

The President's Daily Brief

October 16, 1976

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Top Secret^{25X1}



Exempt from general
declassification schedule of E.O. 11652
exemption category SBI(1),(2),(3)
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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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CHINA: Word is out to the Chinese people on the arrest of the four leading leftists in the Politburo.

Wall posters have appeared in at least three major Chinese cities, including Shanghai, calling for harsh measures to be taken against the quartet, now dubbed the "four dogs." The tone of the posters suggests that rumors of their execution are false.

The roundup of other leftists has extended to those sectors in which the left was most influential--the fields of propaganda, culture, and education.

The dragnet does not appear to have extended widely into the provinces, where leftist supporters are keeping a low profile. There is one report, however, that a leftist newspaper in Shanghai, which carried an article in March attacking Chou En-lai, has been closed. A poster in Shanghai reportedly called for one local leftist official to explain his relationship to those arrested in Peking.

The anti-left blitz has prompted other Chinese officials to act with growing confidence.

The minister of foreign trade reportedly apologized to foreigners that trade had come to a standstill but promised that the situation would change for the better and trade would progress. The trade policy had been under attack since the campaign to oust Teng Hsiao-ping. A Chinese vice-premier told foreigners that the Chinese will "crush" any attempts to distort Mao's line, an accusation that has been raised against the left.

Some foreign observers have noted an increased number of police, militia, and military men on the

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streets of Peking. These heightened security measures are undoubtedly related to the move against the left and possibly also to the fact that a Central Committee meeting is still in progress in the capital. There have been no reported signs elsewhere in China of heightened security.

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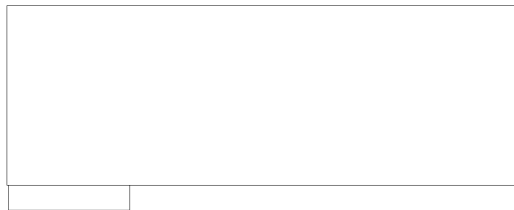
LEBANON: *The Syrian advance toward Beirut slowed yesterday as Syrian forces engaged in stiff fighting in the Bhamdun area.*

Units attempting to pass north and south of the town also ran into fierce resistance.

In the south, advance Syrian units have apparently reached heights overlooking the port of Sidon. The Christian militias have largely stayed out of major fighting during the past few days, but they have been moving against leftists and Palestinians in villages north of the Jazzin-Sidon road.

The Arab League peacekeeping force in Lebanon has been ineffectual in the face of the Syrian offensive and could be on the verge of disintegrating. Arab League mediator Hasan Sabri al-Khuli, who is now in Cairo, has reportedly ordered the commander of the League forces to return to Egypt. The Lebanese press, citing Egyptian sources, states that Khuli himself may submit his resignation from the peace mission.

Saudi Arabia has obtained Syrian President Asad's agreement to attend a six-member "mini-summit" in Riyadh.



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has announced that presidents Sadat, Asad, and Sarkis, Saudi King Khalid, Kuwaiti Amir Sabah, and Palestine Liberation Organization chief Arafat will attend.

Asad's agreement to attend reverses his earlier refusal to go to any limited summit that would include both Arafat and Sarkis and would focus on the situation in Lebanon. He may have decided that, in view of recent Syrian military successes, he risks little by acquiescing in the Saudi desire to hold a summit. Asad may also assume that nothing but rhetoric will emerge from the meeting.

Since his intervention in Lebanon, Asad has followed a pattern of pursuing a military option for only short periods of time, broken by long pauses during which negotiations were conducted and Syria could give an impression of willingness to compromise--without, however, conceding anything of value. Asad may calculate that such a pause is in order again.

The Arab League summit, scheduled to begin Monday, presumably has been pre-empted by the Riyadh meeting and may well be postponed.

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USSR: *There are indications of possible impending changes among top Soviet leaders that could include the replacement of ailing Premier Kosygin by party secretary Kirilenko. Such a transfer would remove Kirilenko from future consideration as a successor to General Secretary Brezhnev.*

In a Kremlin ceremony yesterday, Kirilenko was presented with the Order of Lenin, an honor that is appropriate for his position in the leadership. The ceremony was attended by Brezhnev and most of the other party leaders.

Kirilenko's acceptance speech seemed to go to far greater lengths than would seem necessary--or even appropriate--to heap praise on Brezhnev and demonstrate his own loyalty to the party boss. His remarks may reflect a growing concern about his credentials as a successor to Brezhnev.

