



*The President's Daily Brief*

17 October 1972

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The South Koreans plan to declare martial law this morning to set the stage for prolonging the rule of President Pak Chong-hui. (Page 1)

Lebanese cabinet sources say that Israel's latest air strikes have undercut the government's rationale for curbing guerrilla activities in southern Lebanon. (Page 3)

In Chile, the principal opposition parties have announced their backing of the strikes, but the government appears to have minimized the immediate effect of the stoppages. (Page 4)

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## SOUTH KOREA

Prime Minister Kim Chong-pil has told Ambassador Habib that martial law will be declared throughout the nation this morning. An accompanying proclamation will call for fundamental changes in the nation's governmental structure through amendment to the constitution and set the stage for President Pak Chong-hui to prolong his rule.

According to the US Embassy in Seoul, one amendment to be made public next week calls for a national referendum in mid-November and the choosing of an electoral group that will in turn elect a president for a six-year term. These electors will be chosen from the local administrative units, which can be expected to line up solidly behind President Pak.

*Pak has been contemplating for some time ways to extend his term of office beyond 1975--the limit set by the constitution. His decision to move now may reflect an attempt to settle the matter before opposition and factional maneuvering can develop. Such problems surfaced in 1969, prior to passage of the constitutional referendum that permitted him to run for a third term last year. The President, moreover, appears to be convinced that the nation needs to reaffirm his leadership so that he can deal from a position of strength with the North Koreans in the sensitive negotiations ahead.*

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*Pak is also confident that there will be little domestic opposition to this new move, since the nation is already tightly in his grip as a result of emergency measures taken last December. To ensure acquiescence, however, the announcement closes all universities for the time being, increases censorship, and forbids all political activity.*

*With an eye toward recent political events in Thailand and the Philippines, Pak very likely believes that South Korea's international standing and its relations with the US will not be seriously impaired by the new measures. The Embassy believes that the announcement is deliberately being made in the last stages of the US election campaign in order to minimize the attention it will receive in the US.*

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Seoul has no major international objectives that could be jeopardized by the declaration now that the contentious Korean issue in the UN has been sidetracked for another year. Because of the timing of the referendum, Pak may feel compelled to put off his state visit to Japan next month--a decision the [redacted] Japanese would doubtless now prefer.

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Pak's action will be an unmistakable sign to the North Koreans that Seoul has no intention of lowering its guard in the talks as Pyongyang has hoped. Already frustrated by its lack of success in the negotiations, Pyongyang may seize upon the latest developments as additional examples of Seoul's perfidy and attempt to exploit them for major propaganda gains. The North could break off the negotiations at this juncture, but is more likely to wait out developments in the South before deciding how to proceed.

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LEBANON-ISRAEL

Lebanese cabinet sources have told the US Embassy in Beirut that Israel's air strikes on Sunday have undercut the government's rationale for imposing curbs on guerrilla activities in southern Lebanon. Critics are now certain to point to the absence of any clear fedayeen provocation for these strikes, the Embassy notes. They will argue that Israel will implement its post-Munich policy of "continuous war" against the fedayeen in any event, and that the army's role of policing the fedayeen therefore is more questionable than ever.

*Within the fedayeen movement itself, the leadership has had difficulty in holding support for the suspension of forays into Israel. Extremist dissenters will now argue that the political climate is right for resuming cross-border operations.*

The Israelis, for their part, evidently intend to press on with a campaign of pre-emptive attacks. In her statement to the Knesset yesterday, Prime Minister Meir reiterated that Israel's war against the terrorists could not be defensive only, but must be aimed at "stamping out" the terrorist organizations.

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CHILE

The opposition's effort to throttle economic activity is gaining some new support, but the Allende government's responses so far have largely offset the immediate effects of the strikes. Both the Christian Democratic and National parties have declared their backing of the strikes, and some of their partisans have stopped work.

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Many stores in downtown Santiago opened for business yesterday in response to police pressure and the government's threats to requisition their goods. With military protection, the government has taken almost complete charge of transportation and distribution of food and fuel. The dynamiting of a railroad from the main port serving Santiago yesterday triggered a further tightening of security for vital installations.

*The growing bitterness on both sides will make the customary search for a negotiated solution more difficult than usual. The disruptions will also accelerate Chile's economic deterioration--Allende's gravest problem.*

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**NOTE**

Laos: The opening round of peace talks now is scheduled to begin today. Government spokesmen had earlier stated that the first session would be held yesterday, but the Communists spent the day making courtesy calls.

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