

Expansion of the Kissinger–Dobrynin Channel and Further Discussions on the Middle East, December 11, 1969–July 28, 1970

105. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, December 11, 1969.

SUBJECT

Informing the Soviets of our Talks with the Chinese

I notice that Gerard Smith and Ambassador Thompson proposed that Dobrynin be informed of the resumption of US-Chinese talks before it becomes public knowledge.

In the last Administration it was a standard practice for the State Department to provide Dobrynin with detailed records of the Warsaw talks. This was done at the Thompson and Bohlen level. The idea was to calm possible Soviet suspicions. It was also assumed that the Russians probably had some knowledge of the content of the talks from Polish monitoring operations and that, therefore, there was no harm in providing them with the full record.

I believe that as a matter of style, and consistent with our general approach to the Soviets and the Chinese Communists, this practice of the last Administration should not be resumed in this one.² I

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information.

² Attached but not printed is a December 12 memorandum from Kissinger informing Rogers that "The President agrees completely with your recommendation against advising Ambassador Dobrynin of our talks with the Chinese. He has asked that under no circumstances should we inform Dobrynin of the talks or their content. If Dobrynin questions, we should respond with nonchalance that they concern matters of mutual interest but not go beyond that."

assume that you will want to call this to the attention of the Secretary of State.³

³ Haig's initials and the following handwritten comments appear at the end of the memorandum: "Absolutely. Hal [Sonnenfeldt]—Rogers called HAK, agreed completely with your psn [position] and on his own volunteered this psn—HAK ran by Pres—and confirmed in writing. Copy attached." At 12:22 p.m., Rogers and Kissinger spoke on the telephone about this issue. According to a transcript of their conversation, "R said Tommy [Llewellyn] Thompson recommended that we advise Dobrynin about the proposed talks with the Chinese. R said he doesn't think we should, but we wanted to give the P[resident] the chance to think about it. K said how did he know? K said I guess he got it in the traffic. R said he got it in the traffic and it's going to be in the papers. R said he thinks we should be nice in view of the SALT, but R doesn't agree. K said he agrees with R and K thinks the P will need a lot of selling to accept Tommy Thompson's view. K said he would mention it to him. K said he will say that R disagreed, but wanted to be meticulous and let K know." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 361, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

106. Memorandum for the 303 Committee¹

Washington, December 12, 1969.

SUBJECT

U.S. Policy on Support for Covert Action Involving Emigrés Directed at the Soviet Union

Summary:

The Department of State was instructed by NSDM 25² of September 17, 1969, to review and up-date NSC 5502/1³ dated January 31, 1955 on the subject of "U.S. Policy Toward Russian Anti-Soviet Political Activities." That document, which was reviewed and approved again by the NSC Planning Board on November 1, 1960, has provided the authorization for CIA covert action programs directed at the Soviet Union involving émigrés from Soviet-dominated areas. In view of the essentially covert nature of these CIA programs, it has been determined

¹ Source: National Security Council, Nixon Intelligence Files, Subject Files, USSR. Secret; Eyes Only.

² NSDM 25 directed the "Disposal of Outdated NSC Policy Papers." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-211, NSDM Files, NSDM 25)

³ See footnote 2, Document 103.

that decisions not only on programs but also on policy should be the responsibility of the 303 Committee.

The principal policy recommendations in this paper are:

—that the present policy of selective support of émigré-related activities be continued;

—that the United States avoid policies, such as those favored by some émigrés, supporting separate nationhood for racial or language groupings within the Soviet Union; and

—that covert support activities be kept under periodic review, keeping in mind the option of withdrawing support in return for identifiable political advantages.

The CIA has distributed a related memorandum on “United States Government Support of Covert Action Directed at the Soviet Union”⁴ dated December 9, 1969 which serves both as background for examination of this revised policy document and to support a request for funding for FY 1970. The CIA request does not include funds for the Radio Liberty Committee (current budget is \$13,131,000) [*1½ lines of source text not declassified*] because those programs were approved by Higher Authority on February 22, 1969. The [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] programs for which CIA is requesting continued support involve the expenditure of \$766,000 in FY 1970. These [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] programs have the approval of appropriate officers in the Department of State: Bureau of European Affairs (Deputy Assistant Secretary Swank and Soviet Union Country Director Dubs) and the Planning and Coordination Staff (Mr. R. Davies).

Trends in US-Emigré Relations

Anti-Soviet émigrés⁵ were regarded as an important potential asset in the early post World War II years, at a time when fear of eventual if not imminent war with the USSR was very real in the West. Emigré organizations and individual Soviet refugees were in demand to help staff proliferating anti-Soviet activities and serve generally as a reserve for a possible war emergency.

After the 1950’s, the United States became more selective in its support for émigré activities. It had become clear that the émigrés were hopelessly split between groups with opposing aims, philosophies and ethnic composition and that it was difficult for any government working closely with them not to be dragged into the morass of émigré politics. In the mid-1950’s, efforts were, in fact, abandoned to try to unite the anti-Soviet émigrés behind a common program. The declining interest in émigrés was also related to the realization that they were aging and had grown increasingly out of touch with developments in the

⁴ Document 103.

⁵ [*3 lines of source text not declassified*] [Footnote in the source text.]

USSR. The relations between the United States Government and the émigré community also became more distant as the United States and the Soviet Union moved toward a more normal relationship.

In the early 1960's, the more responsible émigré leaders came to realize that there was no hope of returning to their homeland in the wake of a Soviet-American war or after the overthrow of the Soviet regime. They therefore shifted the emphasis of their activities toward stimulating and publicizing the growing intellectual ferment and expressions of dissidence within the Soviet Union.

United States officials had come to understand that assistance to the émigrés for the eventuality of war with or revolution within the USSR was unrealistic. The skills of the émigrés would be available in the event of war, regardless of whether or not the United States was subsidizing émigré organizations. The sort of mass unrest and revolutionary changes predicted by some émigrés were unlikely to occur within the USSR under conditions short of war. To the extent that significant changes in Soviet policy or leadership might take place, they were likely to result from the actions of a relatively narrow circle of leaders responding to changing attitudes and imperatives within Soviet society.

It was recognized, at the same time, that the émigrés could play an important role in overcoming the resistance to change in Soviet society by stimulating dissatisfaction with existing policy among the Soviet people, especially under the less repressive conditions which followed Stalin's death. As broadcasters, editors and scholars working for Radio Liberty and other émigré information activities, the émigrés were able to address themselves more candidly than U.S. officials could to developments within the USSR; and there was evidence that the émigrés reached an important audience in the USSR precisely because they spoke with special intimacy and concern about developments in Mother Russia. In short, the United States Government concluded that anti-Soviet émigrés had a special contribution to make to United States information programs, both overt and covert, which collectively aimed at influencing the attitudes of the Soviet people and their leaders in directions which would make the Soviet Government a more constructive and responsible member of the world community.

It was also recognized that the émigrés had a certain role to play per se. For some Soviet intellectuals and liberals, they served as in the 19th century as the "conscience-in-exile" and repository of the best cultural traditions of the Russian people and in extremis as a haven of refuge. The émigré organizations accordingly provided—and continue to provide—encouragement to intellectuals in their struggle for personal freedom against the Soviet regime.

Emigré groups have continued to seek official American recognition and support for their particular organizations and aims. In their response, American officials have been authorized to express traditional

American sympathy for all peoples struggling to preserve their cultural traditions and religious beliefs and to protect the human rights of their people. At the same time, it has long been United States Government policy to remain neutral between the Russian proponents of a unitary Russia and émigrés from national minority areas favoring separatist policies.

Nature of Present Activities

The United States Government is presently involved with the émigré community in a number of activities which are summarized below. Details regarding these activities are set forth in the CIA memorandum.

a. *Radio Liberty Committee* (RLC): (successor organization to the American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism), RLC is composed of three major divisions: (1) a radio station (Radio Liberty) which broadcasts via shortwave to the Soviet Union 24 hours a day in 18 languages; (2) a book publication and book distribution program designed to provide Soviet citizens with books not normally accessible to the Soviet public, and; (3) the Institute for the Study of the USSR which produces research papers and publications targeted at the developing countries in Africa, Middle East, and the Far East. In all instances RLC émigré employees are picked for talent and ability without regard to private émigré political beliefs or affiliations.

[3 paragraphs (28 lines of source text) not declassified]

United States Policy Options

A. High Profile Support

The United States could reverse field and follow a more vigorous pro-émigré policy, which might take the form, for example, of (i) more forthcoming identification by United States officials with émigré activities and objectives, (ii) extension of subsidies for émigré activities or organizations not presently receiving U.S. Government assistance; (iii) adoption for the first time of a policy of open support for the independence of national minority areas like the Ukraine.

Pro

—Blatant support of anti-Soviet émigré activities would suggest the determination of the Administration to follow a tough policy toward the USSR, exploiting any vulnerability, in the event that the USSR does not become more cooperative on major issues in dispute.

—Any substantial intensification of émigré propaganda activities might have some feedback in terms of defections, in acquisition of information, and in stimulating dissension inside the USSR;

—United States identification with the independence of national minority areas would strike a responsive chord in an area like the Ukraine and could strengthen nationalist resistance to Russian domination.

Con

—The Soviet leaders, who are chronically suspicious of US policies, could conclude that the United States Government had embarked on a frankly subversive and hostile course of action and that it is disinterested in negotiations on outstanding issues.

—The Soviet leaders will not be induced to be more cooperative by the threat of increased American aid to the émigrés since they believe that the émigrés are feeble and that the Soviet government can control internal dissent.

—Inside the USSR, hard-line supporters of strict conformity and suppression of dissent would have their hands strengthened.

—Repression would retard the process of evolution in popular and leadership attitudes which United States policy has sought to promote.

—Support for the national independence of minority areas would alienate and unify Russian opinion everywhere so that the United States would lose with one hand what it might hope to gain with the other.

—The USSR would be encouraged to increase its own anti-American activities around the world, including support for radical and subversive movements within the United States.

—The problems of finding émigré organizations which are potentially effective and useful to the United States Government have increased with time many émigrés are now even more out-of-touch with Soviet reality, older and less active than in the early post-war years.

B. Withdrawal of All Support

The question of support for specific émigré activities is periodically reviewed. For example, a decision was taken in February 1969 to continue to finance the Radio Liberty Committee.

It can be argued that it would be in the national interest to divorce the United States Government entirely from the emigration and its activities.

Pro

—There would be a financial saving.

—A decision to withdraw American financial support from all émigré/[activities?]

—The existence of émigré voices speaking from abroad would continue to provide moral support and information to those Soviets who have the courage to voice their convictions openly in the USSR.

—Continuation of U.S. Government support for émigré activities on their present limited scale is not incompatible with negotiations with the Soviet Union on matters of mutual concern.

—Withdrawal of U.S. Government subsidies would eliminate, not merely the information activities which reach directly into the USSR, but also useful auxiliary activities which provide anti-communist information to target audiences in non-communist areas.

Con

—By continuing the present level of activities, the United States would not realize the advantages cited under the earlier options.

Recommended Courses of Action

On balance, the low profile policy which has evolved toward the emigration appears both realistic and well suited to United States objectives. Accordingly, it is recommended:

a. That the United States continue to work with émigrés and their organizations for the primary purpose of encouraging an evolution in attitudes within the USSR.

b. That the present general level of involvement with anti-Soviet émigrés be regarded as compatible with our limited adversary relationship with the USSR.

c. That the effectiveness of the activities presently being subsidized be reviewed periodically.

d. That the possibility of withdrawing support from émigré-related organizations, including the Radio Liberty Committee, be kept under review, on the understanding that any withdrawal should be based on concrete political advantage.

e. That any proposals to organize the émigrés for the possible eventuality of war with, or revolution in, the USSR be opposed as unrealistic and likely to damage US-Soviet relations.

f. That the United States support the aspirations of minority peoples in the USSR for preservation of their national culture, religious identity and human rights, but that it avoid identification with any émigré policy favoring separate nationhood for racial or language groupings within the Soviet Union.

g. That the United States policy of non-recognition of incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR be maintained, subject to possible review, but that Baltic refugee organizations [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] be discouraged from active propaganda or other efforts to detach the Baltic States.

h. That émigré activities should continue to be monitored as appropriate even where no US subsidy is involved, since the émigrés occasionally obtain useful information on the USSR through their own channels, and are a potential source of embarrassment to the United States in its relations with the USSR.

107. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Soviet Ambassador (Dobrynin)¹

Washington, December 19, 1969, 7:26 p.m.

D: Happy New Year to you.

K: I'm seeing you Monday night?² I'm already starving myself. We're going to solve all the problems on Monday. But I have a problem before that—that Helsinki conversation. I have been praising the Soviet Delegation for its constructive tone and attitude. But the issue has come up—I just talked with the President—that of the site of the conference.³

D: I got a telegram—still in the same position.

K: When you talked to the P he understood you to say that the site is no huge problem; you said it could start in Helsinki and move someplace else. On this basis he agreed to start in Helsinki. Now Jerry Smith⁴ is under the impression that your man says it has to be Helsinki.

D: You want Geneva?

K: Yes, the P prefers Vienna, with which we know you have problems. The P's basic attitude stays the same. We would consider your attitude very constructive if we could reach a compromise.

D: I will send to Moscow and see.

K: The final session is Monday (?) and we would like to end up without too many disagreements.

D: The only problem is that tomorrow is Saturday—it will be hard to [reach them—I couldn't understand exactly what would be hard, but I think that's what he meant].⁵ But I'll try.

K: I'll appreciate it and I'll see you Monday.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² See Tab A, Document 110.

³ Kissinger spoke with the President at 7:15 p.m. The first few sentences are apparently missing from the transcript of their conversation. Kissinger then stated, "The SALT talks." Nixon asked, "[The Soviets] are going to change it?" Kissinger replied, "This is the problem. You remember our problems with Dobrynin. Bill [Rogers] was reluctant to raise the issue. You had given [Gerard] Smith the instructions and now the Russians had backed off. I thought just as a matter of discipline I ought to call Dobrynin and remind him of this conversation before." Nixon said, "Tell him we gave in on Helsinki and why not Vienna. We don't have to be anxious but the point is that it ought to be either Geneva or Vienna." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 360, Telephone Records, 1969–1976, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

⁴ Reference is to Gerard Smith.

⁵ Brackets in the source text.

108. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, December 23, 1969.

SUBJECT

Recent Soviet Policy Developments: SALT, China and Germany

I thought you might be interested in a speculative piece I asked to be prepared on some aspects of Soviet policy.

The main points are: The Soviets have several balls in the air—SALT, the talks with China, and the new negotiations in Bonn; while it is tempting to see a grand design behind their diverse moves, one suspects there is a large element of improvisation.

SALT

The Soviet negotiators have been rather reserved, avoiding some key issues, and generally leaving the first moves up to us; by insisting on national means of verification, however, they have sharply narrowed the range of realistic proposals. One of their main incentives is their evident concern over Safeguard. They may hope to generate a new debate in this country by proposing a complete ban. At the same time, they have hinted at an interest in a fairly simple agreement early in the next phase.

China

Some observers see a close connection between SALT and the Sino-Soviet talks. While the Soviet position at Helsinki has been perfectly understandable in terms of the issues, they have tried to impress Peking with the possibilities of a Soviet-American rapprochement at Chinese expense. The Chinese have countered by reopening the Warsaw channel.

As for the talks in Peking, it does not appear that the interruption last week means a breakdown or new crisis. Both sides apparently see a tactical advantage to continuing the discussions. But the negotiations are stalemated, and tensions may mount again this spring when the weather makes military operations feasible. Thus the resumption of SALT may be viewed in Moscow as a kind of reinsurance against American reaction to Soviet punitive measures against China.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

Germany

The harsh line taken by Gromyko in his talks with the West German Ambassador² suggests that Moscow feels the China question is sufficiently under control for the time being to establish a hard bargaining position with Bonn. The Soviets would be likely to do so in any case, since they probably are calculating that the new Brandt government³ is under pressure to demonstrate results and will be forced to make concessions. Moreover, by establishing a maximum position the Soviets are in effect laying down the terms for Bonn's other talks with the Poles, the Czechs and the East Germans.

The Outlook

By next spring the Soviets may have untangled the various lines of their Eastern and Western policies and we could look ahead to:

—a new Sino-Soviet crisis, which again would raise the ominous threat of a Soviet attack;

—renewed pressure for a European Security Conference, emanating both from Moscow and from within the Alliance;

—pressures from Bonn for us to become more active in supporting the German negotiations with the East; Brandt may want us to endorse concessions on a security conference, if his policy initiative appears to be foundering;

—the resumption of SALT, in which the Soviets might tie together SALT and European security, or present a seemingly attractive proposal intended to wipe out the Safeguard program, in return for a limitation on Soviet offensive weapons at or near parity.

The longer version elaborating on this speculation is attached at Tab A.⁴

² Gromyko met with West German Ambassador to the Soviet Union Helmut Alldorf on December 8, 11, and 19. Soviet demands included FRG recognition of all post-war European borders; recognition of the FRG/GDR border; understandings on the right of both German states to represent their own interests internationally; a FRG undertaking regarding access to nuclear weapons; and FRG concession on the Munich agreement on the Oder-Niesse border. Telegrams providing accounts of their talks are *ibid*.

³ Willy Brandt, who was the West German Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister until October 21, became Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany on October 22.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

109. Telegram From the Department of State to Certain Posts¹

Washington, December 24, 1969, 0034Z.

211994. Subject: Soviet Response to U.S. October 28 Proposal.

1. Ambassador Dobrynin at his request called on Secretary Rogers December 23 to convey Soviet response to October 28 formulations on Middle Eastern settlement. Sisco and Dubs also present.

2. Dobrynin said that while this reply was in form of oral statement, he was giving Secretary a Soviet language text and an informal Soviet Embassy translation of his statement.²

3. Secretary stressed at outset that US documents on UAR-Israeli aspect and Jordanian-Israeli part of settlement represented firm US Government positions. Secretary underscored this is as far as US is prepared to go. We believe that two documents provide framework within which parties can and should begin negotiations. Four Powers should get parties to negotiate on basis Rhodes formula, otherwise no progress can be made.

4. Dobrynin said that Secretary knew that Soviet side had no specific objection to Rhodes formula. Nevertheless in view of comments made by various parties regarding formula, Soviet side now felt Rhodes formula should not be used. Soviets feel Rhodes formula would not help very much in present state of affairs. Although Moscow is doubtful about any specific use of this formula, it is prepared to find something similar.

5. In response to Sisco's query, Dobrynin confirmed this represented a change in Soviet position. Sisco characterized this as a definite setback. Secretary had indicated in his discussions with Gromyko in New York US believes great use can be made of Rhodes formula, that it is constructively ambiguous, leaving it to each side to interpret formula in terms of its own policy.

6. Dobrynin replied that ultimately it might be possible to find some procedure involving Jarring which would be close to Rhodes formula; using this formula now would mean trouble from the start.

7. Secretary asked Dobrynin whether Soviets felt Arabs are really ready to start negotiations and whether USSR is ready for such process

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Priority; Nodis. Drafted by Dubs on December 23; cleared by Brown (S/S) and Okun (S); and approved by Sisco. Sent to USUN, USINT Cairo, Amman, Beirut, Jidda, Kuwait, Tel Aviv, London, Paris, Moscow, Bucharest, Rabat, Tunis.

² The official translation of the Soviet text of December 23 was transmitted in telegram 212662 to Rogers in Key Biscayne, Florida, December 26. (Ibid.)

to get underway. Dobrynin did not respond directly but said USSR wishes to find more precise formulations regarding some of the issues at stake. He recalled that US had suggested possibility of finding neutral language on some questions, but reiterated that Soviet view is that more precise language should be found on such questions as DMZs, passage through waterways, and security provisions.

8. Secretary said he again wished to make clear that US has gone as far as it can go. We feel strongly that parties should begin process of negotiations. After the negotiations get underway, Four Powers could help in making suggestions and in encouraging parties directly concerned to reach agreement. We cannot overemphasize importance we attach to getting parties to negotiate.

9. Dobrynin asked what US proposes to do with respect to Jarring. Secretary said we continue to feel that best way to get Jarring started would be for Four Powers to agree on our two documents since they represent a sound framework for negotiations and are totally consistent with the Security Council Resolution. Secretary said we must get parties directly concerned negotiating and thereafter Four Powers could help prod the parties from behind the scenes while Jarring is making his efforts. He stressed that any more precise formulations would suggest that we are attempting to impose a settlement. This we cannot do.

10. Dobrynin said that Soviet statement notes that Jarring may also share view that it would not be useful to use Rhodes formula at this time because of the differences of view that have been expressed by parties regarding its interpretation.

11. Sisco said that United States feels Rhodes formula is neutral. It makes possible all sorts of diplomatic contacts, direct and indirect. It, therefore, meets main requirements of situation. Soviet change on Rhodes formula is a retrogressive step. Secretary Rogers recalled that Riad had himself raised question of the Rhodes formula during discussions in New York and had accepted it. Dobrynin suggested that Riad had accepted the formula on condition that any talks would be indirect. Secretary said let them call it indirect if they wish. We see no problem on that score. Dobrynin said that basic Soviet position is that an attempt should now be made to go beyond neutral formulations where possible in an attempt to find more precise language on elements of settlement. After this is done a formula providing for use of Jarring might be found to bring about negotiations. Dobrynin asked whether it is the United States position to give Jarring papers and to let him proceed from there in an effort to start negotiations. If this were the United States position, he doubted whether Jarring could be successful.

12. The Secretary noted that if the parties accepted Rhodes formula, they could interpret it as they desired. He reiterated that the

United States firmly believed that a settlement could not be imposed. We do not believe that documents can be given to the parties on a take it or leave it basis. Once parties agreed to negotiate with the United States papers as a framework, Four Powers could provide guidance and encouragement subsequently on specific points not covered by these documents.