Kirilenko has been one of Brezhnev's oldest and closest associates and has been regarded as his most likely successor. Despite this, and even though he has served as Brezhnev's unofficial deputy in the party secretariat, he has never been recognized publicly as the number two man in the secretariat. Moreover, his age--he was 70 in September--becomes an increasing liability with the passage of time.



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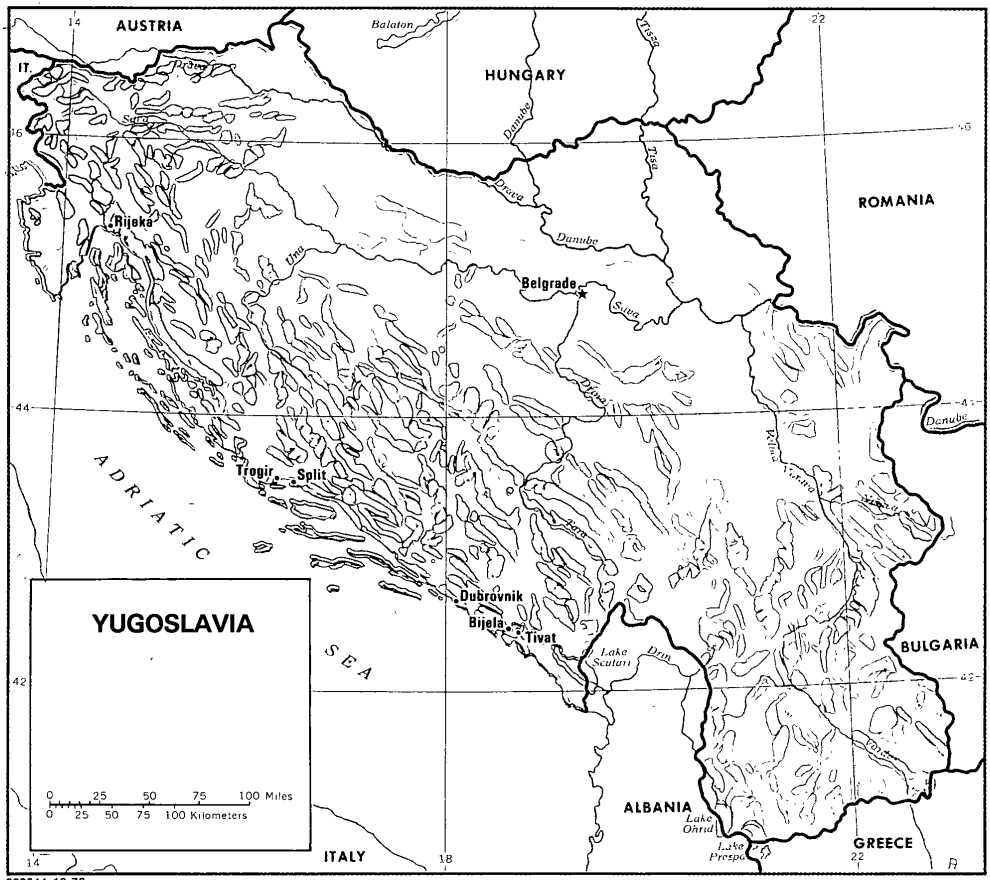
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CUBA: Prime Minister Fidel Castro condemned the CIA yesterday for "direct participation" in last week's bombing of a Cuban airliner but offered to discuss with Washington a solution to the problem of terrorism.

He conditioned such discussions only on "a definitive end to all acts of hostility and aggression" against Cuba.

Speaking at a mass rally in Havana's Revolutionary Square to pay tribute to the victims of the crash, Castro announced his decision to terminate, effective April 15, 1977, the 1973 agreement with the US on hijacking. He pledged, however, that if a US commercial plane should be hijacked to Cuba after the agreement expires, Cuba would return the aircraft, crew, and passengers to the US and would

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not "put up with" the perpetrators of the air piracy. He said Cuba would continue to honor similar bilateral agreements now in force with Canada, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela.

Castro's renunciation of the agreement with the US appears to be little more than a gesture designed to mollify the Cuban people and to press the US to take action against Cuban exile terrorists. The charge of CIA complicity seems to be intended as another way of exerting leverage on the US.

Although Castro absolved the Venezuelan government of blame in the bombing, he referred in some detail to the role Venezuelans and exiles in Venezuela played in the crash and the access some exiles have to "certain political circles" in Venezuela.

Castro left the impression that, frustrated by a series of terrorist incidents, he is earnestly seeking a means to stop them even if this must include talks with Washington.

