



The President's Daily Brief

June 14, 1975

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[Redacted]

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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JORDAN-SYRIA

President Asad and King Husayn concluded three days of talks in Jordan this week by establishing a joint supreme committee to "coordinate military, political, economic, and cultural policies." Although the two principals underlined their intentions to pursue closer military cooperation, the final communiqué fell short of announcing the creation of a formal joint military command.

Both Husayn and Asad probably hope to use their highly publicized and apparently successful meeting to strengthen their respective positions in the jockeying now going on among the Arabs. In this sense, Asad's visit may have had as much political and psychological importance as military.

Asad, in an effort to strengthen his hand in dealings with Egyptian President Sadat, has been trying for some time to promote closer ties between Syria and Jordan, as well as between Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Jordan has become even more important to Asad as a political and military ally over the past few months because of the smoldering antagonism between Iraq and Syria.

Husayn, for his part, still wants to participate in the final disposition of the West Bank. He has formally relinquished his negotiating role to the PLO, but he remains hopeful of playing some part because of the inability of PLO chief Yasir Arafat to get the Palestinians invited to the Geneva peace conference.

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Contingency plans for greater Jordanian-Syrian military cooperation in the event of a war with Israel were probably a major topic of discussion. Husayn has felt for some time that he damaged his chances for regaining the West Bank by limiting Jordan's role in the 1973 war to the dispatch of a few units to the Syrian front. Since then, he has watched both Syria and Egypt regain some of the territory they lost in 1967, while Jordan has all but been shut out of negotiations. At the very least, Husayn has probably concluded that he must commit more of his forces sooner to the Syrian front if there is another war.

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USSR-LIBYA



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EGYPT

*Egyptian mechanized infantry units
are conducting training* [redacted]

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In April, a mechanized brigade of the 6th Mechanized Infantry Division [redacted] conducted an exercise designed to advance nearly 40 miles in two days of fighting--about the distance Egyptian units would have to advance from their positions on the west bank of the Suez Canal to capture the strategic Sinai passes. The brigade, which was based in the Cairo area, reportedly moved to its attack position at night and, with artillery reinforcements, moved forward for two days until it reached its objective.

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[redacted]

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The 6th Division's attack scenario [redacted] involves an advance of nearly 40 miles in two days while destroying enemy brigades in mobile combat. We doubt that an Egyptian brigade would be a match for an Israeli tank or mechanized brigade, particularly in combat involving considerable movement. This is the kind of warfare at which the Israelis excel. Moreover, Israeli artillery is self-propelled and its air force well trained in providing rapid, accurate support to ground forces.

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The most significant omission [redacted] is the lack of air defense by surface-to-air missiles. Although the division has some air defense weapons of its own, it would also require support from SAM units if it hoped to avoid heavy losses from Israeli air strikes.

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USSR

General Secretary Brezhnev yesterday completed the round of republic election speeches given by Soviet leaders with a restrained affirmation of interest in improved relations with the West. Brezhnev stuck to familiar foreign policy themes, as had President Podgorny and Premier Kosygin earlier this week.

In the somewhat tougher tone evident since the April 1975 party plenum, Brezhnev credited the relaxation in international tensions chiefly to Soviet efforts and to a new correlation of world forces in favor of socialism. He cautioned that some politicians are paying only lip service to detente and criticized those allegedly trying to win over right-wing circles by feigning suspicion of detente. The implication was that supporters of detente in the West should be more forthright in defending it and should not look for concessions from the Soviet Union to help them sell it at home.

Brezhnev's specific references to the US and to you were uniformly favorable. He praised ongoing steps toward a new strategic arms limitation agreement but was imprecise on the timing of the summit, saying only that it would take place this year.

Brezhnev devoted a major portion of his foreign policy remarks to reviewing broad Soviet arms control measures. He reiterated Moscow's interest in reducing military budgets and proposed an international agreement to ban the manufacture of new weapons systems of mass destruction. The Soviets have previously raised with the US their interest in restricting such systems, but Brezhnev urged consideration of it in a multilateral forum. As such, it may become a featured part of Soviet proposals at the UN or in international disarmament discussions.

Brezhnev briefly mentioned the European security conference, simply noting that its conclusion was "not far off." His comment on force reduction talks was a typical Soviet jibe at alleged NATO efforts to seek one-sided advantages.

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WESTERN EUROPE - PORTUGAL

West Europeans are considering economic assistance for Portugal in an effort to bolster Portuguese moderates and stave off another move to the left in Lisbon.

The EC Commission this week prepared a set of proposals that includes a "community action" program to channel substantial financial assistance from EC member states to Portugal on an urgent basis. The recommendations also provide for improved access to EC markets for Portuguese exports, technical assistance, industrial cooperation, Portuguese access to the European Investment Bank, and increased benefits for Portuguese workers in the Community.