13. Dobrynin asked whether the United States proposed to give Jarring all three papers, that is, the United States, French, and Soviet, that are available with respect to Jordan. Secretary Rogers said that we continue to believe US papers offer best basis for Jarring to proceed—they contain fair and equitable positions.

14. Sisco noted that United States October 28 proposal had not been formally tabled at Four Power meetings since we were awaiting a Soviet reply. He underlined that the United States October 28 proposal along with the US paper on Jordan³ are the documents we believe should be transmitted to Jarring. Other papers that have been presented on Jordan, in our view, do not represent a real basis for negotiation.

15. Dobrynin noted that there were now two documents on the UAR and three on Jordan. He would hesitate to say that the United States paper on Jordan, for example, should be the central document. He assumed that any paper on Jordan would be of a joint nature.

16. Secretary said that we had hoped that our October 28 proposal would represent a joint US-Soviet paper since it took Soviet views into account. US does not want to consider October 28 proposal and our paper on Jordan as beginning points for negotiation among the Four Powers. We feel that we have gone as far as we can. We believe US papers provide Jarring with what he needs; they are a fair and equitable framework for negotiation.

17. Sisco said we will obviously study Soviet document carefully in an attempt to arrive at a conclusion as to whether it makes any sense to proceed any further in bilateral and Four Power talks. Principal focus in the Four Power discussions is, of course, Jordan. Depending upon the reaction to our paper on this subject, we will also wish to make a judgment regarding whether further discussions in Four Power context are useful. Soviet statement which we received today seems a reflection of its position back in June;⁴ discussions of last six to seven months therefore have not carried us very far.

³ On December 18, the United States presented a proposal for a Jordan-Israel settlement similar to its October 28 and December 9 plans; see Documents 98 and 104.

⁴ See Document 58.

18. Secretary again asked Dobrynin whether there is a genuine interest on the part of Arab nations to negotiate a peaceful settlement. Secretary also asked whether the Arab countries are interested in a process of negotiation or whether they are simply interested in getting Israelis to withdraw and only afterward to begin negotiation process.

19. Dobrynin again refused to answer directly. He said this question was too broad and that there was no simple answer. He noted, however, that there has been some transformation in Arab thinking. For example, in past some Arab leaders had no desire to recognize existence of Israel. Subsequently, Arab leaders have indicated that they have changed their position on this score. With respect to Israelis, one difficult question was how to handle Fedayeen problem. This was difficult issue to articulate on paper. This appears to be question which could be handled satisfactorily. Soviet Union and US appear to be very close with respect to refugee problem. At same time Dobrynin said he did not understand US reluctance to mention the UN Resolution on refugees. Nevertheless, some agreement could be reached on that issue. Furthermore, Egyptians seemed willing to accept some formulation regarding the Strait of Tiran. Question of providing guarantees is a more difficult one. Soviet Union believes that guarantees could be provided by Security Council, where US and Soviet Union have veto power. UN troops under control of Security Council might, for example, be stationed at Sharm al-Shaykh. The Soviet Union cannot, however, accept the stationing of Israeli troops there as the US evidently has proposed.

20. Sisco said that US has not proposed in Moscow that Israeli forces be stationed at Sharm al-Shaykh. Soviets had conveyed this impression to Arabs, and we have spent some weeks correcting this interpretation. In Sisco's conversations with Gromyko, number of options discussed but no proposals made. Sisco recalled that it was because Israel could be expected to press an Israeli presence and Arabs a UN presence, that he came up with idea of neutral formulations prejudicing neither side's position.

21. Sisco then said he had completed a preliminary and rapid review of the text of the oral statement left by Dobrynin. His view is that it is unresponsive and not constructive. Dobrynin said lamely he would report this. Conversation concluded by reaffirmation of intention to give document thorough study and to respond in due course.⁵

⁵ Printed from an unsigned copy.

110. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, December 24, 1969.

SUBJECT

My Conversation with Ambassador Dobrynin

Attached is a memorandum of my conversation with Ambassador Dobrynin during the evening of December 22.² I found the following of particular interest:

—Dobrynin discussed Vietnam with a very low-key tone. His threat about what would happen if we started bombing the North again or hit Haiphong—that the Chinese would send in engineer battalions which would increase Chinese influence in Hanoi—seems almost to be an invitation for us to attack North Vietnam.

—Dobrynin said that he did not think Hanoi would have anything new to say for the next few months.

—The Russians seem eager to talk on a number of substantive issues. They are probably trying to head us towards a summit meeting. This could be a reflection of a desire for real détente, or it could mean they are getting ready to hit China in the Spring. The latter interpretation—that they are repeating their Czechoslovakia drill—is reinforced by their choosing April 16 as a date for resumption of the SALT talks.

Dobrynin suggested that he and I meet at regular intervals, discussing a particular topic at each meeting to explore what possible solutions on various issues might look like. We could decide after the discussion of each topic was completed and after it had been discussed with you whether any action was necessary—whether instructions would be given or it should be taken to another level. If you approve, I will agree to meet with him every three weeks after our return from San Clemente on an agenda to be approved by you.³

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969, Part 1. Top Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. Sent for action. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² On December 22, Kissinger sent the President a memorandum of "Points I Propose to Make to Ambassador Dobrynin at Dinner This Evening," which Nixon approved. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 215, "D" File) Before leaving for the dinner, Kissinger and Nixon spoke on the telephone. According to the transcript of their conversation, Kissinger said, "I just wanted to make sure that nothing else occurred to you." Nixon replied, "Say, the promise is great, but conditions are the same. On Vietnam, play it cool. Say well, maybe we don't need your help. If it is raised say we are really pressing across the bridge on that. Now anything we do, we don't want to take affront at it." (Ibid., Box 361, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

³ Nixon initialed the approve option.

Tab A

**Memorandum of Conversation Between the President's
Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the
Soviet Ambassador (Dobrynin)⁴**

Washington, December 22, 1969.

SUBJECT

Conversation with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin

After an exchange of pleasantries, Dobrynin opened the conversation by saying that he wanted to speak to me on a frank and open basis. He had missed the opportunity to talk to me for a long time, and he hoped that our meetings would be more frequent. I said that it was always a pleasure to talk to him.

Dobrynin said that when he had met with the President,⁵ the President had indicated that the Middle East and other issues could be settled only on the highest level. With this, the Soviet Government agreed. On the other hand, the President had also indicated that there could be no contact on any level except the diplomatic level until Vietnam was settled. Did this mean that we did not believe that there could be any progress in our relations with the Soviet Union? I asked Dobrynin why he raised this issue now, since I thought we had explained to him at great length what our position was and that nothing had really changed. Vietnam was an important problem to us, and he knew how we related it to other issues.

U.S. Domestic Scene

Dobrynin said he wanted to be frank. He had made a careful analysis of the American domestic situation, and he had communicated it to Moscow as follows:

The President was almost certain of re-election in 1972. He had only begun to tap the right-wing votes and he could always expand his base in that direction. There was, therefore, no prospect of anyone's unseating him in 1972. If anyone wanted to wait him out, they had to be ready to wait for seven more years. This was too long for the Soviet Union, and it should also be too long for Hanoi. He therefore wanted to ask me again whether I saw any prospect for improving Soviet/American relations.

⁴ A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. Nixon wrote "K—very fascinating!" in the upper righthand corner.

⁵ See Document 93.

I repeated the President's statement at the October 20th meeting that he hoped to have his Administration go down in history as one that did bring about a substantial improvement in Soviet/American relations but we wanted to proceed by concrete steps. And, of course, it was a difficult problem while the Vietnam war went on.

Vietnam

Dobrynin then turned to the war in Vietnam. He said, "You have to understand that we tried to do something last April and May, but Hanoi told us that there was no sense having a private channel unless the United States agreed in advance to negotiate about a coalition government. We cannot tell them how to fight in their own country. This is a real problem to us, and we thought it was best not to return a negative reply." I said it would have been better to return some sort of a reply, but there was no sense talking about the past.

Dobrynin then asked me how I saw the future. I said that I really had not come to discuss Vietnam, but to sum it up in a few words, we were very confident. For the first time in my experience with Vietnam, I now was certain that time was working on our side. It seemed to me that Hanoi had only two choices—to negotiate or to see its structure in South Vietnam erode. He said, "Isn't there even a slight chance that the South Vietnam Government might collapse?" I said that we were confident that we were on the right course. Maybe Hanoi would start an offensive but then, as the President had repeatedly pointed out publicly, it would have to draw the consequences. Dobrynin said, "Of course, if you start bombing the North again, or if you hit Haiphong, you realize what would happen." I expected him to say the Soviet Union would come in. But instead, he said, "What would happen is the Chinese would send in engineer battalions, and you don't want to increase Chinese influence in Hanoi." I said, "If you can live with it, we can," and in any event, our problem was to end the war in South Vietnam.

Dobrynin said that he did not think that Hanoi had anything new to say for the next few months. I told him that they knew what channels were available and that we would be glad to listen to them if they did. We would be flexible and conciliatory in negotiations. We had no intention to humiliate Hanoi, but we would not pay an additional price to enter the negotiations. Dobrynin asked me whether we were ever going to send a senior Ambassador to the negotiations. I said it depended in part on the negotiations, but I had no doubt that ultimately it would be done. He said he had to admit that nothing was going on at the negotiations now, but that he thought they were an important symbol.

I said in conclusion that if Hanoi had something to say to us it should do so explicitly, and not get us involved in detective stories in

which various self-appointed or second-level emissaries were dropping oblique hints. Dobrynin laughed and said he would be sure to get this point across. He thought Hanoi had nothing to say at the moment.

The major point about the Vietnam part was the complete absence of contentiousness on Dobrynin's part. There was no challenge to my assertion that our policy was working out, and there was a conspicuous effort by Dobrynin to disassociate himself from the Vietnamese war.

Tour d'Horizon

Dobrynin asked how we looked at Southeast Asia as a whole. I referred to the Nixon Doctrine and regional groupings, etc. I asked him how the Russians saw their own interests in the area. Surprisingly, he said, "We don't have real interests there. We were drawn in in 1964 on the basis of a misunderstanding."⁶

Dobrynin then turned to other issues. He began with a familiar catalogue. He said that the Soviet Government was approaching relations with the United States with an open mind and with good will, but a number of very strange things had happened. They had made a formal proposal to Secretary Rogers about European security. They had never received a reply; instead, the Secretary had made a very anti-Soviet speech in Brussels.

On the trade bill, the Administration had not liberalized trade as⁷ many in Congress had wanted.

While the SALT talks were going on, there were newspaper stories that the United States was pushing its ABM development and its MIRV development in the Defense Program Review Committee under my chairmanship.⁸

The Middle East negotiations⁹ were stalled.

Deputy Foreign Minister Macovescu of Romania was received at the White House while Gromyko was not.

I had to remember that in the Soviet Union, decisions were not made by one man as in the United States, but by eleven;¹⁰ and all these signals put together created a very bad impression. I shouldn't tell him that something had slipped in our big bureaucracy—such reports were not believed in Moscow. "Our people take orders," he said.

⁶ Nixon underlined "basis of a misunderstanding."

⁷ Nixon underlined "had not liberalized trade as."

⁸ Nixon underlined most of this sentence.

⁹ Nixon underlined this word.

¹⁰ Nixon underlined most of this clause.

We managed to convey the idea that we were making everything conditional on something else.¹¹ For example, we were asking them to show their good intentions in Berlin before we agreed to a European Security Conference.

With respect to summits, we gave the impression that they were pleading with us where, in fact, they had not—though they were, of course, certainly willing to consider it in principle. There was one place on which one could make quick progress and that was at the summit, but we didn't seem to be interested in it. And therefore he wanted to know how I visualized the possibility of progress.¹²

I told Dobrynin that we remained interested in good relations with the Soviet Union. We were the two great powers, and we had to avoid conflict; we should speak while we were still in a position to make definitive decisions. At the same time, as the President had repeatedly pointed out, we wanted to have concrete, detailed negotiations. Until he told me just what he was aiming at, it was very hard for me to comment on his points, since I did not know what he understood by progress. For example, we had heard a great deal about the European Security Conference, but I did not know just exactly what the Soviet Union hoped to achieve there. Dobrynin said, "Well, why don't you ask us. We would be glad to tell you at any level." I said, "Well, maybe we should ask you, but why don't you tell me now." Dobrynin said, "We want existing frontiers recognized." I said, "No one is challenging the existing frontiers." Dobrynin said that he had the impression we were challenging the status quo in Germany. I told him we were not challenging the status quo in Germany, but there was a big difference between challenging it and giving juridical recognition to East Germany.

Dobrynin then asked about China. He said, "What exactly are you up to. Are you trying to annoy the Soviet Union?" He also asked how we visualized relations with China developing. I said the President had often pointed out that the 800,000,000 Chinese were a fact of international life which we had to take seriously and from which we couldn't foreclose ourselves. We were not childish, and we did not believe that we could end all the distrust immediately or have a very huge negotiation immediately. But we did want to establish some sort of relationship. Dobrynin said, "How can you do it as long as you have Taiwan?" I told him that this was essentially our problem, and that we thought we could explore possibilities. Dobrynin said, "Well, you made

¹¹ Nixon underlined most of the second half of this sentence.

¹² Nixon underlined most of this paragraph.

a rather clever move getting Japan involved in the defense of Taiwan and at the same time opening negotiations with Communist China.”¹³ I did not make any direct response to this. I said we had no intention of playing for small stakes with Communist China, and needling the Soviet Union was an unhistoric and not worthwhile effort. Dobrynin asked why we don’t recognize Mongolia. He said that the Soviet Union would welcome it.

Dobrynin then said that he thought the Mid-Eastern negotiation could not go anywhere. Sisco was ingenious in coming up with formulae, but they always moved around in a circle and they did not take into account the power realities. He thought that the Middle East had to be settled at the highest level.

One result of the distrust between Washington and Moscow, Dobrynin said, was that a number of other countries could attempt to maneuver between us. For example, the British were always going to the Soviet Union and telling them that the United States was preventing a European Security Conference, but the Soviet Union knew the British game.¹⁴ The British thought they had to keep the Soviet Union and the United States apart so that they could maneuver—that if the United States and the Soviet Union were together, Britain was nothing. I said that I did not know to which statements he referred, but that the British and we were in rather close accord.

Finally, I said to Dobrynin it was not very fruitful to discuss these issues in the abstract. It would be much better if we discussed them at least on a hypothetical basis, issue by issue. Dobrynin said that as a matter of fact, he was going to make exactly this proposal to me. He said that his government was aware of the fact that the President might not wish to have comprehensive solutions while the war in Vietnam was going on, but they saw no harm in exploring what such solutions might look like.¹⁵ At least, we would both understand each other better then. He therefore wanted to suggest that after I came back from California, he and I meet at regular intervals and set aside each session for one particular topic. We could then decide after the topic was completed and after this had been discussed with the President whether any action was necessary—whether instructions would be given or it should be taken to another level. I told him that I would have to take this matter up with the President, but that, in principle, it was possible that we might proceed this way.

¹³ Nixon underlined most of this sentence.

¹⁴ Nixon underlined this sentence.

¹⁵ Nixon underlined this sentence.

Dobrynin then made another effusive statement of the need for Soviet/American cooperation and of the good faith of his government and earnestness in trying to seek it. He said a good example was the rapidity with which they had agreed to the President's preference on the site for the SALT talks. He said, "You know Smith had tried for two weeks but when the President requested Geneva, we gave him Vienna even though he had not asked for it. This is what could happen in other areas if we understand each other." I told him that he could be sure I would report this fully to the President, and that I would be in touch with him after we returned from the West Coast.

111. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, December 27, 1969.

SUBJECT

Sino-Soviet Relations

Attached are extracts from a perceptive CIA analysis of current Sino-Soviet relations.² The report indicates, *inter alia*:

—Peking admits being forced into border talks and believes Soviet efforts to improve relations with the West are part of preparations for "dealing" with China.

—Peking's campaign of civilian "war preparations" is designed to deter a Soviet attack as well as promote national unity and unpopular domestic programs.

—Moscow will continue military pressure along the frontier and pursue diplomatic efforts to isolate China.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1006, Haig Files, Sino-Soviet Relations. Secret; Sensitive. The memorandum indicates the President saw it. A handwritten note in the upper-right-hand corner reads, "Take to San Clemente." Nixon arrived in San Clemente on December 30 and departed on January 5, 1970.

² On December 17, Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms sent Kissinger Intelligence Memorandum No. 2625/69, entitled "Sino-Soviet Relations: The View from Moscow and Peking." Helms' covering memorandum stated, "I believe that both the President and you will find this up-dating of Sino-Soviet relations of interest." (Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 93–T01468R, Box 5, Sino-Soviet Border, Aug.–Dec. 1969) On December 27, Kissinger replied that, "The memorandum on current Sino-Soviet relations was very perceptive and most interesting. I appreciate your bringing the report to my attention and have forwarded it to the President." (*Ibid.*)

—Peking will remain the vulnerable and defensive party and seek to improve its international diplomatic position.

Tab A

Extracts From Central Intelligence Agency Intelligence Memorandum

Washington, December 16, 1969.

**SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS: THE VIEW FROM MOSCOW
AND PEKING**

Peking's Perspective: A Siege Mentality

A recent tour d'horizon [*1½ lines of source text not declassified*] has given us a good example of this conspiratorial and somewhat distorted Chinese world view. Candidly admitting that Peking had been forced into the border talks under the Soviet gun, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] launched into a fascinating Chinese-eye view of Soviet foreign policy. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] asserted that in seeking a European security conference and attempting to improve relations with West Germany the Soviets are trying to create a "quiet Western front" so as to be able to "deal with China in the East." The clincher [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] was the Soviet-US negotiations on Seabeds and SALT: he implied that before coming to final grips with the China problem, Moscow feels compelled to reach an understanding with its sometime enemy/sometime partner in counterrevolution, US imperialism.

Meanwhile, such verbal expressions of concern over Moscow's designs against China are being reinforced by a "war preparations" campaign that has been under way among the civilian population since the beginning of the present border conflict last spring. According to a series of [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] reports, the latest aspects of this drive are the digging of trenches and underground personnel shelters, frequent air raid drills in the cities, and the dispersal of a portion of the urban population. This does not mean that Peking is anticipating an imminent Soviet attack; fundamentally, much of what is billed as "war preparations" is designed to promote national unity and unpopular domestic programs. Nevertheless, such highly visible civil defense exercises also demonstrate to Moscow that China is prepared to resist Soviet pressure and is maintaining at least a minimum level of readiness against an attack. According to a recent [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] report [*less than 1 line of source text not*

declassified] the Chinese leadership, has explained the “war preparations” campaign [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] in precisely these terms. Noting that the campaign was aimed at the USSR rather than the US, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] expressed a belief that Chinese “readiness” would help deter a Soviet attack and added that “if we did not prepare, the Soviets would certainly attack.”

The New Sino-Soviet Equation

Whatever the course of the talks,³ this much seems clear: they are not likely to alter significantly the present realities of the Sino-Soviet dispute or in any way diminish the ideological and political gulf separating the two sides. Moscow, painfully convinced of a long-term menace posed by a Maoist China and encouraged by its success in intimidating Peking, can be expected to maintain a hard line in dealing with the Chinese. Even if the border remains calm the Soviets will almost certainly see fit to continue and perhaps increase their massive military superiority along the frontier—a very real form of military pressure. By the same token, Moscow appears committed to its diplomatic policy of “containment” and is not likely to back away from its efforts to isolate China within and without the Communist world.

It is difficult to overemphasize the impact of this Soviet policy on China’s future domestic and international course. Peking will of necessity remain the vulnerable and defensive party in the dispute and the formulation of future Chinese policy may be increasingly influenced by the shadow of Soviet hostility. On the domestic front, such questions as proper military tactics and planning to cope with the Soviet threat will almost certainly become contentious issues as Peking continues its efforts to construct a new domestic order out of the political wreckage of the Cultural Revolution. In terms of Chinese diplomacy the effects of this new Sino-Soviet equation have already surfaced. The recent attempt by Peking to repair its ties with North Korea, North Vietnam and Yugoslavia were doubtless encouraged by China’s growing awareness of its weak international position vis-à-vis Moscow. The future course of Chinese foreign policy will probably be increasingly motivated by Peking’s desire to do what it can to correct this diplomatic imbalance. The fact that Chinese diplomats in Warsaw have just received the US Ambassador for exploratory talks is further evidence of this state of mind.

³ Sino-Soviet talks took place in Moscow during the first half of December.

112. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, December 29, 1969, 11:30 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

As you requested, I saw Anatoliy Dobrynin to tell him that you approved in principle his suggestion that we meet regularly to discuss specific topics. When I called Dobrynin to tell him that I wanted to see him, he expressed some concern that there might be some connection between my call and the delay of your vacation trip. I did not comment one way or the other except to say that my call was in connection with our dinner conversation.² He said he hoped that I understood that the dinner conversation was merely a frank expression of his personal views.

I saw Dobrynin at 11:30 a.m. on December 29th with the intention of spending only a very brief time with him. Instead, Dobrynin stayed for nearly an hour. I began the conversation by saying that the President had carefully reviewed the memorandum of our conversation the previous week³ and has asked that I see the Ambassador before our trip to the West Coast⁴ and to tell him that we saw some merit in the idea of private conversations between the Ambassador and me. I pointed out that the Soviet Government knew our view on Vietnam and the impact it had on other negotiations but stated that nevertheless there might be some merit in exploring what a *détente* might look like were the political conditions right to achieve it. Both sides had been saying for months now that they wanted to improve relations but this general formulation up to now has lacked specificity. The procedure the Ambassador had outlined seemed sensible, namely that we would set aside each meeting for one particular topic.

