

The President's Daily Brief

August 2, 1976

2

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August 2, 1976

50X1

Table of Contents

50X1

Lebanon: The Syrian-Palestinian accord has not led to a reduction in the fighting in Lebanon.

Syria: President Asad's designation of a new prime minister is a sign of his confidence in his domestic position. *(Page 3)*

USSR: The Soviet aircraft carrier Kiev entered the Atlantic Ocean on Saturday. *(Page 5)*

Note: Cuba-Angola *(Page 6)*

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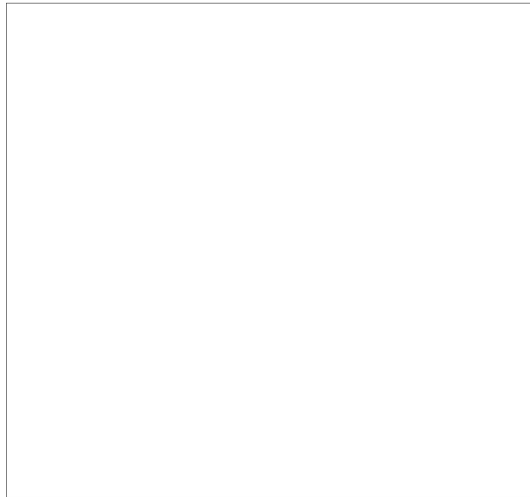


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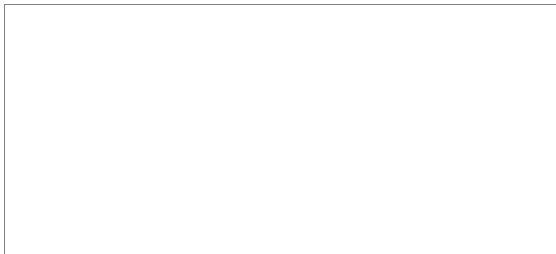
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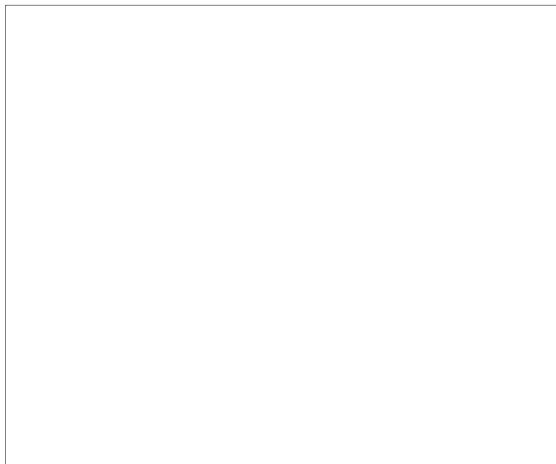
LEBANON: *The shaky Syrian-Palestinian accord signed in Damascus on Thursday has had no effect so far in quieting the fighting in Lebanon, which intensified over the weekend.*



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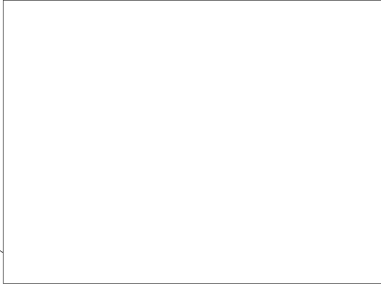


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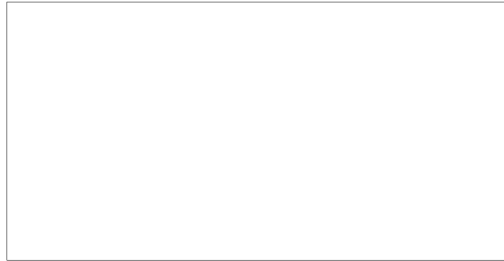


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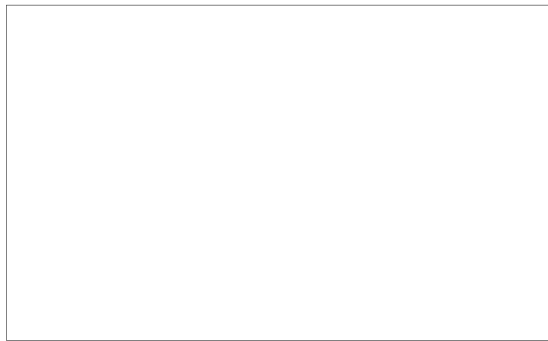


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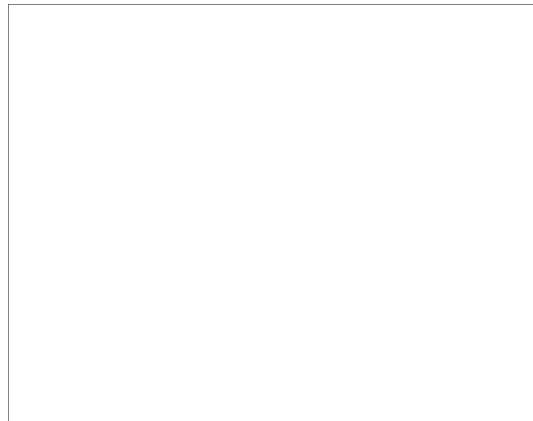
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Beirut's pro-Christian radio is claiming that early on Friday a Libyan ship at the port of Sidon unloaded 48 armored vehicles and 22 amphibious armored troop carriers, which were said to be manufactured in the USSR.



