



The President's Daily Brief



October 5, 1976

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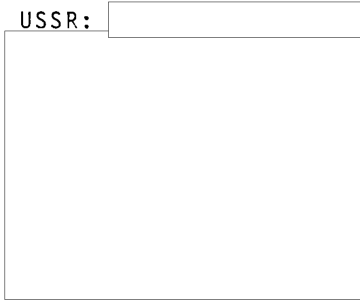


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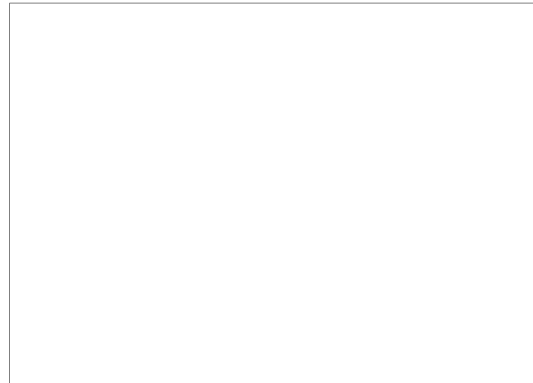
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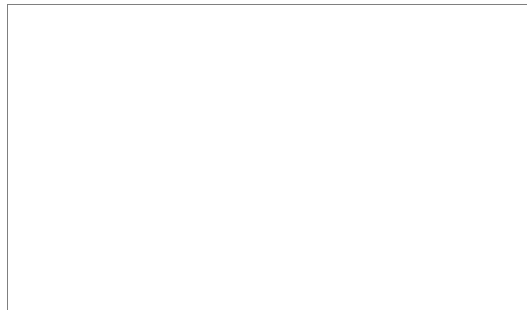
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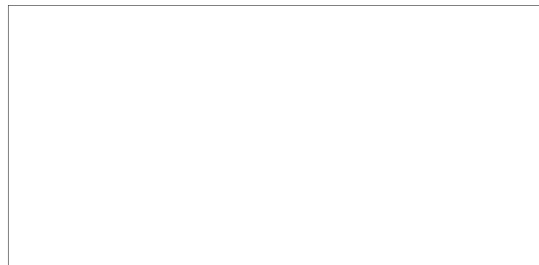
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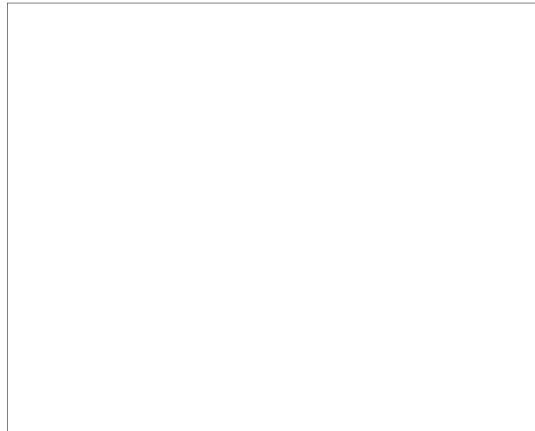
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LEBANON: *The lull in Christian and Syrian operations in the mountains east of Beirut continues while efforts are under way to work out some kind of agreement.*



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The Palestinians are unlikely to agree to withdraw now that they have blunted the Christian offensive.

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The Syrians may have had a number of reasons for backing off from a showdown in Alayh. They probably knew that the engagement would be bloody, and they have consistently held back from taking heavy casualties, which could stir up domestic unrest. They may also have calculated that a slowdown at this juncture would take the steam out of Egyptian efforts to convene an Arab summit that might feel forced to condemn Syria's intervention. Damascus could also have wanted to head off possible Soviet or French diplomatic pressure.

*Arab League mediator
Hasan Sabri al-Khuli
has announced that talks
are under way to secure
Palestinian withdrawal
to the refugee camps,
their bases before the
war.*

In the talks, which involve the Christians, Syrians, and Palestinians, the Christians seem to be demanding that the Palestinians not only return to their camps and adhere to previous accords regulating their activity, but also agree to hand over all their heavy weapons--a demand that all Palestinian leaders, including moderates, have rejected.

The Syrians may not be willing to support the Christian demands in all respects, but they are not likely to agree to a settlement that allows the Palestinians to retain any significant autonomy except under Syrian supervision. There are mounting signs that a key Syrian goal has become the ouster of Yasir Arafat from the Palestinian leadership.

Leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt, who met with the French foreign minister in Paris over the weekend, made it clear that he wants any meeting hosted by the French to be restricted to Lebanese only. Palestinian and Syrian representatives would not be welcome.

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Camille Shamun has already branded Jumblatt's efforts in Paris as a "waste of time," saying categorically that "we are not prepared to respond to any invitation if it is made."

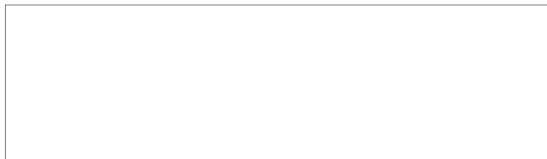
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NOTES

The ruling military council in Ethiopia is facing another outbreak of dissidence among government troops serving in Eritrea Province.



The troops' morale has deteriorated recently as rebel harassment actions have become increasingly effective. A delegation consisting of council members and senior military officers reportedly flew from Addis Ababa to Asmara to discuss the troops' grievances.

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In Addis Ababa the government has announced the arrest of two persons in connection with the assassination on Friday of an influential civilian adviser to the council. The killing probably was carried out by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, an underground Marxist organization opposed to continued military rule.

* * *

A compromise on the nuclear energy issue has cleared the way for formation of a three-party, nonsocialist coalition government in Sweden.

The compromise on this divisive issue reportedly calls for delaying the commissioning of two new plants until 1978 and stopping construction on the rest. A royal commission will then review the subject and report to the parliament in 1978. The parties have agreed that a referendum may be held at that time.

There have been hints of a shift in emphasis in Sweden's foreign policy under the new government. According to a Swedish diplomat in Stockholm, the foreign affairs

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priorities, in descending importance, are: Sweden's Scandinavian neighbors, its friends in Europe and North America, and all other countries--including the USSR and Cuba. Under the previous government, a list of priorities would have included support for liberation and antifascist movements around the world.

* * *

The assassination yesterday of a high Basque official, who was also a member of the Council of the Realm in Spain, may impede some of the government's efforts to be more forthcoming on Basque grievances.

The killing of Juan Maria de Araluce, a supporter of the late General Franco, is unlikely to provoke a nationwide rightist reaction against the government's political reform program. The victim's position on the Council of the Realm, the country's highest consultative body, however, may give his death a nationwide psychological impact that will make further relaxation of police restrictions difficult.

A government statement issued after the emergency cabinet meeting last night pledged strong action against terrorists.

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Araluce had received death threats from a terrorist group, Basque Fatherland and Liberty. Although recently the Basque terrorists announced that they would form a political party to use legal channels to pursue complete independence, the killing of Araluce seems to be an indication that at least one faction of the group has not given up its terrorist inclinations.

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