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The President's Daily Brief

January 16, 1974

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

January 16, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Israel, Mrs. Meir's government has come under increasing attack for what domestic critics fear is its readiness to make unilateral concessions in the disengagement talks with Egypt. (Page 1)

There are more signs that Tunisian President Bourguiba has had second thoughts about union with Libya. Yesterday, the Tunisians took steps apparently aimed at putting it off indefinitely. (Page 2)

After agreeing at yesterday's Council meeting to a community representation at next month's conference of oil-consuming countries, the EC foreign ministers will now attempt to work out a common position. (Page 3)

General Secretary Brezhnev's forthcoming visit to Cuba will provide an occasion for revolutionary rhetoric, but his private comments will probably be low on anti-imperialist fervor and high on the benefits of peaceful coexistence. This will not sit well with Castro, who sees dangers for his regime in Soviet-US detente. (Page 4)

Security officials in Jakarta imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew following yesterday's anti-Japanese rioting by students. More troops are being brought into Jakarta to help restore order, and Prime Minister Tanaka has modified his schedule in order to avoid direct confrontation with the protesters. (Page 5)

The Cambodian Government's conscription campaign to expand the army's general reserve has faltered. Although by the end of November some 12,000 new trainees had entered the army, inductions have slowed to a trickle since then. (Page 6)

The Kuwaiti minister of defense has acknowledged that his country is negotiating with Moscow for arms. (Page 7)

In Turkey, President Koruturk has named Bulent Ecevit prime minister-designate, paving the way for a coalition of Ecevit's left-of-center party with the right-wing National Salvation Party. No major departure from Turkey's pro-Western foreign policy is likely. (Page 8)

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ISRAEL

Mrs. Meir's government is under increasing attack for what domestic critics fear is its readiness to make unilateral concessions in the disengagement negotiations with Egypt. The rightist Likud bloc, which scored significant gains in the recent parliamentary elections, charges the government with conducting the negotiations with Cairo through Secretary Kissinger as if it had no choice but to "surrender in stages." Likud spokesmen claim that the talks are leading to a unilateral withdrawal that would endanger the state. Yesterday, Likud demanded that approval of the government's proposals for an agreement with Cairo be the first item of business when the newly elected Knesset opens next Monday.

The Israeli press also is expressing misgivings. Even US security guarantees, in the view of some papers, would not be enough to compensate Tel Aviv for giving up its demand that Egyptian forces on the east bank of the Suez Canal be thinned in return for an Israeli withdrawal. The daily with the largest circulation in the country has called such an arrangement a trap for Israel, arguing that Washington would be unable to fulfill its commitment when the chips are down.

Perhaps partly in response to criticism that it is not tough enough with Cairo, the government yesterday halted the daily supply convoys to Suez and the encircled Egyptian Third Army. Defense Minister Dayan had warned publicly on January 14 that Israel might take this action if cease-fire violations continued. At least 18 Israelis reportedly have been killed and 88 wounded in fighting on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts since the cease-fire.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY***TUNISIA-LIBYA**

Evidence continues to mount that President Bourguiba has had second thoughts about union with Libya. Yesterday the Tunisians moved to put it off indefinitely. Prime Minister Nouria announced that the constitution would have to be revised before a referendum on the merger could be held. Amending the constitution would cause, at the least, considerable delay, and could help to kill the project altogether. The procedure requires two readings, at least three months apart, in the National Assembly, and then a two-thirds majority for approval.

Nouria, who has long opposed closer ties with Libya, also threw new doubt on the terms of the declaration on the merger. He stated flatly that there would be further negotiations "to determine the concept of the union and the stages of its implementation."

President Bourguiba's bizarre handling of the proposed merger will weaken his prestige and lead to political maneuvering by presidential hopefuls around him. This can be expected to increase as preparations continue for a congress of Bourguiba's party next October, which will be followed by national elections in November.

President Qadhafi has not yet reacted to Tunisia's delaying tactics; the Libyan radio continues to hail the union as if the merger plans were still on the track.

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

The EC foreign ministers, having agreed at yesterday's Council meeting to a community representation at next month's conference of oil-consuming countries, will now attempt to reach a common position. French Foreign Minister Jobert supported the consensus that Commission President Ortolli and German Foreign Minister Scheel, in his role as Council president, would represent the community in Washington. Although Jobert said Paris still had reservations about attending, the other EC foreign ministers now expect to be present.

In leaving its own attendance in doubt, France presumably hopes to win support among its community partners for a position that would minimize the US role in European energy arrangements made after the conference. The French therefore want to move EC energy consultations with other countries to the OECD forum--or even the UN--as quickly as possible and keep such talks focused on long-term goals.

The Commission has already made suggestions for a community position that attempt to answer the French concern that any energy action group not appear to set the consuming countries against the producers. The Commission stresses that priority should be given to a dialogue with the oil producers, that the EC's position should be communicated to OPEC, and that consideration must be given to the non-producers among the developing countries.

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USSR-CUBA

General Secretary Brezhnev is due shortly in Havana on his first visit there. Plans for the visit had been announced unusually far in advance, not long after Brezhnev returned from the US, a sign that he saw the trip as a way to demonstrate that he is not neglecting his Communist allies.

