

The President's Daily Brief

April 2, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

April 2, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Tensions remain high along the Golan Heights

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China is sending to the special session of the UN General Assembly next week the highest ranking official ever to head its delegation. He may be highly critical of US business practices in underdeveloped areas. (Page 2)

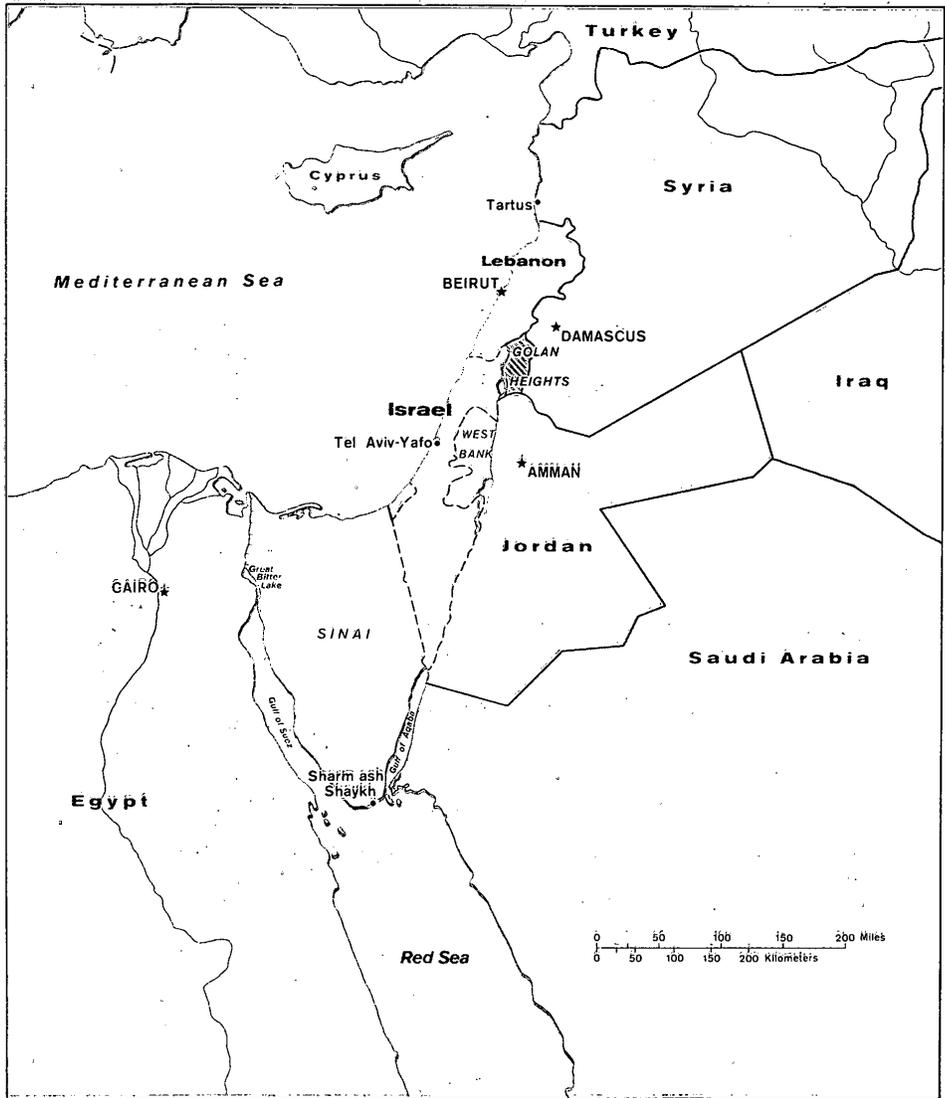
Arrangements appear to have been completed for the formation this week of a new coalition government in Laos. (Page 3)

The Soviets have made some concessions at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. (Page 4)

At Annex, we explore in detail China's foreign policy in light of domestic political pressure on Premier Chou En-lai.

