



# The President's Daily Brief

*September 11, 1976*

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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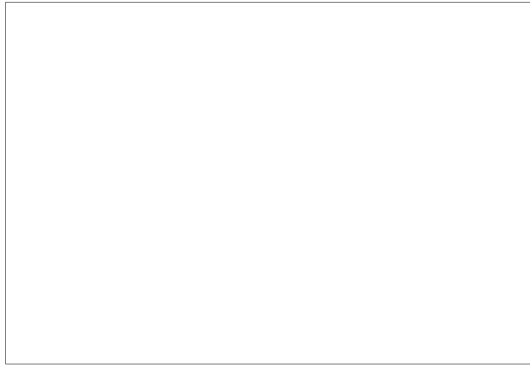
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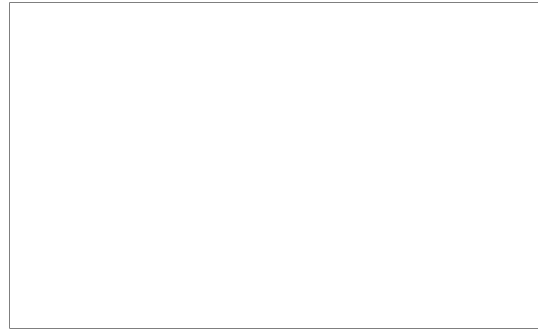

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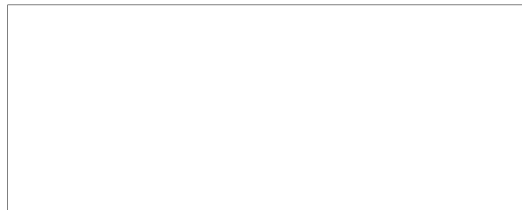
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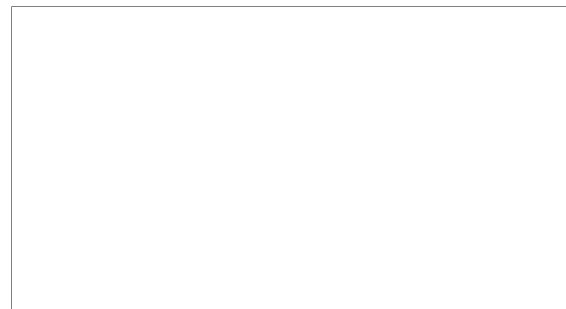
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LEBANON: Interior Minister Shamun, the most extreme of the major Christian leaders, apparently agreed during talks in Syria this week to allow an orderly transfer of power to president-elect Sarkis on September 23.

Syrian President Asad and leaders of the larger Christian Phalanges Party believe Sarkis should take office before new political or military initiatives are launched.

Shamun and Asad reportedly discussed the possibility of moving "symbolic" Syrian units into Christian-held areas of Lebanon for a possible new military push to be made if the political stalemate continues after September 23. Such a move would be intended to support the fiction that Syrian troops are in Lebanon as a peace-keeping force rather than to assist only one side.

Egypt is now attempting to become centrally involved in the Lebanese diplomatic negotiations.

Palestinian and Lebanese leftist and Muslim leaders have recently consulted with Egyptian officials in Cairo. Foreign Minister Fahmi is scheduled to receive a number of other Lebanese politicians in the near future, including Phalanges chief Jumayyil and socialist leader Jumblatt.

Cairo has had little success in limiting Syria's influence in Lebanon by supporting the Lebanese leftists and the Palestinians and presumably is now hoping it can counter Damascus more effectively with assertive diplomatic action. Egypt may also be working to ensure that it will be included in any peace talks that might follow Sarkis' installation and to prepare for the Arab summit that is scheduled to consider the Lebanon problem late next month.

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*IRAQ-SYRIA: Baghdad has reduced its forces in western Iraq by about 10,000 men, and we have indications that additional withdrawals are planned.*

Iraq began moving troops toward the Syrian border in early June, apparently in an effort to relieve Syrian pressure on Palestinian and leftist forces in Lebanon, and has maintained a force of 70,000 to 80,000 troops in the west since early July.

