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The President's Daily Brief

October 1, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

October 1, 1974

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PORTUGAL

Speeches yesterday by newly installed Portuguese President Costa Gomes and former president Spino-la contrasted sharply.

In his resignation speech, Spino-la bitterly denounced the emergence of a generalized climate of anarchy. He warned the Portuguese people that they were threatened with a "new form of servitude under the banner of false liberty." He declared that he was unable to carry out the program of the Armed Forces Movement because its ideals had been set aside.

Costa Gomes stressed the achievements that have been made since the April coup and appealed for unity. The new President reaffirmed his support for the Armed Forces Movement and seemed to be signaling that he will be more flexible than his predecessor. He reminded his listeners that in politics "one must not be tied to rigid and preconceived schemes."

Costa Gomes has long acted as a mediator between the unyielding Spino-la and the leftists in the Armed Forces Movement. Perhaps to calm supporters of the popular ex-president, Costa Gomes lavishly praised Spino-la's dedication to the movement's ideals and noted his own efforts to prevent the resignation.

Earlier in the afternoon, Costa Gomes visited a commando unit outside Lisbon, which professed loyalty to Spino-la, presumably to quell possible unrest.

Costa Gomes promised that Portugal would honor all of its international obligations including its association with NATO. Foreign Minister Soares had earlier informed the embassy that Lisbon will remain in NATO.

The size of the military junta has been reduced by the forced resignation of three Spino-la loyalists. With Spino-la's resignation, only three officers remain: Costa Gomes himself and two decidedly leftist admirals. Cabinet changes are expected; Spino-la supporters in the ministries of defense and social communications are likely to be replaced.

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The Council of State reportedly approved the formation of a "Council of Revolution" composed of 160 members of the Armed Forces Movement to serve as the highest directive body of the government.

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CYPRUS

Greek Prime Minister Karamanlis yesterday urged Greek Cypriots to support acting President Clerides. Karamanlis qualified his backing somewhat by saying support for Clerides should be extended so long as the continuing crisis precludes the return to Cyprus of the "elected president, Archbishop Makarios."

The Prime Minister's announcement followed a meeting with a member of the Cypriot parliament who briefed Karamanlis about the growing disunity in the Greek Cypriot community. The parliament member may also have delivered a threat from Clerides to resign if Athens did not give him stronger public support.

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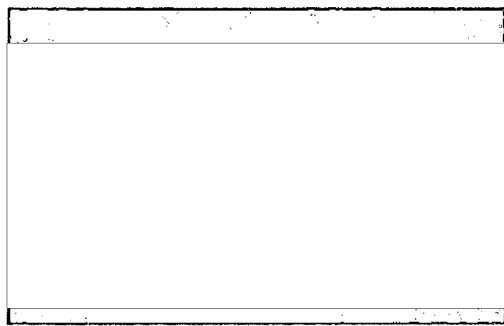
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[Redacted]

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The machinations of Archbishop Makarios, who has announced his intention to go back to the island, have also become a growing worry for Clerides. The campaign among Makarios' supporters for the Archbishop's early return has gained strength; Makarios' supporters held a mass rally in Limassol on Sunday.

Clerides, meanwhile, continued his discussions of humanitarian issues with Denktash yesterday. The two agreed to resume the exchange of prisoners, who will be released where they wish, regardless of the location of their homes.



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SYRIA

Syrian pilots have begun training for ground-attack missions with the MIG-23. Training of this kind suggests that the Syrians are well advanced in their ability to handle this aircraft, which is the most sophisticated in any Arab inventory. Iraq is the only other country to have received this aircraft.

