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The President's Daily Brief

September 13, 1975

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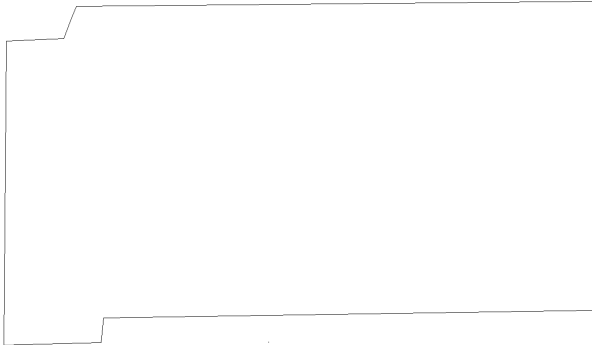
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Table of Contents

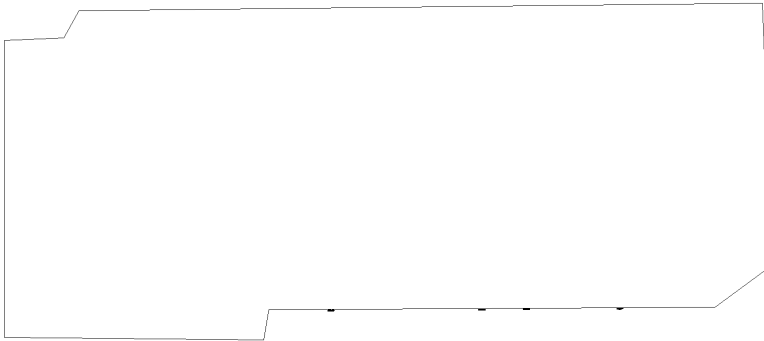
<u>West Germany - US:</u> [redacted]	25X1
[redacted] (Page 1)	
<u>Persian Gulf:</u> The new Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement is getting a mixed reception from the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. (Page 2)	25X1
<u>Syria-Israel:</u> [redacted]	25X1
[redacted] (Page 3)	
<u>Portugal:</u> Progress seems to have been made toward formation of a new cabinet. (Page 4)	
<u>Cyprus-UN:</u> The Greek Cypriots are taking their case to the UN General Assembly. (Page 5)	
<u>Notes:</u> Ethiopia; Syria; Philippines-SEATO (Page 6)	

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WEST GERMANY - US



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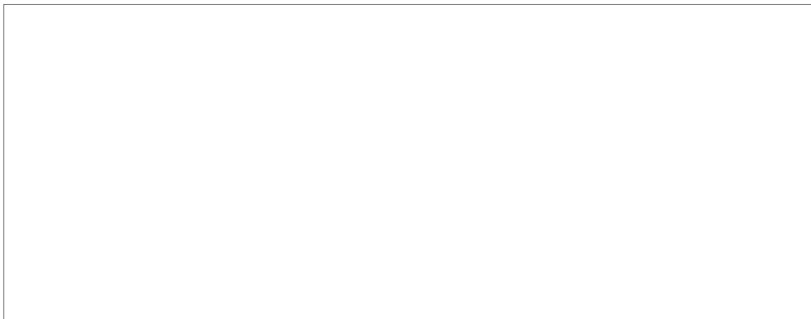


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PERSIAN GULF

The new Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement is getting a cool reception from the Arab states of the Persian Gulf.

Despite Saudi Arabia's supportive public comments on the accord, some Saudi officials are privately discouraged about future prospects for peace in the area and are chiding the US about the limited nature of the agreement. In separate conversations with Ambassador Akins last week, both royal adviser Rashid Pharaon and Foreign Minister Saud Ibn Faysal took the line that another war is inevitable, their argument being that the US will not put enough pressure on Israel to bring about withdrawals from the West Bank or the Golan Heights.

Pharaon asserted the US has armed Tel Aviv so heavily since 1973 that Israel's victory would be overwhelming in any war fought today. The interim agreement, he said, has bought time for the Arabs, and they must use the next few years to prepare for war; Saudi Arabia will foot the bill for Egypt and will assist Syria and Jordan to rearm. If war breaks out between Syria and Israel in the meantime, Pharaon stressed, no one should doubt that Saudi Arabia will help Syria "with all of its capabilities"--and Egypt will have no choice but to follow.

While the governments of the small Gulf states are carefully avoiding taking sides, a coalition of Palestinian and leftist organizations in Kuwait is trying to whip up sentiment against the disengagement agreement. Critics of the accord drew 10,000 people to a rally this week, during which speakers called on Arab masses to join in a general strike on September 15. The Kuwaiti press, heavily staffed with Palestinians, is predictably coming down strongly against the agreement.