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*SOUTH AFRICA: The spread of rioting this week has complicated Prime Minister Vorster's efforts to reach a consensus within the ruling National Party on a strategy to reduce South Africa's mounting racial tensions.*

For several weeks the South African press has been speculating that Vorster intends, through closed-door sessions with members of Parliament and the provincial councils, to gain broad support for some modifications of the apartheid system. A special National Party caucus did convene yesterday.

This week Vorster told a provincial party congress that he would consider measures to alleviate poor living conditions among non-whites, but he said that they had no right to participate in any white political institution. He explicitly ruled out representation of "coloreds" or Asians in Parliament.

The Prime Minister may have taken this tough stand in order to soften opposition among the rank-and-file of his party to economic and social reforms that he had previously proposed.

Yesterday the government did announce limited concessions as the Colored Representative Council convened. The meeting, however, was boycotted by members of the Labor Party, the stronger of two "colored" parties in the council, because of the detention without trial of the party chairman.

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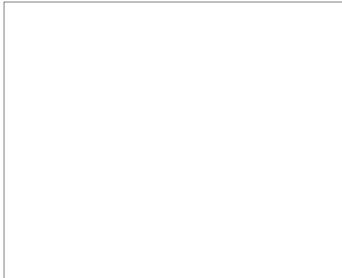
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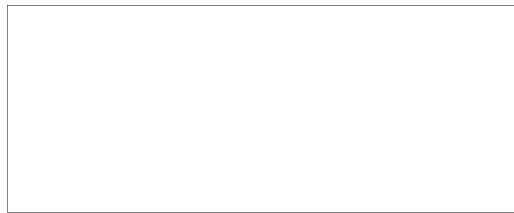
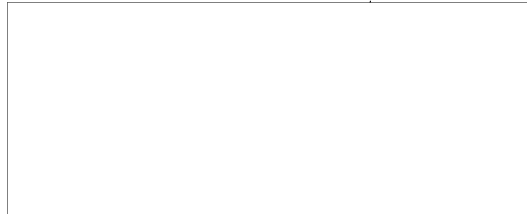
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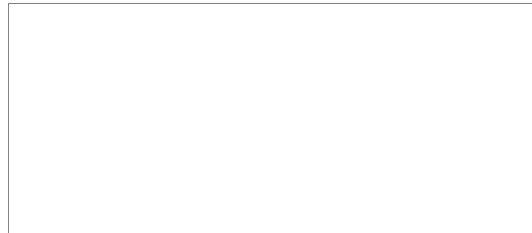
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SPAIN: *Spanish Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez took a major step toward accommodating opposition demands last night when he announced the general lines of his government's reform program.*

In a televised statement following cabinet approval of the program, Suarez said that all major reforms--such as overhauling the state-run labor organization, granting greater autonomy to the regions, and working out the power relationship between parliament and government--would be left to a bicameral legislature to be elected by direct, universal suffrage before next June. In effect, this would make the new parliament, which is to include the democratic opposition, a constituent assembly.

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Suarez' program also incorporates several other concepts called for by the opposition as guarantees of democratic progress:

--abolition of the seats held by 40 members of the current parliament appointed for life by General Franco;

--some form of proportional representation;

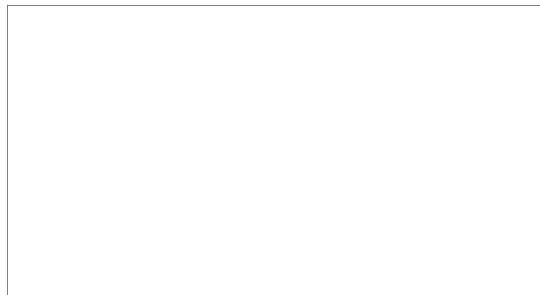
--regional representation in the upper house;

--lower house initiative for constitutional reforms.