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The Christian radio has meanwhile seized on the arrival of the Libyan troop carriers--which it claims are still in the Sidon area--to justify what appears to be a Syrian offensive in the south.

50X1

the Syrians are concentrating at Jazzin, from which they had partially withdrawn, and that after an intense artillery and rocket barrage, a battalion of tanks and a battalion of infantry moved west on the road to Sidon as far as Rum. Faruq Qaddumi, the Palestinian official who negotiated the Damascus accord, has sent an urgent message to Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam asking the Syrians to stop.

The Syrian advance toward Sidon may have been sparked by the arrival of Libyan troops and equipment. The Palestinians have been receiving a steady stream of supplies through Sidon since the Syrians withdrew from the immediate vicinity of the city some weeks ago in an earlier attempt to pave the way for a cease-fire.

SYRIA: The designation of Major General Abd Ar-Rahman Khulayfawi as Syria's new prime minister reflects President Asad's confidence in his domestic position and his current policies, particularly his intervention in Lebanon.

Prime Minister Ayyubi's resignation has been expected for some time. After losing his top party post in last year's intraparty elections, Ayyubi offered to resign. Asad, believing that the effort to unseat Ayyubi was directed at curtailing his own power, refused to replace Ayyubi then in order to avoid any appearance of giving in to internal pressures.

With Syrian troops firmly ensconced in Lebanon and the Syrian-Palestinian accord concluded, Asad apparently now believes that he can go ahead with the cabinet change. No other cabinet appointments have

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been announced, but many key ministers are likely to stay on in order to underscore Asad's intention to continue his present policies.

If Foreign Minister Khaddam is not reappointed, it could signal Damascus' desire to improve relations with Cairo because Khaddam is disliked by President Sadat and other top Egyptian officials. As a faithful Asad lieutenant and Syria's principal foreign policy spokesman since the 1973 war, however, Khaddam is likely to be retained.

The new prime minister is a long time confidant of President Asad.

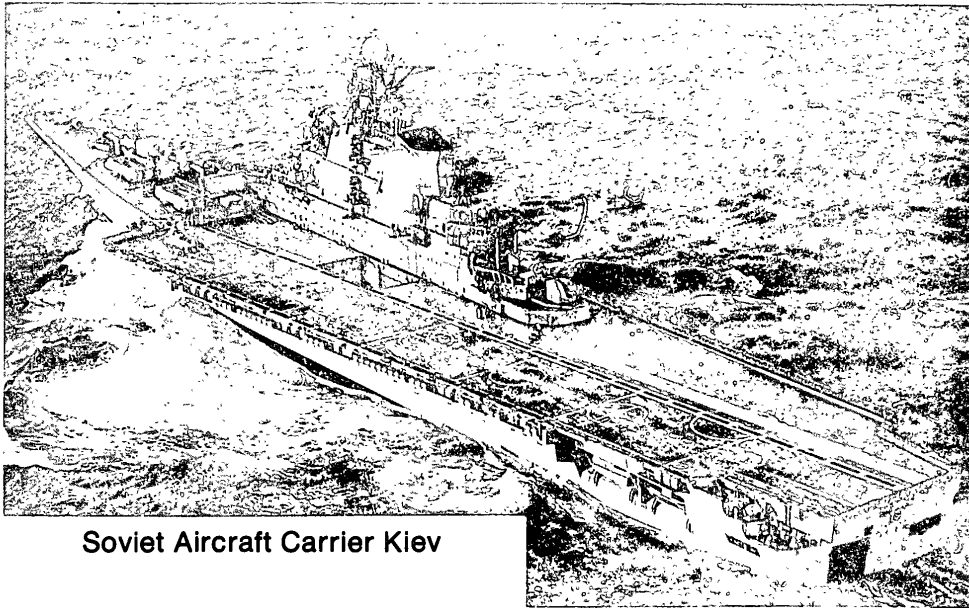
Khulayfawi was one of his key supporters when Asad took power in 1970 and served as minister of interior and prime minister until ill health forced him to resign in late 1972. Well regarded in both party and military circles, he is considered to be an effective administrator.

