



# The President's Daily Brief

*September 10, 1975*

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PORTUGAL

*The Socialist Party is taking advantage of the Communists' recent setbacks, but it remains concerned that its gains could be wiped out by an attempt from either the left or right to seize power.*

Socialist sources have told the US embassy that prime minister - designate Azevedo has agreed to form a government based on the Socialist program and that the new cabinet could be announced as early as today. These sources claim that the party turned down an opportunity to form a Socialist government because it wanted to avoid criticism from other political parties at a time when tough decisions are necessary.

The Socialists say that they will be given at least five of the approximately 15 cabinet posts, although they may be including in this number independents sympathetic to their cause. According to the Socialist version of the new government, the Popular Democrats--who finished a respectable second to the Socialists in the elections last April--will receive two posts, and the Communists will be given at least one and possibly two.

The Socialists hope to gain effective control of the government. The party will try to get the military back into the barracks and hopes to disarm the various revolutionary groups, including the Communist paramilitary apparatus which the Socialists claim totals approximately 6,000 in the Lisbon area.



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EGYPT

*The US embassy in Cairo has provided an assessment of why President Sadat, anticipating Arab criticism of the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement, still risked signing an accord that does not fully satisfy even Egypt's demands.*

Our embassy believes that the answer lies in a synthesis of considerations, none of which has been overriding on its own. These are:

--Sadat judged that this was the last real chance to demonstrate that his shift in foreign policy--from dependence on the Soviets to confidence in the US--is working and has not hopelessly stalled, as his critics have charged. Believing election year in the US will make impossible bold US diplomacy, Sadat concluded it was now or never.

--Sadat perceived other options offered virtually nothing for Egypt. He knows he cannot "win" a war. Further, he is in the awkward position of knowing that if he takes preemptive military action, he is likely to lose carefully cultivated US support.

--As for a reconvened Geneva conference rather than the just concluded negotiations, Sadat knew it would have been a dangerously sterile operation, resulting in polarization of the Soviets and Arabs versus the US and Israel, and consequently an admission that his policy was bankrupt.

--Sadat was impressed with the argument that an Israeli withdrawal, obtained through negotiations and not war, constitutes an important symbolic victory and the actual beginning of the peace process.

--Sadat hopes he has sealed his borders against Israeli attack at a time of relative Egyptian military weakness.

(continued)

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--As it became obvious during the negotiations that Egyptian minimal demands were to be met (oil fields returned and Israelis "out" of the passes), Sadat's ability to turn down the agreement diminished sharply. Without a significant pretext, refusal to accept the accord would have been equivalent to a slap at the Americans.

--The Egyptian people are in a mood to accept even a "bad" agreement. Businessmen want stability. The army is not afraid to fight but knows the severe disadvantage it faces. Most Egyptians are tired of war and yearn for economic improvements.

--Sadat retains full confidence in your and Secretary Kissinger's determination to continue to move the peace process along.

Sadat, therefore--for lack of anything better--agreed to sign the accord. He knows the risks are high, for he has left himself open to attack on almost every tenet of Arab solidarity. He has agreed to a de facto suspension of the state of belligerency and to the reintroduction of superpower "imperialists" in the area.

He has been unable to obtain a public declaration of US determination to seek a significant Israeli pullback from the Golan immediately. He has nothing to offer the Palestinians except a statement that he has urged the US to begin a dialogue with the Palestinians.

In short, Sadat will be hard pressed to refute charges that his is a self-seeking "Egypt first" policy that flies in the face of Arab nationalist principles.

The inevitable result initially will be an increasing flood of leftist propaganda. At least for the interim, Sadat's moral and real influence in the Arab world will diminish.

From all indications, however, Sadat is confident he can handle whatever domestic dissent outside provocateurs manage to stir up. Most of his senior colleagues do not fully share his confidence.



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LEBANON

*Muslims and Christians in northern Lebanon fought to a near standstill yesterday. With casualties and property damage very heavy in both Tripoli and Zagharta, militiamen on each side have abandoned hand-to-hand combat and returned to their usual tactic of shelling from fixed positions.*

The militia of the right-wing Phalanges Party, which played a central role in the violence in Beirut earlier this year, still has not become significantly involved in the fighting. The party is Lebanon's largest Christian political organization, but is not strong in the area where hostilities are taking place.

