

The President's Daily Brief

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August 17, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

August 17, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

French

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Greece. In Athens, the government is beginning to take specific actions to demonstrate displeasure over US policy. (Page 1)

The latest developments in Greece and Cyprus are discussed on Page 3.

Andrey Kirilenko, a senior Politburo member and party secretary, is the best bet to succeed Brezhnev if the General Secretary leaves office soon. We estimate that, if Kirilenko replaced Brezhnev, this would lead to very little change in Soviet foreign policy over the short term. (Page 4)

Israel's recent actions to improve its military preparedness have led in turn to renewed Egyptian and Syrian military preparations. (Page 6)

Japanese traders have been placing huge orders for US corn; they apparently hope to line up enough to cover their requirements for the coming year. (Page 7)

Notes on South Korea and on Morocco-Spain appear on Page 8.

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FRANCE-GREECE

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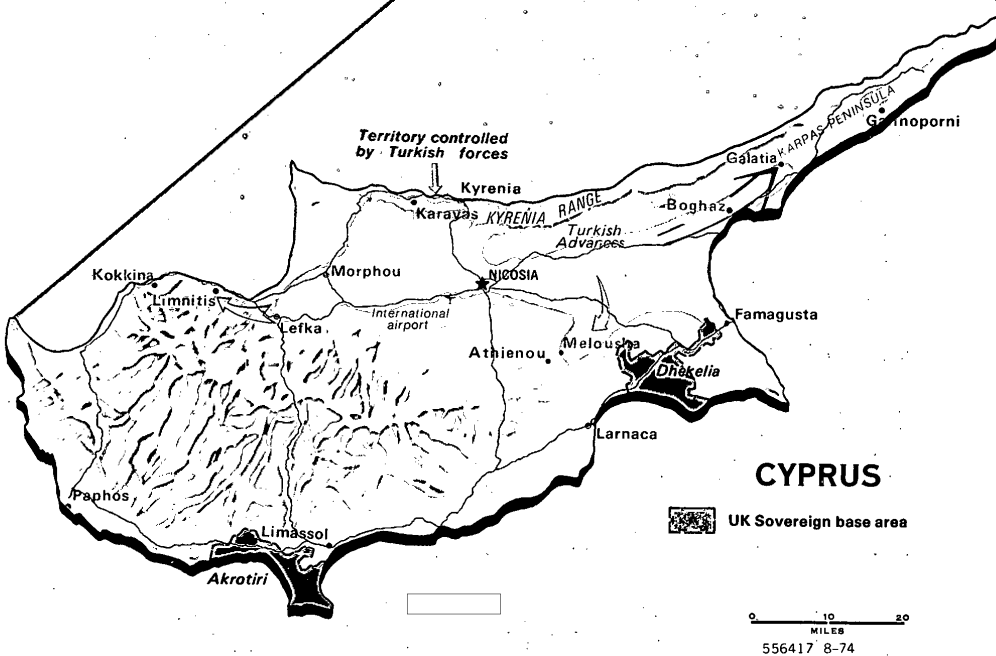
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In Athens there are indications that the Greek government is beginning to take specific actions to illustrate its displeasure over what it regards as Washington's pro-Turkish attitude.

--Yesterday, Greek officials refused to grant clearance to US military flights on two occasions. They indicated that they could no longer honor a blanket diplomatic approval of US military flights into Greece that has been in effect since 1966.

--The US embassy in Athens speculates that the Greek government may be considering a revision of the status of US forces in Greece, and could be contemplating more far-reaching action.



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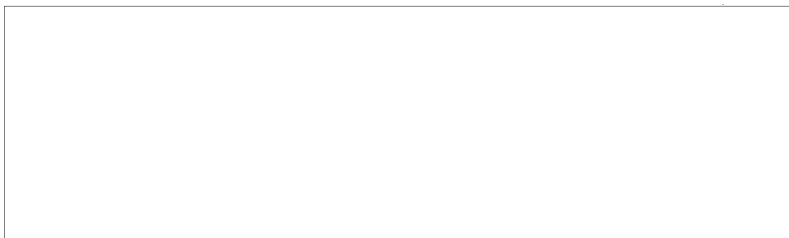
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GREECE-CYPRUS

The Greek defense minister has implied to General Goodpaster that Athens is preparing to withdraw a number of personnel from NATO headquarters, leaving only a liaison office. A Foreign Ministry official in Athens said Greece may follow the "French formula," which he said would involve the gradual elimination of all NATO facilities in Greece.

Manifestations of anti-Americanism, meanwhile, are continuing throughout Greece. Yesterday, a mob set fire to buildings on the US military base at Iraklion, Crete, and there were demonstrations outside the embassy in Athens and the consulate at Thessaloniki.