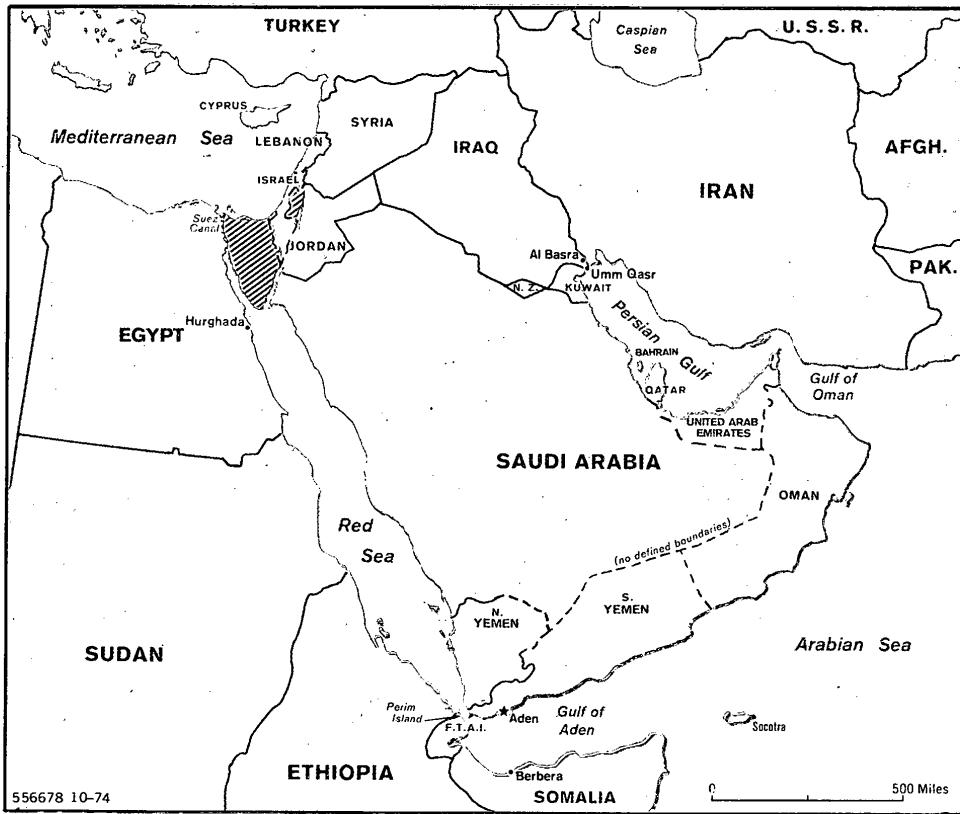
Syria's first MIG-23s arrived in June; it now has at least 45, including both the ground-attack and interceptor versions.



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The Syrians flew only a few ground-attack missions during the war last October; they used obsolescent MIG-17 and SU-7 aircraft in this role.

The MIG-23 will give Syria a better capability for ground attack. The interceptor version of this aircraft should also enable the Syrian air force to engage Israeli F-4 Phantoms more effectively in aerial combat.



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USSR - INDIAN OCEAN AREA

The Soviet helicopter ship Leningrad and its escorting destroyer were sighted 15 to 20 miles off Berbera, Somalia on Friday and Saturday. Helicopters from the ship appeared to be flying to Berbera port, which is just within sight of the anchored ships. The two ships may spend as much as a week in the Gulf of Aden before they rendezvous with a supply ship off the east coast of Somalia.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the Leningrad and its escort took on food and fuel from an auxiliary ship at the Soviet anchorage 20 miles off Aden. [redacted]

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[redacted]

The Leningrad has not entered the territorial waters of either Somalia or South Yemen.

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Soviet helicopter ships, the Leningrad and the Moskva, have made only five calls at foreign ports--four to Egypt and one to Yugoslavia.

Soviet Naval Support in the Indian Ocean Area

As Moscow has extended its routine naval operations into distant areas such as the Indian Ocean, the Soviet navy has sought to supplement auxiliary ship groupings--"floating bases"--with foreign shore support facilities. Traditionally, the Soviet navy has avoided dependence on foreign sources and means. At present, Soviet ships in the Indian Ocean receive substantial support at several ports, although none were set up as US-style "homeports." At Berbera in Somalia, Soviet personnel even have direct control over some facilities.

