



The President's Daily Brief

19 October 1972

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

19 October 1972

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Egyptian Premier Sidqi does not appear to have resolved any basic problems during his visit to Moscow. (Page 1)

Israel is determined to drive the fedayeen out of Lebanon. The guerrillas have fallen to fighting among themselves over whether or not to strike at Israel from Lebanese territory. (Page 2)

In Chile, the situation remains tense and neither the government nor opposition-led strikers have gained a decisive advantage. (Page 3)

[Redacted] Soviets

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USSR-EGYPT

Egyptian Premier Sidqi does not appear to have resolved any basic problems during his visit to Moscow. The main areas of agreement mentioned in the communiqué issued after his visit were condemnation of Israel and a willingness to continue further contacts between the leaders of both countries. The communiqué said that Sidqi and Premier Kosygin "exchanged views...in an atmosphere of frankness;" phrases that are ordinarily used by the Soviets to denote disagreement.

One point of contention could well have been Moscow's refusal to deliver the kinds of weapons that Cairo says it needs to launch a military offensive across the Suez Canal.

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In a speech at a Kremlin reception Monday night, Sidqi expressed Egypt's gratitude for the many examples of Soviet economic aid and noted that it is natural to discuss extending such cooperation to "other fields." Whether or not the Egyptians really believe they can reverse Soviet policy, they apparently intend--perhaps in part for domestic reasons--to press Moscow for new kinds of offensive weapons.

The communiqué indicates, however, that the Soviets will continue to withhold such weapons. Moscow may have been encouraged to maintain its position by the knowledge that the Egyptians have not had any success finding an alternative to Soviet arms.

The communiqué also said that the Arab states are entitled to liberate their land by "diverse means in accordance with the UN charter," a formula reflecting the Soviet view that terrorism is counter-productive. This is also a weaker formulation than was used during Sidqi's visit to Moscow in July, when "all" means were approved, and no reference was made to the UN charter.

Despite differences, both sides have clearly signaled their interest in preventing relations from getting worse. The Egyptians cannot afford to let Soviet political, economic, and military support sink below present levels, and at minimum Moscow does not want to jeopardize its use of Egyptian naval facilities. This attitude is reflected in the communiqué, which notes that Breshnev, Podgorny, and Kosygin have accepted Sadat's invitation for a summit meeting in Cairo. No date is specified for this meeting, however, and further talks may be necessary before a summit meeting takes place.

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ISRAEL-FEDAYEEN

Foreign Minister Eban has told Ambassador Barbour that the recent Israeli air strikes were aimed primarily at getting Lebanon to do more to halt fedayeen activities. Eban strongly suggested that Tel Aviv is trying to drive Lebanon into closing the fedayeen bases and expelling their occupants from the country. He admitted, however, he was not sure the Beirut government was able to do so.

Lebanon, Eban said, is the only place in close proximity to Israel where the fedayeen are free to train and prepare actions against Israel and its citizens abroad. In contrast, he said, Egypt and Syria encourage terrorist activity elsewhere, but tightly control the guerrillas in-country.

On this point, Eban is essentially correct. Egypt and Syria support the fedayeen but do not approve of raids on Israel from their territories.

In Lebanon, the government's restrictions on the fedayeen have led to a sharp acceleration of infighting within Fatah, the largest guerrilla organization. Two bloody clashes occurred earlier this month between rival Fatah factions and there has been more fighting this week. The most recent fighting was triggered by Yasir Arafat's efforts to force certain of the more radical elements to suspend cross-border operations, as provided by the agreement with the Lebanese Government.

The fighting within Fatah signals a diminution of Arafat's already tenuous control of his organization. Extremist factions unresponsive to his direction appear headed for more independent action, including increased terrorism and attempts to resume operations in Israel.

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CHILE

The situation remains tense and neither the government nor strikers supported by opposition parties have gained the initiative.

On 18 October Allende made minor concessions, averting a bus drivers' strike that could have encouraged others to take antigovernment positions.



