

The President's Daily Brief

November 7, 1975

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SPANISH SAHARA

Morocco's threat last night to break the agreement with Spain limiting its mass march into Spanish Sahara, coupled with a stern warning from Algeria that the Moroccans must be forced to withdraw soon, sets the stage for a violent showdown.

Morocco last night "unofficially" informed the Spanish that the agreement to stop the march a few miles inside Spanish Sahara had "lost its value" because Madrid had publicized it. Unless Spain agrees to a new round of negotiations on the fate of the territory, the Moroccans say the march will continue today. The Moroccans indicated that if Spanish forces fire on the marchers, Rabat will find it difficult to avoid intervening with its own forces.

The Moroccan ultimatum preceded the adoption last night of a UN Security Council resolution calling for the withdrawal of the marchers, but there is no sign that Rabat has been deterred by the resolution.

Algeria last night issued what Ambassador Parker interprets to be an ultimatum threatening intervention in the disputed territory. President Boumediene summoned the ambassadors of all permanent Security Council members and told them that some concrete action must be taken to stop the Moroccan march. With the US ambassador, he was somewhat more direct, noting that he believes the US has enough influence with King Hassan to force him to stop the march simply by telling him to do so.

Satellite photographs taken in late October confirm an Algerian buildup of military equipment at two border cities. [redacted]

[redacted] Algerian forces are in position to move against Morocco, and Ambassador Parker says he has no doubt they will do so if Hassan does not recall his people.

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LEBANON

Beirut was relatively quiet yesterday, but efforts by warring factions to rearm themselves threaten both the cease-fire and the uneasy reconciliation between Prime Minister Karami and Interior Minister Shamun.

A showdown between Karami on the one hand and Shamun and President Franjiyah on the other is developing over attempts by Christian forces to unload a shipment of arms that arrived Tuesday at Juniyah, 12 miles north of Beirut. Karami complained to Ambassador Godley yesterday that his order to army units to halt unloading of the ship's cargo was not being followed.

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BANGLADESH

Major General Zia ur-Rahman seized power in Bangladesh early this morning. Major General Musharraf, who had taken over earlier this week, may have been killed.

The 39-year-old Zia is evidently highly popular among army troops; he played a leading role in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971, and it was he who first broadcast the country's declaration of independence. The US embassy reports that Zia's take-over seems to have aroused more enthusiasm among civilians as well as among the troops than did either Musharraf's power play earlier this week or the coup last August.

India, which was caught off guard by Musharraf's move, seems to have been surprised again. The continuing instability in Dacca increases the chance that India will try directly to influence events in Bangladesh. Indian officials have indicated in recent months that continued turmoil in Bangladesh or a massive influx of refugees into India, such as happened in 1971, could result in Indian military intervention.

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USSR

Soviet press coverage of this week's personnel shifts in Washington has been essentially factual, but the message being conveyed to the Soviet audience is that the changes are likely to be favorable for the USSR.

In covering your press conference, Moscow has concentrated on continuity in policy toward the Soviet Union and the mutually advantageous nature of the US-Soviet relationship. The Soviets have also been careful to include your statement that Secretary Kissinger will continue to play the dominant role in US foreign policy.

Izvestia's Washington correspondent reported your remarks on pursuing strategic arms limitation talks with the USSR but omitted the statement that the US is not negotiating under pressure of time.

Borrowing heavily from US media interpretations to explain the changes, *Izvestia* described Secretary Schlesinger's "removal" as unexpected but noted "well-known differences with the secretary of state, particularly on the detente question and the SALT talks." It also cited clashes between the defense secretary and congressional advocates of reduced military spending.

The departure of Director Colby was attributed solely to efforts to "repair the badly tattered public image of the intelligence community."

Vice President Rockefeller's "self-elimination" from the 1976 race was viewed as improving your room for maneuver in response to pressure from the political right.

The Soviets have generally limited public comment on the nominees to brief career sketches. The Soviet military daily *Red Star*, however, carried US press assessments of Donald Rumsfeld as a member of the "moderate wing" of the Republican Party.

PORTUGAL

Prime Minister Azevedo's government may face new challenges in the next few days as extremists recognize that their opportunities for attaining power are slipping away.

Although many problems remain, Azevedo has had considerable success in asserting the government's authority and demonstrating his own popular support. He has also reduced Communist influence in the media and the military, and he is determined to purge Communists and their allies from key positions in the government.

