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# The President's Daily Brief

*September 9, 1976*

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**FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**

September 9, 1976

Table of Contents

China: NCNA has announced the death of Chairman Mao Tse-tung. (Page 1)

Southern Africa: [redacted] at the summit meeting in Dar es Salaam no progress was made toward uniting the Rhodesian nationalists. (Page 2)

25X1

Rhodesia: The government's security forces claim that they have inflicted heavy casualties on the guerrillas, but the level of insurgent activity apparently has not changed. (Page 2)

USSR - US - South Africa: Soviet commentary on the US - South African talks shows that Moscow is concerned about the possibility that "shuttle diplomacy" will be resumed. (Page 3)

Lebanon: The Syrians apparently are urging Lebanese leaders to cooperate with the future government of president-elect Sarkis. (Page 4)

USSR-Syria-Lebanon: The Soviets have issued an authoritative and relatively moderate statement on Lebanon to convey support for a negotiated settlement. (Page 5)

OPEC: We have new information which strengthens our belief that OPEC will vote to raise prices by 10 to 15 percent at the December meeting in Qatar. (Page 6)

Egypt-Libya: Photography of September 5 seems to indicate that Egypt is continuing its military buildup along the Libyan border but at a slower pace than earlier indications had led us to believe. (Page 7)

25X1

Portugal: Prime Minister Soares may be losing confidence in his government's ability to resolve Portugal's problems. (Page 7)

25X1

Ethiopia: [redacted]

25X1

Notes: USSR; Poland; Angola-Portugal; South Africa (Pages 10, 11, and 12)

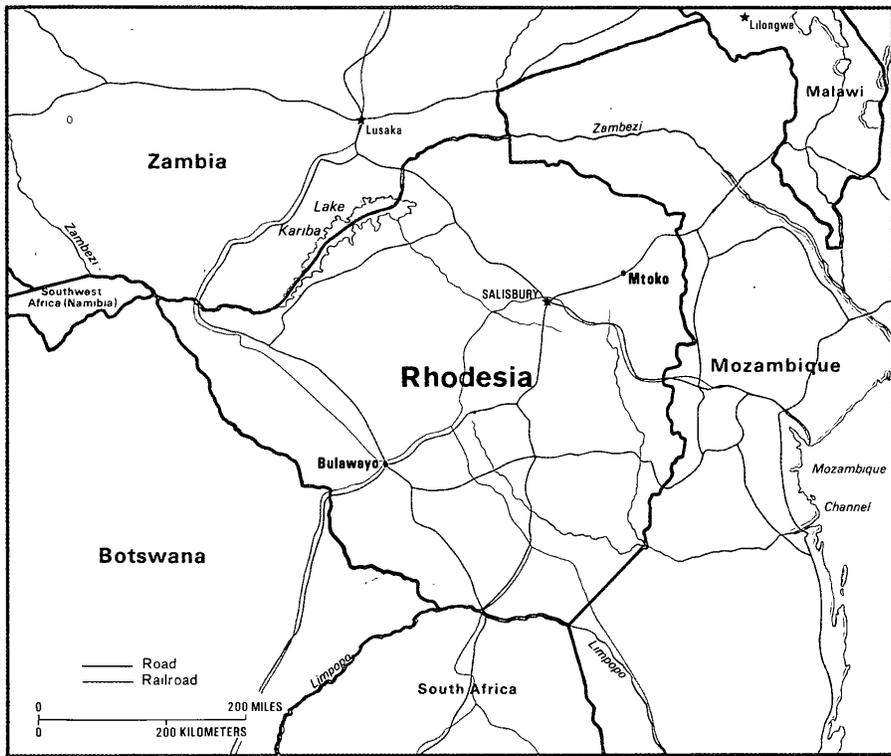
At Annex we discuss some of the implications of the death of Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

**FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY**

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

CHINA: *NCNA announced the death of Chairman Mao Tse-tung in Peking this morning. At Annex we discuss some of the implications of his demise.*

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

SOUTHERN AFRICA: *Reliable reports confirm that no progress was made toward uniting the fragmented Rhodesian nationalist movement at the two-day summit conference of five southern African presidents at Dar es Salaam.*

The five presidents probably held off making any firm decisions on ways to strengthen the military effort against Rhodesia until they assess the results of Secretary Kissinger's meeting with South African Prime Minister Vorster.