Dobrynin said that he had been told by Moscow that on matters of high policy he should deal primarily with me, while routine matters

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969, Part 1. Top Secret; Sensitive. This memorandum of conversation was attached to a January 2, 1970, memorandum from Kissinger to the President. Kissinger provided the salient points from his conversation with Dobrynin and explained that "while it produced nothing startling new, its overall tone was forthcoming, frank and reasonable."

² See Tab A, Document 110.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Kissinger planned to spend the New Year holiday with President Nixon at his vacation home in San Clemente on the southern California coast.

should be handled at the State Department. I replied that the President had asked me to tell him that we would assume that if matters of great importance came up they would be discussed in this channel, and that we would ignore secondary overtures. Dobrynin stated there would be no secondary overtures.

We then discussed what subjects might be included and the order in which to take them up. Dobrynin suggested European security and the Middle East. I said that there might be some merit in discussing SALT—not from the point of view of technical solutions but simply to see what sort of an arrangement was generally conceivable, whether, for example, it should be limited or comprehensive. Dobrynin thought about this for a minute and then said that perhaps we should put SALT very high on our agenda. Moscow would undoubtedly be making decisions on how to proceed with SALT during February and March and it might be helpful if we could get our general thinking in harmony. The details could then be worked out by the negotiators.

In this connection, Dobrynin said that their internal approach was entirely different from ours. We had experts strictly on disarmament, while they did not. When Dobrynin was present as Soviet SALT proposals were discussed, the Soviet group was composed of technical experts from the various ministries, including financial experts who were responsible for commenting on the budgetary implications of various proposals. But there was no single group in the Soviet Union which had a vested interest in disarmament as such. Their military men were expected to be able to handle the broad general view.

Dobrynin stressed that the President's comment that we expected to be serious and not engage in propaganda had certainly helped the Soviet's preparations.

Dobrynin then turned to the Middle East and said that in the present framework the negotiations were stalemated. He wondered how I conceived the problem. I said there were two categories of issues. One was the relation between Arabs and Israel. These, I thought, could be settled only if both great powers were willing to ask their friends to make sacrifices. There was no point in insisting on unilateral concessions. The second range of issues which had not yet even been touched upon was first, how the Soviet Union and the United States could avoid being embroiled in a war that might break out and second, how they could regulate their different interests in the Middle East apart from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Dobrynin said that the second range of questions were of very great interest in Moscow. He did not contradict my formulation of the first range of questions. He said that one remark the President had made had struck home with particular force in Moscow, namely, that "after all Israel had won the war." If that meant that we wanted to have Egypt bear the whole burden, then prospects for ne-

gotiations were dim indeed. I said the President was not stating a condition but a fact of life and that he was not saying Egypt should bear the whole burden but should keep in mind that it must bear *some* burden.

Dobrynin then said that we might not realize it but every word the President said was studied with extraordinary care in Moscow. Dobrynin asked whether I wanted to discuss Vietnam as part of our meetings and indicated that he would be prepared to do so. I showed no particular eagerness but simply pointed out that we knew what we were doing in Vietnam and that we hoped they would understand that any measures we might be forced to take would not be directed against them. Dobrynin said he was watching our policy with great interest. I also said that I hoped that the Soviets would make clear to their North Vietnamese allies that a major offensive by them would have the gravest consequences. Dobrynin made no comment.

Towards the end of the conversation, I raised the possibility of a visit by the astronauts to the Soviet Union. Dobrynin said that he wanted to be frank. The Soviet people were very emotional and if the astronauts came they would undoubtedly receive a tremendous reception. He did not know whether the Soviet leaders considered conditions ripe for the sort of demonstration that would follow.

Dobrynin said that in the next few days he would inquire at the State Department about our thinking with respect to depositing the instrument of ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Secretary Rogers had wanted to wait until enough states had ratified to put the Treaty into effect. What if this was delayed for several months? I said this was not an issue of high policy and that I was certain there would be no undue delay.

We ended the meeting with an agreement that as soon as I return from California we would arrange a schedule for our meetings.

113. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, undated.

Henry:

Re your Dobrynin conversation. I take it you have already sent comments to the President so this may be plugging the hole after the mouse has escaped.

You seem now to be on the foothills to the summit and yet the negotiable concrete issues seem more elusive than ever. In Vietnam, the Soviets may be genuinely concerned that we have a workable policy. If we do, there is little or nothing to talk to them about; if we don't I see no more prospect than before that talking to them is useful. On the Middle East, we can't deliver our clients and they won't deliver theirs. In Europe, they have nothing attractive to offer us except stabilizing Berlin and that is probably too good a club for them to give up. Arms issues may or may not hold promise, but anything that would really make a difference is hardly in view.

So you get down to rhetoric and atmosphere. Maybe Brezhnev wants those so he can attack China next year. Maybe he wants them because it helps him in his own power conflicts at home (it would not be the first time that tottering Soviet leaders have enlisted an American President's help to prolong their political lives). Maybe the Soviets have no clear idea at all; perhaps, as Dobrynin says, they are reconciled to the President's staying in power for seven more years anchored to a right-wing power base and they just want to keep talking because silence frightens them.

In any case, the Soviets obviously want to talk to the White House and no responsible American President can ignore that. I just hope we won't end up playing Brandt's game on a global scale.

Happy New Year.

HS

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1969, Part 1. Secret; Nodis; Sensitive. The memorandum bears the handwritten date "Dec. 1969." It was probably written between December 29 (the date of Kissinger's last conversation with Dobrynin before the New Year) and December 31.

114. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, December 30, 1969.

SUBJECT

Minutes of the Meeting of the 303 Committee, 23 December 1969

PRESENT

Mr. Kissinger, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Johnson, and General Cushman
Mr. Packard was out of the city
Mr. John Hart was present for Item 1
Mr. William Nelson was present for Items 2 and 3
Mr. [name not declassified] was present for Item 4
Mr. [name not declassified] and Mr. [name not declassified] were present for Item 5
Mr. Archibald Roosevelt was present for Item 6
Mr. Thomas Karamessines and Mr. [name not declassified] were present for all items

[Omitted here is discussion of items 1–4, which are unrelated to the Soviet Union.]

5. United States Government Support of Covert Action Directed at the Soviet Union

a. The State Department memorandum for the 303 Committee dated 12 December 1969, entitled "U.S. Policy on Support for Covert Action Involving Emigrés Directed at the Soviet Union,"² was approved as a basic policy statement superceding NSC 5502/1, dated 31 January 1955, entitled "U.S. Policy Toward Russian Anti-Soviet Political Activities."

b. It was agreed that this policy statement will not be issued as a National Security Directive Memorandum (NSDM) but will serve as the U.S. policy authorization for the kinds of émigré activities described in the CIA paper dated 9 December 1969,³ titled as in the above paragraph heading.

c. [2 names not declassified] briefed the Committee and responded to numerous questions on the following activities which comprise the CIA covert action program supporting media and contact activities aimed at stimulating and sustaining pressures for liberalization and evolutionary change from within the Soviet Union:

[4 paragraphs (6 lines of source text) not declassified]

¹ Source: National Security Council, Intelligence Files, 303 Committee Meeting Minutes, 1969. Secret; Eyes Only. Copies were sent to Mitchell, Packard, Johnson, and Helms.

² Document 106.

³ Document 103.

d. The Committee approved the continuation of the CIA covert action program including the above individual projects at the funding level contained in the CIA FY 1970 budget.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Soviet Union.]

Frank M. Chapin

115. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, December 31, 1969.

SUBJECT

Evolution of Positions in US-USSR Talks

On December 30, I gave you a wrapup of US and Soviet positions as stated in the US formulations of October 28 and the Soviet response of December 23.² Attached is a detailed study of the evolution of the US and Soviet positions through five negotiating phases since March 18. Since that study is comprehensive, following is an analytical summary of the changes on each major issue:

Negotiating Procedure

The US has insisted throughout—either in text or in gloss—on direct negotiations at some stage. In September–October, the US added the concept of Rhodes-type talks to the discussions and text.

The USSR in early phases urged us not to complicate the process by emphasizing direct contacts. In September, Gromyko told Rogers he would agree to Rhodes-type talks (though he appears to have understood that direct talks were involved only at signing) if the US were

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Kissinger wrote the following comments on the memorandum: "Excellent paper. Now let's get same for European Security." A large bold handwritten "P" appears in the upper right hand corner of the memorandum. Kissinger drew an arrow to the "P" and wrote, "What does this mean?"

² Saunder's memorandum of December 30 has not been found. The U.S. formulations of October 28 on the Middle East are in Document 98; the Soviet response of December 23 is Document 109.

more precise on boundaries. In December, the USSR returned to the position that the big powers should not commit the parties to any particular form of negotiation, but the Soviet December 23 response seemed to leave open the door to some procedure comparable to Rhodes talks.

Timing of Withdrawal and Peace

The US has insisted throughout that Israeli withdrawal would begin at the same moment the state of war is ended and a formal state of peace begins.

The USSR has persistently struggled to create a distinction that would satisfy Israel by having the peace agreement come into effect on the day Israel begins withdrawing but would permit the Arabs to say that final peace does not come into being until withdrawal is completed. They have tried to do this by distinguishing between de facto (beginning of withdrawal) and de jure (end of withdrawal) peace. The USSR has also dwelt on a two-phase Israeli withdrawal which would permit UAR troops to move into the Canal area as soon as Israeli troops have withdrawn 30–40 kilometers.

Obligations of Peace

The US has enumerated the general obligations of nations to one another as defined in Article 2 of the UN Charter.³ In addition, the US has insisted on a stipulation that governments control all hostile acts from their territory, specifically including those of non-governmental individuals and organizations.

The USSR accepted in its June 17 document⁴ the general obligations of Article 2 of the UN Charter, but has throughout resisted inclusion of any specific stipulation that would have the effect of committing the UAR to control the fedayeen. The December 23 reply neither reaffirms nor repudiates earlier acceptance of the general obligations of the Charter.

Boundaries

The US position has evolved:

—March 24: “Rectifications from pre-existing lines should be confined to those required for mutual security and should not reflect the weight of conquest.”

³ Article 2 of the UN Charter contains seven principles to guide the conduct of its signatory nations. The text of Article 2 is in *A Decade of American Foreign Policy: Basic Documents, 1941–1949*, p. 118.

⁴ A translation of the Soviet response is in Document 58.

—October 28: Israel should withdraw to the pre-war UAR-Israel border *provided* adequate security arrangements can be negotiated in Gaza, Sharm al-Sheikh and the Sinai.

The USSR has insisted throughout on pre-war lines. As the US position has evolved, the USSR has become more precise in insisting on our affirming UAR sovereignty over Sharm al-Sheikh and Arab sovereignty over Gaza.

Demilitarized Zones

The US position has evolved from stating that the entire Sinai should be demilitarized to holding that the belligerents should negotiate their size and the procedures for enforcing them.

The USSR has consistently held that demilitarized zones should be on both sides of the borders, not giving advantage to either side. The UN Security Council should work out procedures for enforcing them.

Waterways

The US has insisted throughout on freedom of passage for Israel through the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal. In its latest formulations, it has linked security arrangements at Sharm al-Sheikh to securing free passage through the Straits.

The USSR has accepted the principle of free passage but linked passage through the Canal to the Constantinople Convention of 1888 which permits governments sovereign over canals to close them to states with whom they are at war. This has provided the UAR's justification for closing the Canal to Israeli in the past. [The US has resisted this.]⁵

Refugees

The US has accepted the principle of free choice for the refugees between repatriation to Israel and resettlement with compensation. But the US has balanced this with progressively more specific provisions to give Israel control over the individuals and the total number of refugees allowed repatriation. The latest formulation includes an annual quota.

The USSR simply calls on Israel to carry out past UN resolutions which call for repatriation or resettlement with compensation. The USSR has resisted any restrictions, although in mid-summer they were willing to discuss it as a possible side understanding.

⁵ Brackets in the source text.

Nature of Agreement

The US, while experimenting with language, has from the start insisted that the final accord should be an agreement or contract between the parties, should be reciprocally binding, should be signed by the parties and should be deposited with the UN for endorsement by the four permanent members of the Security Council.

The USSR in earlier stages clearly accepted the idea of a binding document—a final accord *between* the parties—signed by the parties and deposited at the UN. However, the December 23 reply ignored this point entirely.

Conclusion

What most strikes me after completing this review of the documents is the cavalier nature of the December 23 Soviet reply. After actively discussing a joint document between June 17—when they produced a draft of their own—and September 30, they simply turned aside our October 28 formulation—containing the position they wanted from us on boundaries—as providing no basis for a joint document.

This has taken place when—as a review of the above positions shows—we might well reach agreement if they would take as much distance from the UAR's position as we have from Israel's.

There seem theoretically to be two possible explanations:

—They are testing whether a flat rejection will cause us to make a few last concessions.

—They are sufficiently content with the present situation not to be willing to press until after the Arab summit,⁶ which they may have calculated would turn out worse for the US than it did.

It may be that Nasser's failure at the summit to win the political, financial or military backing he wanted slightly increases our advantage. In any case, the December 23 response is such a step backward that it warrants a sharp rebuff and even telling Dobrynin that we have nothing more to say.

⁶ An Arab summit, which included the Defense and Foreign Ministers of 13 Arab countries, met in Rabat, Morocco December 21–23 to discuss a common military and political strategy against Israel. The summit ended without issuing a communiqué.

116. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

Washington, January 6, 1970, 2326Z.

Todel 3727/1975. Subj: Your January 7 Meeting with Gromyko—Viet-Nam. Ref: Moscow 46 (Notal).²

Deliver at Opening of Business.

1. We do not believe that you should raise Viet-Nam with Gromyko. The Soviets have recently shown some concern at our alleged downgrading of Paris talks and some interest in probing further our intentions with regard to negotiations. Should Gromyko raise this question, you should suggest to him that Soviets discuss these matters with our Delegation in Paris which is fully empowered to discuss any serious proposals with other side.

2. If Gromyko persists and launches into usual Soviet presentation about unrepresentative nature of Thieu Government and desirability of coalition, you should respond along following lines:

A. The basic fact about political situation in South Viet-Nam is that the Communists represent only small minority of population. Non-Communists may be divided among themselves to some extent but the people are basically united in not wishing to be taken over by the Communist minority.

B. This is why neither United States nor GVN is afraid of truly free elections in South Viet-Nam. There are many ways of assuring that elections would be completely free and we are willing to talk about any of them. We would prefer that neither American troops nor North Vietnamese troops remain in South Viet-Nam during elections but even on this point we are flexible: both US/free world and DRV forces might be withdrawn to base areas within South Viet-Nam while elections are taking place.

C. Communists are doing badly in South Viet-Nam and would be well advised to negotiate while they can. Soviets should not be misled by false reports of Communist military successes. VC/NVA are consistently losing many times the numbers killed on our side even though there are now relatively fewer Americans engaged than before. These losses plus high number of Southerners defecting from other side dur-

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL US–USSR. Secret; Immediate. Drafted by Kirk; cleared by Dubs, Matthews, Sullivan, Swank, and Eliot; and approved by Rogers. Repeated to Paris, Saigon, London, and New Delhi.

² Telegram 46 from Moscow, January 6, confirmed Beam's appointment with Gromyko for January 7. No record of this meeting has been found.

ing the past year have led to constantly increasing proportion of North Vietnamese in enemy ranks. This in turn leads population increasingly to regard North Vietnamese as a foreign occupying force driving more and more people into the arms of GVN. GVN control over countryside is steadily expanding and increasing in depth.

D. We can understand Communist fear that as a minority they might suffer persecution or discrimination during an election period and a non-Communist electoral victory. We believe there should be binding guarantees against such persecution or discrimination. These could be worked out in negotiations.

E. We are entirely willing to see NLF play a legitimate role in the political process of South Viet-Nam but only in proportion to the support they enjoy among the people. Idea of imposed coalition government is not acceptable. If Communists want guarantees against persecution and discrimination, there are other ways in which these can be secured.

F. Communists will find it far more difficult to negotiate a settlement after it has been demonstrated that GVN can hold its own without help of American combat forces. At such a time our own influence in favor of a compromise settlement would be less than it is today. Therefore, it appears to us that it would be in enlightened self-interest of any true friend of North Viet-Nam and Viet Cong to urge them to negotiate seriously and to seek political compromise while there is still time.

3. Material in paragraph 2 could also be used by U.S. representatives in other conversations with Soviets.

Rogers

117. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, January 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

US-Soviet Diplomacy on European Security

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 667, Country Files, Europe, European Security Issues, U.S. and Soviet Diplomacy. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Sent under a January 9 covering memorandum from Haig to Kissinger.

Our dealings with the USSR on European issues, at least in recent years, are not strictly speaking analogous to our talks with them on the Middle East or arms control questions. On these latter matters we have had sustained negotiations either culminating in an agreed document (arms control) or revolving around such a document (Middle East). Since 1959, we have not really had this type of negotiation on European matters.

Rather there have been a series of long-range artillery duels via public declarations (usually, though not exclusively, issued by our respective alliance groupings), interspersed with occasional, random and disjointed bilateral conversations at various levels.

We have, by and large, been scrupulous in not making ourselves the Western negotiating agent on Europe; even if we had wanted it otherwise, it is not now likely that our allies would let us. If, on the other hand, we wanted to begin dealing with the Soviets on European questions, without the blessing of the allies, the effect on NATO would almost certainly be chaotic. In this connection, it is of interest that Gromyko has now come forward with the suggestion to Ambassador Beam that there should be bilateral US-Soviet talks on a European security conference. Dobrynin's strongly reiterated insistence on a direct US reply to the Soviet *démarche* of November 19² is undoubtedly also related to this.

Diplomacy in this area has also been complicated by numerous side-shows—not unnaturally, since the interests of a great number of states, East and West, are involved. A review of US and Soviet exchanges therefore does not provide a complete picture—although it does provide the essence. The present paper does not attempt to include the mass of exchanges, public and private, among individual European states, nor our own occasional exchanges, notably with the Poles and Romanians who, while supporting Soviet and Warsaw Pact positions, do so for reasons and with accents of their own.

It should also be noted that some US-Soviet negotiations while ostensibly or mainly on matters other than regional European ones, have profound impact on Europe. This was true of the test ban negotiations³ in several different ways, profoundly true of the NPT negotiations and will be even more true of SALT. We have not tried in the present paper to analyze these interrelationships.

Finally, European security, broadly construed, includes economic and technical matters, in addition to political and military ones. While

² See Document 102.

³ Reference to the negotiations that culminated in the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963.

these have not recently figured in US-Soviet exchanges, they have done so at various times in the past and they remain very prominent in intra-European contacts on East-West issues. (Eastern Europe's relationship to the European Communities is a problem complex of increasing weight if and as the Communities develop and may in the middle run outweigh most if not all the other East-West issues in Europe.) In any case, we do not get into this entire area in the present paper.

Basically, despite the huge volume of documents and the smaller, though considerable volume of private talk, the fact is that European issues have not been ripe for concrete negotiation between ourselves and the Soviets. Even today, with the volume of private talk picking up, the issues have been largely procedural: do we or do we not have a conference; how should it be prepared, etc. (For the Soviets, admittedly, this has substantive interest since the mere convening of a conference is of advantage to them.)

The one real substantive subject, that of our and Soviet troops, has not been talked about seriously since Khrushchev and LBJ exchanged pen-pal letters in 1964⁴ (Note: this is not generally known), when we rejected the idea of mutual cuts. While Dobrynin has now responded to Elliot Richardson's prodding by indicating that the Soviets would give serious consideration to a NATO proposal, it is far from clear that serious *US-Soviet* negotiations on this matter will (or should) be undertaken.

Other potential negotiating issues relate to Germany. You will recall that the President in his letter to Kosygin last April⁵ offered bilateral soundings on Berlin, and the Soviets have shown some interest. But we are probably well out of the bilateral channel on this one since (a) the subject hardly promises to be productive for us and (b) we should do nothing to undermine allied cohesion on this subject.

In sum, when all is said and done, direct US-Soviet negotiations on Europe which would in any sense be directed at changing the status quo would at present be either (a) artificial and contrived, or (b) not in our interest, or (c) not in the Soviet interest. At the same time, while the status quo is not all that bad right now for us, at least when compared to other status quos, it is not desirable, or feasible, to seek US-Soviet negotiations which would sanctify it. Of all the Western powers we should be the last one to underwrite Moscow's free hand in Eastern Europe (especially since we are in process of developing a special relationship with Romania); and we certainly have no interest in negotiating the disruption of the Western alliance with Moscow.

⁴ Khrushchev's message is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, volume XIV, Soviet Union, Document 36.

⁵ See Document 40.

This would not rule out conversations with the Soviets to see what if anything of substance they want to talk to us about on Europe; but we should do so with the utmost caution and take meticulous care that the Allies are kept informed.

This paper includes the following parts:⁶

Part I—A resume of the issues that have figured in US-Soviet exchanges, public and private (Tab I)

Part II—A chronology of major statements by both sides (Tab II)

Part III—A comprehensive selection of documents (Tab III)

⁶ All three attachments were attached but are not printed. A handwritten comment next to the last one reads “held in Washington.” The first two were dated January 8.

118. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, January 20, 1970.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

Dobrynin called in the morning, saying he had an urgent set of matters to discuss. We set the appointment for 4:30 in the afternoon.

Dobrynin began the conversation by asking what had happened in Warsaw.² I said I had not seen any reports yet. He asked whether I was going to tell him what had happened in Warsaw. I replied that I didn't think he would believe it if I told him and, in any event, we were not in the habit of conveying our diplomatic conversations. Dobrynin then said that China was a neuralgic point with them. Of course, he recognized that China could not represent a military threat to the Soviet Union until 1979, but people were not very rational on that issue and we should keep this in mind. In particular, we should not try

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The conversation was held in Kissinger's office. Kissinger sent this memorandum to Nixon under a January 27 covering memorandum that summarized the “most interesting points” of his meeting with Dobrynin.