Most Soviet warships operating in the Indian Ocean routinely put in to Berbera for resupply, minor repairs, and short-term crew rest. Repairs are performed alongside a Soviet barge that has been docked there since October 1972. The Soviets control

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a storage area on the pier, but it is not used for weapons or ammunition. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets have reportedly agreed to assist in constructing an airfield near Berbera, but work on an airstrip has not begun. They are, however, assisting in the development of Berbera's commercial port facilities, including a major expansion of petroleum storage capacity.

Access to Berbera has enabled the Soviets to double the time on station of their basic Indian Ocean contingent, which includes one destroyer, two destroyer escorts, two fleet minesweepers, one landing ship, and an F-class diesel submarine.

Facilities in Iraq

Soviet naval ships receive some servicing at the main Iraqi port of Al Basra. Support there apparently is limited to minor maintenance for smaller ships on an intermittent basis. A Soviet repair ship has been observed at the Al Basra naval base, where it has remained for as long as six months at a time. Soviet naval ships, including at least one of the two fleet minesweepers that participated in a Persian Gulf patrol last summer, occasionally visit Al Basra while the repair ship is in port.

Soviet warships call at Umm Qasr in Iraq even more frequently than at Al Basra. Visits are limited to resupply activity, however. There are no maintenance or repair facilities at Umm Qasr.

Aden Port (South Yemen)

Despite the Leningrad's experience, other Soviet naval ships frequently visit Aden. This port, some 150 nautical miles across the Gulf of Aden from Berbera, has extensive commercial repair facilities remaining from the days when Aden was a British colony. The Soviet navy has not used these repair facilities, but their auxiliary ships make regular stops in Aden to take on water, fuel, and other provisions. They may also pick up supplies arriving in Aden via air transport from the USSR. The Soviets have routinely used Aden's international airport--located only five miles from the port--for military transport flights. In recent months, Soviet warships frequently have been observed at anchorage near the port.

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TURKEY

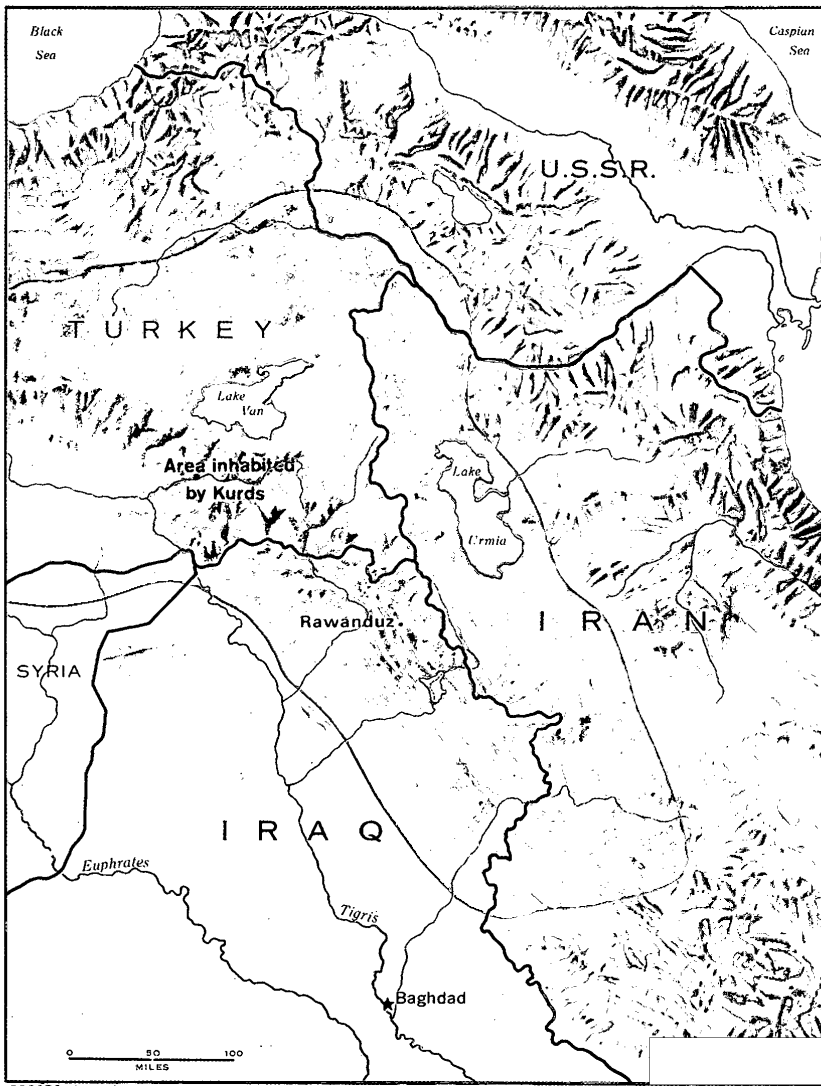
Suleyman Demirel, leader of the Justice Party, will try to form a right-of-center coalition following Prime Minister Ecevit's second failure to organize a new government.