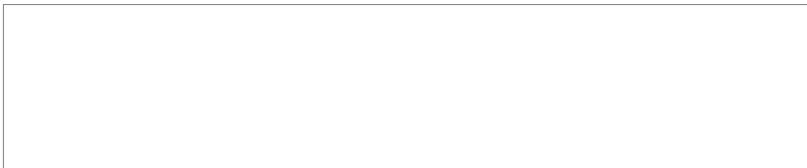
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There has been no serious violence yet, despite numerous sabotage attempts--probably by rightist extremists. Leftist extremists are spoiling for a fight, but have thus far been reined in by Allende and his more moderate advisers. The President is determined not to let the left provoke the armed forces but to make certain that the opposition gets all the blame for disturbances and economic dislocations.

Strike leaders seem uncertain what to do next. They still hope that army chief General Prats will finally be driven by events to move against the government.

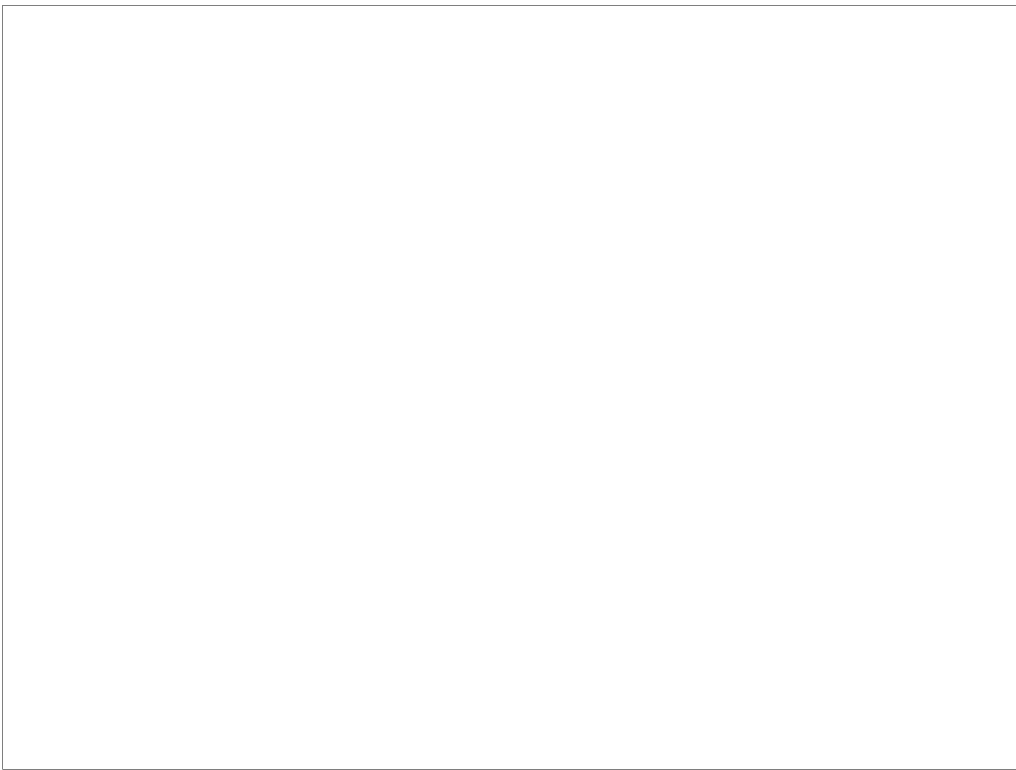


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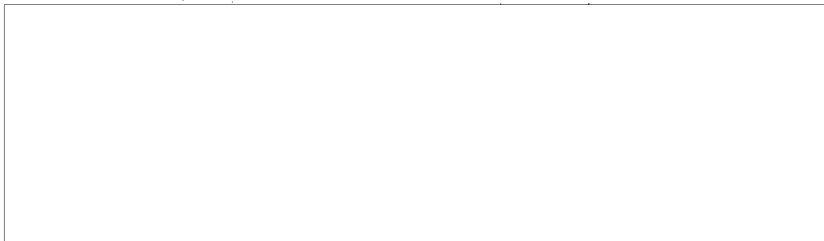
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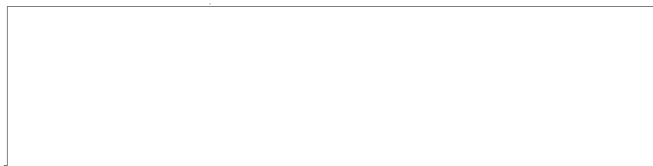


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