² From January 12–16, Chinese and U.S. representatives resumed talks in Warsaw to explore an improvement in bilateral relations.

to use China as a military threat. I said that this seemed to me vastly exaggerated. There was no possibility of China's representing a military threat, and even less possibility of China's being "used," whatever that meant, by the United States. Our relations were so far from normalcy that there was no sense even discussing such ideas. Dobrynin said he personally agreed, but he just wanted to convey the intensity of feeling in Moscow. I said we, too, had our neuralgic point: for example, broadcasts on the Moscow radio in which American prisoners held in North Vietnam were broadcasting to America. This was an unfriendly act. Dobrynin said he had already been informed to that effect by the State Department and he frankly did not know enough about the situation to comment.

Dobrynin then asked whether he could request a personal favor of me. A group of Soviet editors were coming to the United States and would visit Washington on February 2nd or 3rd. Would I be willing to see them? I said, yes, if it were done on a strictly off-the-record basis. Dobrynin said he had never leaked to the press, and their press was very disciplined. I said that I would be glad to see them and that I would be delighted if he joined them. I would set aside an hour on either February 2nd or 3rd.

Dobrynin changed the conversation and said a curious thing had happened. The First Secretary of the Japanese Embassy had called on the First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy to inquire about a remark I allegedly made to the Japanese Ambassador to the effect that we were planning a summit meeting with the Soviet Union in late summer or early fall. Was there anything to this remark? I said that I had never talked to the Japanese Ambassador alone on any subject and that Dobrynin could be assured that if the subject of summits ever were raised by us, it would be done strictly between Dobrynin and me, and no foreign ambassador—indeed, no other member in our bureaucracy would be involved.

Dobrynin then said that Moscow wanted to reiterate how much it welcomed our readiness to engage in direct talks between him and me on a variety of subjects. He recommended that we take two subjects first—Europe and SALT. We would discuss these subjects thoroughly, one subject at a time. I said that he had to understand that our discussions would have to be entirely hypothetical, a position the President had often explained. The final resolution would depend on a number of factors, including the overall political climate. Dobrynin said he understood. Nevertheless, in a few days he would take the initiative to propose a meeting on Europe. He suggested that I then take the initiative in proposing a meeting on SALT, but that the second meeting should take place no later than the first week in March, and the first meeting proportionately earlier. I told him that I would be interested to hear some concrete proposals on Europe, though, so far, the topics had not seemed too promising. He said he would be concrete.

Dobrynin then turned the conversation to West Berlin and handed me some talking points about the situation in West Berlin which he considered extremely grave and provocative. The note itself was very tough (it is attached to a separate memorandum).³ I told Dobrynin that any unilateral action in or around Berlin would have the gravest consequences. I would study the talking points and if I had any reply to give, I would make it. However, I saw no sense in our discussing Europe if there were even the prospect of a unilateral Soviet action on Berlin. Dobrynin said that the Soviet Union did not make much fuss last year when the German President was elected in Berlin, but now, in effect, the whole German Parliament was meeting in Berlin again in the guise of various committees, and this could not continue.

Dobrynin parted with the understanding that he would call me when he was ready to discuss European matters.

Attachment

Démarche Delivered by the Soviet Ambassador (Dobrynin) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)⁴

January 20, 1970.

The authorities of the FRG have officially announced their intention to hold sessions of the Bundestag committees as well as meetings of the factions and other parliamentary organs of the Federal Republic in West Berlin in the next few weeks. Moreover provocative nature of such a venture not only is unconcealed but rather is openly displayed—an attempt again to use West Berlin to aggravate international situation.

The Soviet Government has drawn the attention of the Government of the FRG to serious consequences which this course of action

³ Printed as attachment below. The démarche was also sent as an attachment to a January 22 memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon. In his memorandum, Kissinger made four recommendations which the President approved: "1) you have noted the Soviet statement on Berlin; 2) you cannot agree that the German actions referred to contradict past U.S.-Soviet exchanges regarding Berlin; 3) we have no desire to have any tension over Berlin and hope this is also true for the Soviets since any crisis in that area would have an adverse effect on our relations; 4) we continue to be prepared to seek genuine improvements in the situation in Berlin and for this reason have joined with our Allies in proposing talks on the subject." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI) On January 22, Kissinger also informed Rogers about Dobrynin's démarche on Berlin and reported, "I made no comment." (Ibid.)

⁴ No classification marking.

by Bonn in West Berlin affairs may have. The question of West Berlin has also been touched upon in the recent conversations of the USSR Ambassador in the GDR with the US Ambassador in the FRG and, therefore, the American side must be aware of our views on this matter.

The state of West Berlin affairs was already discussed in my conversations with you, Mr. Kissinger, in February and March last year.⁵ At that time it was noted on the American side that it was necessary to avoid repeating what had occurred around West Berlin in connection with holding presidential elections there.⁶ It was also noted that events there should not make Soviet-American relations feverish and that third countries should not be allowed to make crises in West Berlin from time to time. This viewpoint has been taken into account by us in our final consideration of practical steps to be taken with regard to West German provocations.

On the basis of the known facts we cannot come to the conclusion that the American side has reciprocated. Without getting now into the matter of Soviet-American exchange of views on the West Berlin question which for reasons, better known to you, Mr. Kissinger, did not materialize, we cannot but point out, however, the obvious discrepancy between the political evaluations and practical measures by the US Administration, in the question of West Berlin as well.

The line of the FRG in West Berlin matters has been and continues to be incompatible with the status of West Berlin. The special status of West Berlin as an entity existing separately from the Federal Republic and not subject to its jurisdiction is an objective fact which has found its reflection in US official documents as well. This is the only ground for mutual understanding between our powers in this matter.

The Soviet Government does not accept arguments to the effect that this sort of demonstration on the part of the FRG took place in West Berlin in the past. Violation of law does not make new law. Repetition of violations may only have as its consequence taking of more serious measures which will show that West Berlin is not the right place at all for stirring up tension in Europe notwithstanding the attitude of other countries towards the FRG actions in West Berlin.

You, Mr. Kissinger, have suggested to openly exchange considerations on questions where the interests of the US and the USSR closely adjoin. We would like to express today a wish that the US Government give anew a thorough thought to the situation developing around West Berlin.

⁵ See Documents 14 and 27.

⁶ See Document 3.

Clearly, there can be no two views about the fact that the actions by the FRG authorities are far from contributing to a better climate for exchange of opinion on West Berlin. The motives of actions by certain circles in Bonn are obvious. But what is the guiding criteria of the Governments of the Western powers who bear their share of responsibility for West Berlin and who show indulgence towards the unlawful policy of the FRG? In any case the Soviet Government cannot but take into consideration all those circumstances and draw from them appropriate conclusions about the positions of the parties.

I have instructions to convey these considerations to the attention of the President and to express our hope that the American leadership share the concern of the Soviet Government over the continuing attempts by some circles to make Soviet-American interests clash, in such an acute point as West Berlin as well. Failure to take measures to cut short such attempts would amount to contradicting the special obligations for maintaining peace and security which rest on the USSR and the US.

119. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

Washington, January 23, 1970, 0117Z.

010865. Subject: US Reply to Soviet statement of December 23 on Middle East.²

1. Text of oral statement made on Jan 22 by Assistant Secretary Sisco to Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin follows. British, French, and Israeli Embassies provided with Sisco's oral statement January 22 (septels). Jordanian Amb will be briefed Monday PM.

2. *Begin text.*

Oral Reply to Soviet Oral Comment of December 23, 1969.

The US Government has studied carefully the oral statement delivered by Ambassador Dobrynin to the Secretary of State on December 23, 1969.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by W.B. Smith (NEA/IAI) and approved by Sisco and in substance by Anderson. Repeated to Amman, USINT Cairo, Beirut, London, Paris, Tel Aviv, USUN, Kuwait, Jidda, Nicosia, Belgrade, Algiers, USINT Khartoum, Rabat, Tripoli, and Tunis.

² See Document 109.

As the Soviet Government is aware, the proposals we developed and suggested to Soviet representatives over a period of many weeks, most recently on October 28, 1969,³ were designed to provide a framework for Ambassador Jarring's guidance with respect to the UAR-Israeli aspect of a settlement, to be paralleled by proposals for the Jordanian-Israeli aspect which we subsequently submitted in the Four Power talks in New York on December 18, 1969. The formulations of October 28, in the form of a proposed joint US-USSR working paper, drew upon elements of both the Soviet document of June 17, 1969⁴ and the US document of July 15, 1969⁵ and were intended to reflect common positions. As such, they represented a serious attempt on our part to meet both Soviet and US views on certain fundamental issues. We reject the Soviet allegation that our position as reflected in the proposed October 28 joint US-USSR working paper is one-sided. It is a fair and balanced document which meets the legitimate concerns of both sides.

There is need for negotiations between the parties to begin promptly under Jarring's auspices. The October 28 and December 18 documents deal with the key issues of pace, withdrawal and negotiations to reach the agreement called for in the UN Security Council Resolution of November 1967. These two documents provide an equitable framework which would enable Ambassador Jarring to convene the parties immediately and get on with his task of promoting the just and lasting peace called for by the Security Council resolution. In this connection, the Soviet contention that the US has now proposed to limit itself to "neutral formulas alone" is without foundation.

The Soviet oral response of December 23 and the position being taken by the Soviet representative in the Four Power talks on the Jordanian-Israeli aspect are not constructive, are delaying the prompt resumption of the Jarring mission and have raised doubt in this government as to the Soviet desire for a stable and durable peace in the Middle East. We see no significant difference between the present Soviet position and the position stated in the Soviet proposals of December 1968 and June 1969.

We do not believe it is useful to comment on every point in the Soviet response of December 23 since the US position and the reasons for it have been fully explained to Soviet representatives on many occasions in the past. We do wish, however, to draw to the attention of the Soviet Government the following:

We note that the Soviet Government no longer supports the provision for negotiations between the parties under Ambassador Jarring's

³ See Document 98.

⁴ See Document 58.

⁵ See Document 67.

auspices according to the procedures the parties utilized at Rhodes in 1949.⁶ This retrogression in the Soviet position is particularly regrettable, since the formulation on this point contained in the October 28 working was worked out jointly by Asst. Secy. Sisco and Ambassador Dobrynin following the understanding reached by Secretary of State Rogers and Foreign Minister Gromyko during their talks at the UN. Resolution 242 calls upon Ambassador Jarring to promote agreement. In the context of the resolution, this clearly means agreement between the parties concerned, which can only be achieved through a process of negotiations—A view which the Soviet Government indicated it shared in accepting on a contingent basis the Rhodes negotiating procedure in the proposed October 28 joint document.

The Soviet response of December 23 misrepresents the US position on the question of withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from UAR occupied territory, implying that our position does not envisage such withdrawal when in fact our proposal makes clear that withdrawal should be to the former international boundary once the parties have agreed upon their commitments to a contractual peace and have negotiated between them under Jarring's auspices the practical arrangements to make that peace secure.

The Soviet reply is completely unresponsive to our suggestions, on which we have placed particular stress from the start, for language to give specific content to the parties' commitments to the just and lasting peace. We note, in particular, that the Soviets have linked withdrawal not with the establishment of peace between the parties but with "cessation of the state of war." The USSR will recall that the Security Council resolution is very specific: its principal objective is the establishment of a just and lasting peace between the parties. Does the Soviet Union agree with the specific formulations on peace contained in the suggested October 28 joint paper? A clear, and not evasive, response is required.

The US Government believes the Soviet Union should reconsider its views in light of these observations.

End text.

Rogers

⁶ See footnote 2, Document 87.

120. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, January 23, 1970.

SUBJECT

Decisions and Actions as a Result of the President's Talk with Ambassador Beam, January 23, 1970²

1. The President wishes the Ambassador to get reciprocity with respect to access to Soviet leaders comparable to that afforded Ambassador Dobrynin here.

2. The President approved the idea of arranging reciprocal visits by high officials. Specifically, he is in favor of a visit to the United States by Soviet Minister Kirillin.³

3. The President believes that more of our diplomatic contacts with the Soviets should be handled by Ambassador Beam. Mr. Kissinger and Under Secretary Richardson are to canvass matters on which this can be done. Further US moves in the Middle East negotiations might be made in parallel in Washington and Moscow.

4. The Ambassador is to do periodic think-pieces for the President about the Soviet situation. The President is interested in the economy and in the Soviet leaders and their motivations.

5. The President wishes no initiatives taken on Vietnam with the Soviets for at least the next 60–90 days. If the matter should come up, the Ambassador should play it cool and talk confidently about our policy. He is to indicate that the President has given up on the Soviets so far as getting any useful help from them is concerned. He is very disappointed with the Soviet performance. We will now end the war our way, taking whatever measures may be needed. Such matters would not of course be directed against the USSR. We should not be in a position of begging the Soviets for anything. Perhaps later, a different approach toward the Soviets may be in order.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information.

² Nixon met with Beam from 1:09 to 1:40 p.m. on January 23. (Ibid., White House Central Files, Daily Diary) On January 23, Kissinger provided talking points, prepared by Sonnenfeldt, for the President. Kissinger met with Beam on January 22 at 5 p.m. No record of that meeting has been found. On January 21, Sonnenfeldt sent Kissinger a memorandum that included talking points which could serve for both meetings with Beam. Sonnenfeldt added, "You may want to ask more specifically for [Beam's] recommendations as to what he could usefully do in Moscow that might give him more opportunity to see top Soviet leaders. One idea is the proposal that we should invite more second-level Soviet leaders to visit." (Ibid.)

³ Soviet Deputy Chairman Vladimir Alekseyevich Kirillin.

6. The President wants the Ambassador to take up anti-US propaganda. He should point out that the Administration has engaged in no cold war rhetoric but, while Soviet leaders have observed circumspection, the current propaganda output may make it hard to hold the line here.

7. The President approved the idea of Under Secretary Richardson visiting the USSR some time this year.

8. The Ambassador should let us know when he thinks a cabinet level visit to the USSR is useful for us.

Henry A. Kissinger

121. Letter From Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Kosygin to President Nixon¹

Moscow, January 31, 1970.

Dear Mr. President:

According to information now available the Israeli leaders, ignoring the decisions of the Security Council have in fact resumed anew military actions against the Arab states, including bombings of population centers of the UAR in the immediate vicinity of Cairo. Not only military installations of the UAR and Jordan are being attacked but also civil population, destruction is being brought to towns, villages, industrial and other installations. The aims of these adventurist actions are clear—to force the neighbouring Arab countries into accepting the demands which are put forward by Israel. All this takes place at a time when the UAR and other Arab countries, honoring decisions of the Security Council, are not so far² striking back at Israel.

In this instance as in determining their position in Middle Eastern affairs in general the Israeli leaders are evidently proceeding from the assumption that the US will go on supporting Israel and that under these circumstances the four great powers will fail to come to a common view on the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 340, Subject Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger. No classification marking. The letter was an unofficial translation from Russian.

² Nixon underlined “not so far.”

There is danger that in the immediate future the military actions may become widescale while the decisions of the Security Council and the UN General Assembly will be losing weight in the eyes of world public.³

We are now studying the question to what extent the Israeli counting on political and other support from outside has ground and has been coordinated with the diplomatic actions by certain powers. We consider it our duty however to draw your attention, Mr. President, to the highly risky consequences the course chosen by the Israeli leaders may have both from the point of view of the situation in the Middle East and international relations as a whole.⁴

We proceed from the conviction that stable peace can and should be established in the Middle East. The Soviet Union has persistently strived for this and has influenced its friends accordingly. If on the other hand the US Government supported its pronouncements in favor of peace in the Middle East by practical steps, and in the first place—vis-à-vis the Israeli leaders, then there would not have been such a situation in which for two years and a half the occupier continues to hold the occupied lands, hundreds of thousands of Arabs are forced to abandon their homes and people continue to perish.

Adherence by Israel to its present course may only widen and deepen the conflict,⁵ perpetuate tension in one of the most important areas of the world since it is impossible to force the Arab countries to reconcile themselves to the aggression, to the seizure of their territory.

It is in the interests of universal peace and international security to warn the Government of Israel against adventurism, to undertake urgent and firm actions, which will help in stopping the growth of military tension and will make Israel listen to the voice of reason. We believe that this would also correspond to the national interests of the United States.⁶

We would like to tell you in all frankness that if Israel continues its adventurism, to bomb the territory of UAR and of other Arab states, the Soviet Union will be forced to see to it that the Arab states have means at their disposal, with the help of which a due rebuff to the arrogant aggressor could be made.⁷

³ Nixon underlined most of this sentence.

⁴ Nixon underlined most of this paragraph.

⁵ Nixon underlined most of this phrase.

⁶ Nixon underlined “to warn the Government of Israel against adventurism” and highlighted this paragraph.

⁷ Nixon underlined most of this phrase.

The situation in the Middle East urgently dictates the necessity of immediate cessation by Israel of its dangerous armed attacks and sorties against the UAR and other Arab states.

The four powers are capable and must compel Israel to abandon its policy of military provocations and to see to it that a lasting peace be established in the Middle East.

We believe that now it is necessary also to effectively use the mechanism of bilateral and four-power consultations in order: 1) to ensure speediest withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories, 2) to ensure establishment of peace in the Middle East.⁸

Withdrawal of forces is the key question for establishing peace. If it is solved then there would hardly be any particular difficulties on the way to agreement on other questions.

We would like you, Mr. President, to appraise the situation from the viewpoint of special responsibility for the maintenance of peace which lies on our countries. As for the Soviet Government, there is no lack of goodwill on our part as well as resolution to act in the interests of peace in the Middle East.⁹

Appropriate communications have been sent by us to Prime Minister Wilson and President Pompidou.

Sincerely,

A. Kosygin

⁸ Nixon underlined these points.

⁹ Nixon underlined most of this phrase.

122. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between Secretary of State Rogers and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, January 31, 1970, 9:20 p.m.

K: I'm sorry to take you away from your dinner (Rogers was at a post-wedding dinner at the Jockey Club). We had a call from Dobrynin

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 361, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

1½ hours ago who said he had a personal message from Kosygin.² He asked if he could see the President. I told him he was at David.³ He asked if he could bring it by to me—which has been done. It is a message about the Middle East; its major points are: the Israelis have resumed in effect military action against the Arab states.⁴ If it continues, consequences will be risked. The USSR will be forced to see to it that the Arabs have the means at their disposal to rebuff the Israelis. If the Israelis withdraw, other things will fall into place. The message is somewhat moderate, but it has that threat in it. The President has given me some of his thoughts. Would you agree if I gave them to Sisco and he could work out an answer with you?

R: Does it call for an answer soon?

K: When Dobrynin called, he asked if he could have an answer by Monday.⁵ I said “no.” He said, “Tuesday?” I told him I couldn’t accept a deadline. There may be some urgency in our getting to Sisco. The message said that similar letters have gone to Wilson and Pompidou.

R: I feel we should downplay its importance—we can’t let them give us these ultimatums.

K: The President thinks so too. It would be unfortunate if outside powers got themselves involved directly or indirectly. I think we should say we have put our proposal down, and we have stated what we think of withdrawal.

R: I took a hard line with [omission in the source text] yesterday.

K: I will call Sisco now.⁶

R: I will get it from Sisco then.

² Document 121.

³ Nixon left for Camp David at 4:46 p.m. on January 31, and returned on February 1 at 10:37 p.m. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, Daily Diary)

⁴ In early January, Israel began a bombing campaign in Egypt’s heartland in an attempt to force Nasser to shift military forces away from the canal area.

⁵ February 2.

⁶ At 9:30 p.m., Kissinger called Sisco. According to a transcript of their conversation, “K told Sisco about Dobrynin’s call and the message from Kosygin and said he would like to tell him what the President thinks. It has to be handled very confidentially. Sisco said he would come in immediately.” (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 361, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

123. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 1, 1970.

SUBJECT

Message from Kosygin

The *key points in the message* from Kosygin which Ambassador Dobrynin gave me last night (Tab A)² are:

1. The Israelis have in effect resumed military action against the Arab states.

2. The USSR is studying to what extent Israeli action has been coordinated with [U.S.]³ diplomatic action.

3. If Israel continues, this will widen the conflict with highly risky consequences for the situation in the Mid-East and international relations as a whole. If Israel continues, "the USSR will be forced to see to it that the Arab states have means at their disposal" to rebuff Israel.

4. The Four Powers must compel Israel to stop and to see that a lasting peace is established. Withdrawal of Israeli forces is key; if this is solved, there would hardly be any difficulty on other questions.

My *thoughts about this message* are as follows:

1. The tone is relatively moderate, but nevertheless this is the first Soviet threat to your Administration, so the tone of your reply will be important. The Soviets avoid directly threatening action of their own. So far, it would seem that they are loath to make this a U.S.–USSR confrontation.

2. There is evidence that the combination of our firmness and the Israeli raids are hurting Nasser.

—There is a strong likelihood that Nasser made a secret visit to Moscow January 22–27. That may be the background for this note.

—Nasser told the Jordanian Foreign Minister that he cannot accept our position

(a) because the USSR won't let him, and

(b) because he would appear to be capitulating if he negotiated while the Israeli bombing continues.

3. The Soviets seem to have become increasingly concerned about a peace plan with a U.S. label on it.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. There is no indication on the memorandum that the President saw it.

² Printed as Document 121.

³ Brackets in the source text.

—This document suggests action by the Four Powers, and Kosygin has sent it to Wilson and Pompidou.

—It implies that we can compel the Israelis to settle.

4. The letter holds out the bait that if the cease-fire could be restored and withdrawal achieved, other issues would fall into place. It does not spell out a view on the other issues and therefore leaves the Soviet view vague. What is worse, the position that Israel must withdraw before other issues are settled is a return to the Soviet position of 1967, which seems to negate much of the progress made in the U.S.–USSR talks last summer.

