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The President's Daily Brief

July 16, 1975

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

July 16, 1975

Table of Contents

Egypt: Foreign Minister Fahmi yesterday declared that Egypt cannot now agree to renew the UN mandate which expires on July 24. This is clearly designed to give a push to the negotiations for a new Sinai disengagement agreement. (Page 1)

Portugal: The Socialists' first mass rally since leaving the government was held without incident. (Page 3)

Angola: The resignation from the government of the chief representative of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola effectively destroys the transitional political arrangement that has existed in the territory for the past six months. (Page 5)

Notes: Australia; India; China (Pages 6 and 7)

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EGYPT

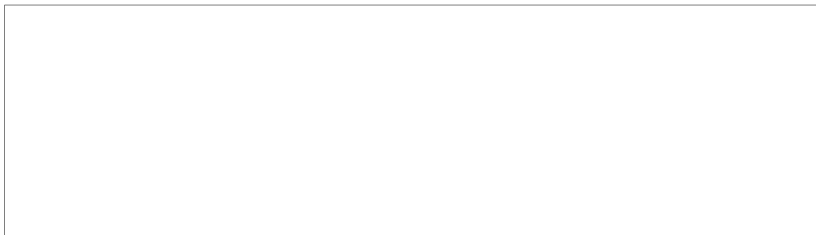
Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmi yesterday informed UN Secretary General Waldheim that Egypt cannot now agree to renew the mandate, which expires on July 24, for stationing UN forces in the Sinai. Fahmi claimed that Israel is using the UN presence to perpetuate its occupation of Egyptian territory. The timing of the Egyptian notification is clearly designed to signal the limits of Egypt's patience and to put more steam into the negotiating process. To back up its argument, Egypt [redacted] has put its armed forces on alert.

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In his letter to Waldheim and in a later press conference in Cairo, Fahmi clearly left open the possibility that real progress toward a Sinai disengagement agreement before the expiration date might alter Egypt's position. He said that Egypt is not calling for the removal of the UN forces and seemed to imply that the Egyptians would not necessarily object if the UN Security Council renewed the mandate without Egypt's express consent. He also seemed to be saying that Israel and the US still have time to alter Egypt's decision.

In his press conference, Fahmi said Egypt still welcomes US efforts to mediate a disengagement agreement. He also laid much of the responsibility for pressuring Israel on the UN. Egyptian media have shown obvious chagrin at Israeli Prime Minister Rabin's statement last weekend that an interim agreement could take weeks or even months to negotiate.

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Fahmi's formulation serves a dual purpose for the Egyptians. It avoids both directly provoking a breakdown in negotiations and some of the stigma that would accompany an eventual resort to military action if Cairo comes to believe that negotiations are leading nowhere.

Israeli officials, in their initial comments to the press, have confined themselves to reiterating Tel Aviv's standard position; i.e., Israel will not be pressured into an agreement with Egypt under the threat of deadlines and recognizes no connection between dates such as that for the expiration of the UN mandate and the current indirect negotiations with Egypt.

Jerusalem Radio's international service, in a broadcast prior to the Egyptian announcement, claimed Israeli government officials would regard the expiration of the UN mandate as a "technical violation" of the disengagement agreement, not significant in itself.

In an apparent effort to force a decision quickly, however, Tel Aviv reportedly has asked the UN Security Council to extend the mandate for six more months.

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PORTUGAL

No violent incidents were reported yesterday as thousands of Socialists held their first mass rally since they withdrew from the government last Friday. Tensions remain high in Lisbon, however, and mounting political and economic problems may push political activists of all stripes to consider the use of force.

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the Socialists must be prepared to defend themselves against the Communist Party's militia and the pro-communist Portuguese Democratic Movement's "urban army," [Redacted]

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[Redacted] the Portuguese army is too disorganized by its own internal power struggles to be able to deal effectively with actions initiated by the political parties.

Since the unsuccessful coup attempt on March 11, Portuguese plotters both inside and outside the country have generally operated on the assumption that a new move to topple the regime could not succeed until economic deterioration had completely eroded popular support for the government. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] most dissident groups believe this point will not be reached for another several months and are planning accordingly.

Any attempt to move up the timetable to take advantage of the present situation would risk the same kind of poorly prepared and uncoordinated effort that led to the debacle in March and the Armed Forces Movement's subsequent sharp turn to the left.

[Redacted]

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[redacted]
[redacted] Azoreans [redacted] claim to represent the separatist movement on the islands that a revolt there will come within the next few weeks. The separatists claim that the revolt will be supported by army troops in the Azores, most of whom are native Azoreans. They seem convinced that Lisbon could not quash a revolt so far from the mainland. [redacted]

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ANGOLA

The resignation from the government of Johnny Eduardo Pinnock, chief representative of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola, effectively destroys the transitional political arrangement that has existed in the territory for the past six months. The Front has reportedly withdrawn its forces from Luanda after almost a week of heavy fighting with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

Pinnock, who fled Luanda on Monday, made his announcement from Kinshasa. He also generally confirmed an earlier report that Agostinho Neto had been ousted as president of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, stating that the Movement had been taken over by "extremist elements."

The Front's withdrawal from Luanda apparently has produced a lull in the fighting. According to Portuguese military officials, 5,000 Front troops are now advancing on the capital from northern Angola. If these troops are indeed on their way, they will have to pass through territory controlled by the Popular Movement.

Portugal still has approximately 24,000 troops in Angola, most of them stationed in and around the capital. They have refused to intervene in the recent fighting.

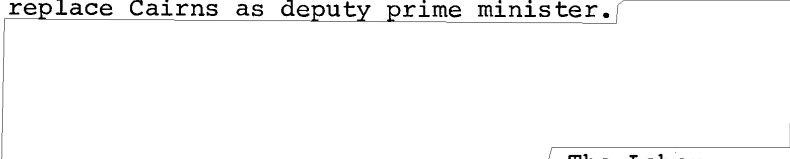
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NOTES

Australian Prime Minister Whitlam scored a qualified victory on Monday when the Labor Party caucus supported his dismissal of former deputy prime minister Cairns.

Whitlam's satisfaction over caucus backing on the sacking of Cairns was tempered, however, by its selection of Overseas Trade Minister Frank Crean to replace Cairns as deputy prime minister.

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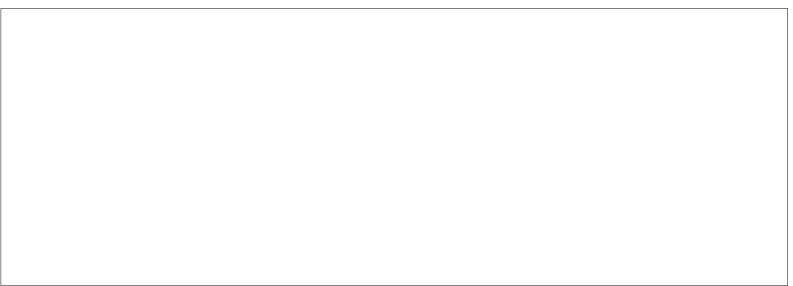
The Labor Party's narrow victory in state parliamentary elections in South Australia last weekend, following a series of electoral reverses, gives some small comfort to the Whitlam administration and, for the time being, eases pressures for national elections.

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