The meeting at Dar es Salaam marked a broadening of the role of presidents Nyerere of Tanzania, Kaunda of Zambia, Machel of Mozambique, and Khama of Botswana.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Vorster will brief Rhodesian Prime Minister Smith early next week on the results of his talks with Secretary Kissinger.

RHODESIA: *The government's security forces claim that they have inflicted heavy casualties on the guerrillas, but the level of insurgent activity apparently has not been affected.*

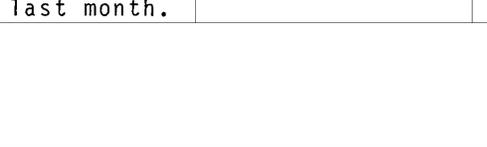
According to government figures, 131 guerrillas were killed in Rhodesia during August--the highest monthly total since the fighting began in 1972. Nevertheless, press reports indicate that the insurgents last week made one of their largest attacks ever. Some 100 guerrillas are said to have followed up a mortar and rocket barrage by raiding a Rhodesian army outpost in northeast Rhodesia.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

In southeastern Rhodesia, the guerillas, according to press reports, shot down a helicopter last week. The Rhodesian air force now faces a serious shortage of trained helicopter pilots following the withdrawal of South African pilots last month.

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USSR - US - SOUTH AFRICA: *Soviet commentary on the US - South African talks in Zurich shows that Moscow is concerned about the possibility that "shuttle diplomacy" will be resumed.*

Writing in Pravda on September 7, senior political commentator Yuriy Zhukov charged that the US role in Africa may cause "new dangerous complications" in the area and that Secretary Kissinger was trying to maintain "racists" in power. The chief of the USA Institute's Foreign Policy Department remarked to a US embassy official on September 7 that he personally viewed the Secretary's activities in Africa as a "carbon copy" of the US approach in the Middle East.

The selection of Zhukov--a well-connected commentator who usually deals with major East-West issues--to write the Pravda commentary

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

strongly suggests that more than just African issues are being addressed. Zhukov's direct criticism of Secretary Kissinger appears to be part of an increasing inclination on the part of the Soviets to find fault with the US administration in general and the Secretary's role in particular.

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*LEBANON: The Syrians apparently are stressing in their talks with Lebanese leaders this week the need for full cooperation with the future government of president-elect Sarkis.*

The Syrians want Sarkis to have sufficient stature to conduct meaningful negotiations. They recognize that this must come primarily from his ability to control his fellow Christians. Phalanges Party leader Jumayyil has been a supporter of Sarkis from the start; however, rightist leader Camille Shamun has a longstanding personal grudge against him and is not in favor of any negotiations until the Palestinians have been more thoroughly chastened.

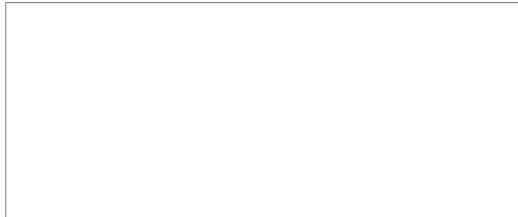
Before his departure for Damascus yesterday, Shamun apparently commented publicly that current efforts to find a new basis for negotiations will not be successful and that the fighting will escalate dramatically before Sarkis is able to take office. His remarks will reinforce the suspicion among many Palestinians and Lebanese Muslims that the current round of talks in Damascus is laying the groundwork for another major Christian-Syrian offensive.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

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*Damascus' main concern at present is the inauguration of Sarkis, now officially scheduled for September 23, the expiration date of President Franjiyah's term.*



The Syrians would like to hold the swearing-in ceremony within Lebanese territory controlled by Syrian forces, thus allowing some 25 members of the Lebanese parliament now in Syria to attend. Several sites in Beirut reportedly also are under consideration, but the Syrians fear a ceremony there would create a potentially explosive security situation. Moreover, if significant numbers of parliamentary deputies are prevented from attending the session, Sarkis' inauguration could be challenged on legal grounds.