If Demirel can get the Democrats and the ultra-conservative Salvationists to join him, the three-party coalition would have a majority of approximately 15 in the 450-seat parliament.

The Democratic Party, however, is largely made up of former Justice Party members who broke with Demirel in 1970, and they remain bitterly opposed to him. The chances of a rightist coalition coming to fruition would be much better if Demirel would step aside.

Ecevit believes that Demirel will fail to organize a new government. Ecevit told the US embassy last week that once it is demonstrated that a rightist coalition is not possible, his chances of enticing the Democratic Party into a coalition with his Republican People's Party will be much improved.

A caretaker government led by Ecevit will provide continuity for Turkey's policies, but will be unable to take any new initiatives. Even should the rightist political forces put together a coalition, they would be unlikely to make any radical departures from the policies pursued by Ecevit on issues such as Cyprus and relations with the US, including the opium question. A rightist coalition might find it even more difficult to make significant concessions to the Greeks.



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IRAQ

The anticipated renewal of the Iraqi offensive against Kurdish positions in northeastern Iraq began Friday. The offensive involves a two-pronged attack, whose objective is to drive the Kurds from the heights overlooking the road from Rawanduz into Iran, and to cut Kurdish forces from supply points along the Iranian border.

[redacted] the Iraqis have already suffered a costly defeat, their second in two weeks. Baghdad's troops, supported by aircraft and artillery, apparently overran some Kurdish positions in the early stages of the assault, but were driven back in fierce fighting early Saturday morning.

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The Iraqis are said to have withdrawn to Rawanduz, leaving some 500 casualties and a large amount of military equipment on the battlefield. The Kurds followed the retreating Iraqis to their camp and shelled them with mortars.

Baath Party strongman Tikriti has committed his prestige to defeating the Kurds before winter sets in about six weeks from now. If the latest drive fails, opposition within the Iraqi military to the Kurdish war will certainly intensify. This could produce an open power struggle between Tikriti and opponents within the government and the military.

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CHINA-PHILIPPINES

Mutual interest in improving relations was dramatized last week as the Chinese gave Philippine First Lady Imelda Marcos an extraordinary reception in Peking.

Mrs. Marcos was favored with separate meetings with Chairman Mao Tse-tung and with hospitalized Premier Chou En-lai. This was Chou's first such appearance in more than six weeks. Excluding earlier meetings with US officials, Mrs. Marcos' audience with Mao is the only time in recent years that he has met with an emissary of a government with which Peking has no official ties.

By their warm treatment of Mrs. Marcos, the Chinese have shown that they will keep the pressure on for early diplomatic recognition. President Marcos may conclude that the time has come to move more quickly in this direction, despite the damage this will do to Philippine relations with Taiwan.

Even before Mrs. Marcos' visit, there were signs that Manila had begun exploring some of the issues that could come up during negotiations on diplomatic relations. The Philippines sent a representative to Taipei earlier this year to advise the Nationalists that Manila was considering improving its ties with Peking.



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A trade agreement was announced during Mrs. Marcos' visit. The agreement reportedly provides for the sale of Chinese petroleum. The Philippines agreed to sell sugar, wood products and other items in return. Details of the pact are to be worked out when a Philippine trade delegation visits China later in the year.