The major fedayeen groups also are staying on the sidelines, despite the presence of some 16,000 Palestinians in two refugee camps near Tripoli.

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A few far-left fedayeen--presumably those in the pay of Libya and Iraq--have attempted to intensify the fighting. These Palestinians have been joined by pro-Iraq Lebanese politicians [redacted] in condemning the government's inaction.

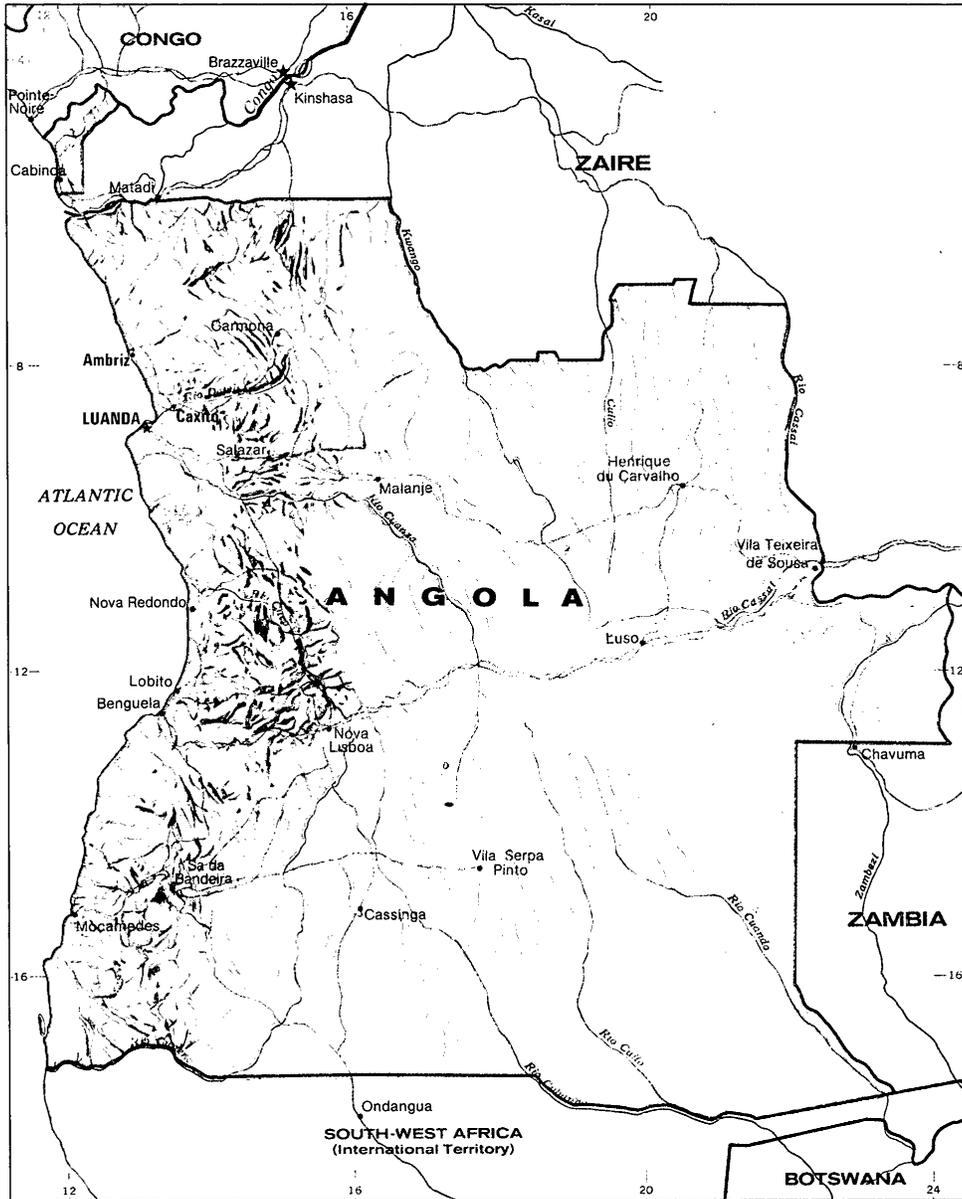
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the government continues to resist calling in the army. Kamal Jumblatt, the leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, has warned Prime Minister Karami against use of the army, and leaders of Beirut's Muslim community have predicted civil war if the army becomes involved.