**USSR-SYRIA-LEBANON:**

*The USSR has issued an authoritative and relatively moderate statement on Lebanon to convey its support for a negotiated settlement.*

The Pravda statement on September 7, signed "Observer" to signify Kremlin endorsement, criticizes both the Syrian intervention in Lebanon and, for the first time, "leftist elements" within the Palestinian movement. The statement denounces the Palestinian leftists for "rejecting out of hand any peaceful proposals" and calls attention to the deep split within the Palestinian leadership regarding negotiations. This will be interpreted by Arafat as an endorsement of his position.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

The article--Moscow's strongest criticism so far of the intervention of Syrian forces in Lebanon--terms the Syrian decision "harmful." The Soviets are still refraining from forthrightly calling for withdrawal and instead are expressing tacit agreement with the demands of "many Arab countries and other countries" that these forces leave. Soviet commentary is obviously bent on antagonizing Damascus no more than necessary.

Unlike the last Observer piece on Lebanon in April, the current article does not go out of its way to castigate Israel or to raise the possibility of US military intervention.

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OPEC:

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[Redacted]

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We reported [Redacted] two weeks ago that the Saudis had assured Venezuela that they would go along with a price increase of from 10 to 15 percent. At about that time the most influential OPEC ministers--from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Venezuela, and possibly Algeria--met in Saudi Arabia and discussed the December price increase.

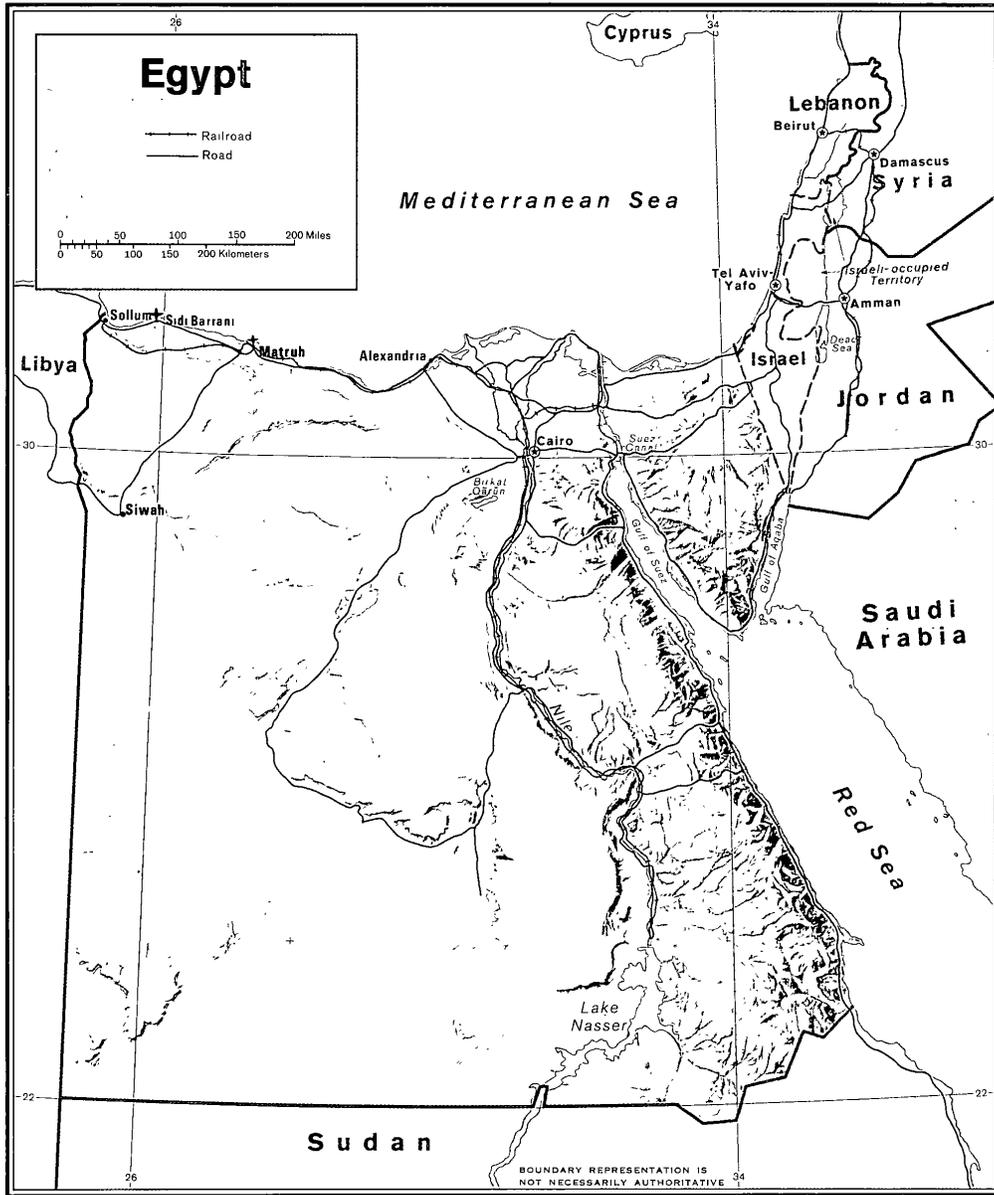
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Subsequently, a high Iranian official told the US embassy in Tehran that a 15- to 18-percent rise is called for.