Like Ayyubi, Khulayfawi is from a prominent Damascus family and is a member of Syria's Sunni orthodox Muslim majority. He thus will preserve the regional and confessional balance in Asad's regime. Asad and many of his supporters in the army belong to a small Muslim sect from Syria's coastal region. Asad also may have appointed the former army general to strengthen military support for the government.



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Soviet Aircraft Carrier Kiev

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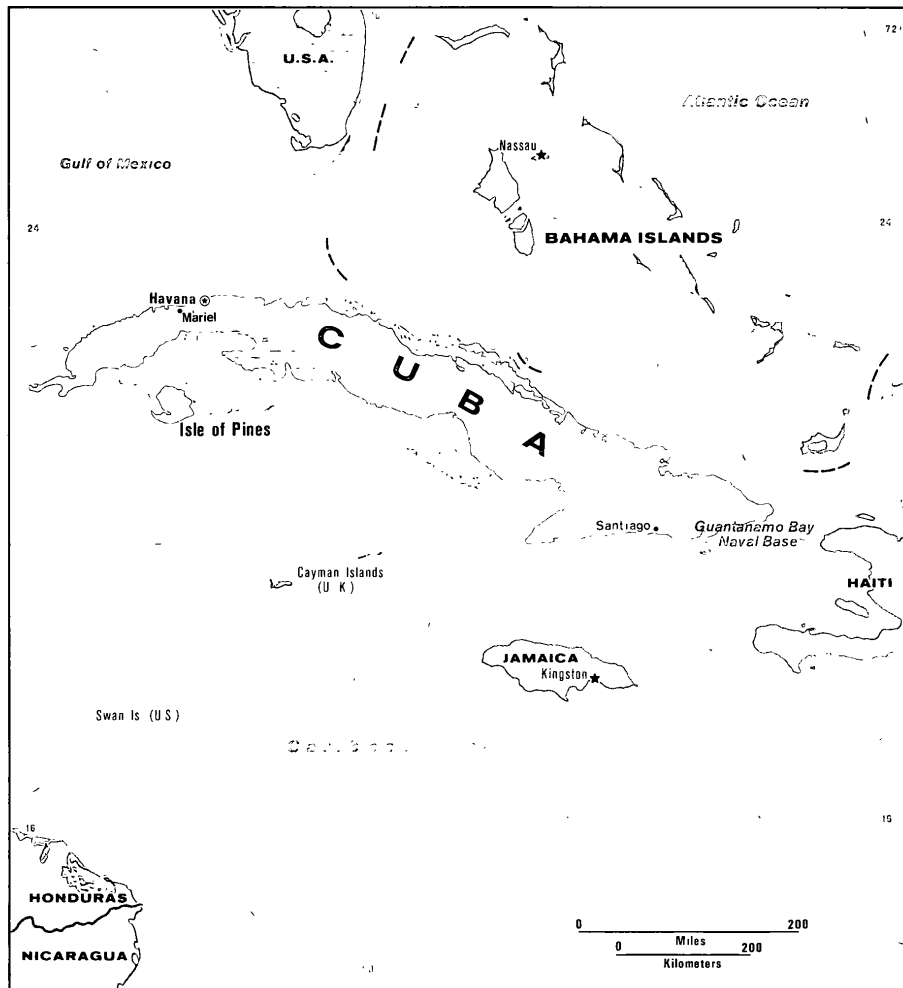
USSR: *The Soviet aircraft carrier Kiev and two destroyers passed through the Strait of Gibraltar and into the Atlantic Ocean on Saturday.*

The carrier may conduct operations in the Atlantic for a short time and then return to the Mediterranean. More likely, the Kiev also could proceed to the Northern Fleet for familiarization and to conduct full-range tests of its antiship missile system. The two destroyers accompanying the aircraft carrier are originally from the Baltic Fleet and may have come south primarily to escort the Kiev to northern waters.

50X1

The Kiev left the Black Sea on its first voyage out of home waters on July 18. During the last two weeks of July, it conducted antisubmarine warfare operations with other Soviet naval units at several locations in the eastern and central Mediterranean. The Kiev carries vertical-or-short-take-off-and-landing fighters and helicopters.

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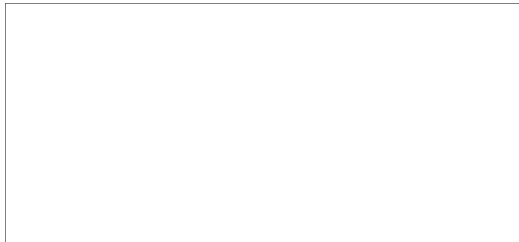
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NOTE

The Cuban convoy that departed Angolan waters in mid-July arrived at the military port of Mariel west of Havana on Saturday.

At least one of the five ships in the convoy apparently stopped off^{50X1} briefly last Thursday at the port of Santiago.



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