

Appointments of Senior UN Personnel

263. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State¹

New York, June 14, 1971, 2341Z.

1595. Subj: Successor to Bunche.

1. When seeing U Thant on another subject June 14 Bush took opportunity of reiterating US interest in making available suitably qualified American replacement. He sought SYG's views on tenure.

2. U Thant confirmed that he agreed post should be filled by American. At present, all Under and Assistant Secretaries General had contracts terminating March 31, 1972 with exceptions of Guyer and Matthews. However, practice had been established that when new Secretary General inaugurated all senior staff submitted their resignations in order to give new incumbent maximum flexibility. (SYG indicated this was largely formality and that both he and Hammarskjold had requested almost all senior personnel to remain.)

3. U Thant said some people expect Sovs to reopen whole "troika" dispute. He made it clear that he would have nothing to do with any suggestion which would imply SYG should clear decisions with both a Sov and American Under Secretary General. On occasions when Sovs had criticized Bunche he had defended him as ideal of what international civil servant should be.

Bush

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 301, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. VII. Confidential; Exdis.

264. Telegram From the Department of State to Secretary of State Rogers in Brussels¹

Washington, December 10, 1971, 0133Z.

Tosec 45/222645. Subject: Succession to Ralph Bunche.²

1. We have made a further review of possible alternative courses of action and have concluded that our interests are best served in maintaining, and if necessary reinforcing, our position that the successor to Bunche should and will be furnished by the United States. While we understand that vacancy will be filled only after the new SYG has come into office, you should make sure that U Thant, Secretariat and others who ask are in no doubt that we expect to provide qualified candidate for that position.

2. As we see it, the Under Secretary General for Special Political Affairs is a key political position even though its effectiveness will depend on

- a. the incumbent's personal relationship with the SYG;
- b. his caliber, stature and experience with UN; and
- c. his understanding of US policy and decision-making processes.

3. We understand there can be no assurance that this Under Secretary will have the operating responsibilities and degree of autonomy in peacekeeping operations that Ralph Bunche exercised; but it seems to us that, given the kind of man who can operate effectively in the UN system, incumbent could exercise considerable influence on the SYG not only in broad range of political matters but in others as well.

4. We have considered the alternative of seeking instead to provide an American candidate for position of Under Secretary for Administration, but concluded that the past record does not augur well for incumbent of that position to exercise significant influence on administration and budgetary matters of greatest concern to us. There is a history of US attempts to use such positions in UN and other agencies to exert influence on key administrative decisions, and record is not encouraging. Moreover, in a period in which we shall have to bear down hard on UN for economy and efficiency, it could prove awkward to have a US national in charge of administration since his actions

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, UN 8–3. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Herz and Assistant Secretary De Palma, cleared by Pedersen and Curran, and approved by Acting Secretary Irwin. Rogers was in Brussels for a NATO ministerial meeting.

² Bunche retired as Under Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs on October 1 and died on December 9, 1971.

would appear to be directed by his Govt. On the other hand, we tend to believe that a capable Under Secretary for Special Political Affairs could exercise influence on the SYG himself in regard to some budgetary and administrative decisions as well.

5. As we see it, the key to proper utilization of the Bunche position will lie in coming up with the right kind of candidate who, by virtue of his qualifications and experience, will be able to get off to the right start with the new SYG.

6. At the same time, we hope to maintain US nationals in key deputy or similar levels in administration areas. Would appreciate USUN assessment whether US nationals now occupy adequate number such positions and if not which we should seek. Occurs to us that in process selecting new SYG we might wish make clear our desires in this area as well as nailing down Under Secretary position.

Irwin

265. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State¹

New York, January 4, 1972, 2240Z.

12. Ref: USUN 007.²

1. At lunch today Guyer and Urquhart told Bush and Schaufele that they had impression, which generally shared in Secretariat, that new SYG does not plan make many high-level UN staff changes. Specifically they almost unequivocal in stating Narasimhan would remain as SYG Chef de Cabinet even though US, UK, USSR and others, as well as Secretariat members would be glad to see him leave.

2. Guyer, specifically, and Urquhart, somewhat less so, in effect counseled against us replacing Bunche. They pointed out that his special position was achieved over twenty-year period and that no other American could expect to fill his role. In advising SYG Office of Special

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Confidential; Exdis.