In the hope of avoiding the kind of acrimony that developed at the OPEC meeting in Bali in May, the ministers who met recently in Saudi Arabia probably negotiated the approximate range of the price rise to be made in December.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*



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Unless there is a shift in the Saudi price position in the interim, the full OPEC meeting in December probably will agree to a price increase of at least 10 percent and most likely 15 percent.

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EGYPT-LIBYA: Preliminary analysis of satellite photography [redacted] indicates that Egypt is continuing its military build-up along the Libyan border, but at a slower pace than earlier indications had led us to believe.

Egypt is still in the early stages of a build-up of ground forces. Photography shows a substantial increase in logistics support equipment at Sollum, Sidi Barrani, and Matruh. 25X1 25X1

There is no build-up of forces at Siwah, the area from which [redacted] they might launch a major armored drive into Libyan territory. No new ground combat units were detected on the photography. 25X1

Construction continues on the new airfield at Sidi Barrani but not at the rapid pace observed in July photography. The Egyptians appear to be preparing to pave the airfield's runway. Its completion would give Cairo two airfields in the west capable of handling sustained air combat operations.

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PORTUGAL: Prime Minister Soares may be losing confidence in his government's ability to resolve Portugal's problems.

Soares apparently feels very frustrated and pessimistic over the political-economic situation. Yesterday he postponed the announcement of the first of a series of economic austerity measures, probably because of the difficulty he has had in getting his cabinet to agree on the proposals. He is said to be particularly disturbed

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

by the refusal of his labor and agriculture ministers to cooperate in a stabilization program and by the government's failure to attract private investment.

The agricultural and labor areas are especially significant because they are being watched closely for indications of the government's ability to reduce entrenched Communist influence.

Last week Soares told Ambassador Carlucci that Portugal requires a \$300-million balance-of-payments support loan from the US this year and an additional \$1 billion in 1977. Soares said his government agrees with US suggestions concerning economic recovery measures and urgently needs a loan commitment to permit development of an appropriate program. He conceded, however, that his advisers are evenly divided on the important question of devaluation.

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ETHIOPIA:

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

NOTES

*Recently appointed Soviet First Deputy Premier Tikhonov will handle foreign economic relations.*

According to an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the USSR attaches great importance to this field. Premier Kosygin has exercised overall direction of foreign economic relations. In view of Kosygin's illness, it would seem logical that Tikhonov should pick up this responsibility.

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*Poland's current troubles have led to speculation about party chief Gierek's future.*

Several influential Polish journalists recently told a US diplomat that they were "absolutely fed up" with the Gierek regime, although they said Gierek himself has "good intentions." One predicted that Prime Minister Jaroszewicz would be the first to go and implied that within a year Gierek would follow.