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USSR-YUGOSLAVIA: *The Soviet Mediterranean naval squadron is increasingly using Yugoslavia's naval repair facilities.*

Yugoslav facilities available to the Soviets are no real substitute, however, for those at Alexandria, Egypt, from which the USSR was evicted in April. 25X1

[redacted] the Soviets are quietly being permitted greater use of Yugoslav ship repair facilities because of the lack of necessary bases in the Mediterranean. Observations by the US defense attache in Belgrade and by other NATO attaches there tend to confirm the report.

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Yugoslav laws are circumvented by falsely declaring the Soviet naval ships as merchant ships. Yugoslav maritime law prohibits the repair of naval ships at commercial ports, stipulates that not more than two naval ships from the same country may be repaired at the naval shipyard at Tivat at the same time, restricts visits by foreign naval units to the ports of Split, Rijeka, and Dubrovnik, and limits such visits to ten days.

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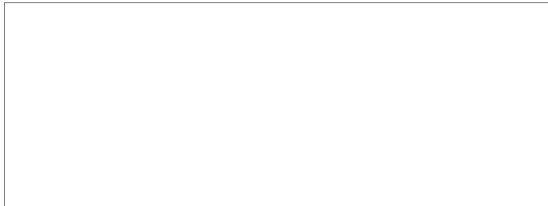
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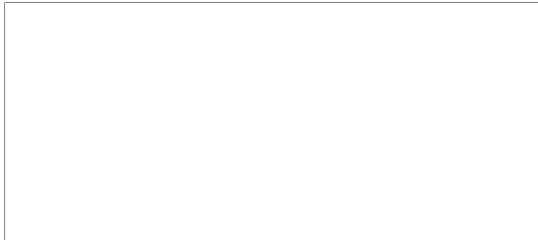
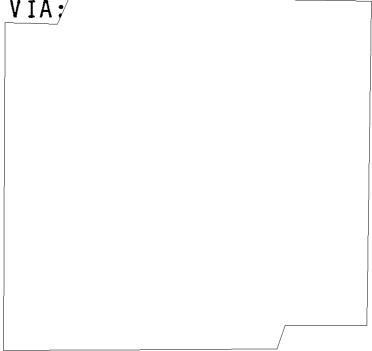
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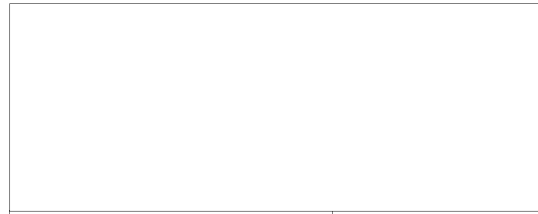
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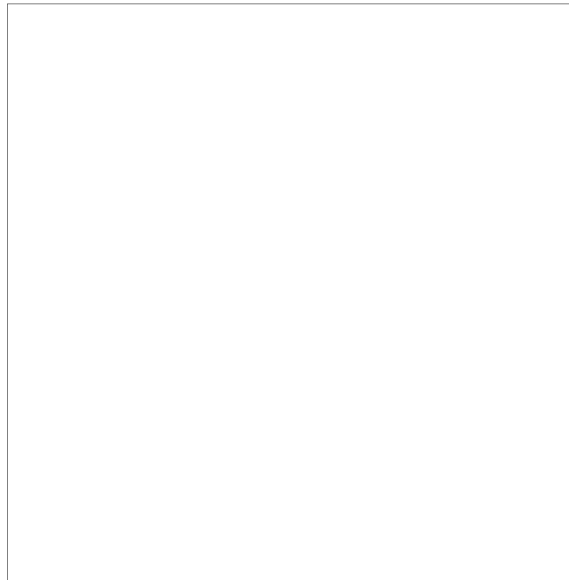
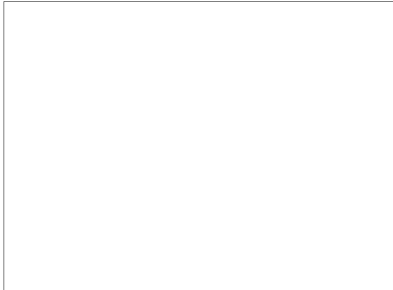
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The Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 23 apparently will return to Earth today after unsuccessfully attempting to dock with the Salyut 5 military space station.

Soyuz 23 was launched on Thursday with two cosmonauts aboard. We have no information as yet to indicate why a successful docking was not achieved.

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