The role of the present government will be to prepare for the legislative election. Suarez did not specify how this would be done, but according to an advance briefing sent to the US embassy, the government intends to submit its proposals for holding the election and establishing a bicameral legislature to the current parliament and subsequently to a referendum. Armed with a popular mandate, Suarez will issue electoral laws by decree.

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*The major stumbling block will be getting the reform program approved by two-thirds of the current, rightist-dominated parliament, but the government seems optimistic.*



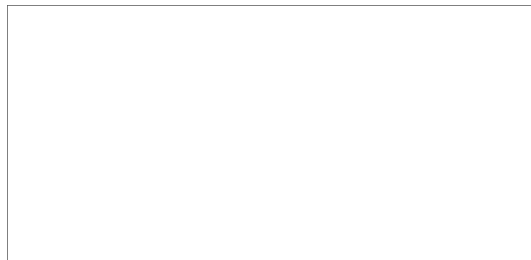
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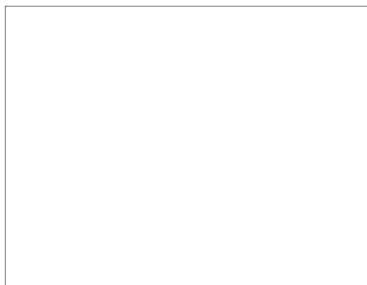
Relations between government and opposition seem to have improved dramatically since Suarez began meeting with leftist leaders, but legalization of the Communist Party remains one of the main points of contention. The government, pointing to military inflexibility on the issue, maintains that its hands are tied. There have been recent signs, however, that the Communist-dominated Workers Commissions may be legalized along with other clandestine labor unions, perhaps as early as next week.

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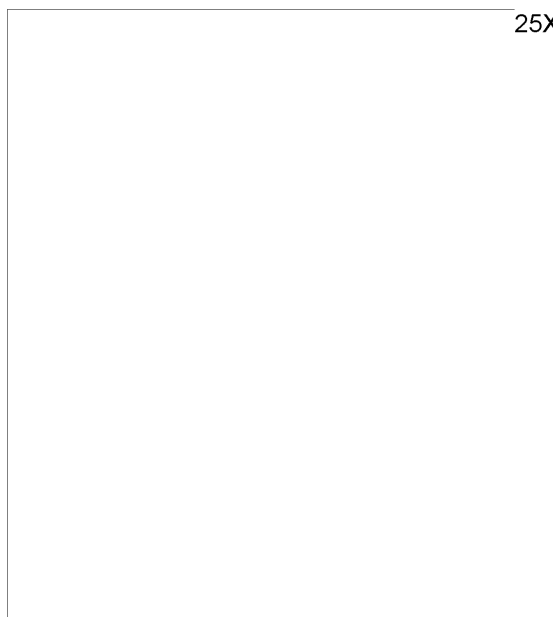
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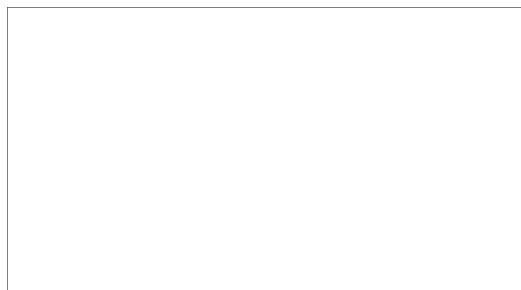
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Yugoslavia  
Iraq

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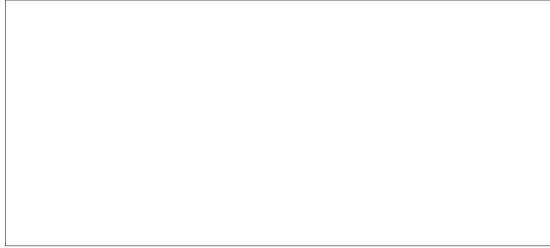
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