



The President's Daily Brief

January 24, 1976

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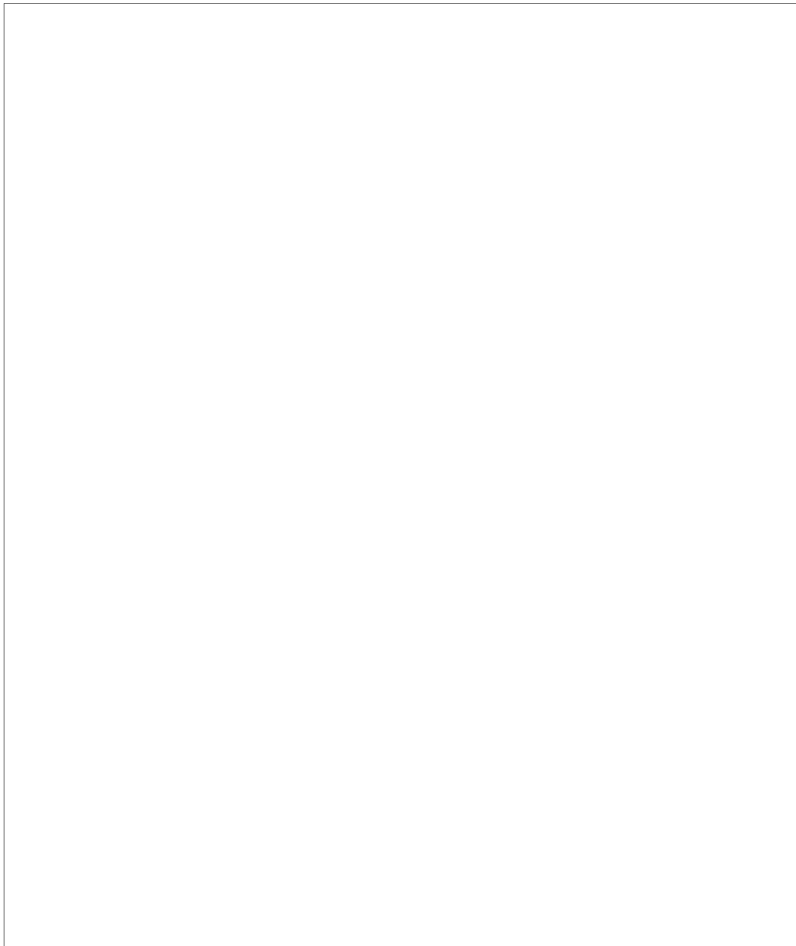
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LEBANON



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USSR-LEBANON

The Soviets probably welcome the latest moves toward resolution of the Lebanese crisis.

Although *Pravda* alluded yesterday to the "intrigues" of "reactionary imperialist forces" against Lebanon and warned against Israeli plans to intervene, there are no solid indications that Moscow is seriously concerned about foreign intervention at this time.

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A settlement of the crisis along the lines worked out by President Franjyah and Syrian President Asad would be to Moscow's liking. The Soviets would approve of the strengthening of the Lebanese left and the increased prestige accruing to the Palestinians and the Syrians. They would applaud the fact that Egyptian President Sadat has largely been isolated from involvement in reaching a settlement.

Moscow has already sought to link the Lebanese turmoil to a need for a Middle East settlement via the Geneva conference. *Pravda* yesterday went a step further when it implied that creation of a Palestinian state would enable "hundreds of thousands" of Palestinians to leave Lebanon.