The cabinet met for the second time in two days yesterday, but has not yet announced action to stop the violence. Newspapers in Beirut reported this morning that the army would be ordered today to intervene in the fighting. They said that the cabinet yesterday had agreed to give army commander Iskandar Ghanim a six-month leave of absence. Ghanim is a Christian and a long-time supporter of President Franjyah. Ghanim might be replaced by army chief of staff Nasrallah, a Druze, who would be acceptable to both sides in the present dispute.



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ANGOLA-ZAIRE

*The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola has forced the National Front for the Liberation of Angola from its stronghold at Caxito, some 40 miles northeast of Luanda.*

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The fall of Caxito is a serious defeat for the National Front and may prelude a major offensive by the Popular Movement to push the other nationalist group out of Angola entirely.

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The Front had capitalized on its presence in Caxito to maintain its military credibility after being forced out of Luanda in July and to discredit the Popular Movement's claims that it is the only organization capable of assuming power when Angola achieves independence. Unless the Front can stage a dramatic comeback in the very near future, it could lose any chance of consideration as a participant in the post-independence government in Angola.

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UN

*The reaction of both the developed and developing world to the US speech-- delivered on the first day of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly-- continues to be generally favorable.*



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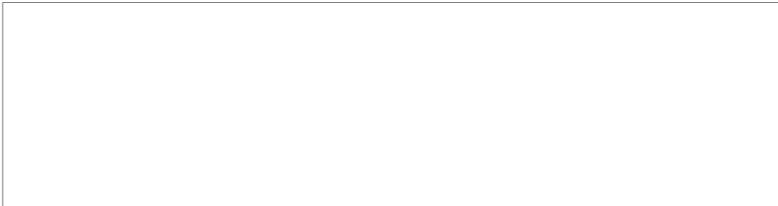
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Our embassy in Paris reports that French officials are generally pleased with the speech because it brings Washington into the dialogue with the developing states. The Japanese Foreign Ministry is satisfied for the same reason. 

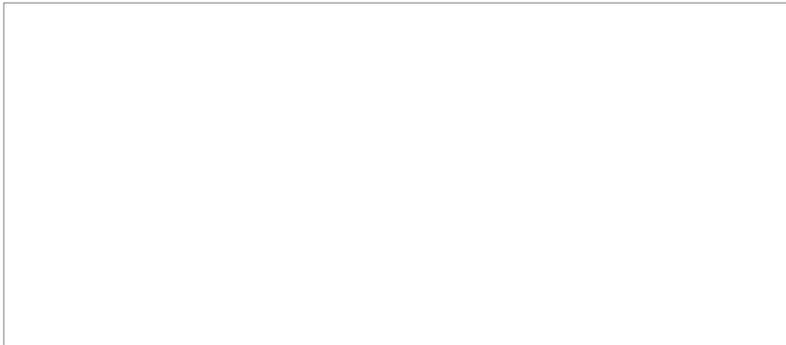
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NOTES

Romanian President Ceausescu [redacted] suffered a bruised ego [redacted] at the Helsinki summit  
[redacted]

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[redacted] Ceausescu-- was upset because he was not in the spotlight at Helsinki. He was annoyed by the Romanian Foreign Ministry's failure to line up more talks for him with other chiefs of state. [redacted] the East European leaders tended to ignore him and treated him like an outsider. [redacted]

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\* \* \*

Prince Sihanouk and his party received a festive welcome when they arrived in the Cambodian capital yesterday.

The Prince was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Khieu Samphan; Deputy Prime Minister for National Defense Son Sen delivered the welcome address. The Prince's visit to Phnom Penh will apparently be short. During October, he is scheduled to be in Peking at both the beginning and end of the month and, in between those dates, to address the UN General Assembly and go to North Korea. Following this round of travel, Sihanouk may be resigned to spending most of his time in Phnom Penh.

\* \* \*

UN Secretary General Waldheim failed again yesterday to get Greek and Turkish Cypriot negotiators Clerides and Denktash to agree on an agenda for formal discussions.

Denktash said that he cannot discuss the territorial question until later in the year, after the senate elections in Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot elections. Clerides refuses to participate in formal talks unless Denktash presents concrete proposals on the territorial question. Waldheim intends to call a session today that he hopes will at least pave the way for another round of talks at a later date.

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