According to our embassy in Warsaw, "the events of these last three months have left a shaken, dispirited Gierek regime pitted against a headstrong, distrustful and sullen population." Gierek undoubtedly is in a weaker position now than he was before June. We have seen no indications, however, of any movement within the party or from the Soviets to unseat him.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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Angola's foreign minister informed Portugal yesterday that the Angolan government desires to reestablish diplomatic relations "in the near future."

The message is an official follow-up to the exchange of views last week in Luanda between Angolan leaders and a visiting Portuguese Socialist Party delegation.

Lisbon replied quickly and positively to the Angolan message by proposing a foreign ministers' meeting. The minority Socialist government needs the political boost that reestablishing relations with the former territory will provide. The eagerness the two countries are showing toward resuming ties suggests that future talks on outstanding issues--particularly Angolan nationalization of Portuguese properties--can be resolved amicably.

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South Africa

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CHINA AFTER MAO

*The death of Mao Tse-tung, announced this morning, will not come as a traumatic surprise to the Chinese populace; the regime has been preparing the public for this event for some time through wide dissemination of photographs showing an increasingly aged and infirm Chairman. The political repercussions of his demise, however, may well last for years.*

Mao had been an important member of the Chinese Communist Party since its founding in 1921, and Chairman since the mid-1930s. He has been the most important and the central reference point in the often confused politics of the party for much longer. Even when his will was partly thwarted by others in the Chinese leadership whose policy views differed from his own, his personality and programs could never be ignored; even his opponents claimed to be speaking in his name and to be carrying out his commands.

As the dominating force in Chinese politics, a founder of the party, the formulator of the "Chinese way" to communism, and the man who led the Chinese revolution to triumph, Mao will be irreplaceable. There is no one on the Chinese scene today who even remotely commands the authority that has been accorded to him or who can easily assume the charismatic role of leader of the Chinese people he exercised for years.

In the upper echelons of the party, however, the Chairman's death may come as something of a relief to a considerable number of second-level leaders. Mao's autocratic actions, suspiciousness, and sometimes erratic policy shifts were almost certainly resented by some of his associates and subordinates, particularly in the past decade. Some of these individuals are now likely to believe that more orderly and rational approaches to policy problems can be taken without fear of reprisals from the Chairman.

Although Mao's place in the three-thousand-year-old history of the Chinese state is likely to loom large, one conspicuous failure in his long domination of the political scene is already glaringly evident and

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

is likely to have serious implications for the future. The Chairman did not succeed in providing for a widely acknowledged and recognized successor. Two designated successors, Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, fell by the wayside in 1966 and 1971 respectively.

A third, Teng Hsiao-ping, who appeared in a position to inherit much of Mao's authority if not the formal title of party chairman, was removed from all his high positions in early April. At the same time, the young Wang Hung-wen, who by virtue of his position in the hierarchy seemed to have a shot at succession to the formal title of party chairman--but probably without much of the authority that normally could accrue to that post--was passed over for promotion last April. Finally, Chou En-lai, who by virtue of his experience and the respect accorded him by most Chinese was perhaps the most logical of all possible successors to Mao, died last January.

For several years the Chinese have talked about post-Mao arrangements in terms of a collegial group which would in effect share the Chairman's authority among themselves. Such an arrangement is entirely possible, at least in the short run, since it seems clear that no single individual has the stature to replace Mao in his full leadership capacity.

It is possible, in fact, that the post of party chairman may now be retired, as a post that could only be held by the irreplaceable leader who has just died. The Nationalist Chinese on Taiwan followed a similar procedure at the death of Chiang Kai-shek last year. In this case, Peking would probably revive the post of party secretary-general, which has been dormant since the start of the Cultural Revolution, in order to provide a manager for party affairs.

If the post of Chairman is to be filled, however, the most likely candidate for the job is Premier Hua Kuo-feng, who is now "first" party vice chairman, a new post created in early April, at the time of the fall of Teng Hsiao-ping. Hua is, however, a compromise figure who lacks a strong power base and who has operated at the center of power for only a few years. In his hands the post of chairman would be less important than it was when Mao occupied the position. Moreover, there are almost certainly a number of senior leaders of the party who would prefer that additional power and prestige did not accrue to Hua. There have been occasional covert attacks on Hua in the media since January, and his deputy in Hunan Province,

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A2

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

which he ran before coming to Peking, has been under heavy political pressure for several months.