5. The overall conclusion from the message and the circumstances surrounding it is that they are not in the stronger position vis-à-vis us. Our policy of holding firm creates the following dilemma for them: If they *do not* agree to our proposals, they get nothing, the onus for escalation falls on them and their client will lose if the escalation leads to a major clash. If they *do* agree, they would have to deliver their client on our terms.

The *strategy of our reply* that I propose is:

—to come down very hard on the Soviet threat;

—to relate Israeli observance of the cease-fire to corresponding observance by the other side, including irregular forces;

—to press the Soviets to spell out their views on what the Arabs would commit themselves to if Israel withdrew.

Because this message is going to both Prime Minister Wilson and President Pompidou, I believe State must be brought in. I have talked to Secretary Rogers and given him the memorandum at Tab B⁴ suggesting the elements of a reply based on our conversation from New York. I have also talked to Joe Sisco who agrees with this general approach.

I have also told Ambassador Freeman⁵ that we have a message and will talk to him before replying. I will reach Ambassador Lucet⁶ tonight. These small gestures of consultation are worth the effort since they will have the letter anyway. After we have a draft reply, we should seriously consider telling the Israelis.

We will have a draft reply for your consideration on Monday.⁷ My recommendation is that we should hold it, however, until at least Wednesday and preferably Thursday.

⁴ Not attached.

⁵ John Freeman, British Ambassador.

⁶ Charles Lucet, French Ambassador.

⁷ February 2.

124. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 2, 1970.

SUBJECT

Soviet Internal Troubles

Several recent events have led the Kremlin watchers to conclude that there may be trouble in the top Soviet leadership. Few observers are yet predicting a major purge or the downfall of Brezhnev, Podgorny or Kosygin, but the economic problems are serious enough for some casualties to occur. Moreover, further economic reorganization seems inevitable, which, in turn, would aggravate political tensions.

Background

What has been happening in the Soviet Union in the past several years is that the rate of economic growth has been declining. Last year industrial growth hit rock bottom, the lowest rate since 1946, and the prospects are not much better for 1970. The overall economic growth was only 2½ percent, the lowest since 1963.

Bad weather last year played a role, but the basic problems are a decrease in industrial investment, and more important, a failure to maintain increases in productivity—sometimes called the technological gap.

After the fall of Khrushchev the new leaders set out to increase the supply of consumer goods, and at the same time raise spending for defense, including the large buildup in the Far East. Though they recognized that the Soviet economy was stretched thin, they hoped that an industrial reform involving use of the “profit system,” would provide a new stimulus to investment and growth.

Last December, when Soviet party and government meetings were held to review the state of the economy and approve the economic plan for this year, matters came to a head. Brezhnev apparently made a long speech (never released) in which he lambasted nearly everyone—planners, management, as well as the average worker, for lack of discipline, poor performance by ministries, etc. He was also highly critical of agriculture, primarily failures in stockbreeding, and the decrease in the production of meat, milk and eggs (a chronic Russian complaint).

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VII. Secret. Sent for information. Drafted by Sonnenfeldt on January 31.

No remedies are in sight, and what Brezhnev offered was mainly exhortation to “improve organization and management, strengthen discipline,” i.e., formulas which date back to Khrushchev’s days.

The reason, of course, is that the Soviet leaders are reluctant to face up to the failure of their own industrial reforms. None of the leaders can suggest a new program of reform which would spur economic progress and at the same time preserve central political control. This is a central Soviet dilemma.²

Other Evidence of Dissension

Added to these underlying problems have been a number of those signals that the experts usually associate with political troubles in the Kremlin.

Last November, the Soviet party, after numerous postponements, held a huge conference on collective farming to create a Cooperative Farm Union, empowered to direct regional agriculture. Instead a rather meaningless advisory council was created and the meeting ended in great disarray.

In the last several months there have been more than the usual number of removals of middle to upper level echelon officials, including a party secretary in the regional republics.

Conclusions

In examining the stability of the political leadership, CIA, in the attached report (Tab A)³ concludes that despite some evidence of political troubles, tensions are not climbing sharply. The nearness of the Lenin 100th anniversary (April 1970)⁴ is an incentive for the leadership to keep affairs on an even keel.

If and when the unity breaks down, however, CIA sees a possible generational split developing between the older politburo members (Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny) and a younger group. This latter group, chiefly First Deputy Premiers Mazurov and Polyansky and the aggressive trade union leader Shelepin may be more and more impatient with the temporizing policies of the older leaders.

The Party Congress, which is expected this year, might bring problems to a head. All of the top leaders will want to ensure their supporters retain key positions. The older group under Brezhnev may try to expand its mandate at the Congress, while the younger group would be inclined to block this prospect.

² Nixon highlighted the last two sentences of this paragraph and wrote, “The critical point.”

³ Attached but not printed.

⁴ Nixon circled “100th anniversary (April 1970)” and wrote, “K—let us now plan to treat this with ‘intelligent neglect.’”

Implications for the US

Foreign policy issues do not seem to play a major role in current problems, but differences over China, and over relations with the West, quite possibly related to SALT and the defense budget, may contribute to frictions and differences over internal matters.

Perhaps the more basic aspect for us is that the present leadership may simply be running out of gas, and that a change is likely to come sooner rather than later. If so, we might be wary of committing ourselves to the present leadership,⁵ or relying on their stability as a longer term element in our calculations.

⁵ Nixon underlined this phrase and wrote, “K—note (they may need *us* for a price.)”

125. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 2, 1970.

SUBJECT

Soviet Message of January 31 on the Middle East

Attached is a suggested reply to the Kosygin message of January 31 on the Middle East.² We will discuss our proposed reply, after your approval, with the UK, France and with the Israelis, whose cooperation is essential in restoring cease fire conditions in the area. Your reply would then be handed to Dobrynin.

A prompt reply would have the advantage of informing Kosygin of the current efforts we started on our own several days ago to help bring about restoration of the UAR-Israeli cease fire. We agree with the argument that we should not appear to be excessively hurried and in fact we would not be ready to respond before Tuesday.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 340, Subject Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger. Secret; Nodis. Kissinger forwarded Rogers' memorandum on February 3 with the recommendation that the President approve the draft reply. Nixon initialed his approval that same day. (Ibid.) On February 2, Rogers informed Beam of Kosygin's letter and summarized the main points of the U.S. response. (Ibid., Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI)

² Attached but not printed. The draft reply was used almost verbatim for the message that was sent to Kosygin; see Document 126.

On the other hand, undue delay in informing the Soviets of our efforts would play into their strategy to place the onus for the current situation on the United States and to garner credit in the Arab world for applying pressure on the United States and Israel.

There are several observations regarding the Kosygin letter which are worth mentioning.

First, its principal thrust seems to be to get us to get the Israelis to lift the military pressure on Nasser. It could possibly signal that Nasser may be about ready to give up for the time being his war of attrition tactics and he may be looking for a way out. The Rabat Conference³ has helped free Nasser's hands in this regard, since he can always say his attempt to mobilize Arab resources fell far short of what he needs. He is also freer after Rabat to pursue a political solution if he so decides. This is why I feel it is so important to continue to stand firm on our two United States peace proposals and to maintain our efforts to convince Cairo and Moscow to adopt a positive stance toward them, as has Hussein.

Second, the inability of Cairo to respond effectively to the Israeli deep penetration raids is no doubt embarrassing to Moscow. We surmise, though we are not sure, that Kosygin's letter stems from Nasser's reported trip to Moscow which must also have involved further UAR arms requests. As a minimum, we are reasonably certain that Nasser encouraged Moscow to come forward with a concrete arms proposition to Jordan. The reference in the message that the Soviets would be "forced to see to it that the Arab states have means at their disposal" could signal that the Soviets have taken a decision to give more arms to Nasser, though there is nothing to indicate any change in their policy of providing measured amounts, or that they have decided provide more sophisticated weapons. It may also be intended to discourage us from providing Israel with additional arms. Moreover, short of nuclear weapons, the Soviets know as we do, that more matériel to the UAR cannot have an immediate effect on the arms balance or result in a sharp increase in UAR effectiveness, since the problem is not hardware but Egyptian lack of training and overall qualitative capacity. In short, the Soviets are in somewhat of a squeeze at the moment, and it should not be precluded that in time a more responsive reply to our two peace proposals will come forth.

Third, while it might be tempting to make only pro-forma efforts to achieve restoration of the cease fire and let pressure mount on the Soviet Union and Nasser, this carries with it elements of risk. Since Soviet

³ Reference is to the Arab summit that included the defense and foreign ministers of 13 Arab countries, which met in Rabat, Morocco, December 21–23 to discuss a common military and political strategy against Israel.

prestige is involved, they might see themselves under increasing pressure to do something visible and concrete to reverse the present trend. The Israeli attacks have made their point psychologically and have achieved the military objective of reducing their casualties on the Suez front. Much of the UAR military capacity in the Suez area has been destroyed. If Nasser as a quid pro quo is ready to abide by the UN cease fire resolutions and let up for the time being on his declared war of attrition, it is in the Israeli and United States interests to restore observance of the cease fire. Moreover, as long as the deep penetration raids go on, it is unlikely that Nasser can take any positive moves toward a peace settlement. This is not to say that the converse is true; even if Israel relaxed its military pressure, there is no assurance Nasser would move toward a settlement.

Fourth, there are some important tactical considerations on how to handle the Kosygin letter.

The letter has propagandistic overtones seeking to pin responsibility exclusively on Israel and the United States. Our reply must be framed on the assumption we may find it necessary and desirable to make it public if the Soviets play their message that way.

The Soviet letter is firm, one sided, and is confined exclusively to the Middle East; but it has an element of threat to us in that it first implies we are in collusion with Israel and then warns of giving the Arabs more means to rebuff the Israelis. Our response on this point in particular should be firm.

It is important to note that Kosygin does not propose that the United States and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics bring joint influence to bear on both sides to restore the cease fire; his focus is primarily on Israeli responsibility for the situation, American collusion, and the need for total Israeli withdrawal. For this reason, I suggest that your reply inform Kosygin of the steps we have taken and are taking through diplomatic channels to ensure compliance with the UN cease fire resolutions. We believe that joint action by the Four Powers is undesirable since it would offer more opportunity for the Soviets to exploit this as responsive to their pressure. We therefore should tell the UK and France that we agree that the UN cease fire should be restored, that our own efforts have been in train for some time, and that each should do what he can through diplomatic channels to help bring about a mutually respected cease fire.

Finally, we believe your reply should place considerable emphasis on the need for a positive reaction by the Soviets to the two United States peace proposals.

126. Letter From President Nixon to Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Kosygin¹

Washington, February 4, 1970.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your message of January 31 has been studied carefully.² For its part, the United States intends to continue its efforts to promote a stable peace between the parties in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967³ and to encourage the scrupulous adherence by all concerned, not just one side, to the cease-fire resolutions of the United Nations. I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, this is the steadfast policy of the United States.

We do not accept the views expressed by the Soviet Government in explanation of the current situation in the Middle East. We have been using our influence with both sides urging strict observance of the cease-fire. Thus any implication that the United States has been a party to or has encouraged violations of the cease-fire is without foundation.

Moreover, your attempt to place responsibility on one side is not supported by the facts; there have been repeated violations of the UN cease-fire resolutions by both sides. Full compliance with these resolutions on all fronts, including the prevention of fedayeen attacks against Israel, would help establish a more favorable atmosphere for progress towards a settlement.

As I have pointed out, the United States, just shortly before the receipt of your letter, discussed this matter with both Israel and the UAR and urged both sides to adhere strictly to the UN cease-fire resolutions. We intend to continue these discussions in order to bring about early restoration of the cease-fire between Israel and the UAR. It will be recalled that in early 1969 the UAR announced and initiated a policy of non-observance of the cease-fire. An early indication by the UAR that it will abide by the UN cease-fire resolutions if Israel will do the same

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 765, Presidential Correspondence, Kosygin. Secret; Nodis. According to a February 3 memorandum from Kissinger to Rogers, President Nixon approved Sisco's delivering the letter to Dobrynin on February 4. Additional copies were to be delivered to the Ambassadors of France and Great Britain following delivery of the original. (Ibid.) According to telegram 17418 to Moscow, February 4, "Sisco handed President's reply to Kosygin letter to Ambassador Dobrynin at 3 p.m. today." (Ibid., Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI)

² Document 121.

³ See footnote 4, Document 2.

would contribute to a reduction of tension and violence and facilitate a political solution. We are prepared to continue our efforts in that direction. We are not aware of any recent Soviet efforts to this end.

We have noted the reference in your message to the effect that “the Soviet Union will be forced to see to it that the Arab states have means at their disposal . . .”⁴ The United States has always opposed steps which could have the effect of drawing the major powers more deeply into the Middle East conflict. This could only complicate matters further.

For this reason, the United States: (1) supports the prompt restoration of the cease-fire; and (2) favors an understanding on limitations of arms shipments into the area. The question of arms limitations was raised directly with Mr. Gromyko in July of last year, our willingness to discuss this important subject was reaffirmed in my speech before the General Assembly⁵ this last fall and subsequently was again taken up with Mr. Gromyko by Secretary Rogers,⁶ and our strong preference for limitations was reiterated as recently as January 25.⁷ Our proposals for discussion of this matter were rejected by the Soviet Union.

While preferring restraint, as I indicated on January 25, the United States is watching carefully the relative balance in the Middle East and we will not hesitate to provide arms to friendly states as the need arises.

On the broader question of a peace settlement, the United States remains committed to help achieve a peace agreement between the parties as called for by the UN Resolution of November, 1967. We have noted your point to the effect that if the question of withdrawal were resolved, there would be no serious obstacles to agreement on other questions. As you know, there can be no withdrawal unless there is full agreement between the parties on all of the elements of a peace settlement. In this connection, the proposals of October 28 and December 18, 1969,⁸ meet the legitimate concerns of both sides on all key questions, including withdrawal. We believe these proposals constitute reasonable guidelines which would provide Ambassador Jarring the means to start the indispensable process of negotiations between the parties under his auspices. It is a matter of regret that Soviet unre-

⁴ Ellipsis is in the source text.

⁵ The text of Nixon’s address before the 24th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on September 18, 1969, is in *Public Papers: Nixon, 1969*, pp. 724–731.

⁶ Reference is to U.S.-Soviet ministerial discussions between Rogers and Gromyko on September 22, 26, and 30 in New York; see Documents 81 and 87 and footnote 1 to Document 91.

⁷ For Nixon’s remarks on January 26 about supplying military equipment to the Middle East, see “Message to the National Emergency Conference on Peace in the Middle East,” in *Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, p. 18.

⁸ See Document 98 and footnote 3 to Document 109.

sponsiveness to these proposals is holding up this process; a more constructive Soviet reply is required if progress towards a settlement is to be made.

We note your desire to work with us in bringing peace to this area. We do not believe peace can come if either side seeks unilateral advantage. We are willing to continue our efforts to achieve a stable peace in the Middle East in a spirit of good will.

We are providing copies of this communication to Prime Minister Wilson and President Pompidou.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

127. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 4, 1970.

SUBJECT

Further Thoughts on Kosygin Middle East Message: An Inept Performance

The more I reflect on the Kosygin letter, the more inept, and for that reason, disturbing² a performance I find it.

Regardless of whether it was intended as a serious diplomatic move or as a pressure play—and the simultaneous and ostentatious transmittal of the letter by Soviet Ambassadors suggests that it was intended to become public—the purpose of the operation presumably was to get the Israelis to desist. In addition, the Soviets no doubt would have wanted to keep the three Western powers off balance and arguing with each other and to maintain the gulf that has been opening between us and the Israelis. Beyond this, they must be anxious to keep their reputation as an effective protecting power of the Arabs alive.³

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 653, Country Files, Middle East, Sisco Middle East Talks, Vol. III. Secret; Nodis. According to another copy of this memorandum, it was drafted by Sonnenfeldt. (Ibid., Box 340, Subject Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger) Sent for information. A handwritten note on the first page indicates that a copy with Nixon's comments was sent to Sonnenfeldt on February 23.

² Nixon circled this word and wrote: "I agree—Confused men do the unexpected and wrong things."

³ Nixon underlined most of this sentence and wrote: "(most important for them)."

It is doubtful whether any of these purposes will in fact be accomplished, at least with any degree of permanence; meanwhile certain other effects of the letters would appear to be distinctly to Soviet disadvantage.

It should not have taken much intelligence to expect at least the US (if not France and the UK) to reply that it favors restoration of the cease-fire on a reciprocal basis. Moreover, the Soviets must have known by January 31 that we were already busy diplomatically in both Cairo and Jerusalem to this end; and that the Israelis have already said that they will abide by a reciprocally observed cease-fire.

Thus the upshot of the Soviet move will be to place the onus for getting the cease-fire restored on Nasser and the Arabs, and through them on the Soviets themselves, rather than on us and the Israelis. But this produces a situation for which Nasser can hardly be grateful: if he gives any kind of positive response, he will be seen as doing so under pressure of Israeli military action. In addition, it would also point up Nasser's, and Soviet, impotence since they seem unwilling or unable to control the Fedayeen whose activities will presumably wreck any cease-fire after a period of time.

If the cease-fire is not restored, as seems likely in view of Soviet inability to deliver their clients, the Soviets are stuck with their threat to provide means for a rebuff. But merely sending more equipment, even if it is more advanced, is unlikely to accomplish anything, at least if the past is any guide. So the onus of escalation is on the Soviets and the Kosygin letter has added to its weight.

If one of the letter's purposes was to keep the Western powers at odds with each other, or at least not to drive them more closely together, its tone and content will tend to have the opposite effect. True, there will be continuing differences about the utility of the four-power forum, and to that extent the Soviets did not calculate incorrectly. But the threat element has also produced a quickening of Western consultation and efforts to attune the responses.

Another effect, which cannot be in Moscow's interest, is to dissipate what had threatened to become a US-French confrontation on arms shipments. The new, explicit Soviet threat to increase arms deliveries has now, inevitably, drawn a response from us which explicitly ties the arms issue back into the US-Soviet context (even though the French angle remains as well).

Some have argued that whatever else the Soviets were attempting to do, their main political purpose was to re-emphasize US identification with Israel by (1) implying actual US-Israeli collusion, and (2) drawing from the US a new statement of support for and defense of Israel which will offset the impression of the last few weeks that we were drifting apart. Even if it is granted that when the exchange is com-

plete we will again look to be somewhat more firmly on Israel's side, the ultimate effect of this may well not be in Moscow's interest: if Nasser is prepared to promise reciprocal observance of the cease-fire he will, as noted above, be doing so in response to Israeli military pressure for which we will also get some of the credit; if the fighting goes on despite the Soviet threats, we will be credited with having faced down the Soviets. Moreover, if there turns out to be some Soviet or Arab flexibility with respect to our⁴ October proposals, we will get the credit both for having made those proposals and for having induced Soviet/Arab flexibility by standing firm in the face of Soviet threats. While the ensuing situation would involve us in problems with the Israelis, the net effect would be to make us appear as the most influential outside power in the region.

But if for some or all the above reasons the Soviet move is inept, it is also disturbing. Since it is unlikely to produce a cease-fire, except under conditions little short of humiliating for Nasser, the pressure on the Soviets to make good on their threat will rise. This basic danger is not a new one; but the Soviets have engaged more of their prestige and thus stand to lose more of it if the Israeli attacks continue, and if our answer is widely interpreted as a rejection of their threats. The Middle Eastern problem has frequently lurked beneath the surface of Soviet leadership politics and in 1967 was used by a rebellious faction in an indictment against the present leaders. This could happen again under present internal conditions in Moscow and lead the leaders to do something brave to recoup.

⁴ Nixon highlighted this part of the paragraph and wrote the following comments: "I completely disagree with this conclusion—The Soviets know that Arabs are long on talk. We have been gloating over Soviet 'defeats' in the Mideast since '67—State et al said the June war was a 'defeat' for Soviet. It was *not*. They became the Arabs' friend and the U.S. their enemy. [unintelligible] this is what moves their intent."

128. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 6, 1970.

SUBJECT

Further Background on the Kosygin Letter

In an earlier memorandum² I speculated on the inept position adopted by the Soviets in the Kosygin letter. At the time I thought that perhaps the Soviet reaction reflected internal strains and frustrations in the wake of an exasperating visit with Nasser. [2 lines of source text not declassified]

Brezhnev was obviously bitter about the Israeli raids, and especially the accuracy of the strike on the house of the Soviet advisers, which he implied was deliberate. His concern, however, was mainly on how to keep the incident quiet and out of the public eye. [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] also indicates that top Soviet military leaders had been meeting on the Middle East and that Brezhnev had a personal hand in the drafting of the letter to you. Thus, the raid of January 28 may have triggered a Soviet decision to send the letters to you, Pompidou and Wilson to justify a new shipment of Soviet arms.

Brezhnev refers to sending "a system" after first sending "means of defense." [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] sheds no further light on what kind of weapons might be involved. One interpretation could be that the new system will be offensive weapons (more advanced aircraft or even tactical missiles) but that new radars or surface-to-air missiles will have to be installed first. It could be that both systems are defensive, however. We will watch this closely and prepare a more extensive review of the possibilities in the next few days.

As I noted, the ill-timed demand for a cease-fire played into our hands quite nicely, in view of our efforts in Jerusalem and Cairo. This may be explained by the fact that Brezhnev expected the letters to go forward on that same day (January 29), when in fact they were not delivered until January 31, that is, after we had initiated our soundings on a cease-fire. The desire of the top leaders to fire off an immediate *démarche* may also explain the little thought given to whether a call for a cease-fire would put Nasser in an untenable position either to agree under pressure or turn down Israeli agreement to mutual cessation.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VII. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for information.

² Document 127.

