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The President's Daily Brief

April 19, 1976

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Table of Contents

Lebanon: Leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt and Phalanges chief Pierre Jumayyil have approved the Syrian-Palestinian agreement on Lebanon announced late last week. (Page 1)

China: The reappearance of Yeh Chien-ying is a further indication that moderates as a group have come through the anti-Teng campaign relatively unscathed. (Page 2)

Notes: Angola-USSR; Rhodesia (Page 3)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

LEBANON: *Lebanese leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt and Phalanges Party chief Pierre Jumayyil over the weekend gave their general approval to the Syrian-Palestinian agreement on Lebanon announced late last week.*

Jumblatt is supporting the basically pro-Syria accord primarily because he has no realistic alternative. The large fedayeen groups that provide the bulk of his arms and fighting men are--for the moment, at least--cooperating with Damascus.

The Lebanese leftists and Palestinians apparently did elicit some concessions from Syria, probably including an agreement to withdraw some Syrian forces from Lebanon and ease the blockade of supplies to the left.

We have no evidence to confirm press reports that significant numbers of Syrian forces have withdrawn from Lebanon. We doubt that Damascus will withdraw large numbers of troops until significant political progress has been made in Beirut.

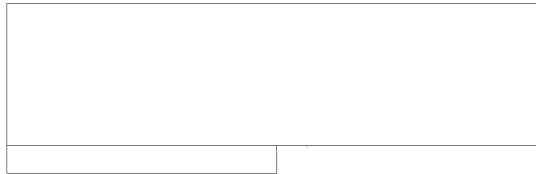
Important Christian leaders are taking special care to make as few concessions as possible until agreement has been reached on a successor to President Franjiah. Franjiah yesterday still had not delivered to the speaker of parliament a signed copy of the constitutional amendment that would permit a new presidential election. He must do this before an election can be held.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CHINA: *Yeh Chien-ying, a leading moderate and the only major figure who had not made a public appearance since the ouster of Teng Hsiao-ping, attended a diplomatic reception in Peking on Saturday. His reappearance is a further indication that moderates as a group have come through the anti-Teng campaign relatively unscathed.*

Yeh left his post as defense minister in protest last January when Teng Hsiao-ping was not named premier. A document issued by Peking claimed that Yeh was "ill" and that his duties were being performed by the Peking Military Region commander. 25X1



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Defense ministry spokesmen, however, have repeatedly denied any changes in the leadership of the ministry--suggesting that the portfolio was held for Yeh during his period of protest.

Yeh reportedly has spent the last few months in south China. It seems unlikely that he would have returned to Peking if he had actually lost his job as defense minister.

Reports of Yeh's attendance at the reception did not identify him as minister of defense. Although this failure to identify him by that title is not unusual, it could mean that the job is still subject to bargaining.

Yeh's return to public view makes the non-appearance of party leftists--the leaders in the anti-Teng campaign--all the more conspicuous. None has appeared since the demonstrations on April 5.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Angolan President Agostinho Neto may visit the Soviet Union later this month.

[Redacted]

If the visit materializes, Neto will probably ask for continued Soviet military assistance. He is unlikely, however, to give Moscow an opportunity to establish a major military presence in Angola.

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Luanda shows signs of wanting to follow a non-aligned foreign policy.

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Rhodesia

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