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MUJIBUR RAHMAN

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As Bangladesh Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman arrives in Washington, his country is undergoing severe internal stress. When Mujib took over early in 1972, the new nation of more than 75 million people faced a quantity of postwar problems. Nearly three years later the economic situation has not improved, and political and social problems have reached a point where they pose a serious threat to his regime.

Domestic Problems

The economy of Bangladesh, already strained by an annual population growth rate of over 3 percent, has been hurt badly over the past year by widespread shortages--particularly of food and imported goods. To complicate matters this fall, Bangladesh has been feeling the effects--which Mujib considers very serious--of recent flooding. Indeed, the Prime Minister fears unrest, particularly in urban areas, and reportedly views the situation as the worst his regime has yet faced.

Mujib has recently come under public attack for his inability to check general lawlessness, including political violence, and for the inefficiency and corruption of his regime. Disillusionment and discontent have apparently spread to all levels of the military and to moderate leaders within Mujib's own party, the Awami League. With the political opposition badly fragmented, the most credible threat to Mujib would appear to come from dissidents in the Awami League or from the armed forces.

The risk of an eventual military move against Mujib is increasing as he drifts toward greater authoritarianism in the face of growing problems. Should Mujib act to increase his powers sharply, military support would be crucial; whether the military would go along with Mujib or seek to unseat him would depend in part on whether he could assure the armed forces an enhanced role in a subsequent regime.

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Relations with the United States

Although Mujib and many Bengalee officials have a lingering resentment toward the US for its policy during the independence struggle in 1971, Mujib has shown a genuine fondness for Americans over the years.

Indeed, the Prime Minister himself started the movement toward more normal relations with Washington [redacted] He sees better relations with the US as resulting in more aid, which in turn will help him stay in power. [redacted]

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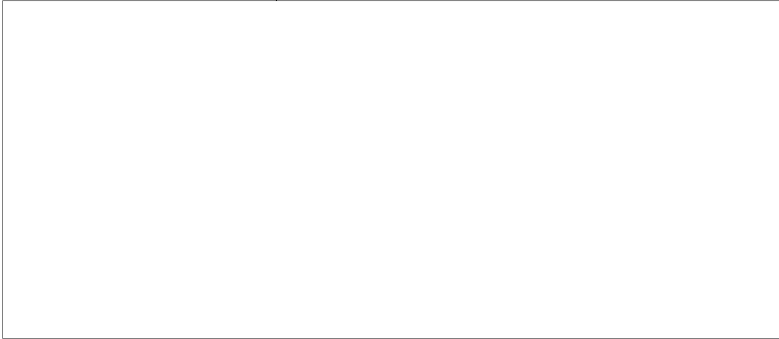
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[redacted] Mujib probably also hopes that the meeting will enhance his standing as international statesman and divert attention from domestic problems.

The move toward Washington has been prompted also by the changing status of Mujib's relations with the Soviet Union and India. His feelings toward the Soviet Union have cooled recently, in part because of Moscow's failure to respond more quickly and generously to requests for flood relief and because of its meager contribution to development aid.

The relationship with India also affects his attitude toward the US. Anti-Indian feeling is growing in Bangladesh, stemming from popular fears of economic exploitation and political domination by New Delhi. Improved relations with Washington give Mujib's government more flexibility in dealing with India, upon which he has previously been heavily dependent for political and economic assistance.

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The Prime Minister probably believes the US has more interest in and influence over events in Bangladesh, and South Asia in general, than is actually the case. Thus he probably has unrealistic expectations of what the US can do for him economically and politically.

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He was treated in Moscow for an illness last spring. This was publicly announced as acute bronchitis [redacted]

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[redacted] he returned from Moscow apparently fully recovered.

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[redacted]

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Mujib remains a folk hero and is still respectfully referred to in Bangladesh as Bangobandhu--an honorific translated roughly as "father of Bengal." He takes this status quite seriously and refers to the people and country--indeed almost everything about Bangladesh--in paternalistic terms.

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