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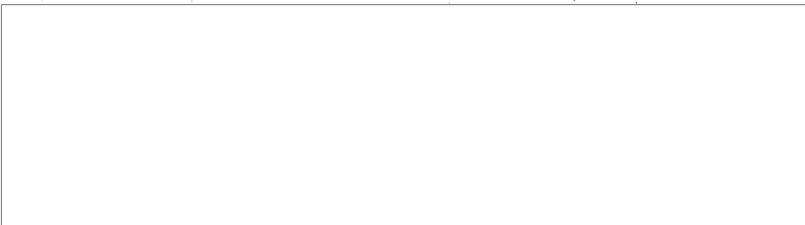


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ISRAEL-SYRIA

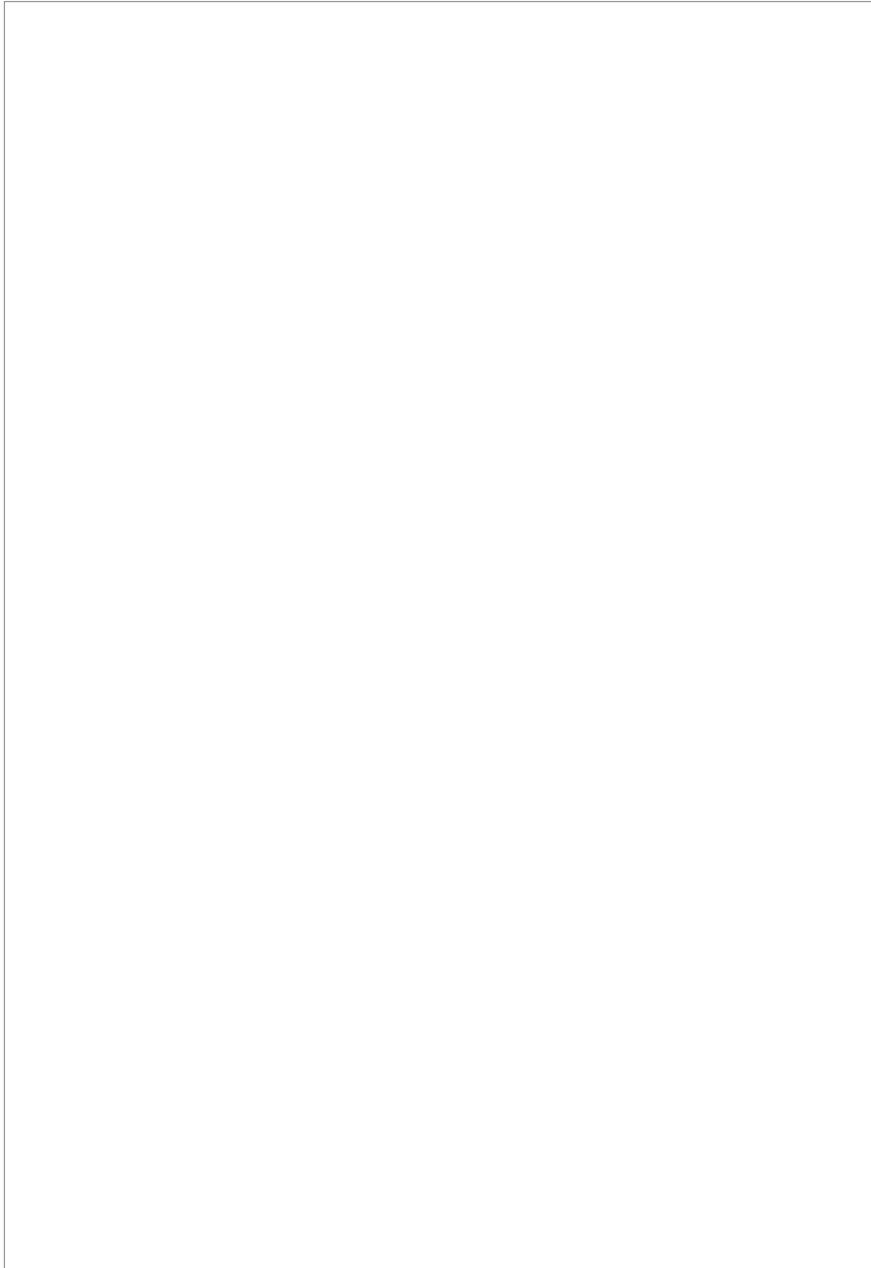
Tensions remain high along the Golan front. Israeli and Syrian troops exchanged fire yesterday for the 21st consecutive day. Israeli aircraft flew patrols yesterday over the Golan Heights, and reconnaissance missions over southwestern Syria and Lebanon. In addition, at least seven reconnaissance aircraft briefly penetrated Syrian airspace near Tartus.



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LAOS

Lao Communist leader Prince Souphanouvong is on his way to Vientiane to conclude negotiations on a new coalition government.

A delegation of senior Lao Communist officials headed by Souphanouvong should be in Hanoi today, and is to be joined there by Pathet Lao members of the new coalition cabinet and its advisory political council. The entire contingent reportedly will depart for Vientiane tomorrow.