Azevedo's success has put the Communists on the defensive. Communist Party leader Cunhal had a long private session with President Costa Gomes on Tuesday. Costa Gomes has been relatively responsive to Communist pleas in the past, and it is likely that Cunhal appealed to the President for support.

The Communists are also resorting to street action in attempts to recoup some of their losses.

--Communist transport workers occupied the office of the labor minister on Wednesday to protest the "purge" of leftists from the ministry's staff.

--Leftist telephone workers occupied Lisbon's main post office yesterday, demanding the dismissal of five administrators with alleged right-wing connections.

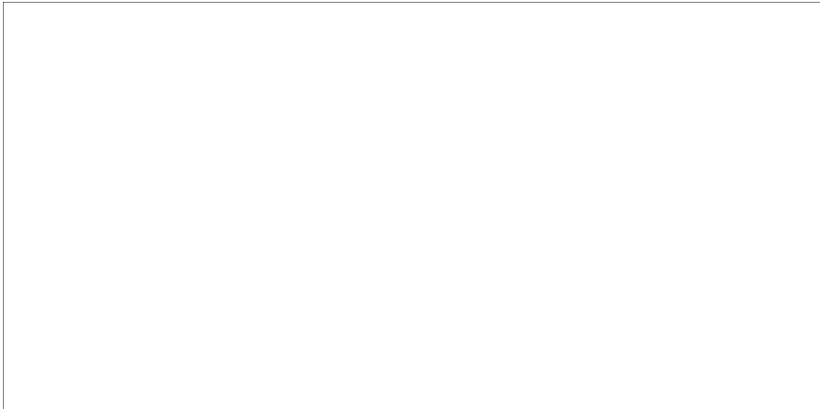
--Communist and Socialist workers battled Wednesday night for control of one of Lisbon's main newspapers.

--Leftist mobs protesting the government's drive to reduce Communist influence in the media yesterday attempted to seize the information ministry.

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In addition to testing the regime's will, these disturbances may have a more devious purpose. They may be intended to provoke a coup attempt by those people within the government that have become increasingly impatient with the lack of discipline in Portuguese society. The Communists are betting that such an attempt would not be successful and that their own fortunes would rise in the aftermath.



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CHINA



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NOTES

Soviet Politburo member Pelshe, who delivered the traditional speech yesterday on the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, made only cursory references to relations with the US.

Pelshe's party responsibilities are primarily on the domestic side, but even so his treatment of relations with the US was brief for this key aspect of Soviet foreign policy. He said nothing about the contribution of summitry to the relationship or about General Secretary Brezhnev's next trip to the US. He did endorse the strategic arms limitations talks, but lumped them with the force reduction talks in another part of his speech.

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Soviet

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Angola

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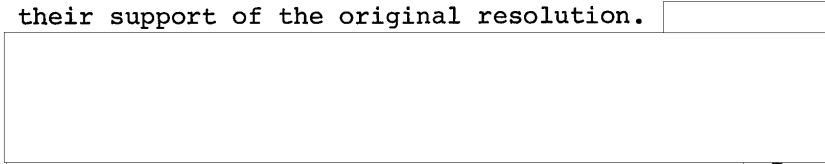
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UN General Assembly debate on the resolution condemning Zionism as a form of racism--passed by a subsidiary committee last month--threatens to strain traditional UN voting alignments and further erode support of the organization by some of the developed countries.

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The Arab countries themselves are divided in their support of the original resolution.

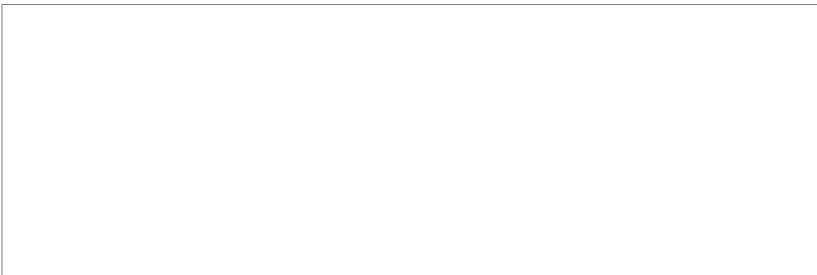


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In any event, amendments to the resolution probably would not substantially change alignment for or against it. Many countries may opt for abstention as the safest course. The only hope at present for defusing the issue lies in motions to defer the vote until the end of the session or to postpone the entire debate until next year. Although not promising, this tactic has some chance for success.

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