² Telegram 7 from USUN, January 4, discussed Bush's courtesy call on Secretary-General Waldheim on January 3, during which Bush said that this government was interested in seeing an American succeed Bunche and that he wanted to be sure that the nominee would be someone with whom Waldheim could work closely. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, UN 8-3)

Political Affairs has unique role and influence which carry over to most member states. Installation of American other than Bunche at high level would make its advice and influence questionable in eyes of others. Soviets would be suspicious and unreceptive in any case but this would extend to Arabs and other third world countries regardless of abilities and sensitivities of person involved. Success of office now—Guyer specifically mentioned Jerusalem affair and SYG's July 20 report on East Pakistan—would be compromised because of presence of US Under Secretary General even if proposals and initiatives were same.

3. Both men also expressed concern over SYG's sensitivity to press criticism which will probably become all the more evident as he continues his press, radio and TV interviews. Guyer would prefer his adopting lower profile but if Waldheim is going to get involved with media he should be more thick-skinned.

4. *Comment:* As Dept. aware we have always assumed that US replacement for Bunche could not expect to step into same position of influence and would have to carve out his own niche in UN structure. Certainly Guyer, as reported reftel and as he repeated in this conversation, believes there is no real job for two men in Special Political Affairs and is probably expressing personal considerations in his remarks.

5. Urquhart can be taken more seriously in view his long experience and his closeness to Bunche, although he too may have aspirations nurtured by UK. What emerges from this conversation is that Bunche replacement, in addition to high competence and acceptability to SYG, will require agility, toughness and nerve to surmount obstacles which may be placed in his path by Secretariat personnel. At same time we do not underestimate difficulties which Guyer and Urquhart mentioned and which will arise for him and office in view suspicions of others that he representative of US rather than SYG.

6. We disturbed about impression that Waldheim not expected make necessary staff changes. We will discreetly suggest to other Perm Reps of similar mind to weigh in on this subject. If Dept. believes it feasible it may wish draw attention of Amb. Gruber to this matter in hope he will pass it on to Waldheim.

Bush

266. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State¹

New York, January 5, 1972, 0003Z.

15. Subj: The Future of C.V. Narasimhan.

1. From a variety of sources we have picked up rumors that Waldheim has requested C.V. Narasimhan to stay on as Chef de Cabinet. Narasimhan himself has been exuding confidence ever since appointment of new SYG and this has tended to lend credence to the rumors.

2. This situation presents us with delicate problem. Senior Secretariat personnel are in general superannuated and Secretariat is badly in need of new blood. At same time Waldheim probably feels he needs to keep some experienced UN hands as he begins to grapple with some of long-neglected problems of the organization. In spite of his reputation of being no friend of US, Narasimhan is: (a) experienced; (b) relatively young; and (c) intelligent.

3. Our concern is two-fold. On political side, Narasimhan must have been deeply involved in advising U Thant to issue the many one-sided statements criticizing US role in Southeast Asia. On administrative and financial side, Narasimhan as one of U Thant's closest collaborators was either unable or unwilling to get Thant to deal effectively with these problems.

4. We will compare notes with UK and if they share our concern we should consider parallel informal approaches to Waldheim on this matter. We could say we have heard rumors Narasimhan might be asked to stay on as Chef de Cabinet. This major decision obviously one Waldheim must make on his own. However, Narasimhan closely identified with and responsible for record of previous administration which failed spectacularly to come to grips with financial and administrative crises afflicting the UN. We strongly support Waldheim's determination to tackle these serious problems and we cannot help but register our concern over reports that UN official who was closest advisor to U Thant on whole range of problems, might be asked to stay on in such a key post.

5. At same time, in order not to have our démarche appear to be a personal vendetta, we should indicate we willing see Narasimhan occupy a post commensurate with his past attainments (e.g. head of UNIDO or UNCTAD), in both of which C.V. has expressed an interest.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Secret; Exdis.

6. In his Dec 24 lunch with Phillips, Waldheim said he had made no commitment to Narasimhan and above rumors may reflect normal nervousness of Secretariat personnel in time of change. However, they are widespread throughout upper levels of UNHQ.

Bush

267. Memorandum From Marshall Wright of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

Replacement for Ralph Bunche

I thought you should be informed of the state of play surrounding a replacement for Ralph Bunche as UN Under Secretary General for Political Affairs.

Waldheim had earlier assured George Bush that he knew we wanted an American replacement and would comply, but Waldheim now asks that we release him from this commitment and seek a different top-level job slot for an American (cable at Tab A),² because he fears that naming an American to the Bunche position "will open up tremendous opposition and demands from other big powers." Waldheim wants to give the job to Guyer, an energetic Argentinian, who is acting as Under Secretary General with some of Bunche's responsibilities.