In short, the Soviets seem to be responding emotionally to the killing of Soviet advisers and out of frustration over their inability to do much about the entire state of affairs. This, of course, could have some ominous implications for future moves, since as I noted in my earlier memorandum, the Middle East was a source of internal tensions within the Soviet leadership at the time of the June war. Brezhnev may be worried that his own position is vulnerable to charges of softness, and the letter could have been for the record to protect himself against any new Kremlin debate over Middle East policy. On the other hand, a failure of his initiative may make him even more vulnerable. In this connection, Brezhnev referred to the “nervous strain” of his job, and some trouble with his throat. This is the second time in the last two months that we have noted Brezhnev having health problems.³

³ Nixon underlined most of these two sentences. He added an exclamation point and wrote, “K—and Jefferson complained of ‘headaches’ every afternoon in his last 3 years as President!”

129. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 6, 1970.

SUBJECT

Thoughts on Soviet Response to Nasser’s Arms Requests

[5 lines of source text not declassified] This raises the question of what specifically the Soviets might have in mind. To answer this question it is necessary to look at both the current state of the Egyptian military forces vis-à-vis Israel and the realistic options open to the Soviets.

The Egyptian Military Situation

The most basic fact about the Egyptian forces is that, despite all the equipment the Soviets have provided since the 1967 war, they are still no match for the Israelis. This is particularly true of the Egyptian air force and air defense system. The Israelis have systematically knocked out the Soviet-provided air defense positions along the Suez

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box SCI 17, Memoranda to the President, January–April 1970. Top Secret; Codeword. Sent for information.

Canal almost as fast as they have been set up and have proved that they can now fly their aircraft against targets almost anywhere in the Nile Valley, including around Cairo. Moreover, the Egyptian air force, with a severe shortage of trained and qualified combat pilots, is unable to either challenge the Israelis effectively in the skies over Egypt or to launch significant retaliatory attacks against Israeli targets. The situation is so bad in fact that Nasser even admits it in public. Nasser must have pressed the Soviets very hard for the means to combat Israel's air supremacy during his secret trip to Moscow January 22–26.

What Can the Soviets Do?

Assuming that the Soviets wish to avoid a major escalation of the hostilities that would risk a confrontation with us, they do not seem to have many options.

Their easiest choice would be simply to replace Egyptian losses by rebuilding radar and SA-2 installations. This would carry the least risk of further Soviet involvement, but would not significantly improve Nasser's position either, since the Israelis have the capacity to keep knocking them out.

More and better planes—there has been speculation on an improved MIG-21 or so-called MIG-23—will not alone help Nasser, although there may be pressure to provide them. The Egyptians are unable to employ effectively what they already have. Nasser admitted this at the Rabat Summit [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] in an interview reported earlier this week. Moreover, it would take too long to train the necessary Egyptian pilots and technicians to operate the aircraft, related ground-control facilities and air defense systems necessary to make an appreciable impact on the present situation.

If the Soviets were to provide Nasser with effective means to offset Israeli supremacy, it would seem that they would have to begin inserting their own people into more exposed combat positions, perhaps billed as "volunteers." The consensus developing at CIA is that they would begin to do this in defensive areas, perhaps providing more sophisticated radar and air defense systems run by Soviet operators. The low altitude SA-3 system, currently deployed outside the Soviet Union only in Eastern Europe and even there only operated by Soviet personnel, would seem to be the most likely candidate.

The Soviets could also begin to supplement Egyptian pilots with their "volunteers." This would also probably require the use of Soviet ground controllers, since the Egyptians are not very effective in this area either, the language problem would seem to necessitate this and Soviet pilots have never been known to fly missions without using their own people for ground support.

The Soviet aircraft-pilot-ground control option, however, while real, runs a greater risk of significant escalation than providing and operating more and new air defense facilities. The Israelis, among the best and most experienced combat pilots, would surely be tough game for the Soviet "volunteers" especially if they were inadequately supported from the ground. The thought of Soviet pilots and planes being shot down in Egypt and Israel must certainly give the Soviet pause for thought. CIA thinks that if Soviet pilots were employed, they would be used for defensive missions only. This would cut the risks some.

Another possibility is that the Soviets could help the Egyptians to develop an air defense system similar to that employed by North Vietnam. This would involve saturating areas to be defended with SA-2 missile sites and more conventional anti-aircraft defenses for the lower altitudes.² The present Egyptian MIGs could also be used to backstop this arrangement or improved versions could be employed if necessary. While this would involve equipment such as that the Israelis have already destroyed, this approach would involve quantities and concentrations not tried before in Egypt which might increase the cost to Israel as they did to us in Vietnam. There are, of course, differences in terrain which might make this harder to do in the UAR. Soviet personnel would have to be used but in less directly exposed positions on the ground.

There are other actions which the Soviets could take to buttress Nasser militarily, but for now they seem less real. Short range missiles for example are a possibility. Such a move would run the strong risk of serious Israeli retaliation and do nothing about Israeli freedom to strike any and all Egyptian targets, military as well as industrial. Unless preceded by an improved air defense ring of some kind, even short range missiles with conventional warheads would be vulnerable to Israel preemptive attacks. They would, of course, also raise the possibility of escalation of the hostilities beyond a point where the Soviets might be able to maintain some control over events.

Conclusion

Therefore, the situation is difficult for Moscow because the Soviets seem to have little middle ground between involving their own pilots to make Egyptian defense really effective and resigning themselves to what would probably be a less than effective effort by ground technicians manning anti-aircraft defenses. It is true that they did a creditable job in North Vietnam and might try that approach. But if they

² Nixon highlighted this part of the paragraph and wrote "Most likely. It worked in Vietnam against us!" in the margin.

once involve their pilots, their prestige would be directly engaged, and someone would have to lose—either the Soviets or the Israelis.

I have called a meeting of the Washington Special Action Group for Monday³ to examine these possibilities and to refine our contingency plans in response to them.

It seems clear that the Soviets feel compelled to make some move in Nasser's support. The first question is whether they will confine that move to a token gesture or attempt to do something effective against Israeli attacks. If the latter, this would almost certainly seem to involve Soviet personnel. The second question, therefore, is whether they insert Soviet personnel into direct combat situations or leave them, as they are now, in defensive ground positions where they do not bring Soviet prestige into face-to-face confrontation with Israel.⁴

³ See Document 130.

⁴ Nixon wrote the following comments at the bottom of the page: "K—I think it is time to talk directly with the Soviet on this—Acheson's idea—'let the dust settle' won't work—states 'Negotiate in any form' won't work. We must make a try at a bilateral talk to see if a deal in our interests is possible."

130. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting¹

Washington, February 9, 1970, 10:21–11:02 a.m.

SUBJECT

Possible Soviet Moves in Egypt

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. Rodger Davies

Defense

Mr. Richard Ware

Mr. Robert Pranger

JCS

Lt. Gen. John W. Vogt

CIA

Mr. Thomas H. Karamessines

NSC Staff

Mr. Harold Saunders

Col. Robert Behr

Mr. Keith Guthrie

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-114, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1969 and 1970. Secret; Nodis. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. A US position for dealing with possible Soviet moves in Egypt must be ready within one week. The WSAG will meet on the afternoon of Wednesday, February 11 to draw up an initial position and will meet again Monday, February 16 to give the problem further consideration.

2. In connection with preparation of the US position the following papers should be prepared:

a. Assistant Secretary Sisco should submit on February 9 proposals for intensifying our diplomatic efforts to bring about a cease fire and, in this context, to warn the Soviets against further intervention in Egypt. These proposals should take into account the possible usefulness of a renewed cease-fire effort in dealing with public opinion pressures, staving off a further Israeli request for aid, and placing the onus on the Soviets for escalating the Arab-Israeli conflict.

b. For WSAG consideration at its February 11 and 16 meetings the military situation in the Middle East and the options open to the United States should be reviewed. This review should be related to the existing contingency plans, particularly Tab H (action by Soviet naval forces) and Tab D (responses to Soviet overt intervention in renewed Arab-Israeli hostilities) of the WSAG contingency plan of October 1969.

The analysis should take into account the overall power situation in the Middle East and not just the Arab-Israeli dispute. State and CIA should coordinate in preparing this aspect of the study.

c. The ad hoc Under Secretaries group is to meet Monday, February 16 to consider the paper that has been prepared on aid to Israel. This paper must be coordinated with current contingency planning and should discuss what aid levels to Israel are appropriate in the light of foreseeable Soviet moves. It should also consider tacit US Government facilitation of Israeli military purchases in the US.

Mr. Kissinger summarized the circumstances requiring the WSAG to meet. There were hints that the Soviets might take some action, as yet unspecified, in the Middle East. It was essential we make sure our plans were in order and, that all possible contingencies had been examined. The study prepared by CIA suggested the following possible Soviet actions: (1) improvement of UAR ground-to-air defense, with some Soviet personnel made available for this purpose; (2) introduction of Soviet pilots, probably with associated ground-control installations; and (3) introduction of offensive weapons such as bombers and missiles. Mr. Kissinger asked if there were any new possibilities.

Mr. Karamessines said there was nothing further to add at this time. However, we might get some more information as a result of the Cairo meeting, since Nasser might tell his Arab colleagues what he expected or had requested from the Soviets.

Mr. Kissinger said he was concerned about one further possibility—that the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean might take retaliatory action against Israel. Mr. Karamessines commented that while anything

was possible, naval action did not seem consistent with the thrust [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] by Soviet officials regarding the Near Eastern situation. Mr. Saunders pointed out that naval action was considered in the October 1969 WSAG contingency plan at Tab H, where it was suggested that we might respond by taking action against the Alexandria port facilities.

After noting that consideration should also be given to the more remote possibility of Nasser's loss of power, Mr. Kissinger suggested that the military situation in the Middle East and the options open to the US be reviewed and considered by the WSAG on Wednesday, February 11.²

Mr. Kissinger asked about the timing of possible Soviet action. Mr. Davies suggested that the Soviets would move quickly for psychological purposes. Mr. Saunders observed that they might wait to see what decision we made on aid to Israel in the wake of Kosygin's letter³ to the President. Mr. Kissinger said he had noted the same theory in the press and asked who was putting out this idea. Mr. Saunders said that it appeared to be a complete fabrication, perhaps disseminated by the Soviet Embassy.

Mr. Pranger noted that [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] the Soviets would be increasing their freighter traffic through the Bosphorus in the next few days. Mr. Davies suggested that the Soviets might just announce that they were going to provide air cover to Cairo; and Mr. Saunders noted that, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] they could take the steps necessary to provide such an air defense within one week.

Mr. Kissinger said that the preceding discussion confirmed the need for a WSAG meeting as early as February 11 to give preliminary consideration to what the US should do. Discussion of the Middle East situation could be completed at a subsequent WSAG meeting on February 16. It was agreed that the February 11 meeting should be scheduled late in the afternoon to provide the maximum possible time for completing the necessary staff work.

Mr. Kissinger asked General Vogt to have a look at the existing military contingency plans. He noted that increased Soviet involvement would at the very least probably result in some attrition of the Israeli Air Force, and that this would generate pressure for US aid to Israel. General Vogt said the Israelis will probably move to take out any new defensive system installed in Egypt by the Soviets. He thought the Israelis had the capability to do so, even if the defenses were manned by the Soviets.

² See Document 134.

³ Document 121.

Mr. Kissinger observed that the implications of Soviet action would be different, depending on whether or not the Soviets acknowledged that they were assuming responsibility for the air defense of Cairo. If the Soviets maintained that an improved defense system was Egyptian, even though run by the Soviets, Brezhnev would probably be under less immediate internal pressures to retaliate in the event Soviet personnel were injured by Israeli attacks. In either case, however, we are likely to face a difficult situation. If Soviet help on air defense results in losses for the Israeli Air Force, we will probably get requests from Israel for aid. On the other hand, if the Israelis challenge the new defenses, the Soviets will eventually feel compelled to respond. They may act immediately if they have publicly acknowledged responsibility for Egyptian air defense; the time fuse may be a few months longer if the presence of their personnel is unacknowledged.

General Vogt pointed out that Soviet interest in defensive armaments for the UAR suggested that they were anticipating Israeli attacks. Thus, the Soviets might seek to keep their involvement covert. He observed that the Israelis had taken out all of the earlier Soviet SA-2 installations that threatened Israeli operations in the Cairo area. [2 lines of source text not declassified] General Vogt added that if the Soviets were to install the more sophisticated SA-3's in Egypt, they would be taking a major new step, since these weapons had never heretofore been deployed outside the USSR. One result might be an Israeli request to us for more sophisticated counter-measures.

Mr. Saunders noted that the existing WSAG plan did not cover the contingency of Soviet intervention solely for the purpose of defending the UAR, with Soviet units and aircraft operating only within Egypt. Mr. Kissinger replied that it seemed hard to see how Soviet action to install a major new defensive system would not sooner or later escalate the conflict and lead to one of the contingencies discussed in the existing plan. The Israelis would feel compelled to challenge the new defenses, and this could lead to a Soviet-Israeli confrontation.

In response to Mr. Kissinger's questions, General Vogt said that Israeli pilots in F-4's or Mirage III's would probably be more than a match for Soviet pilots in Mig 21's. He doubted that the Israelis would lose one plane for every two lost by the Soviets.

The discussion then turned to possible Soviet supply of offensive missiles to the Egyptians. Mr. Davies emphasized the concern which would be generated in Israel if the Soviets were to announce the installation of missiles with a 200-mile range. In response to Mr. Kissinger's questions, General Vogt said that the Soviets could provide a missile such as the Frog which has a two-mile CEP (circular error, probable) at a range of 200 miles. This would permit bombardment of the Tel Aviv suburbs. With high explosive warheads, this would be

primarily a terroristic weapon and would cause little damage. General Vogt added that the Israelis soon will also have an offensive capability in the form of the Jericho missile.

Mr. Kissinger asked if the Soviet decision to aid the Egyptians was irrevocable. Mr. Davies and Mr. Karamessines agreed that it was. Mr. Kissinger asked if anything was to be achieved by our trying to warn the Soviets against such a step. Mr. Davies suggested that it would be desirable to intensify our diplomatic effort toward a cease fire, and Mr. Karamessines added that this would help us in dealing with public opinion. Mr. Kissinger then asked that Assistant Secretary Sisco send over a paper dealing with this "today" (February 9).

Mr. Kissinger observed that one explanation for the spate of Soviet Embassy-inspired stories linking a US decision on aid to Israel with the Kosygin letter was that the Soviets had made the decision to step up assistance to Nasser and were attempting to shift to us the blame for escalating the dispute. He suggested that if we moved fast on the diplomatic front, we could appear to be making a response to the Soviets and might thus stave off another Israeli request for aid. He added that it was important that the ad hoc Under Secretaries group on aid to Israel meet on February 16. The staff paper prepared for the Under Secretaries must be coordinated with our other planning, so that we would be able to decide what aid levels to Israel would be appropriate in the light of foreseeable Soviet moves in Egypt.

Mr. Kissinger asked about the possibility of avoiding US Government decisions on aid to Israel while allowing the Israelis to purchase military equipment in this country. We would, of course, want to know what the Israelis were buying, but we would make no announcements. Mr. Davies agreed that the less that was said on the record, the easier it would be for us to aid Israel. It was agreed that our ability to do this would depend to some extent on the type of equipment the Israelis were seeking.

General Vogt suggested that arrangements could be worked out with the Israeli Air Force to keep Israeli purchases as quiet as possible. He added that it would be useful to see how our equipment fares against that which the Soviets might supply.

Mr. Kissinger directed that the possibility of tacit US facilitation of Israeli purchases be covered in the study being prepared for the Under Secretaries group. He added that if a decision were made to offset Soviet equipment supplied to Nasser, we needed to consider what we should do. We also needed to decide whether the introduction of Soviet combat personnel into Egypt would trigger one of the contingencies covered in existing plans.

Mr. Kissinger asked that in connection with the current review State and CIA prepare an analysis of Soviet moves in the light of the overall power balance in the Middle East and Africa. Possible estab-

ishment of a Soviet power base in this area was a matter of serious concern.

Mr. Kissinger suggested that the best means of warning the Soviets might be a Sisco–Dobrynin meeting on achieving a cease-fire. Mr. Karamessines and Mr. Davies agreed. Mr. Kissinger asked that Assistant Secretary Sisco address this matter in the memorandum to be submitted “this afternoon” (February 9). At the suggestion of Mr. Karamessines, Mr. Kissinger also suggested that Mr. Sisco consider in his memorandum the possible advantages of publicizing promptly any measures which the Soviets might take to step up their aid to Egypt.

Mr. Ware said that in considering this we ought to think about where it leads in terms of US involvement in the Middle East. Mr. Pranger suggested we might try to warn the Israelis about the increased dangers of attacking Egyptian defenses in the event the Soviets openly acknowledged their own involvement. Mr. Kissinger doubted that we could ask the Israelis not to attack or tell them that we would not provide them aid.

Mr. Kissinger then directed that Tab D (response to Soviet overt intervention in renewed Arab-Israeli hostilities) and Tab H (action by Soviet naval forces) of the October 1969 WSAG contingency plan be reviewed in the context of the current possibilities for Soviet action in Egypt which might result in attrition to the Israeli Air Force and damage to Israeli territory. A judgement was needed on the circumstances under which we would prefer each of the options discussed in the October 1969 plan: military aid to Israel, interdiction of Soviet supplies, and US military intervention. Mr. Kissinger again emphasized the importance of considering the problem in the context not just of the Arab-Israeli dispute but of the overall power situation in the Middle East.

In answer to General Vogt’s question, Mr. Kissinger said that JCS should submit its review of military plans directly to the NSC.

131. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 10, 1970, noon.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting took place in the Library in order to avoid newspaper speculation.

After some preliminary pleasantries, I told Dobrynin that I had asked him to come to make a few points to him on behalf of the President. I then made the following seven points from my memorandum to the President of February 10:²

(1) It had come to my attention that one of the junior officers of the Soviet Embassy had complained to one of our journalists that we did not take the Kosygin letter sufficiently seriously.

(2) We are assuming that serious communications will be made directly by Dobrynin to me and therefore we will not comment officially.

(3) We want Dobrynin to know that the Kosygin letter received the highest level attention. Given the fact that the Soviet side had distributed it in regular channels in London and Paris, we had no choice but to deal with it in a similar fashion here.

(4) The President is prepared to have bilateral discussions on the Middle East in the Dobrynin–Kissinger channel with a view to finding a solution fair to everybody.

(5) We want the Soviet leaders to know that the introduction of Soviet combat personnel in the Middle East would be viewed with the gravest concern. We are choosing this method of communication because we do not want to make a formal *démarche*. At the same time, we want to make sure that the Soviet leaders are under no misapprehension about the possibility of grave consequences.

(6) The President remains committed to his policy of seeking a resolution of outstanding disputes with the Soviet Union on the widest possible front.

(7) In this spirit, I propose a meeting to discuss SALT on February 17.

When I was finished, Dobrynin was extremely affable. He said he understood perfectly. He wanted to assure me that the Soviet leaders

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 215, "D File". Secret; Sensitive.

² Earlier that day, Kissinger sent Nixon a memorandum providing the seven points he planned to make to Dobrynin. The President initialed his approval. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI)

had no intention of exacerbating tensions. They had, however, wanted to indicate that the situation was getting serious. The primary concern of the Soviet leaders was another round of the arms race in the Middle East, just as we had indicated.

On the other hand, the Soviets were displeased by the tactics that were being used; for example, at the precise moment that the President's reply was handed to Dobrynin by Sisco, Secretary Rogers was handing the text of the reply to Ambassador Lucet. Considering that the letter was written by the Soviet Prime Minister to the American President, Dobrynin thought that the reply might well have been handed back by the Secretary of State. At any rate, it would have been more polite to let the Soviet Ambassador have it an hour or two before the allies of the United States. Secondly, it did not make a very good impression on the Soviet Union that the essence of the reply was leaked to the press before it could even have been received in Moscow. This was a beef with the general tactics used by the State Department. For example, Sisco's reply to the Soviet answer to our memorandum of October 28th³ was leaked to the press five hours before it was transmitted to Dobrynin. As a result, Dobrynin had the essence of the reply in his pocket before Sisco even started speaking. Dobrynin said, moreover, that the State Department had misrepresented the Soviet note of December.⁴ It was not intended as a rejection of our proposals of October 28. On the contrary, it represented a direct invitation for further talks, and it was deliberately presented as being negotiable.

Dobrynin said that Kosygin was a very mild man, and he was astonished to read in the American press that his letter was intended to convey a threat. The letter had intended to state the dilemmas of the Soviet Union in the Middle East and the problems that were being raised. I said I was glad to hear that because I could only underline what I had said earlier—that the introduction of Soviet combat forces would have the most serious consequences. Dobrynin said he understood perfectly, and he only hoped that we took into account Soviet problems when we made any decisions about future weapons deliveries to Israel.

Dobrynin then asked me whether he had understood me correctly that the Middle East could be the subject of conversations in the Kissinger–Dobrynin channel. I said, yes—not in the detail that had been characteristic of his talks with Sisco, but rather in terms of general principles. If we could come to some understanding of general principles, Sisco could handle the details. Dobrynin said he would report this to

³ The Soviet oral reply is in Document 98.

⁴ Document 109.

Moscow, and he was sure that they would be glad to hear it. Moscow wanted to know whether we were engaged in a propaganda battle or in a serious effort to settle, and he repeated that the Soviet note of December did not represent the last Soviet word on the subject.

132. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to Nixon¹

Washington, February 10, 1970.

SUBJECT

Cautioning the USSR against Escalating the Mid-East Arms Race

The intelligence of the last few days suggests that the USSR may have decided to give the Egyptians some sort of "system" designed to counter Israeli air operations. As noted in the memo sent you last week-end,² the Soviet action could fall into three broad categories:

- improvement of ground-to-air defenses using substantial numbers of new Soviet technicians and perhaps more advanced surface-to-air missiles; or
- open Soviet involvement in the air defense of Egypt, perhaps including Soviet pilots flying interceptors;
- introduction of an offensive weapons system such as surface-to-surface missiles or Soviet pilots flying attack missions.