It is possible, therefore, that Hua's elevation to the chairmanship could be contested, and in fact any decision to fill the post might be put off for some time. It is also possible that if Hua were elevated to the chairmanship, he could be balanced off by a reconstitution of the post of secretary-general. In this case a leading candidate for that job would be the leftist political boss of Shanghai, Chang Chun-chiao, who probably performs the functions of secretary-general on a de facto basis at present. There is certain to be opposition to this appointment from the party's right wing, however.

If the post of chairman were abolished, that of the current party vice chairman would also have to be abolished. In addition to Hua, the other vice chairmen are Wang Hung-wen, whose youth makes him suspect to many older party members and whose alignment with the left wing of the party is a major disability in the eyes of the rightists, and Defense Minister Yeh Chien-ying, a long-time associate of the late Chou En-lai who has been identified with the party's right wing and who came under criticism earlier this year for his vehement support of Teng Hsiao-ping.

The balance these two men provide could be an argument for preserving the system of chairman and vice chairman. If, however, that system is scrapped, Hua Kuo-feng would be an obvious candidate for the secretary-general's post. Since Chang Chun-chiao also has claims on this job, a clash between the two could easily develop.

Insofar as the principle of collegiality is followed by the Chinese, the three current vice chairmen, Chang Chun-chiao and Peking Military Region Commander Chen Hsi-lien would almost certainly form the core of the collective. These five men are the most powerful in China today. They are not likely to work easily together, however. The left-right split between Yeh, on the one hand, and Wang and Chang, on the other, is already pronounced, and as already noted, there is potential for serious friction between Chang and Hua.

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

Chen, even more than Yeh, the defense minister, is likely to represent military interests in the collective. Many important military figures have resented the leftist leaders since the days of the Cultural Revolution, and to the degree that Chen speaks for them, he could come into conflict with Chang and Wang. Chen, however, appears to be an ambitious man whose personal interests could lead him into temporary and expedient alliances with any civilian faction. He is reported to have abandoned Teng Hsiao-ping at a crucial juncture last January, for example, and this move may have been an important factor in Teng's subsequent political demise.

Latent factionalism among the ruling group is likely to come to the fore rather quickly, in fact. Mao's death occurs at a tense and rather fluid moment in Chinese politics. Repercussions from the Teng purge are still echoing throughout the country--in the provinces and in Peking. The fissure between the party's right and left wings is perhaps wider than at any time since the late stages of the Cultural Revolution, and the issue of relations between the military and civilian members of the party is still not fully resolved. Since the attacks on Teng began, the army has begun to reemerge as an important factor in political affairs; this tendency is likely to become more pronounced in the wake of Mao's death.

This confused situation makes a struggle among the various factions in the leadership all but inevitable, and this struggle is likely to make itself manifest sooner rather than later. Mao has died at an unpropitious moment for the party's left wing, however. This group--a minority in the party and among the leadership--has not yet managed to achieve a solid and largely unassailable position, as it clearly hoped to do before the Chairman's death. Mao had his differences with the leftists in recent years, but they were at most times able to play on his obsessive concern for the development of an equalitarian China, and their enemies were inhibited by fear that Mao could intervene on their behalf in unexpected fashion. This inhibition has now been removed.

One likely victim of these changed circumstances is Mao's wife, the termagant Chiang Ching. She is widely disliked, and without the Chairman's potential protection she may well fall by the wayside rather quickly. The left as a whole is in fact now in a

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A4

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

somewhat unenviable position. It is likely to be on the defense in whatever struggle develops in the wake of Mao's death. Nevertheless, leftist leaders, although a minority, speak for a significant portion of the Chinese party, and the struggle, if it develops, is not likely to be resolved quickly.

This fact, plus the obvious difficulty the Chinese will have in adjusting to a China without Mao, is likely to inhibit the development of new policy initiatives and to slow the implementation of policies already adopted, both in the domestic and foreign policy spheres. If the military gains an increased voice in policy-making, however, it is possible that Peking may become more receptive to the idea of moderating somewhat its unyielding opposition to the USSR.

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