Bush asks that Secretary Rogers review our position.

Assistant Secretary De Palma is waiting for Rogers' return to Washington to recommend that we stick to our guns and insist on an American.

As to whom we might put forward as the candidate, State's thinking has not yet jelled. Dick Pedersen's name is being bruited about, but it's possible that Secretary Rogers might want to go outside State.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Secret. Sent for information.

² Telegram 36 from USUN, January 6; attached but not printed.

I agree with the line De Palma is proposing—that we hold Waldheim to his commitment to name an American. It's not surprising that other governments have started to crowd Waldheim, and precisely for that reason [we] ought to have our own man sitting next to the SYG as a counter-weight.

Since matters will be coming to a head rather soon on this, if you have any thoughts or guidelines you want to give me, I'll be grateful for them.

268. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State¹

New York, January 12, 1972, 1746Z.

112. Subj: Successor to Bunche—Bush—SYG Meeting Jan 11.

1. I met SYG 3 PM Jan 11 and specifically asked him "if we find that we can accommodate your wishes, do you plan to fill 'the Bunche job' with another nationality?" SYG gave a swift "no".

2. I told him we wanted 38th floor presence plus input on political matters.

3. SYG suggested GA affairs job with political input understood. We discussed possible titles such as "UNSYG for GA Affairs and Special Political Affairs". SYG rejected this saying it would appear to be vastly expanded US role. SYG then suggested "UNSYG for GA Affairs and Special Affairs".

4. We agreed to think about matter more. He is anxious to work something out.

5. He questioned me on 38th floor presence. I said we had to insist on it. He then mused that if we discussed new job including GA affairs, it could well be on 38th floor since GA people already had offices there. "The man could use the Bunche office and the administrative employees already located on the 38th floor."

6. SYG mainly worries about reactions of USSR and PRC. I told him USSR had no complaint with Kutakov already reappointed and further that no other country, particularly those he worried about, once having a senior position would ever give it up.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Secret; Exdis.

7. We had general discussion of type of man.

8. The matter was left that we would both think more and then get back together. I made clear that no agreement had been made on giving up the Bunche job, only that we wanted to explore a way to accommodate his wishes and ours as well.

9. *General comment:* Waldheim still appears stung by press criticism. He is worrying too much about it. He is concerned about financial problems of UN and fortunately appeared concerned over costs of SC meeting in Africa. He is anxious to see President and specifically mentioned preferring to do this before the President's Peking trip, feeling this would show UN not on "back burner" as far as President's interest goes.

Bush

269. Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations¹

Washington, January 14, 1972, 2234Z.

8038. For Bush from Secretary. Subject: Bunche job. Ref: USUN 036,² State 222645;³ USUN 112.⁴

We recognize SYG may find it necessary realign functions of Under-Secretaries in conformity present political realities. Obviously, Soviets and PRC will press him to avoid assigning peacekeeping functions to American Under-Secretary. We may not be able obtain assurance incumbent of that position will have specific responsibility exercised by Bunche in peacekeeping field, but we would like retain both general advisory role and as much substantive political responsibility as possible.

If SYG finds it impossible retain title of Under-Secretary for Political Affairs, we would be willing consider job now described as

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Assistant Secretary De Palma, cleared by Sisco and Eliot, and approved by Secretary Rogers.

² See footnote 2, Document 267.

³ Document 264.

⁴ Dated January 9. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN)

Under-Secretary for GA affairs, but would want Bunche's responsibilities for Middle East made part of that job. We could not accept view that ME responsibilities are not suitable for American. On contrary, US in unique position vis-à-vis Egypt, Jordan and Israelis. GA job has consistently involved other substantive responsibilities. Cordier, who held GA assignment, was also in fact Chef de Cabinet, as was Narasimhan.

To accommodate ME responsibilities job might be described as Under-Secretary for Political and General Assembly Affairs. This will parallel Kutakov's title: Political and Security Council Affairs. We think it important retain "political" in title. If we are offered that position we would want assurance that technical peacekeeping responsibilities would be assigned to national of suitable country (e.g., Canada) and not to USSR, PRC or country susceptible to Soviet or Chinese pressure. We feel this justified by UN's heavy dependence on US political, financial and logistics support for peacekeeping operations. As part of either above arrangements, we could envisage someone like Guyer as Chef de Cabinet. We also would expect the Bunche job to be abolished and that there be no increase in total number of Under-Secretaries.

