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The President's Daily Brief

April 9, 1974

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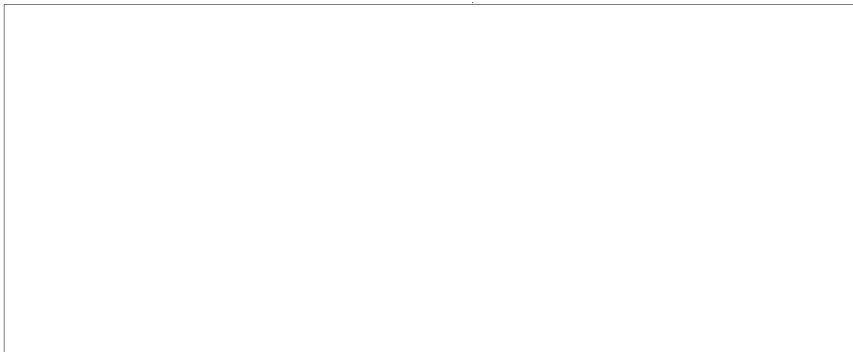


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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

April 9, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS



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Prime Minister Meir is facing unexpected difficulties in working out a solution to the cabinet crisis brought on by calls for Dayan's resignation. (Page 3)

Army chief Kri Siwara reportedly has persuaded Prime Minister Sanya to reshuffle his cabinet soon, but the changes are not expected to increase direct military participation in the government. (Page 4)

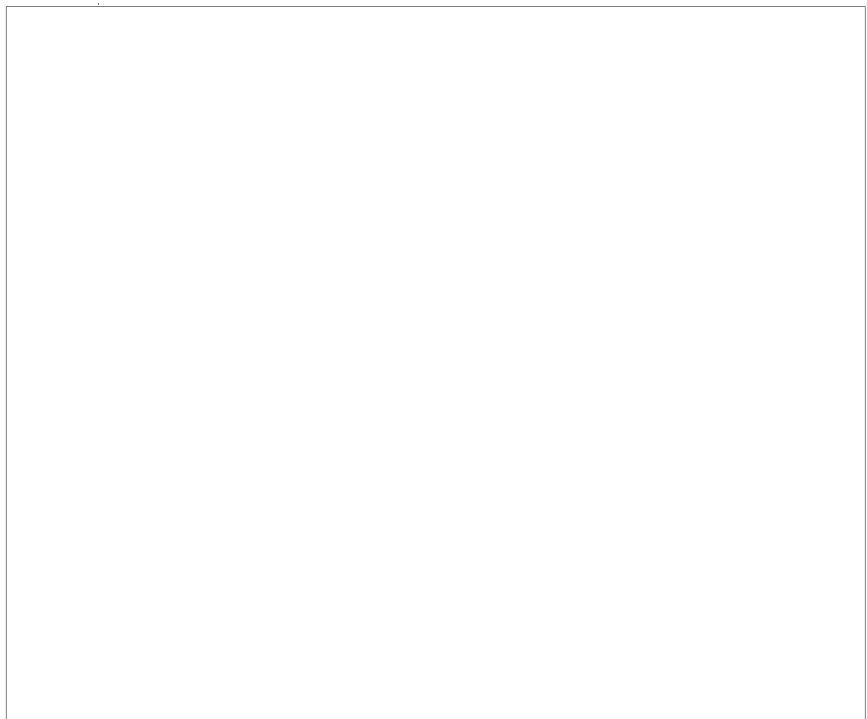
The Iraqi Government is pushing ahead with its plan for Kurdish autonomy despite continued Kurdish resistance to the scheme. (Page 5)

A note on Laos appears on Page 6.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

USSR-SYRIA

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ISRAEL-SYRIA

[redacted] crash of the Israeli Phantom yesterday just inside the Lebanese border near Mount Hermon. Syria claims its forces shot the jet fighter down, while Israel asserts that it crashed because of a technical malfunction.

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UN observers confirm that two pilots bailed out of the aircraft and that rescue helicopters entered the area in an attempt to reach them. Subsequent reports indicate that the pilots are in the hands of Lebanese authorities, who have promised to meet with the Israelis today to discuss their return.

The incident follows a weekend of unusually heavy activity by Israeli aircraft.

[redacted]
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Action yesterday along the Golan front was limited to artillery and tank exchanges.

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ISRAEL

Prime Minister Meir has encountered unexpected difficulties in working out a solution to the cabinet crisis brought on by calls for the resignation of Defense Minister Dayan.

Labor Party leaders are seeking what they call an "elegant solution," which would remove Dayan as defense minister but keep the Labor Alignment and the governing coalition intact. Dayan has suggested that the entire cabinet resign and that Mrs. Meir form a new cabinet in which Dayan would receive a different portfolio.

Mrs. Meir seems favorably disposed to Dayan's offer, but her party is divided. The left-wing Mapam faction is balking at a wholesale cabinet resignation, while Dayan's Rafi faction insists on it if Dayan has to resign. There is some speculation that Dayan will be named minister without portfolio responsible for Arab-Israeli negotiations and the occupied Arab territories. Dayan has said he does not want to be foreign minister.

Considerable difficulties still remain in the path of any cabinet shuffle. Aside from the divisions within the Labor Alignment over the issue, there is some question whether it would be accepted by the other two members of the coalition, particularly by the National Religious Party, which is torn by an internal crisis of its own.

At this stage, Mrs. Meir probably still has a better-than-even chance of somehow resolving the matter and holding the coalition together, thus allowing her to stay on as prime minister.

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THAILAND

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Army chief Krit Siwara apparently has prevailed on Prime Minister Sanya to reshuffle his cabinet, probably within the next two weeks. [redacted]

[redacted] Sanya is expected to replace the ministers of commerce, finance, industry, and education, and may also change the defense and foreign affairs ministers.

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Krit has been pressing for changes largely because of increasing dissatisfaction within the military over the government's handling of pressing economic problems, such as rice distribution and inflation. The changes currently envisioned are not expected to increase direct military participation in the government, but they should mollify many of Sanya's military critics by introducing men who have demonstrated a willingness to work with the military in the past.

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IRAQ

The Iraqi Government remains determined to push ahead with its plan for Kurdish autonomy despite continued Kurdish resistance to the scheme. The Baghdad government has replaced its five Kurdish ministers--all of whom have supported Kurdish separatist leader Barzani--with five other Kurds, who may be more amenable to the government's plan.

Meanwhile, Barzani's Kurds

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have probably exaggerated their accounts of clashes with government forces.

Last week the "Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan," a clandestine broadcasting station under Barzani's control, was heard for the first time since 1970, having been silent during the three years of the now-expired truce.

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NOTE

Laos: Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma has announced that Laos will try to revive the Soviet aid agreement of some \$3.5 million signed in 1962. The agreement was suspended the following year because of the withdrawal of the Pathet Lao from the coalition government. Moscow has not responded to Souvanna's statement, but presumably it will be favorably inclined. Souvanna indicated that he would also request assistance from other Communist countries. Annual economic aid for Laos has ranged around \$65-\$70 million. The US has provided most of the aid, which has been used primarily for financing imports.

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