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# The President's Daily Brief

*April 19, 1974*

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

April 19, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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[redacted]

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(Page 1)

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[redacted] Israel [redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted] (Page 3)

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Bangladesh [redacted] Pakistan [redacted]  
[redacted] (Page 4)

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Notes on Ethiopia, Iraq, the EC, and Greece-Turkey appear on Page 5.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

## ISRAEL-SYRIA

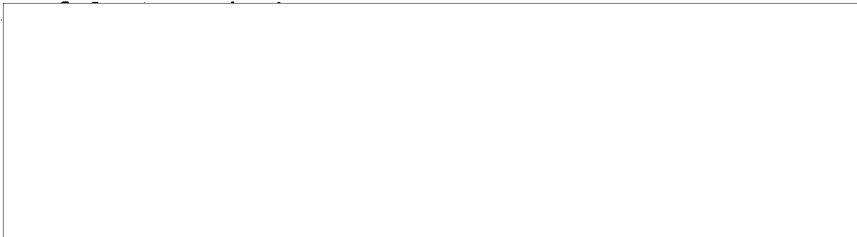
Syrian aircraft struck Israeli ground positions yesterday for the first time since the October war. A Syrian spokesman claimed that the strikes inflicted "huge" losses on Israeli forces in the Mount Hermon area and at other locations along the front.

Tel Aviv has played down the strikes' significance. According to an Israeli military spokesman, the attacks wounded only one soldier and lasted only "a couple of minutes." He claimed, in contrast, that Israeli sorties over the front lasted for more than five hours.



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Damascus claims that its air defense forces shot down an Israeli Phantom, but Tel Aviv denied the claim.



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## EGYPT-USSR

President Sadat renewed his criticism of the USSR during a speech yesterday, four days after Foreign Minister Fahmi recommended easing public criticism of the Soviets. Fahmi's appeal followed his meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko in New York on Monday, and Sadat had agreed to tone down press attacks. In his speech yesterday, the Egyptian leader adopted a friendly tone that has been absent lately, but his references to major points of disagreement showed an almost stubborn unwillingness to placate Moscow.

Sadat said he has written Soviet party leader Brezhnev four times in the past six months with "basic and essential demands"--obviously for arms--but has consistently been told they are "being studied." Sadat described this as only a misunderstanding between friends, but expressed "regret" and puzzlement over the reason for it. Sadat also said he has begun to diversify Egypt's source of arms, attributing this decision to a desire for a balance in Egypt's international relations.

Perhaps, Sadat suggested, Moscow is withholding arms because it believes Cairo is abandoning socialism, liberalizing its economy, or improving relations with the US and the West. These are matters that concern only Egypt, he asserted, and comment from the outside "shows bad taste." He repeated a line he has used frequently in recent weeks, that Egypt does not want hostile relations with any state unless that state "begins to antagonize us." Sadat said Egypt will not befriend one state at the expense of any other, and in this context referred specifically to the US and the USSR.

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## ISRAEL

The Labor Party's five-member selection committee will meet today to decide on a list of candidates to succeed Mrs. Meir as party leader. The list will be submitted to the party's Central Committee on Sunday.

The party's secretary general, in an effort to reduce the number of contenders, yesterday talked to prospective candidates Deputy Prime Minister Alon, Justice Minister Zadok, Foreign Minister Eban, Labor Minister Rabin, Mayor Almogi of Haifa, and Information Minister Peres.

Only Peres, a member of Dayan's Rafi faction, has openly expressed an interest in the position, but the others clearly are available. Peres, however, has only a slim chance.

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**BANGLADESH-PAKISTAN**

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Despite the apparent conciliatory attitude of both parties, the issues left unresolved at the New Delhi conference two weeks ago are complex and certain to be the subject of hard and protracted bargaining. One of the most difficult questions will be the division of prewar Pakistan's assets and liabilities. Dacca will also continue to argue for a Pakistani commitment to take more than the 140,000 Biharis--non-Bengalee Muslims--Islamabad has already agreed to accept.

NOTES

Ethiopia: The military is again demonstrating its impatience with the government's failure to arrest and prosecute corrupt ministers of the previous cabinet. Troops meeting in Addis Ababa--probably drawn from units throughout the country--yesterday demanded of Prime Minister Endalkatchew that the former ministers be placed immediately under at least house arrest. According to a Reuters report that has not been confirmed, the Prime Minister replied that he already had done so. If the arrests have not been made, the military may take direct action to back up its demand, such as detaining the ministers in question or seizing a major city or military installation.

Iraq: Baghdad may have begun a major offensive against Kurdish rebels. The government has intensified ground and air attacks against the Kurds in the last few days. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

EC: West German Foreign Minister Scheel has called an informal meeting of the foreign ministers of the Nine for this weekend, possibly to "educate" British Foreign Secretary Callaghan about the importance of EC ties. The interregnum in France has forced the community to mark time on a number of fronts. Bonn hopes this pause may give the new British Government time to obtain a better understanding of the interdependence of the EC states, particularly in the economic and financial areas.

Greece-Turkey: Tensions between Athens and Ankara over their rival claims to possible offshore oil fields in the Aegean Sea have abated. Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit has said that the issue is a technical problem and should not be allowed to develop into a political crisis. Greek and Turkish officials are scheduled to meet this week in New York to discuss the issue.



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