



# The President's Daily Brief

*September 21, 1976*

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LEBANON: *Syrian President Asad is unlikely to resume military operations in Lebanon until after president-elect Sarkis' inauguration on Thursday to allow the new president to work for a political settlement.*

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Meanwhile, the Syrian media yesterday accused the Sadat government once more of responsibility for the Lebanese civil war and of sabotaging the talks at Shaturah. The singling out of Egypt in this manner does not bode well for the success of the summit in Saudi Arabia.

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*Fighting in Beirut has become worse over the past few days.*

The renewed hostilities have raised some concern about the ability of the Arab League forces to provide adequate security for Sarkis' inauguration. The ceremony now is scheduled to take place at a location only 100 yards from the front line.

\* \* \*

*CHINA: Since the death of Mao Tse-tung less than two weeks ago, the Chinese leadership has moved quickly to reaffirm the general outline of Chinese foreign policy toward the US and the USSR.*

The Chinese press quickly published your letter of condolence and replayed your statement to US newsmen on Mao's death. The Chinese nevertheless have made clear that they remain displeased with some aspects of US foreign policy, such as Washington's continuation of "detente" with Moscow.

The Chinese ambassador to the UN, Huang Hua, during a talk last week with Ambassador Scranton, reiterated standard Chinese warnings that "detente" might hasten war rather than prevent it.

Chinese media gave perfunctory treatment of Secretary Kissinger in its coverage of foreign tributes paid to the late Chairman. The Chinese did not publish the Secretary's statement after Mao's death, and he was given no special prominence in Chinese coverage of condolence calls paid by senior US officials to the Chinese mission in Washington.

There is no ambivalence in Peking's treatment of the USSR. Peking rejected a condolatory message from the Soviet party Central Committee on the grounds that the Chinese "have no relations" with the Soviet

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party. The Chinese also allowed several days to pass before they publicly acknowledged that two Soviet Politburo members had expressed condolences at the Chinese embassy in Moscow.

Heated anti-Soviet propaganda stressing the theme of Soviet "expansionism" has continued to appear in Chinese media since Mao's death. Peking's treatment of this sensitive issue is clearly designed to counter speculation that Chinese policy toward Moscow is likely to change now that Mao is gone.

\* \* \*

*NORTH KOREA: North Korea, in a sudden turn-about, has instructed its supporters in the UN to withdraw the draft resolution favoring the North from the provisional agenda of the UN General Assembly.*

[redacted] North Korea's communist co-sponsors will present a letter of withdrawal to the president of the General Assembly this morning.

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The North Koreans may have detected some weakening in the support for their position at the UN this fall. Last year two conflicting Korean resolutions were passed, and the North was hoping to build enough momentum this year to achieve an outright defeat of the South.

A number of recent developments, however, have improved the prospects for passage again of South Korea's resolution. These include:

- the unusual display of dissent registered by 23 countries against a harshly worded North Korean resolution submitted at the non-aligned conference in Sri Lanka;

- the improved pro-South lobbying effort;

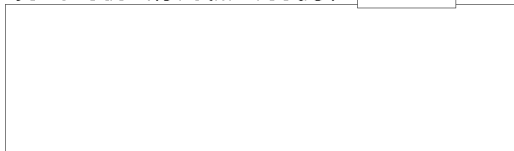
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--the confrontational language  
of the draft UN resolution sub-  
mitted this year by the North;  
and

--the adverse publicity stemming  
from the Panmunjom incident in  
mid-August.

North Korea may also have sensed  
that there was growing sentiment  
at the UN this year for a deferral  
of debate on the perennially con-  
tentious Korean issue. 25X1



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NOTES

With the end of the mourning period following Mao's death, China has resumed preparations for an atmospheric test of a nuclear device at Lop Nor.

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[Redacted] suggests that the test could occur during the next few days.

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Prime Minister Mintoff's Labor Party won a close but decisive victory over the opposition Nationalists in Malta's parliamentary election on Friday and Saturday.

The final vote count is expected to give Labor a three-seat majority in the new parliament. This is more than enough to guarantee the continuation of a strong Labor government for the next five years.

The result is a personal triumph for Mintoff, and he will interpret it as a mandate to continue his foreign policy aimed at avoiding alignment with either the US or USSR.

\* \* \*

Serious differences with Argentina's foreign minister, Admiral Guzzetti, appear to have been the principal cause of last week's surprise resignation of Ambassador Arnaldo Musich, the junta's envoy to Washington.

The burden of defending the regime against charges of human rights violations also could have influenced Musich's decision.

Guzzetti has long been upset with Musich because the latter tended to be more responsive to the economy minister than to the foreign

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minister. Guzzetti was said to be further incensed when Musich met in Washington with a US priest who had been detained by Argentine authorities as an alleged subversive and freed only after a vigorous US protest.

The loss of the able Musich, a businessman and economist who worked hard to secure financial assistance and sympathy for the new government, could hurt the military regime. It could also mean a loss of prestige for President Videla, who pressed Musich's appointment despite some military objections.

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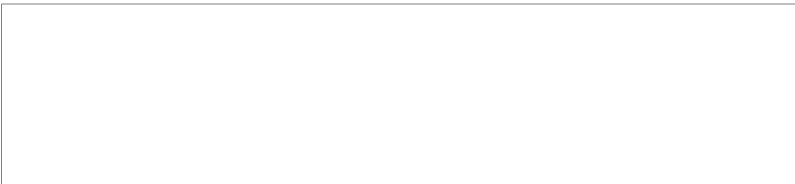
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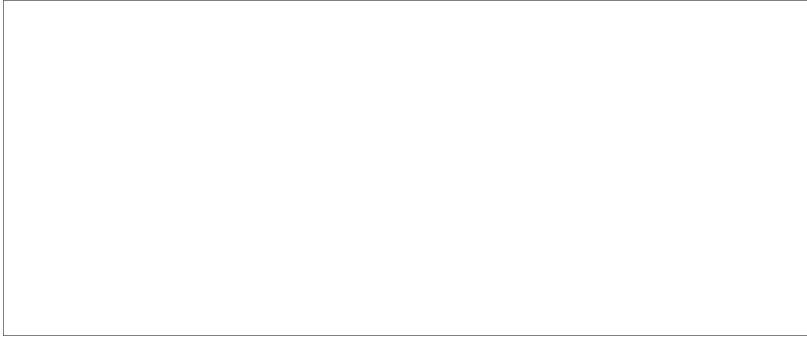
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