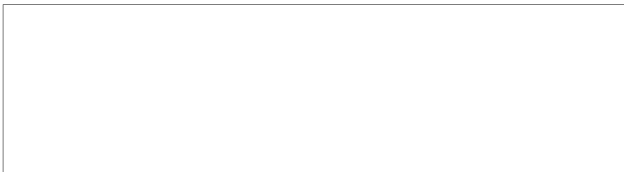
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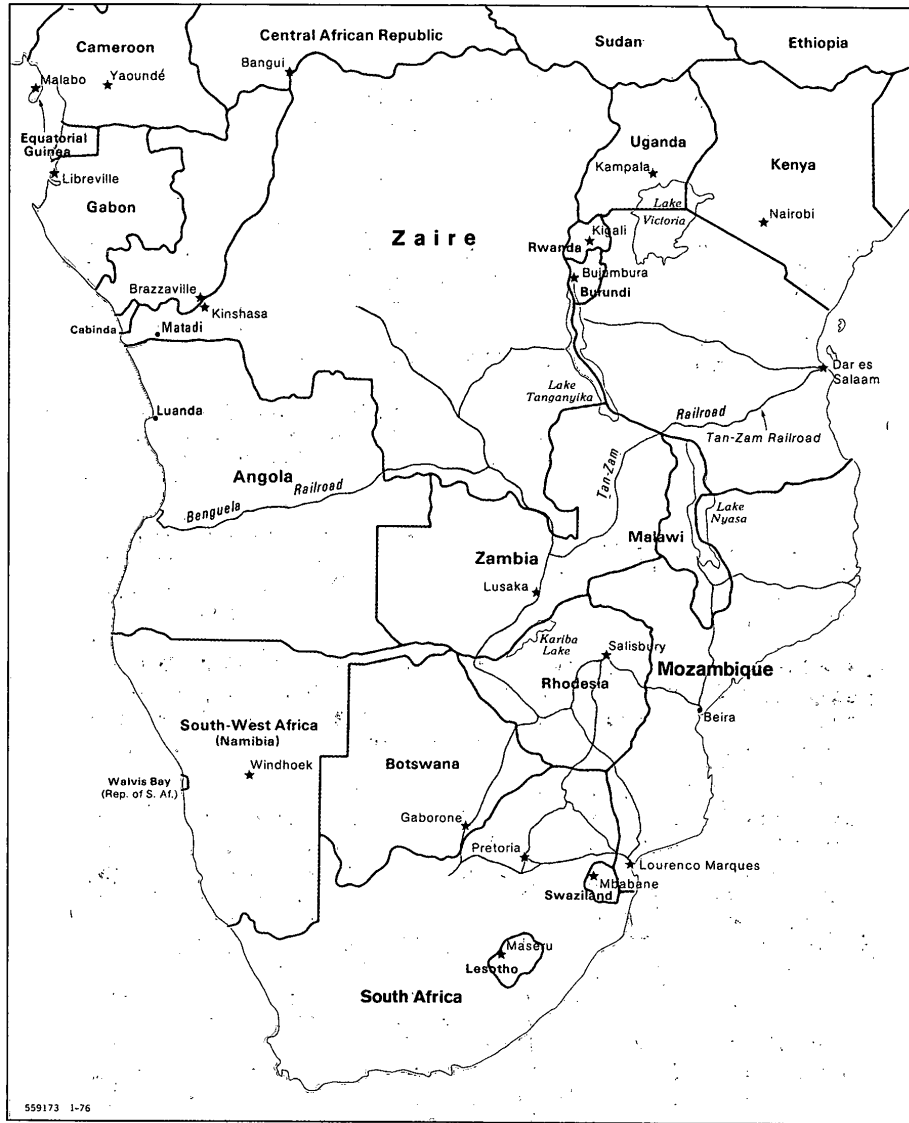


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PORTUGAL

Direct negotiations began this week on a new political pact between the Portuguese military and political parties over the role each will play in a revised government. The draft agreement presented by the military has already been sharply criticized by democratic party leaders who believe it keeps too much power in the hands of the all-military Revolutionary Council.

Although the military proposal appears unacceptable to the parties in its present form, it is less restrictive than the agreement signed last April that assured the military virtual control of Portuguese politics for three to five years. The Socialist, Popular Democratic, and Social Democratic Center parties nevertheless hope to restrict the council to an advisory role.

The Communists and their allies, on the other hand, want the armed forces to retain the upper hand in the Lisbon government in the belief that Communist influence continues to be greater in the armed forces than among the civilian population.

The pace of negotiations will have to pick up if elections are to be held as scheduled on April 25.

In the Azores, recent concessions by the Portuguese government on autonomy have strengthened local leaders who favor autonomy over independence and have relaxed political tensions in the islands.

NOTES

Spanish Prime Minister Arias' plan to reform the political system encountered obstacles yesterday when the rightist-dominated Council of the Realm voted against the proposal to postpone parliamentary elections for one year; elections are now scheduled for March 1.

The Cabinet had proposed the delay to allow time for changes that would make the Parliament more representative. The Council is scheduled to meet again Monday, apparently to take another vote, and King Juan Carlos and his ministers may try for a postponement of at least a few months rather than a year.

If the Council should refuse to compromise, the King and the Cabinet might decide to issue the decree anyway, on the grounds that the Council's role is vaguely defined in the constitution. Such a move would provide an early test of strength between the reform-minded Cabinet and establishment rightists.

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Satellite photography of mid-December indicates that Iraq has at least 700 tank transporters, almost twice our previous estimate of the Iraqi inventory.

In the October 1973 war, Iraqi forces were hampered in their movement to the Golan Heights by a lack of transporters for armored vehicles. With the new transporters, Iraq can move a larger force to the Golan Heights, and can complete the move in less time than we had thought. The transporters are enough to move the tanks of two armored divisions and a mechanized infantry division--approximately the force we estimate Baghdad would send to Syria in the event of another war with Israel.

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North Yemen



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India



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The EC decided this week to give Yugoslavia access to European Investment Bank funds.

Concerned that Soviet influence in Yugoslavia will increase after President Tito's death, some members are anxious to take steps now to broaden Belgrade's relations with the West. The EC Council has authorized an initial \$60 million to construct a trans-Yugoslavian highway that will link Italy and Greece. This is the first time a Communist country has been given access to credits from the investment bank.

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	Jamaica	

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