troop Withdrawal

[REDACTED] Saudi Arabia has begun to withdraw its combat forces from Syria, a move that has been under consideration since early this year. The Saudis reportedly informed Syria in early July that they planned the withdrawal.

[REDACTED] About 6,000 Saudi troops have been in Syria since the war in October 1973.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Saudi Arabia reportedly plans to airlift out some 5,000 men, with most of the remaining troops returning by road with the brigade's armored vehicles. According to the US defense attache in Damascus, about 200 troops will remain in Syria to support the small Saudi peace-keeping force in Lebanon.

[REDACTED] Press reports from Cairo this past week have portrayed the withdrawal as evidence of Saudi displeasure with Syrian military actions in Lebanon, but Syrian officials cite Riyadh's plans to modernize its armed forces as the primary reason.

[REDACTED] The US embassy in Jidda believes, however, that Saudi Arabia simply may no longer see a need to station a token force in the confrontation area to demonstrate its leadership in the Arab world.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted] Some Saudis have suggested the withdrawal may be motivated by concern about the exposure of Saudi troops to Baathist influence in Syria. The Saudis may also be worried that the troops could be drawn into the Lebanese fighting. Saudi troops are already serving with the Arab peace-keeping forces in Lebanon, and it would be difficult for Riyadh to refuse requests for additional troops so long as it had units stationed nearby in Syria.

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[Redacted] Riyadh also intends to pull its 5,600 troops out of Jordan.

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[Redacted] this move will take place later this month. Saudi Arabia has had troops in Jordan since the Arab-Israeli war of 1967.

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