If the Soviets involve themselves openly, this will raise serious questions for us: Can we afford to let the Soviets openly assume responsibility for the defense of a Mid-Eastern nation without responding? On the other hand, is it in the U.S. interest to move toward a confrontation with the USSR over Israel's strategy of bombing the UAR?

These larger questions are being dealt with urgently this week in the Special Actions Group.³ However, since it is patently preferable—if possible—to prevent this kind of situation from developing, the tactical question today is whether we should follow up your letter to

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Nodis. Sent for action. Drafted by Saunders based on a February 9 memorandum from Sisco and Richardson to Kissinger entitled "Cautioning USSR Against Qualitative Escalation of Armaments in the Near East." (Ibid.)

² Document 128.

³ See Documents 130 and 134.

Kosygin⁴ with approaches to Dobrynin and perhaps Gromyko (Ambassador Beam sees him Wednesday for a broad discussion) to caution against dangerous escalation.

This would have to be done delicately since the obvious Soviet counters will be that we should first halt Israel's bombing and agree not to ship more arms to Israel. We would also have to avoid giving the impression that recent Soviet moves have us excessively worried.

Our answer on each of the first substantive points could be that (1) we are prepared to work with Israel for return to observance of the cease-fire provided both sides agree and (2) we are prepared to discuss arms limitation to both sides.

The most delicate question is how we show our own resolve. So far we have indicated our determination not to let the local arms balance shift against Israel. Since Israel's superiority over the Arabs is substantial, that would not be difficult to achieve even with small shipments. But if the Soviets enter the picture, more may be required and our response would assume a direct anti-Soviet character.

For the moment, it is probably best to stick to language expressing strong concern over escalation, (1) repeating our intention not to permit a change in the military balance and (2) leaving to the imagination what "escalation" means as far as we are concerned.

I believe some such approach is desirable. Your letter to Kosygin set the stage but some follow-up would give us a better feel for what it is possible to achieve with the Soviets in the way of restoring the cease-fire and achieving some slowing of the arms race.

In my next talk with Dobrynin I could make the points that (1) The introduction of Soviet combat personnel would be an act of the gravest sort and (2) we are willing to continue talks with them to find a peaceful solution. But in diplomatic channels, there are two ways of making such an approach:

1. Assistant Secretary Sisco could make the approach to Dobrynin. This would have the disadvantage of being pointed only at the Mid-East and perhaps displaying excessive concern and running across direct approaches we might make to Dobrynin.

2. Ambassador Beam could be instructed to include this on his broad agenda with Gromyko tomorrow. As you know, he has asked for more of this sort of thing to do.

Recommendation: That you approve having Ambassador Beam raise this with Gromyko.⁵

⁴ Document 126.

⁵ Nixon initialed his approval on February 11, and Beam met with Gromyko the same day; see Document 136.

133. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, February 11, 1970, 1530Z.

738. Subject: Call on Gromyko—Middle East. Ref: State 020685.²

1. Discussion of ME took up approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of my 90 minute review Feb. 11 with Gromyko. Other subjects in septels.³

2. I led off, closely following points in reftel, and stressing positive points of President's reply⁴ to Kosygin. Discussing need for ceasefire and reports of additional military assistance to UAR, I wished to caution against such assistance as could increase the level of violence on both sides. For this reason, the USG favors scrupulous adherence by both sides of UN ceasefire resolutions and I mentioned US approaches being made respectively in Cairo and Feb. 12 Four-Power meeting. At same time I was obliged to state that if USSR introduced more sophisticated weaponry or took other steps of extraordinary nature, we would have no alternative but to consider setps to restore the balance.

3. Gromyko took up ceasefire first. He said USSR could not consider ceasefire outside the context of actions which Israel is taking. These actions are flagrant military provocations, and are expression of Israel's complete ignoring of UN decisions. Soviets must draw conclusion that US statements that it will take steps toward Israel and will cool off extremist statements have not been justified. Ceasefire and ME situation cannot be discussed without considering concrete actions being taken by Israel, which is carrying out systematic, provocative attacks on Arab states. Neither USSR nor USA has received reports that UAR actions are not consistent with UN decisions. It is not UAR, Syria, Jordanian, or other Arab troops which are on Israeli territory, but the reverse. Gromyko then asserted it would be hard to find one honest objective world statesman who would say that the Arab states are to blame for tense ME situation. The fault lies with Israel.

4. On arms deliveries, Gromyko wished to remind the US of Sov. Govt. position, which has been expressed in messages to the USG and by Kosygin to the President. Moscow is not against discussing question of limiting arms deliveries to the ME. However, USSR proceeds from idea that for all practical purposes such discussion is not possible while

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Priority; Nodis.

² Telegram 20685 to Moscow, February 9, contained Rogers' instructions for Beam. (Ibid.)

³ Not further identified.

⁴ Document 126.

Israel occupies Arab territories. To discuss matter while Israeli troops are on Arab territories creates false, distorted situation. If USG wishes to find just solution to this question, it cannot object to the Soviet Government's position. When the question of the withdrawal of Israeli troops is resolved, as well as other problems relating to Middle Eastern settlement, our two sides could begin to discuss question of limiting arms deliveries to ME. Once Israeli troops withdraw, Gromyko did not think US and USSR would face tremendous difficulties on limiting arms deliveries. Any possible agreement would depend, however, on concrete positions of parties.

5. Gromyko said Soviet Government had paid attention to statement expressed in President's message to Kosygin regarding US interest in restoring relative balance in the event anything is done for benefit of the Arabs. He said USSR regrets that USG poses the question way it has. Israel, which ignores UN decisions, occupies Arab territories and by its policies, is source of tension and acute situation in ME. In Soviet view, USG would occupy more just position if it used all its possibilities and influence to bring about reduction of tension in area exert influence on Israel, instead of taking position it did in President's message. While USG says USSR should exert influence on Arabs, the victims of Israeli aggression, and hints that in interest of maintaining the balance US will take certain steps, the US is making statements regarding new deliveries of phantoms. Mention is made of dozens of plans, but perhaps it may be more. US actions can only complicate the situation. USG proposals are one-sided, pro-Israel and not objective. They are not designed to help reach agreement.

6. Gromyko went on to assert the USSR had made many efforts to find an agreement. At times it seemed to Moscow that our two sides had achieved some rapprochement of positions. However, under the influence of facts not known to the Soviet side, the US would then begin to retreat from its previous positions, would reorient its stand. Such an approach undermines all positive movement in negotiations.

7. Gromyko said the development he was talking about has found expression in the positions taken by the US representative in the Four-Power talks. In effect, the US adopting a take-it or leave-it approach, which the USSR rejects. The USSR wishes to find an agreement acceptable to all parties. However, if in the future the USG continues to use this approach, it promises little in the way of achieving agreement.

8. Gromyko then said that the USSR is ready, just as before, to continue Two-Power ME talks. He wanted me to inform my government of this. At the same time, he said he would like to have the USG occupy a more constructive position than heretofore.

9. Gromyko said he would like to make an observation not directly connected with my remarks, but related to the general problem

of finding a ME settlement. In essence, he said there seemed to be no divergences of views between the USSR and the USA when the USG asserts that it is not enough to solve just the question of the withdrawal of troops, but that other questions need to be settled. We both agree that what is needed is the cessation of war and the establishment of a durable peace. We both seem to attach great importance to the idea of a durable peace, yet nothing comes of this and it puzzles the USSR. Perhaps misunderstandings have or are taking place. Gromyko said USSR was ready to do whatever is necessary henceforward so situation can be normalized and not worsened but this does not all depend on USSR.

10. I responded by saying my remarks were intended to follow up on the President's reply to Premier Kosygin and to draw attention to the 3 special suggestions which might help the situation in the ME. I did not wish to recapitulate the President's letter, which I was certain would receive due consideration by the Soviet side. I noted the President had said the ceasefire had been violated by both sides, and that the UAR in early 1969 had announced a policy of not observing the ceasefire. I wished to stress, however, that a ceasefire was a means and not an end in itself, but intended to moderate the current situation and to facilitate negotiations for a settlement. Under such circumstances why would anyone want to oppose a ceasefire. I added that, should the USG decide to provide planes to Israel, this would be done in light of the balance existing in the ME, a balance which might be disturbed by Soviet deliveries to the Arabs. The US has been frank in its position, for example President Nixon made this point in his Jan. 26 message⁵ to the American Jewish community meeting in Washington.

11. Referring to Gromyko's assertion that US seemed to be backing off from various positions on ME, I pointed out that any changes we had made were for the purpose of finding a fair-handed solution. Actually, the evolution in our position had sometimes been made for this purpose in the direction of Arab and not solely Israeli interest and had been in response to Soviet urging, as for instance in the the matter of outlining our ideas on frontiers. We certainly could not be accused of pointing our position toward a more adamant, rigid line. In conclusion I stressed we fully appreciate the importance the Arab states attach to withdrawal, which is a key feature to our proposals. The Arabs, however, should not underestimate what the establishment of peace means, not only to the Israeli Govt., but also to world opinion at large.

⁵ See footnote 6, Document 126.

12. Gromyko reiterated his assertion about the US tending to back off from previous positions. I responded briefly by saying I did not want to renegotiate everything that had been done in New York and Washington, but wished only to concentrate on certain points which the USG felt would bring about an early normalization in the area. I closed this part of the discussion noting I was pleased that the Soviets apparently also wish an early normalization of the situation.

13. *Comment:* Despite his sophistry, Gromyko was even-tempered in his presentation and seemed to be impressed by the steps we are taking to urge a ceasefire and by our warnings concerning an arms escalation in the ME.

Beam

134. Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting¹

Washington, February 11, 1970, 4:25–5:27 p.m.

SUBJECT

Possible Soviet Moves in Egypt

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State

Mr. U. Alexis Johnson

Mr. Rodger Davies

Defense

Mr. Richard Ware

Mr. Robert Pranger

JCS

Lt. Gen. John W. Vogt

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. The WSAG working group paper² should be refined to categorize possible Soviet actions to strengthen Egyptian defenses and iden-

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-114, WSAG Minutes, Originals, 1969 and 1970. Top Secret; Nodis. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room.

² A paper entitled "Increased Soviet Involvement in UAR Military Effort—Contingencies and Options," was drafted by Saunders and Rodger P. Davies for consideration by the WSAG working group. (Ibid.)

tify US options in response. The paper should discuss the issues raised by these options, make clear relative US and Soviet military capabilities in the Middle East, and consider the impact which Soviet actions could have on the overall balance in the Middle East.

2. An analysis should be prepared of what would be involved if the Soviets were to install an effective air defense for Egypt. This should include information on likely types of equipment, numbers of personnel, lead time, and means of transporting to the UAR.

3. Existing Middle East contingency plans should be reviewed to determine their applicability to the present situation.

4. CIA should prepare an analysis of possible Soviet intent in diverting an intelligence collection ship to a location south of Cyprus.

5. The WSAG will meet on February 16 for further consideration of Middle East contingency planning.³

6. The results of the WSAG studies will be made available to the Ad Hoc Group on aid to Israel. The Ad Hoc Group will meet February 17 or 18 to consider pending proposals on supplying military equipment to Israel. It will meet later to consider overall US strategy in dealing with the Middle East situation.

7. Proposals on all available intelligence capabilities covering possible Soviet moves in Egypt should be prepared for discussion by the 303 Committee on February 17. These proposals should take into account possible means of improving Israeli reconnaissance.

Mr. Kissinger said that at this meeting the WSAG should review existing contingency plans to consider whether they fitted the situations that might arise as a result of Soviet moves in Egypt. It would be up to the principals to decide the timing and nature of any action that might be taken. WSAG approval of a plan did not constitute a recommendation to go forward with the actions specified in the plan.

Mr. Karamessines reviewed new intelligence. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] Nasser in his address to the chiefs of state meeting in Cairo said the Soviets had promised him support by all necessary means. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] officials confirmed that Nasser had visited Moscow and claimed that the Soviets had committed themselves to supply all arms needed to regain the occupied territories. Specifically, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] officials spoke of Soviet willingness to offer Mig 23's and other sophisticated air defense systems if the US provided Phantoms to Israel.

³ A February 16 covering memorandum for these minutes from Jeanne Davis to U. Alexis Johnson, Warren Nutter, Nels Johnson, and Thomas Karamessines informed them that the February 16 meeting was postponed until further notice. (Ibid.)

General Vogt commented that the Mig 23 seemed an unlikely choice, since it was in short supply, was too sophisticated for the Egyptians, and was not suited to prevailing air combat conditions in the UAR-Israel conflict.

Mr. Karamessines mentioned reports that the Soviets might supply surface-to-surface missiles with a range of up to 800 miles and that Soviet pilots might be made available for purely defensive purposes. Nasser had spoken of Soviet irritation at Israeli intransigence and particularly at injuries to Soviet personnel from Israeli air attacks which had resulted in one dead and several wounded, including a general. Nasser, emphasizing the need to improve his air defenses, had admitted that SAM's and radars had been taken from the front lines to assist against low-level Israeli attacks against Cairo.

Mr. Karamessines also noted [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] estimates that in Moscow Nasser had requested both offensive and defensive weapons and had found the Soviets generally receptive. However, [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] thought the Soviets might hesitate to supply offensive weapons and would be more likely to strengthen Egyptian air defenses with improved SA-2's, SA-3's, or anti-aircraft artillery. [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] believe that these improvements would require substantial Soviet manning. General Vogt agreed that Soviet personnel would be needed.

Mr. Karamessines said that a Soviet signal intelligence ship returning from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea had interrupted its voyage and was now operating south of Cyprus.

General Vogt suggested that the Soviets might be expecting the Israelis to introduce new electronic systems as a response to new armaments to be given by the Soviets to the Egyptians. The Israelis might need new equipment if the Soviets brought in SA-3's. Nevertheless, the intelligence ship could not be required for this purpose in the near future since installation of SA-3's would take a long time. Answering a question from Mr. Karamessines, General Vogt said that the ship would probably not greatly improve Egyptian ability to anticipate Israeli attacks.

Mr. Kissinger said the explanations offered for the activities of the intelligence ship were not very persuasive and asked that an analysis be prepared of Soviet intentions in placing the ship off the Israeli coast.

Mr. Ware asked how many personnel might be involved in operating SA-3's. General Vogt replied that there was little information available but estimated that the total might be about the same size as an SA-2 battalion, which had 700.

General Vogt added that the JCS thought we ought to consider improving our capability to detect possible Soviet moves. The group then

discussed at some length various ways to increase reconnaissance, including improvement of Israeli capabilities. General Vogt believed we could do little in this line for the Israelis in the immediate future but might be able to help increase their capabilities over the longer run. He emphasized that in considering the need for better reconnaissance we should think about a program to be conducted over a considerable period of time. The consensus was that a decision on reconnaissance would not be required prior to Tuesday, February 17. Mr. Kissinger directed that proposals covering all available intelligence capabilities be prepared for discussion by the 303 Committee on February 17.⁴ These proposals should take into account the possibility of improving Israeli reconnaissance. It would then be possible to have recommendations available for the President by February 18.

Mr. Johnson said that everything points to the Soviets using our decision on aid to Israel as the peg for action on their part to support Nasser. Mr. Kissinger observed that Soviet inaction could very quickly affect their standing in the Middle East.

Mr. Kissinger said that there were three contingencies that needed to be considered: (1) an unacknowledged Soviet move to strengthen UAR air defense by providing equipment and technicians; (2) open Soviet acknowledgement of some Soviet responsibility for UAR air defense; and (3) Soviet threat of offensive action against Israel. The WSAG should list possible US responses to Soviet actions; these could be categorized as diplomatic action, providing aid to Israel, and military measures. It was agreed that the working group paper prepared as a result of the February 9 WSAG meeting could serve as a basis for this analysis. Once the WSAG had assembled its findings, it could place them before the NSC or the Ad Hoc Group on aid to Israel.

The group then considered whether there was any sort of assistance the Soviets could provide that would be effective in stopping the Israeli penetration attacks. Mr. Kissinger pointed out that to stop the attacks would imply that the Israelis would suffer substantial losses. This would create additional problems for us. Mr. Karamessines said that intelligence reports indicated the Soviets might try to give the Egyptians an anti-aircraft capability similar to that they had provided the North Vietnamese. The consensus was that because of Egyptian ineffectiveness, providing them such a capability would probably mean the introduction of Soviet crews.

Mr. Kissinger asked that estimates be prepared of what would be required for an effective Egyptian air defense, including how much

⁴ Minutes of this 303 meeting are in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

equipment and personnel would be needed and how transportation to Egypt could be arranged. General Vogt suggested that the Egyptians were concerned primarily about the Cairo area, and that this could probably be covered with 10 battalions of ground-to-air missiles.

Mr. Kissinger suggested that Soviet bombers and pilots might be the cheapest way of creating an effective deterrent against Israeli attacks. General Vogt said that Soviet bombers operating against Israeli defenses could well suffer substantial losses. The Soviets would probably be reluctant to put their prestige on the line in this way. Answering a question from Mr. Pranger, General Vogt said that the intelligence ship would not be useful to feed information to bombers.

General Vogt said that one other possible defensive measure would be for the Soviets to provide an SA-4 mobile system, with associated radar facilities. This would not stop the Israeli penetrations but would make them more costly. Responding to Mr. Johnson's question, General Vogt said that this equipment could be transported by air but would involve tonnages far greater than the Soviets have heretofore flown into Egypt. He noted that the Soviets had obtained overflight permission from Turkey for previous airlifts to Egypt.

Mr. Kissinger again pointed out that we would be faced with a problem if improved Egyptian defenses inflicted losses which the Israeli Air Force could not withstand. General Vogt said that even if the Egyptians had a system equivalent to the North Vietnamese, losses would still not be great—perhaps one per 1000 sorties.

Mr. Karamessines asked about the status of diplomatic efforts. Mr. Kissinger said the approach to the Soviets discussed at the February 9 WSAG meeting had been approved and was being made. Mr. Karamessines then asked about the old proposal for withdrawal of forces from the Suez Canal. The consensus was that there was no possibility that such an approach would be effective at this time and that the basic problem remained the Israeli penetration attacks.

Mr. Kissinger pointed out that diplomatic and supply pressures on Israel were an important part of the inventory of measures which the US might take. Mr. Johnson said that the detailed planning should be reviewed to ensure it is consistent with what we are now working on. Mr. Kissinger agreed and noted that the existing plans for the most part assumed a situation in which the Israeli forces were being driven back in a Soviet-backed effort to oust them from occupied territory. Mr. Davies added that we should look closely at those provisions of the contingency plan covering (1) interdiction of Soviet supplies to Egypt and (2) a one-time retaliatory strike responding to a Soviet attack on Israel. Mr. Kissinger cautioned that we would not wish to rush into military action. Mr. Ware asked if we had the assets to consider a retaliatory strike. General Vogt said that we could mount a strike; but if

the Soviets responded, they could rapidly outbid us. Mr. Johnson added that all the analysis done so far had shown that the Soviets would be in a superior military position in the event of a crisis in the Middle East. Mr. Kissinger stressed that it was important that this point be made clear to the President.

Mr. Kissinger asked that the working group established after the February 9 WSAG meeting⁵ refine their paper to categorize possible Soviet moves, identify US options in response, discuss the issues these options raise and consider the impact on the overall strategic situation in the Middle East. The WSAG would meet again on the morning of February 16. The papers prepared by the WSAG should be made available to the Ad Hoc Group on aid to Israel. This Group should meet February 17 or 18 to consider pending proposals on providing military equipment to Israel. Later the Ad Hoc Group could meet again to consider the overall US strategy in dealing with Middle East problem.

⁵ See Document 130.

135. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 18, 1970.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

I had lunch served in the downstairs Library at the White House Mansion in order both to avoid the press' seeing Dobrynin coming in and to avoid staff members' asking questions. Another reason was to show Dobrynin that we were paying some special attention.

Dobrynin began the conversation by giving me a picture that I had seen at the Soviet photo show the evening before. It is of a dog looking at a syringe with great apprehension, and had amused me very much. He had written a little inscription on the back.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, [Part 2] Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Residence Library.

We then turned immediately to the President's annual report,² which had been published the night before. Dobrynin said that he had read the report with the greatest care and that he had found it on the whole a well-balanced document. In fact, he thought that it would be well received in the Soviet Union, except for a number of items. First, he had noticed that there were only two foreign leaders mentioned in the report—President Thieu and President Ceausescu. This, Dobrynin said, would rub people the wrong way. The second thing, to which there would be great exception taken in the Soviet Union, was the list in the Introduction of countries where the Red Army had been used since 1945. I told him that, of course, he had to understand the report was not written primarily for Moscow audiences and that as far as the mention of Ceausescu was concerned, there was no particular intention attached to it. He said he just wanted to be sure that it was one of these drafting problems which might indicate a certain priority in the President's attitude, but which was not directed at the Soviet Union.

Dobrynin then asked a number of questions about the organizational part of the report. Specifically, he wanted to know the difference between the group dealing with crisis management and the groups dealing with programs—e.g., the differences between the Verification Panel and the Washington Special Actions Group. I gave him a rather general description. Dobrynin said that in the Soviet Union, of course, decisions were taken in a different manner; that is to say, there was no coordination between departments at a lower level. Each department worked independently, and all issues were resolved at the higher level.

Dobrynin then asked about a phrase in the report which said that the only status quo in the world today is the fact of change. Did that mean that we no longer recognized the existing dividing lines in Europe? I said it was odd for a Marxist to argue that such a phrase produced any difficulties, since after all, all of Marxist theory was based on the theory of history. Dobrynin smiled and said that in Europe we are fomenting the maintenance of the status quo. I said the distinction had to be made between existing dividing lines in Europe and existing frontiers. We certainly recognized all existing national frontiers, but we did not recognize the East German boundary as a national frontier. This did not, of course, mean that we would support the use or the threat of force with respect to it.

