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The President's Daily Brief

October 30, 1975

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

October 30, 1975

Table of Contents

Lebanon: The continued inability of political leaders to negotiate an end to the fighting in Beirut has again prompted calls for President Franjyah's resignation. (Page 1)

Syria: [redacted] President Asad is giving consideration to not renewing the mandate for the UN observer force on the Golan Heights, but we do not believe he has made a final decision. (Page 3)

25X1
25X1

France-USSR: The cool treatment that French President Giscard received during his visit to the USSR earlier this month has raised speculation in France that the "special relationship" between France and the USSR has ended. (Page 4)

25X1

Syria-Israel-Egypt: [redacted]

25X1

Korea: Passage of both conflicting resolutions on Korea by the UN General Assembly's Political Committee sets the stage for some hard bargaining when the plenary session of the assembly takes up the Korea issue early next month. (Page 6)

Note: Bangladesh (Page 7)

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LEBANON

The continued inability of political leaders to negotiate an end to the fighting in Beirut has again prompted calls for President Franjyah's resignation. He is expected to resist as long as possible.

Franjyah is a Maronite Christian who sympathizes with the right-wing Phalangists. Lebanese Muslims and the Palestinians believe he is reinforcing the Phalangists' reluctance to make political concessions that could end the fighting. Hard-line Phalangists, however, are exasperated with his reluctance to take more forceful steps to end the fighting. Moderate Christians are increasingly moving toward the view that Franjyah's departure would be an acceptable price to pay for peace.

[redacted] Christian peace negotiators have shown a qualified willingness to accept general Palestinian proposals but have been reluctant to discuss specific concessions. Fatah officials are apprehensive that the Christians may only be stalling and say they have received word of US efforts to convince the Christians to be flexible. The Fatah officials believe the Phalangists may now be inspired to compromise out of a realization that the US will not enter the battle on their side.

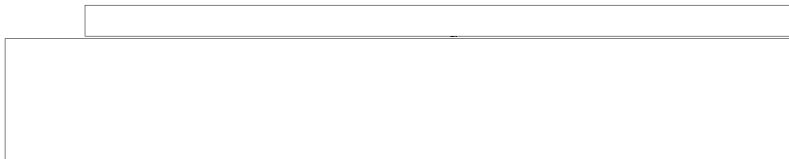
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Prime Minister Karami made slow progress yesterday in his attempt to convene the new ten-man security committee that is to implement a ceasefire. Socialist Kamal Jumblatt, apparently responding to urgings by Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, grudgingly agreed to participate, but reiterated his doubts that the group would accomplish anything. Neither Phalangist leader Jumayyil nor Interior Minister Shamun, the two most powerful Christians on the committee, has yet reported to Karami's office, although Jumayyil has said he will endorse any decisions reached by the group and will join in its deliberations as soon as security conditions permit.

(continued)

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The Prime Minister apparently plans to assemble the security committee, then ask religious and Palestinian leaders to join it in a "summit conference" that could hammer out a political solution. Karami has believed in the need for such a meeting since his appointment as prime minister in early July.



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Still another cease-fire was announced late Tuesday night, but had no effect. Heavy fighting continued in all areas of Beirut yesterday. Lebanese leftists and the Palestinians still have been unable to rout Phalangist snipers out of three hotels in the western section of the city.

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SYRIA

[redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] President Asad 25X1
is giving serious consideration to not renewing the mandate for the UN observer force on the Golan Heights. He is also weighing the possibility of a limited "war of attrition." We believe Asad has not yet made a final decision on these options and that he clearly wants to create uncertainty about his intentions.

[redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] Asad [redacted] not renew the 25X1
 mandate but will allow the UN forces to remain in 25X1
 place at least temporarily. [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] Asad believes he 25X1
 cannot obtain a satisfactory disengagement agree-
 ment at present, nor can he risk opening hostilities
 against Israel. Therefore, [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] he would hope that his refusal to renew the 25X1
 mandate would raise tensions and force the US to
 pressure Israel into agreeing to disengagement terms
 acceptable to Damascus.

[redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] Asad 25X1
 has not yet made up his mind about the mandate and
 is leaning toward renewing it. [redacted]

[redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] Asad [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] thought renewing the mandate 25X1
 would be a good idea, provided some political ges-
 ture, such as a new UN resolution, accompanied it.

[redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] Asad may have intended that his suggestion for 25X1
 a new UN resolution should reach US officials.