Leftist politician Andreas Papandreou, who returned to Athens yesterday, was welcomed by a large crowd shouting anti-American slogans. He called for a complete break with both the US and NATO.



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Turkish forces on Cyprus gained most of their military objectives yesterday. They now control an area extending roughly from Lefka and Limnitis in the west through Nicosia and on to Famagusta on the east coast.

Sporadic cease-fire violations can be expected to continue and the Turks evidently intend to complete the capture of the Karpas Peninsula. They may also extend their line westward from Karavas. They are not likely to encounter much resistance from the Greek Cypriot National Guard.

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USSR

In response to the interest you expressed yesterday [redacted] with regard to the succession problem in the USSR, we offer the following assessment.

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Andrey Kirilenko, a senior Politiburo member and party secretary, is the best bet to succeed Brezhnev if the General Secretary leaves office soon. Kirilenko has functioned as Brezhnev's deputy for party administration, and his elevation to the top job would be least disruptive to the existing party structure. He is 67 years old, however, and the prospect of his moving up to the top party post diminishes with each year that Brezhnev remains on the scene.

[redacted] A Kirilenko administration probably would not undertake any sharp departures from the course that has been followed under Brezhnev in foreign affairs, partly because of the inhibitions built into collegial decisionmaking. There are some signs, however, that Kirilenko would be somewhat more cautious in dealing with the West, at least at the outset.

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--Although his election speech in June was effusive on the success of summitry and the prospect for extensive cooperation between the US and the USSR, over the years his public support of detente has been infrequent and well hedged.

--Moreover, he has been in the forefront of those who have championed the "Brezhnev Doctrine" of limited sovereignty for Eastern Europe, and he is widely reported to have urged the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Kirilenko has called aid to the Vietnamese and Arabs not only a "revolutionary duty," but also a security requirement of the USSR. He has strongly criticized the Chinese Communists, but has not shut the door on an eventual reconciliation with China.

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His style of leadership would, at least initially, be less colorful and exuberant than Brezhnev's.

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There would probably be a return to a more collective style of leadership following a change at the top. Kirilenko's position would not be as powerful as Brezhnev's is now, and Soviet policy would bear a less personal stamp than it does at present.

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ISRAEL - ARAB STATES

Israel's recent actions to improve its military preparedness--large-scale maneuvers and mobilization tests--and its professed concern over Arab intentions have led in turn to renewed Egyptian and Syrian military preparations. Although neither Israel nor its Arab neighbors seem to want to renew fighting at this time, heightened tensions increase the danger that further fighting may occur.

The Israeli government feels compelled to demonstrate that Israel will not again be surprised militarily as it was last October. Tel Aviv also wants to convince the Arabs that any attack would be met by thoroughly prepared Israeli forces. Additionally, Tel Aviv hopes that Israeli concern over a possible resumption of hostilities will cause the US to provide increased military aid.

The object of most of Israel's charges has been Syria. Israeli estimates attach special significance to statements by Syrian President Asad that a final peace settlement must result in a total withdrawal by Israel from all territories occupied since 1967, a demand that is unacceptable to Tel Aviv. The Israelis are also concerned about the replenishment of Syrian weapons inventories and the introduction into Syria of such weapons as the MIG-23 fighter and the Scud surface-to-surface missile.

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JAPAN

Japanese traders began placing huge orders for US corn immediately following the US Department of Agriculture's crop forecasts of August 12. Grain trade sources expect additional large purchases in the US and in other countries during the next few weeks.

Japan normally buys about two thirds of its feedgrains and 90 percent of its soybeans from the US and is the largest single market for US exports of these items.

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The Japanese apparently hope to line up enough corn to cover their requirements for the coming year. They may also be trying to hedge against possible shortages of other feeds, especially sorghum and soybeans.

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NOTES

South Korea: The South Korean government will use the attempted assassination of President Pak Chong-hui to link his non-Communist opponents with pro-North Korean elements in Japan. Police authorities in Seoul have publicly identified the assailant as an active member of anti-Pak groups in Japan, though no direct link has been alleged with the pro-Pyongyang Chosen Soren grouping of Koreans resident in Japan. There is also no evidence of a conspiracy. The case, of course, is complicating the sensitive relationship between South Korea and Japan. Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka, recognizing the need to avoid further friction, has decided to attend Mrs. Pak's funeral in Seoul on Monday.

Morocco-Spain: Morocco's prime minister and foreign minister traveled to Madrid early this week to press Rabat's claims to Spanish Sahara. The positive tone of the joint communiqué at the end of their visit suggests the stage has been set for further talks. At the same time, Morocco has moved more troops to the border with Spanish Sahara, indicating that Rabat will continue to use military pressure tactics to try to create a sense of urgency. King Hassan is well aware of Spain's superior military capabilities, however, and is likely to keep his military moves under careful control.

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