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[Redacted] Baghdad aimed its heaviest propoganda volleys at the Syrians. The Iraqi press equated Damascus' position with that of Cairo and charged that the "devious" Syrians, in spite of their criticism of President Sadat, are themselves conspiring to entangle the Palestinians in the step-by-step approach to a settlement.

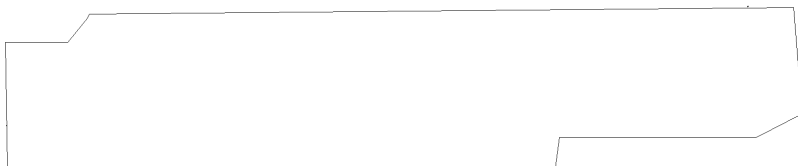
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SYRIA-ISRAEL



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PORTUGAL

Progress seems to have been made toward the formation of a new cabinet. The politicians appear to have been spurred to greater cooperation in part by what they regard as a threat from the political right.

The Revolutionary Council issued a communiqué yesterday expressing approval of Admiral Azevedo's efforts to put together a cabinet of military officers, Popular Democrats, Socialists, and Communists. After balking for some days, the Communists are now said to have agreed to let members of their party join the cabinet. Announcement of the cabinet could come as early as today.

Concern in Lisbon about a threat from the right is sparked mainly by the recent activities of former president Spínola. He arrived in Paris from Brazil last week and has reportedly been meeting with other exiles to discuss the situation in Portugal and to assess strategy.



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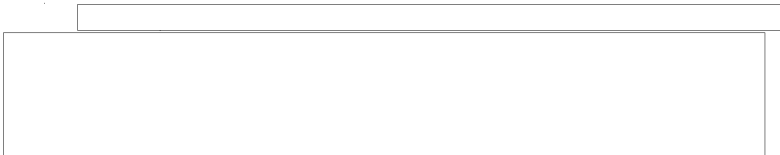
Northern Portugal is fertile ground for anti-government activity. Months of political and economic turmoil have left the public restive. Disgruntled refugees from Angola are adding to the potential for active opposition to the government.

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CYPRUS-UN

The failure of the intercommunal talks in New York this week has led the Greek Cypriots to take their case to the UN General Assembly.

The Greek Cypriots have been encouraged to take this step by the strong support they received at the recent Nonaligned Conference in Lima.



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President Makarios will come to the US later this month to lead the Greek Cypriot delegation, although Greek Cypriot negotiator Clerides told one of our officials this week that a UN debate on Cyprus would probably not take place until after the Turkish Senate election on October 12. This would give the Turks time to submit proposals on the territorial question. Clerides cautioned that a mere promise by the Turks to discuss territory would not suffice for the Greek Cypriot side to agree to another round of talks.

The impasse in the talks may prompt the EC Nine, which earlier this summer offered to mediate the dispute, to take the initiative in trying to avert an acrimonious debate in the UN. The Turks generally have been cool to an EC role in the dispute, but the prospect of heading off a debate in the General Assembly could make them more receptive.

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NOTES

Two American servicemen are reported missing in Ethiopia after an attack early this morning on a US communications facility near Asmara, presumably by Eritrean insurgents.

Asmara has been tense in anticipation of attempts by the insurgents to disrupt the observances today marking the first anniversary of Haile Selassie's ouster. The insurgents still hold two US civilians captured in Asmara last July.

* * *

Recent satellite photography of Syria shows a Scud surface-to-surface missile exercise in progress at a training area some 20 miles north-east of Damascus. This is the first time a Scud exercise has been observed in the country.

Scuds were first reported in Syria nearly two years ago, but photographic confirmation of their presence was not obtained until late May. Syria is believed to have received enough equipment from the USSR to organize at least one Scud brigade of nine missile launchers. The Scud has a range of about 160 nautical miles and could cover virtually all of Israel from southern Syria.

* * *

A Philippine bid to abolish not only the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization but also the underlying Manila Pact of 1954 has complicated planning for the organization's annual council meeting to be held in New York on September 24.

In the working group preparing for the council session, the Philippines has proposed termination of the Manila Pact when SEATO is phased out as a formal organization in two years. Thailand, however, wishes to retain the Manila Pact because, unlike the Philippines, Bangkok has no bilateral security treaty with the US.

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[Redacted] Philippine Foreign Secretary Romulo appears to be behind the change in the Philippine position, arguing that the pact is outdated and a gratuitous provocation to Asian communists. The Thai will take the lead in trying to get Manila to moderate its stand before the New York meeting.

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