The permanent Pathet Lao representative in Vientiane expects Souphanouvong and Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma, accompanied by all of the coalition government nominees, to proceed to the royal capital of Luang Prabang on Thursday. Ambassador Whitehouse has been informed that Souvanna plans formally to present the new coalition to the King for investiture on Friday.

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NOTE

CSCE: The Soviets have made concessions at the Geneva Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. They still insist on adoption of a statement that would give priority to "inviolability of frontiers," thus legitimizing present boundaries in Eastern Europe, but they have informally agreed to recognize in a separate text the possibility of peaceful changes in borders. This will particularly please the West Germans, who do not wish to foreclose the possibility of German reunification. The Soviets have also agreed to a statement concerning dissemination of printed materials, part of the controversial area of "human contacts." Many other disputed subjects remain on the table; so far there has been no sign of Soviet give in order to conclude the present stage of the negotiations before Moscow's self-imposed goal of June.

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CHOU EN-LAI UNDER POLITICAL PRESSURE

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Premier Chou En-lai is under pressure from opponents within the Chinese leadership to show progress on the Taiwan issue. [Redacted] failure to act quickly on the issue might leave Chou vulnerable to his opponents--he specifically mentioned Chiang Ching, Mao's wife and leader of the so-called radical camp in the Chinese leadership. These opponents have been seeking ways to introduce criticism of Chou into the anti-Confucius campaign.

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Tough Speaking

With this in mind, [Redacted] Chou directed Liao Cheng-chih, a close associate, to give a tough keynote speech at the annual meeting on February 28 commemorating the native Taiwanese uprising in 1947 against the Nationalist government. This speech [Redacted] was meant to signal a new Chinese interest in the Taiwan issue.

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Speeches at the meeting, including Liao's, were in fact more strongly worded than those delivered at the meeting last year, which took place in the wake of the announcement that Liaison Offices were being established in Peking and Washington. The speeches this year were not menacing, however, nor did they display a keen sense of urgency.

Despite this, the speeches have been handled by Chinese propaganda outlets in a way that indicates treatment of the Taiwan issue is a subject of high-level wrangling in China. Outlets in Hong Kong did not release the text of a speech by Fu Tso-i, another important speaker at the meeting, for 24 hours; when they did, Fu was quoted as calling for the "liberation" of Taiwan.

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Against Confucius

Foreign policy issues have been an important component of the anti-Confucian campaign since its inception. Thus far Chou--and Mao himself--has seemed determined to preserve the foreign policy followed by Peking during the past several years. Aspects of that policy undoubtedly have been under fire, perhaps from several quarters, for much of the past year. The criticism may have grown more intense since late last month, when Chiang Ching became more active politically after a period of relative eclipse.

Her renewed political vigor may be related to what appears to be an attempt to identify with regional military leaders, who themselves may have come under criticism in the course of the anti-Confucius campaign. One can reasonably speculate that this marriage of convenience may have brought Chou, and perhaps Mao as well, under some pressure, as did a similar joining of hands between the "left" and the provincial military in the period immediately preceding the Tenth Party Congress last summer.

Early last week, for example, Chou rather plaintively remarked in a banquet speech that China, as a socialist country, would of course continue to support revolutionary causes. The Premier has made such public remarks before, but in this instance he did seem to be replying to unnamed critics.



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Political Pressures

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On another issue bearing on China's relations with the West, Chou seems to be holding the line. A recent article in People's Daily reiterated the importance China attaches to continued imports of advanced technology from the West, noting the necessity of such imports to China's plans for more rapid development.

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[Redacted]

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The tone of the People's Daily article was distinctly defensive and was apparently occasioned by earlier material appearing in the Chinese media that criticized a tendency toward "over-reliance" on such imports. The basic disagreement in this area seems to be over the proper level of such imports, and not whether China should continue to purchase machinery and technology from the West.

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Basically Intact

On the basic tenets of Chinese foreign policy, however, the media have continued to carry themes that have been dominant for the past several years. In particular, the press has continued to emphasize

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the idea of an international balance of power, which Peking has considered essential for the protection of Chinese national interests. Peking, for example, has recently found comfort in a spate of items underlining continuing "contention" between the US and the Soviet Union in all parts of the world, and Chou himself pointedly hammered on this theme on the eve of Secretary Kissinger's visit to Moscow.

[redacted] almost certainly right in claiming that Chou is now under pressure--on Taiwan as well as other issues. The rhetoric in which that policy is expressed undoubtedly has undergone a change in recent weeks, but the substance of Chinese foreign policy still appears to be intact.

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