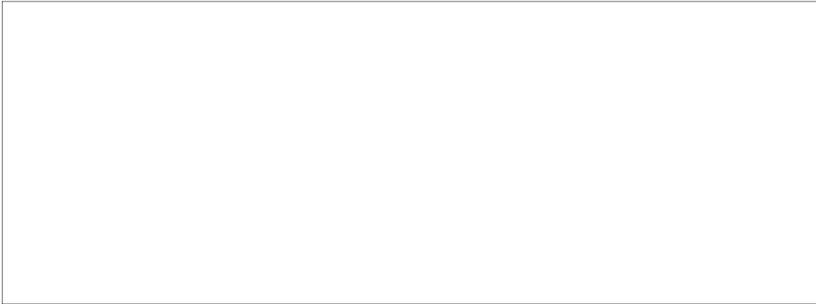
Aid to Portugal has been a thorny problem for the Community, and the EC foreign ministers may regard these terms as too generous when they take up the Commission's proposals on June 24. In any event, they will probably insist that the size and pace of aid be tied to the development of democratic institutions in Portugal. The "community action" proposal will fit this demand because, as a unilateral EC commitment, it could be terminated quickly if the Portuguese situation should take a turn for the worse.

The chances that the EC foreign ministers will approve a substantial aid package for Portugal appear to have improved as a result of the visit of Portuguese President Costa Gomes and Foreign Minister Antunes to Paris last week. These two relatively moderate members of the Armed Forces Movement reportedly had some success in convincing French President Giscard that moderates still have a chance to control Portugal's future and that their cause would be advanced by West European economic aid.

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Social Democrats in West Germany and Sweden reportedly are considering aid to Portugal with a more direct political impact. West German party leaders are said to have reacted favorably to a proposal by Portuguese Socialist leader Soares that lower ranking Portuguese officers be invited to West Germany for political training. The Swedes also have a plan to bring officers of the Armed Forces Movement to Sweden to familiarize them with European democratic socialism.

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LEBANON

*Lebanese Prime Minister - designate
Rashid Karami has yet to form a govern-
ment.*

For the past three weeks, he has been unable to wring concessions from either leaders of the right-wing Phalanges Party, who demand that they be represented in the new cabinet, or from leftist leaders, who insist that the Phalangists be excluded as punishment for their role in the recent fighting.

Karami's task has been complicated by the fact that President Franjyah has avoided pressing the Phalangists to compromise and may in fact be reinforcing their hard-line position. Franjyah appointed Karami only reluctantly and would take some satisfaction from Karami's failure to form a government.

The continued delay in forming a government is increasing the risk that the public will lose confidence in Karami, widely considered Lebanon's "last hope," and that widespread street fighting will resume. Sniping and kidnaping have occurred in several areas of Beirut during the past week, despite the general adherence by both sides to the cease-fire.

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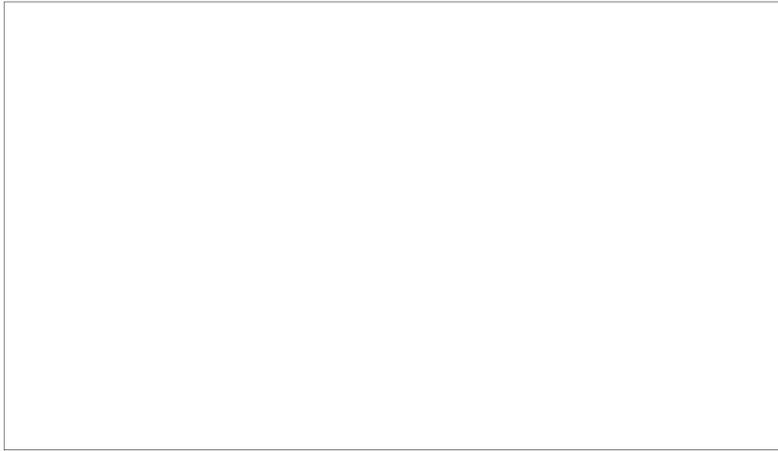
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CHINA



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NOTES

Both North and South Korea have applied for formal membership in the nonaligned movement and are focusing on the Conference of Nonaligned Countries scheduled to be held in Lima this August.

Pyongyang has a good chance of being accepted at the Lima conference; Seoul is likely to fail. A victory for North Korea at Lima would increase the chances that the UN this fall will vote a resolution calling for an end to the US and UN roles in South Korea.

* * *

Saudi Arabia provided Algeria with \$400 million in long-term loans late last week to help meet Algeria's growing balance-of-payments difficulties.

Lower oil prices and falling oil production have reduced Algerian export earnings, while ambitious development plans and a poor harvest have required more imports. Algerian officials have been seeking up to \$2 billion to avoid further depletion of foreign exchange reserves, but have encountered stiff terms in international money markets.

* * *

The Greek parliament will elect a new president of the republic next Thursday under the country's new constitution.

The three candidates are loyal supporters of Prime Minister Karamanlis and can be expected to step down should Karamanlis wish to move up to the presidency at a later date.

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