The occasion will call for revolutionary rhetoric, but Brezhnev's private comments to the Cubans will probably be low on anti-imperialist fervor and high on the benefits of peaceful coexistence. This will not sit well with Castro, who sees dangers for his regime in Soviet-US detente.

The Cuban leader continues to believe he can ill afford to ease his own anti-US stance. Castro still points to the "threat" of US aggression, in order to mobilize Cubans in support of regime policies, and he has used the economic "blockade" to explain away many of his own failures.

Despite this, Brezhnev may take the line that Cuba would profit from a less intransigent attitude toward the US. The USSR, which still underwrites the Cuban economy to the tune of more than \$1 million a day, would also expect to benefit from any shift in Cuban political attitudes that brought an improvement in Cuba's economic position. Brezhnev's general approach is not likely to overcome Castro's misgivings, however, and Brezhnev is not likely to press strongly enough to alienate the Cuban leader.

The Soviets will be eager to obtain Castro's support for the organizational steps they want to take toward another world Communist conference. Preparations are already under way for a series of regional meetings of Communist parties, and there are reports that representatives of several Latin American parties will meet in Havana during Brezhnev's visit. The Soviets will need Castro's cooperation to get their campaign off to a propitious start.

Economic and military aid will certainly be discussed during Brezhnev's visit. Moscow's extensive use of Cuban military facilities could give Castro leverage in seeking more Soviet arms, but there has been no sign that major new agreements will be made.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

INDONESIA

Security officials in Jakarta imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew following yesterday's anti-Japanese rioting by students. Vandalism and burning continued well into the night and at midnight police were still trying to disperse 1,500 students gathered near the Japanese Embassy and several Japanese businesses. Additional troops are being brought into Jakarta to help restore order, and Prime Minister Tanaka's schedule has been modified to avoid direct encounters with the protesters.

Indonesian officials, hoping to avoid a major army-student confrontation, have ordered troops to withhold fire except in self-defense. Even so, at least four persons have been killed and several seriously wounded.

Dissident students have long been planning to protest Tanaka's visit with demonstrations against Japanese economic domination of Indonesia and alleged collusion among government officials, Japanese, and local Chinese businessmen. Much of the vandalism has occurred in Chinese commercial districts, and security officials fear that serious anti-Chinese rioting may develop and spread to other parts of the country.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The government's conscription campaign to expand the army's general reserve, launched in mid-October with a goal of obtaining 25,000 new troops, has faltered. Although by the end of November some 12,000 new trainees had entered the army, inductions have slowed to a trickle since then.

A fundamental problem is that the manpower pool on which the government can draw is drying up. Certain provincial cities have large numbers of males eligible for the draft, but provincial officials have not yet shown much inclination to implement the conscription law. In addition, the National Police have had little success in rounding up draft evaders. Government officials involved with the draft met recently to plan corrective measures; they told local draft officials to "get tough," and asked for the appointment of an assistant to the defense minister to oversee the program.

At present, Cambodian Army combat strength stands at between 110,000 and 130,000 troops out of an overall strength of almost 210,000. The 37,000-man general reserve has borne the brunt of the heavy fighting in the Phnom Penh region during the past year. Total Khmer Communist combat strength is estimated at 50,000 to 60,000 troops, of which 12,000 to 15,000 are estimated to be committed to operations near Phnom Penh.

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KUWAIT-USSR

The Kuwaiti minister of defense acknowledged on January 13 that his country is negotiating with Moscow for arms [redacted]

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[redacted] This is the first time Kuwait has expressed interest in Soviet weapons. With the exception of a \$1-million contract for antiaircraft guns ordered from Yugoslavia in 1970, all arms purchases have been from the West.

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After border skirmishes with Iraq last March, the Kuwaiti Parliament in early July approved a request for \$1.4 billion to strengthen the country's military capability. Negotiations with the US for a wide range of military equipment, including jet fighters, air-to-surface and antitank missile systems, and tanks, have been under way since April 1973, but have thus far resulted in only one small contract for trucks.

The Kuwaitis are [redacted] close to concluding a deal with France for Mirage interceptors, and have also shown interest in surface-to-air and antitank missiles made by the French and West Germans. Kuwait's interest in Soviet arms could be a pressure tactic to encourage Washington, Paris, and Bonn to be more forthcoming.

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TURKEY

President Koruturk yesterday named Bulent Ecevit prime minister-designate, paving the way for a coalition of Ecevit's left-of-center party with the right-wing National Salvation Party. The two parties have already agreed on coalition terms and will probably announce a cabinet soon.

The military would have preferred a coalition in which the Islam-oriented National Salvation Party did not play an important role; moreover, senior officers have shown concern over what they consider Ecevit's leftist tendencies. They will closely monitor the government's activities but seem willing for the present to give it a chance.

The new coalition has a precarious majority of only eight seats in the National Assembly, and there is an ideological gulf between the two parties. Ecevit has little experience in foreign affairs, and will probably concentrate first on domestic problems. No major departure from Turkey's pro-Western foreign policy is likely. Ecevit's party does advocate, however, more assertive behavior in NATO, reconsideration of the ban on opium poppy cultivation, and nationalization of petroleum resources. These are all issues on which its coalition partner can agree.

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