In conveying above to SYG, you should express our understanding for pressure he will undoubtedly face on this matter, which is nothing new. However, we think it vital that American retain political role in UN analogous to that Bunche had, however described, including specific political responsibilities which would assure him effective base of operations. He must be located on 38th floor and we hope he would be one of close associates who participates with SYG in key political decisions.

American Under-Secretary for Special Political Affairs has been necessary balance to Soviet Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs. We shall now also need post at this level of responsibility to balance PRC Under-Secretary. You should stress that retention of effective high level job comparable to that held by Bunche is critical to restoration US confidence in organization, a factor we hope he fully appreciates. It is important that Waldheim not even seem to downgrade responsibilities of senior American official.

You should also point out we have always observed Charter obligation and treated Americans in Secretariat as international civil servants. We shall continue to do so. At the same time we assume Waldheim appreciates importance of having strong American Under-Secretary in position to provide him sound insight into US attitudes, policies and decision-making process.

Rogers

270. Telegram From the Mission to the United Nations to the Department of State¹

New York, January 18, 1972, 2216Z.

185. Subj: Narasimhan's Future.

1. During long conversation with me Jan 14 on Waldheim's initiative, he admitted he had a real problem with Narasimhan who is pushing hard to retain Chef de Cabinet position. Waldheim said the PRC, Soviets and French had all expressed lack of confidence in Narasimhan and he already aware of our own reservations. SYG said he knew Narasimhan would have to be moved but he had not been able to work out an appropriate alternative assignment.

2. I asked Waldheim if he had explored further the possibility of making Narasimhan SYG of UNCTAD or appointing him Executive Director of UNIDO. Re UNCTAD, SYG had learned Perez-Guerrero's term had been extended to March 31, 1973. Re UNIDO, Abdel Rahman's contract expires December 31, 1972. Of these two posts, Narasimhan would probably be more interested in UNCTAD position. On the chance that Perez-Guerrero might consider resigning before the end of his term (perhaps after UNCTAD III in April–May 1972) Waldheim said he intended to discuss question with Amb Aguilar of Venezuela prior to latter's departure to take up his new job as Amb to US. (Perez-Guerrero has retained his status in Venezuela's diplomatic service.)

3. Until he can resolve the Narasimhan problem, SYG intends to rely increasingly on his personal assistant, Anton Prohaska, whom he has moved into his immediate office from the Austrian Mission.

4. Waldheim has concluded that the post of Chef de Cabinet should not continue at the Under SYG level. Once he has found a new assignment for Narasimhan, he intends to downgrade the post to the level of Assistant SYG. This would release an additional Under Secretary position, which could be made available for the Chinese.

Phillips

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Secret; Exdis.

271. Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations¹

Washington, March 23, 1972, 0326Z.

49607. Subject: US Nominee for UN Under Secretary. For Bush from De Palma.

Following luncheon given by the OAS for Secretary General Waldheim I informed him that Secretary Rogers wished to propose Congressman F. Bradford Morse (R., Mass) for the post of Under Secretary General on the basis of earlier discussions concerning the role we expected an American Under Secretary to play. The SYG seemed visibly disappointed for a moment and remarked that following a press report that Congressman Morse might be proposed there was considerable discussion in UN circles of his apparent lack of experience and unfamiliarity with the United Nations. I told him that on the contrary, I was in a position to assure him that Congressman Morse has taken a keen interest in the work of the United Nations, that as a member of the Peace through Law group in the Congress he has been a leading advocate of UN causes, and that he is closely familiar with United Nations activities. When I added that the Secretary and the President felt that the designation of a member of Congress was particularly desirable at this time in order to improve Congressional confidence in the organization, the SYG reacted very favorably and noted that an experienced member of Congress could contribute much to the organization's work as well as to its image in the US Congress.

The SYG said he would appreciate an opportunity to talk with Congressman Morse and I undertook to suggest that Mr. Morse arrange to see him in New York as soon as possible.

I subsequently telephoned Mr. Morse who agreed to get in touch with the SYG later today to arrange an appointment.²

Irwin

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 303, Agency Files, USUN, Vol. X. Confidential; Exdis. Drafted by Assistant Secretary De Palma, cleared by R. Christiansen, and approved by De Palma.

² Secretary-General Waldheim announced Morse's appointment as Under Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs on March 27.