



The President's Daily Brief

September 8, 1976

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LEBANON: Syria continues preparations to ensure a smooth transfer of power to Lebanese president-elect Sarkis.

Pierre Jumayyil and a high-level Phalangist delegation met with Syrian President Asad on Monday, and extremist Christian leader Camille Shamun is scheduled to visit Damascus today for consultations.

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In the course of his talks with Asad, Shamun is expected [redacted] to press his standard demand that the Palestinians be totally disarmed before any further negotiations. Shamun, who is skeptical about the prospects for peace, would prefer to resume Christian offensive operations.

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PLO chief Yasir Arafat, Lebanese leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt, and other Palestinian and leftist leaders met in Beirut on Monday and rejected a "Syrian peace plan" brought back by Arafat's envoys from Damascus over the weekend.

Fighting in most of Lebanon remains at a generally low level.

Exceptions are Beirut where shelling has increased again and the Mount Lebanon area where the Christians are shelling Palestinian-held villages.

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ANGOLA-PORTUGAL: Portuguese Prime Minister Soares told Ambassador Carlucci that Angolan leaders expressed to a visiting Portuguese Socialist Party delegation last week their wish to re-establish diplomatic relations with Portugal.

According to Soares, the Angolans felt they had been pushed into too close a relationship with the Soviet Union and now wanted to develop a more independent position.

Soares said the Angolans even raised the possibility of a "privileged relationship" for Portugal.

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They need technical assistance and apparently hope to see the return of Portuguese technicians. The Angolans also made the point that Portugal could help Luanda establish links with Europe and contacts that would facilitate Angola's admission to the UN.

The Portuguese delegation gained the impression that conditions had improved in Angola. Stores were well stocked and the people appeared to have more money. Most Angolans who were questioned on the situation credited American petroleum operations rather than Soviet aid.

The exchange of views last week was on a party-to-party basis. Following the talks, however, both sides publicly proposed re-establishing diplomatic relations, and government-level exchanges can be expected in the near future.

The minority Socialist government in Lisbon has promised to cultivate close ties with all Portuguese-speaking nations, and the restoration of relations with Angola would give it a needed foreign policy success. The government would also probably like to reduce the economic strain caused by the return of some 600,000 refugees from the territories by sending some of them back to Angola.

Angola's approach to the Portuguese Socialists occurred during the same week that President Neto sent a private message to Washington--delivered through the US embassy in Stockholm--expressing interest in establishing normal relations.

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