

# The President's Daily Brief

*December 1, 1975*

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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(This Brief, with information as of 1:00 P.M. EST, was cabled on this date to the President in Asia.)

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## ISRAEL

*The cabinet, meeting in special session today, has announced that it will have nothing to do with the proposed Security Council debate on the Middle East in January. Although the cabinet said Israel will adhere to the disengagement agreement on the Golan Heights, it rejected the Security Council's linkage of the UN mandate renewal to broader political issues.*

The cabinet further noted that Israel considers the Security Council decision to debate the Palestinian question as a move that is likely to hinder progress toward peace. It reaffirmed Israel's determination not to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization or to attend the Geneva conference if the PLO is invited.

The cabinet did not close the door to further negotiations with Syria as a result of the Security Council resolution, but noted that as a result of the resolution "discussions" have been authorized on the establishment of new Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights. The government heretofore has refused to act on applications for new settlements in order not to jeopardize any future peace negotiations.

The cabinet statement avoided criticism of the US, and most press commentary has not directly condemned Washington for approving that part of the resolution calling for a debate on the Middle East question. Nonetheless, the Israelis' reporting of the US vote on the resolution is played in such a way as to associate the US obliquely with a decision they regard as unacceptable. A radio broadcast this morning, for instance, reported that despite reservations the US voted in favor of a "resolution proposed by the Arabs' friends in the Security Council." The broadcast quoted Secretary Kissinger as expressing great relief that the resolution had passed, implying his support for all elements of the Council's decisions.

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The Israelis seem to be deliberately ignoring the fine points of the Security Council action, such as the distinction between the resolution itself and the separate statement of understanding regarding PLO participation in the debate. They read both documents as a single package that will have the net effect of placing Israel under pressure to recognize and negotiate with the PLO. Their initial comments suggest the Israelis are prepared to believe the US will be a party to this pressure.

The cabinet debate apparently did provoke a recommendation from some ministers that Israel revise its position on the Palestinian question, but in the end any such accommodation was rejected, at least for the present. According to Jerusalem radio reports, five ministers proposed that the government announce that Israel would negotiate with any Palestinian element that recognized Israel's existence. This is a position the Israeli government has consistently rejected.

Syria, the PLO, and Egypt have predictably issued statements expressing satisfaction with the Security Council resolution.

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INDIA

*The cabinet shuffle on Sunday does not significantly alter the ideological complexion of the government, nor does it appear to have any connection with New Delhi's present foreign policy concerns.*

The shakeup comes on the eve of an important Congress Party session, however, and may be part of a general housecleaning by Prime Minister Gandhi. Last week she forced the resignation of the Congress Party chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. The cabinet change removes two important members of the government--Minister of Defense Swaran Singh and Minister of Shipping and Transport Uma Shankar Dikshit--as well as two lesser known ministers of state. Singh may have irritated the Prime Minister with his alleged criticism of her decision to impose a state of emergency last June.

The two new cabinet ministers are Bansi Lal, who becomes Minister without Portfolio, and Gurdial Singh Dhillon, who takes over the Shipping and Transportation Ministry. Both men have been close to Gandhi, particularly in the months since the emergency was proclaimed. Gandhi, at least temporarily, will take over the Defense Ministry.

NOTES

*Nothing unusual was revealed in the first public report of the Soviet Central Committee meeting on December 1.*

The committee announced that General Secretary Brezhnev will deliver the main report at the Party Congress which opens February 24. Premier Kosygin will speak on the economy. Brezhnev spoke at the plenum, but the text of this speech probably will not be made public. Next year's economic plan and budget were approved; they will also be taken up at the session of the Supreme Soviet--the USSR's legislature--which opens December 2.

\* \* \*

Spanish Communist Party leader Santiago Carrillo may soon test the government's political tolerance.

He announced his intention Sunday of returning to Spain legally or illegally from his exile in Paris. Aside from his party position, some of his recently published statements will make it difficult for the government to permit his return. Carrillo has criticized King Juan Carlos as "Franco's king," and has said he may call for demonstrations against the limited pardons granted last week.

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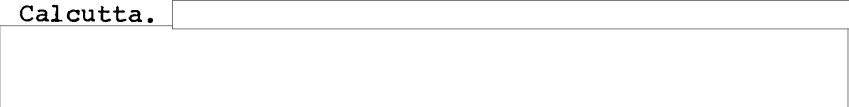
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*The scheduled visit to India early this week of a high-level Bengalee delegation to discuss means of improving relations will be delayed for at least a week.*

The meeting was proposed by Bangladesh President Sayem following last week's attack on the Indian High Commissioner in Dacca. The proposal to send a high-level delegation to New Delhi has met resistance in Dacca, where some officials view the proposal as a sign of weakness. The Indian government also is skeptical about the visit and wants to exclude from the delegation anyone New Delhi regards as anti-Indian. A meeting of Bangladesh and Indian border commanders is scheduled for December 2 in Calcutta.

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*The New Zealand National Party victory in Saturday's election should improve Wellington's ties with the US.*

Prime minister-elect Muldoon will probably drop the Labor government's ban on port calls by nuclear-powered warships and its proposal for a South Pacific zone closed to vessels carrying nuclear arms. Muldoon sees both of these as bars to full military cooperation with the US. The margin of the National Party victory surprised even party stalwarts. Its 19-seat majority in the 87-seat parliament could increase as close contests are decided. The new government will probably assume office on December 12.

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*The Lao Foreign Ministry today announced the end of the coalition government.*

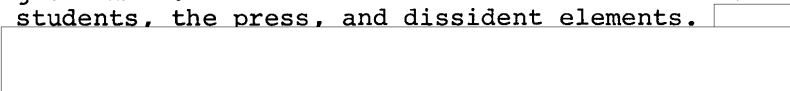
Representatives of non-communist governments in Vientiane were told that the coalition had served its purpose and was being changed to conform to the "people's wishes" and the "present situation." A Foreign Ministry spokesman stated that a new government would be formed shortly and confirmed that Prince Souvanna Phouma and King Savang had been informed of this decision. Both are expected to announce their resignations shortly.

\* \* \*

*Nepalese King Birendra appointed a new prime minister and made other cabinet changes on December 1.*

The appointments may be another indication that the King is moving to reassert firm control over the government. In recent months he has cracked down on students, the press, and dissident elements.

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