[redacted] 25X1

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FRANCE-USSR

The cool treatment that President Giscard received during his visit to the USSR earlier this month has raised speculation in France that the "special relationship" between France and the USSR--nurtured by De Gaulle--has ended. The French-Soviet relationship has always had a strong element of mythology and opportunism, and Paris has not been under any illusions about its importance to Moscow once the Germans reconciled themselves to partition and detente was under way with the US.

The Soviet rebuff of the French President in Moscow probably resulted largely from Giscard's exaggerated expectations of what he could expect on implementation of the humanitarian issues agreed upon at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The French were in the forefront of those who had pushed for Soviet commitments at CSCE, and Giscard reportedly felt a responsibility--and opportunity--as the first Western head of state to visit Moscow after Helsinki to gain a broad bilateral implementation agreement.

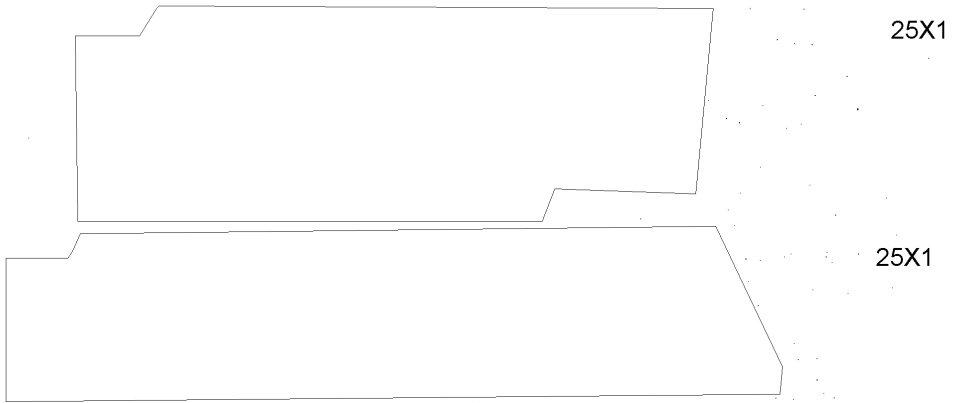
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A senior French official in Moscow has said that vigorous French Communist Party pressure also was partially responsible for the treatment accorded Giscard. Knowledgeable sources in Paris have told our embassy that the French Communists shared with the Soviets an interest in putting a damper on Giscard's visit.

The results of the visit are unlikely to have a lasting effect on French domestic politics. The trip was initially interpreted by some French newspapers and political leaders as personally damaging to Giscard. An opinion poll taken after his return, however, showed 60 percent of the people supported his tactics in Moscow.

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SYRIA-ISRAEL-EGYPT



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KOREA

The passage last night of both conflicting resolutions on Korea by the UN General Assembly's Political Committee sets the stage for some hard bargaining when the plenary session of the assembly takes up the Korea issue early next month.

The pro-Seoul resolution--emphasizing the need to maintain the Korean Armistice Agreement and Seoul's right to participate in future security arrangements--passed by a vote of 59 to 51, with 29 abstentions.

The pro-Pyongyang draft--featuring a call for the unconditional dissolution of the UN command and the withdrawal of all "foreign" forces--passed 51 to 38, with 50 abstentions.

The vote reflected Pyongyang's growing diplomatic support in Southeast Asia and among the non-aligned countries. Australia, the Philippines, Turkey, and Greece were among the countries that shifted from votes against the pro-Pyongyang draft last year to abstentions.

There will be strong pressures at the plenary for a compromise. The North Koreans, having for the first time won a UN endorsement of their views--however ambiguous--will strongly resist abandoning their major positions. The only viable formula may be one that leaves the major Korean security issues unsettled for yet another year.

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NOTE

Two Bangladesh army officers, who were key organizers of the coup last August, have approached the US embassy in Dacca twice in the last ten days with informal requests for military assistance.

The two officers said that aid is needed to thwart what they assert are efforts by India, with Soviet backing, to undermine the government of President Mushtaque. Among other things, they allege that India is giving aid and sanctuary to a group of armed guerrillas led by a die-hard supporter of former president Mujib. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted] It is unclear whether the officers were speaking for or with the knowledge of Mushtaque, but they are almost certainly reflecting the fears of Indian intentions held by Mushtaque and other Bengalee leaders.

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