² The text of Nixon's "First Annual Report to the Congress on United States Foreign Policy for the 1970s" is in *Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, pp. 116–190. On February 25, Kissinger sent Nixon a memorandum that provided excerpts of foreign media reaction. The Soviet reaction was given as follows: "A Soviet writer commented in *Izvestiya* that 'President Nixon is trying to pacify the American people and make them favor the present Government course.'" (Ibid., Box 326, Subject Files, Foreign Reaction to President's Annual Review of U.S. Foreign Policy)

Dobrynin replied that this explanation was perfectly agreeable to the Soviet Union. Could he communicate it to his government? I told him that existing national boundaries would not be challenged by this Administration, and I said as far as I knew, I had never heard anyone express any different view. Dobrynin said he had been puzzled because the previous Administration had given him formal assurance to that effect, and we had not yet done that.

Dobrynin then turned to the issue of sufficiency and said this was, of course, a very vague term on which further discussion might be useful. He wondered in what respect the ABM fitted into the sufficiency concept. He said that it was unfortunate that Helsinki was immediately followed by the ABM announcement. I told him that the ABM announcement came up, as he knew very well, as part of our regular budgetary cycle. It would have come up in January regardless of Helsinki, and nothing had happened in Helsinki that could affect our budgetary decisions. As he knew very well, we were engaged in a purely exploratory conversation.

Dobrynin then asked about the difference between area defense and point defense. I gave him a very crude explanation because I did not want to go into missile characteristics. With the President's authority, I gave him a brief account of what the request would be like for next year, and I told him it was a minimum request which would keep the program going but which would retain all options for SALT.

Dobrynin said that he simply did not understand how the Minuteman defense could also be useful for area defense and how, if it was useful for area defense, it could make any difference to the Soviets what our intentions were. I told him that the best thing would be if I would let one of my technical experts explain the system to him, and we arranged a meeting for some weeks ahead.

Dobrynin then read a little note to me (attached)³ which did not, he said, represent a formal communication but some tentative instructions. The note reads as follows:

“At the time of the Helsinki meetings the American delegation emphasized that it displays business-like attitude toward discussing the problem of curbing strategic offensive and defensive armaments race. We would like to say frankly that further development raises questions on our side in this respect.

“We do not understand, in particular, what was that that guided the American side when despite agreement about the confidential nature of the talks it in fact released to the press through its various spokesmen many elements of the contents of the Helsinki negotiations.

³ Not attached.

Such an approach can hardly make a favorable impact on the atmosphere of the talks in the future.

“We would also like to stress that in the light of the exchange of views in Helsinki we are puzzled by the position on issues of strategic armaments taken by certain members of the U.S. Government, in particular, by the U.S. Secretary of Defense Laird. Mr. Laird has recently come out demanding substantial speed-up in the deployment of the ABM ‘Safeguard’ system, as well as declared the intention to speed up the development of a new type of strategic bomber and underwater long-range missile system. The Pentagon also advocates development of a new ground-based intercontinental ballistic missile.

“The demands by members of the U.S. Government that the U.S. should expedite nuclear missile arms race make for some thought as to the intentions here with respect to achieving agreement on curbing strategic offensive and defensive arms race.

“It is known that earlier, when the U.S. Government was taking its decision on deployment of the ‘Safeguard’ system President Nixon connected its deployment with the course of Soviet-American talks.”

A question arises as to whether it should be understood that the Laird statement about speeding up the ABM deployment in the U.S. is connected with the position that the American side is going to take at the Soviet-American negotiations in Vienna?

“The Soviet Union in preparing for the Vienna talks proceeds from the assumption that statements by the American delegation at the Helsinki talks reflected the position of the Nixon Administration, and that that position has not changed during the time passed since the end of Helsinki negotiations. However, in connection with the Secretary of Defense Laird statement a question arises whether or not the American delegation is going to change its position?”

I told Dobrynin that the best way to proceed would be for us to schedule another conversation devoted primarily to SALT. I told him that we were serious, and that it was difficult to talk in the abstract. Dobrynin wanted to know whether we were interested in a comprehensive or a limited agreement, whether we were going to change our position in Vienna, and what approach we were going to take. I told Dobrynin that we should have a full discussion, and that we might set up two channels—one for the formal negotiations, and one between him and me to deal with general principles.

136. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, February 18, 1970.

SUBJECT

Ambassador Beam's Talk with Gromyko on the Middle East

Ambassador Beam met with Gromyko on February 11² to follow up on your response to the message to Kosygin.³ He was under instructions to stress (1) the need for a cease-fire in which both sides would stop shooting, (2) our continuing interest in talks on arms limitation, and (3) our desire for a more positive response to our proposals for a peaceful settlement between the Arabs and the Israelis.

Gromyko's Response

Cease-Fire: Gromyko said that the USSR could consider neither a cease-fire nor the whole Mid-East situation outside of the context of the actions which Israel is taking. Israel is carrying out systematic, provocative attacks on the Arab states. "Neither the USSR nor USA has received reports that UAR actions are not consistent with UN decisions." [Beam later rebutted this allegation.]⁴ The fault lies with Israel.

Arms deliveries: Gromyko reminded us of the position Kosygin took in his recent message to you.⁵ Moscow is not against discussing limitations on the delivery of arms to the Middle East but for all practical purposes such discussion "is not possible" as long as Israel occupies Arab territories. When the question of the withdrawal of Israeli troops is resolved, as well as other problems relating to a Middle East settlement, arms limitation talks on the Middle East could "begin." Though he did not think there would be any tremendous difficulties, any possible agreement would depend, however, on the concrete positions of the parties.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Drafted by Sonnenfeldt and Saunders on February 12. The draft contained the following concluding sentence that Kissinger deleted: "I believe we must continue to confront the Soviets with the risks of intervention while leaving open the possibility for genuine diplomatic negotiation."

² See Document 133.

³ Document 126.

⁴ Brackets in the source text.

⁵ Document 121.

Gromyko also said that the Soviets had “paid attention” to the part of your message to Kosygin on the U.S. restoring the balance if anything is done to benefit the Arabs. The USSR, according to Gromyko, regrets the way we have posed this question. Israel is the source of the tension in the Middle East and the U.S. would be in a “more just position” if it exerted maximum pressure on the Israelis.

Instead the U.S. says that the USSR should exert pressure on the victims of Israeli aggression and hints that in the interest of maintaining the balance we will take certain steps (like new deliveries of Phantoms).

U.S. Proposals: The U.S. proposals for a peace settlement are one-sided, pro-Israeli and not objective. The USSR had made many efforts to reach an agreement, but every time there was “some rapprochement” of positions the U.S. would retreat to previous positions and undermine positive movement in the negotiations. This is reflected in the Four Power talks where the U.S. is taking a take-it-or-leave-it approach and which promises little in the way of achieving agreement.

Nevertheless, Gromyko later in the conversation said that the USSR remains ready to continue the Two Power talks, though he would like us to take a “more constructive position.” The USSR is puzzled by the lack of progress since we seem to agree on the fundamentals. Perhaps misunderstandings here or there are taking place. The USSR is ready to do whatever is necessary to normalize the situation and not worsen it, but this does not all depend on the USSR.

Comment: The general thrust of Gromyko’s response seems to be a firm reiteration of the positions the Soviets have been taking for some time. They continue to place the entire blame for the escalation of the fighting on the Israelis and picture the Arabs as the innocent victims of U.S.-Israeli collusion. They show no inclination to press Nasser on the restoration of the cease-fire or a peace settlement. Similarly, the Soviets continue to reject serious consideration of limiting arms shipments to the Middle East on the grounds that nothing constructive can be accomplished until there is a peace settlement. At the same time, they leave the door slightly open to continuing bilateral talks with us or multilateral talks including the British and French as a means of constructing a diplomatic alternative. Their basic problem is that to be really helpful to the Arabs they would have to provide effective military support. But this, they fear, could lead to confrontation with us.

Gromyko’s response points up the Soviet dilemma but does not provide new evidence of their intentions. They are not anxious for a confrontation with us over the Middle East even though Kosygin’s letter itself injected strong elements of confrontation. But they are under increasing pressure to do something for Nasser and may already have made some new commitment to him, at least to increase the pressures on the U.S. and Israel. Their immediate aim may be to force the Israelis,

through us, to cease the air attacks on the Egyptian heartland. Failing that, they seem to be preserving the option of offering some new movement in the Four Power or even the Two Power talks which might persuade us to hold off on arms deliveries to Israel, or—if that doesn't seem feasible or attractive—involving themselves more directly in the defense of the UAR. We cannot be sure that the Soviets have irrevocably decided to come to Nasser's aid with more and improved weapons and/or direct involvement of their own people in the hostilities. On the other hand, the present diplomatic exchange could be mainly for the record and to justify such a move.

In short, the Soviets continue to walk on a dangerous tightrope and seem not yet to have decided on a definite course. All that seems clear is that at least on the surface they have left the most important options open, while trying to force the Israelis to call off their attacks and prevent us from sending more Phantoms. The tough and dangerous decisions—whether and how to bail out the Egyptians or whether and how to make a genuine diplomatic move that would persuade the Israelis to stop their attacks—are still ahead for the Soviets.

137. Special National Intelligence Estimate¹

SNIE 11–16–70

Washington, February 19, 1970.

SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARD SALT

Discussion

How the Soviets Saw Helsinki

1. It was plainly the view of the Soviet delegation at Helsinki that the first round of talks was to be no more than preliminary and

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, NIC Files, Job 79–R1012A, NIEs and SNIEs. Top Secret; Sensitive; Limited Distribution. According to a prefatory note, the Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Department of State, Defense, Atomic Energy Commission, and the National Security Agency participated in the preparation of this estimate, which was submitted by the Director of Central Intelligence and concurred by all members of the USIB. This SNIE superseded SNIE 11–16–68, November 7, 1968, "The Soviet Approach to Arms Control," which "dealt with the attitudes the Soviets might be expected to bring to talks on limiting strategic weapons (SALT). It discussed how such factors as the USSR's economic position and its view of the strategic relationship with the US might be thought to bear on the Soviet approach to SALT." It is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, volume XI, Arms Control and Disarmament, Document 291.

exploratory. But the Soviets were also intent on demonstrating by their demeanor—the avoidance of propagandistic or tendentious debating tactics—that Moscow was ready for a serious exploration of the prospects for strategic arms control. They wanted, in return, renewed evidence of American “seriousness.”

2. The essential test of this seriousness, in the Russian view, is whether the US is ready to acknowledge that it does not think of itself as bargaining from a position of strategic superiority and will treat with the USSR as an equal. Thus, at Helsinki, the Soviets tried to satisfy themselves that the US did not aim to use the talks as a lever to obtain concessions from the USSR on other international issues; among other reasons, because they did not want the impression to be left that the USSR needed arms control more than the US did. So too, the Soviets insisted that an arms control agreement must assure “equal security” for both sides and not give a military advantage to either.

3. Other than to carry out this kind of broad reconnaissance of US intentions, the instructions of the Soviet delegation at Helsinki seemed to call generally for letting the US take the lead in opening substantive issues. The Soviets were quick, however, to endorse certain broad propositions which the US put forward as essential premises for an agreement. Thus, they affirmed that they understood mutual deterrence to be the governing principle of the US-Soviet strategic relationship. And they recognized officially for the first time the interrelationship between offensive and defensive strategic systems and acknowledged that defensive, as well as offensive, systems can pose a threat to stability.

4. Generally, on broad concepts underlying the problems at issue the Soviets demonstrated sophistication; this was apparently intended to show their seriousness as well as to assert their claim to equality. Insofar as the Soviet statements approached more concrete issues, they reflected primarily a concern to lay the groundwork, at least for bargaining purposes, for definitions which would include or exclude weapon systems to the Soviet advantage. But it did not appear that the Soviets had even in their own minds a fully coherent view of the various elements which might go into an eventual agreement, and some of their points were made as a response to an illustrative negotiating outline offered by the US.

5. Moscow’s willingness to move on to a second round of talks indicates that it found US motives in SALT to be sufficiently “serious.” No doubt some in the Soviet leadership were already persuaded of this, but others probably argued that the results of Helsinki should be awaited. In any case, it appears that Moscow was uncertain until the discussions were nearly ended whether they had gone well enough to warrant the conclusion that a second phase would have reasonable chances of success from the Soviet point of view. The decision to go ahead only

after a four-month interval may have been due to foot-dragging by some elements in Moscow, though it could equally have resulted from recognition that much more elaborate preparation would be needed than had been thought.

6. Probably the Soviets left Helsinki without a clear understanding of the shape and content of an agreement at which the US might be aiming. That the US presented categories and definitions which the Soviets took to be self-serving presumably did not disturb them greatly, though they probably came away uncertain as to how flexible the US would be in this regard. Some features of the US presentation may have genuinely puzzled them, notably the tentative approach to the ABM problem and the mention of MIRV only in passing, as part of a list of component parts of missile systems. They may still be uncertain concerning the degree to which the “illustrative elements” outlined to them actually represented an initial US negotiating position. They are also probably confused concerning the extent to which the US intends to press for qualitative as well as quantitative limitations.

7. In particular, the Soviets are probably uncertain as to how comprehensive and complex an agreement the US will eventually seek. Even in a fairly simple agreement, the standards of equivalence will be difficult to establish, due to asymmetries in the structure of strategic forces—a fact that both sides acknowledged at Helsinki. And the Soviets are probably not sure whether the US will be satisfied to rely for verification on national means only. Nevertheless, they have probably concluded tentatively that the US approach did not disclose any insuperable obstacles to an eventual agreement and that the chances of working out an agreement satisfactory to the USSR were good enough to be worth pursuing further.

Factors Bearing on Soviet Negotiating Tactics

8. The Helsinki round was altogether too preliminary and tentative to have clarified Soviet motives in entering SALT. Nevertheless, it strongly suggests that Moscow is seriously interested in discovering whether the intensity of the strategic arms competition can be contained, through SALT, on terms which do not prejudice Soviet security. The USSR's interest in exploring this avenue seems to rest, in the first place, on its perception of the present state of the strategic relationship with the US. Economic considerations also bear on the Soviet attitude toward SALT, as do certain Soviet foreign policy concerns, e.g., Western Europe, NATO, and China. But, at the same time, there are a number of factors which set limits to how far and how fast Moscow will go in SALT.

9. *The Strategic Relationship with the US.* We have no way of knowing with certainty whether the Soviet leaders believe that the present

strategic relationship is the best they can now hope for and, if they do, whether they also think that long-term stabilization of this relationship is desirable or even possible. It may be that the decision-making apparatus in Moscow has not come to a firm consensus on such questions. There is agreement in Moscow, of course, that the USSR must have rough parity at least. It is possible that some Soviet leaders believe that a useful margin of advantage in strategic weaponry is attainable. We do think, however, that as the Soviet leaders now see the future they believe that it will not be feasible to attain superiority of a clear and decisive nature.² They may fear, in fact, that the technical and economic capabilities of the US will enable it to reduce the USSR's relative position once again.

10. If these are the views the Soviets entertain about the present situation, they may see value in an agreement which would stabilize the present situation. They might want such an agreement in a form which would not foreclose their options if and when they came to a different view of what the strategic relationship might be. They would be realistic enough to recognize, however, that an agreement loose enough to permit them some future freedom of choice would also give the same to the US.

11. *Economic Considerations.* At a time when the rate of industrial growth is declining, when the agricultural sector remains in parlous condition, and when it is openly acknowledged that the Soviet economy is lagging behind technologically, the Soviet leadership must be reluctant to face the prospect of additional heavy arms expenditures.

² Maj. Gen. Rockly Triantafellu, the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, disagrees with the assessment in this sentence. He believes as follows:

While the Soviets are sensitive to the possibility of the US embarking on an expanded strategic military program (including MIRVs, hardening, mobility, and ABMs), they are also sensitive to the mood of the US toward decreasing military expenditures. A judgment as to whether the Soviets would consider feasible the attainment of clear and decisive superiority must be addressed in the context of past Soviet decisions. The Soviets mounted an enormous effort to develop and deploy strategic military nuclear systems (ICBMs, SLBMs, aircraft, and ABMs) to overtake the US in numbers and weapon yield and to achieve an initial advantage in ABM capability. While the decision to catch up posed a severe technological and economic challenge to the Soviets, they accepted the challenge and have now achieved at least parity. At the same time, they have continued to greatly expand their military research programs, have continued to develop new systems—such as fractional orbit and depressed trajectory missiles—and have continued the pace of their deployment of strategic systems. Therefore, in reviewing past Soviet achievements and weighing their present and future actions, there is no evidence to support a view that the Soviets will ignore an opportunity to forge ahead. The goal may now seem to them closer at hand than it was 10 years ago. The resources in terms of technical and scientific personnel, production capacity, and internal political control are available to motivate and facilitate a Soviet decision to achieve clear and decisive strategic superiority. [Footnote in the source text.]

Any easing of the strategic arms burden would make possible the redistribution of scarce investment funds and high-quality human resources. On those grounds, some Soviet leaders probably wish SALT well. Others would probably welcome the opportunity to shift resources within the military establishment itself. Nevertheless, given its present size, nature, and rate of growth, the Soviet economy could, if need be, support even higher levels of arms spending than at present. Though probably an important consideration, the state of the Soviet economy will not be the decisive factor in the Soviet approach to SALT. It does not oblige the USSR to seek agreement.

12. *SALT and Current Soviet Foreign Policies.* While its assessment of SALT's impact on the US-Soviet strategic relationship is paramount in Soviet thinking, Moscow must also realize that SALT is now involved in the total context of its foreign policy, and particularly its relations with the US. If a failure in SALT were to be added to differences over Vietnam and the Middle East, relations between the two great powers would tend to deteriorate. Such a trend at present would probably cause the USSR considerable concern. The USSR's current European diplomacy, which aims at generating an atmosphere of détente, would suffer a setback. Moreover, the Russians could expect the Chinese, seeing the failure of the US-Soviet enterprise and foreseeing the possibility of further overtures toward themselves from the US, to adopt a more uncompromising line toward Moscow. On the other hand, the Soviets could calculate that, if SALT were to show signs of progress, certain issues in US-USSR relations might become more manageable from their point of view.

13. Taken together, considerations of this kind do give Moscow incentives for taking a positive approach to SALT, at least initially. On the other hand, the Soviets will not wish the US to believe that it has leverage in SALT because of the USSR's broader policy concerns, and they will not, in fact, make important concessions because of such concerns. Actually, they will hope that as SALT develops they will have opportunities to exploit weaknesses and divisions in the US and between the US and its allies. They are likely to exercise restraint in this respect, however, so long as they think they have a good chance of getting a satisfactory agreement.

14. *Domestic Politics.* The deliberations which led up to Moscow's acceptance of the US proposal for SALT were long and probably hard. There is no reason to suppose that the decision to go ahead, so deliberately reached, is likely to be easily reversed. Most signs indicate, however, that the prevailing instinct in Moscow is to move into SALT slowly and carefully. The momentousness of the negotiations for the national security of the USSR, as for that of the US, inevitably impresses itself on the minds of the Soviet leadership. The intrinsic complexity of the

issues involved and the lack of experience of negotiation in this sensitive area also make for a cautious approach. Decisions which might not come easily in any circumstances will, moreover, in this case be affected by the ungainliness of the Soviet decision-making process and the conservative reflexes of the collective leadership.

15. A Soviet official at Helsinki confirmed that control over the delegation's activities came, as might have been surmised, from the Politburo itself, through the foreign ministry machinery. This procedure will presumably be maintained through the Vienna phase. The Politburo's watchfulness is not surprising, given not only the inherent significance of the issues but also the possible domestic effects of the decisions to be made and their implications for relations among the top leaders. None of the decisions faced by the present governing committee have cut across so many bureaucratic interests. Though some of these interests will have a positive attitude toward SALT, many of them will have misgivings. Among the latter will be that part of the economic bureaucracy which has a vested interest in defense industry and its many allies in the party apparatus. And, of course, the Politburo will need to give weight to military views, toward which it has been generally attentive in recent years.

16. *Military Attitudes.* A large part of the Soviet military establishment—probably the bulk of it—undoubtedly has serious reservations about strategic arms limitations. But some of the military leaders have long resisted the high priority given to strategic weapons at the expense of the traditional arms of service. In recent years, the militarization of the Sino-Soviet dispute has greatly enlarged requirements for general purpose forces. Moreover, some military writers see in the nuclear stalemate a need to improve capabilities for conventional warfare, especially in view of NATO's adoption of a strategy of "flexible response." An arms limitation agreement which freed resources to meet these requirements would surely be welcome in some military quarters. Thus, the political leadership will probably not receive uniform advice from the military establishment as the negotiations develop.

[Omitted here is discussion on possible Soviet positions at Vienna printed in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXXII, SALT I, 1969–1972.]

33. *Concluding Observations.* Given the distances that will separate the two sides on most of the above key issues and the complexities that will need to be overcome, the Soviets have almost certainly not yet decided whether, in the end, an agreement acceptable to them can be achieved. Nor is there a single view in Moscow at present as to whether Soviet long-term interests would be better served by stabilizing the strategic relationship under an agreement rather than by continuing a competitive situation. The play of group interest and personal ambition which will surround this choice is bound to be intense.

34. Clearly there is much in the traditional Soviet outlook which would generate negative attitudes toward the idea of agreed stabilization. Long-held premises about the inevitability of conflict, mistrust of American motives, fear of being duped, even ignorance of the relevant technical facts would help to sustain such attitudes. And it is true that conservative instincts seem to be dominant in the present leadership.

35. On the other hand, there are obviously a number of people, including some military men, who have the ear of the leadership and will be able to make a strong case for a serious try at stabilization by agreement. The argument for easing economic pressures is a strong one, particularly for those who want more margin to experiment with economic reform. It will be said that as the arms race enters a new technological phase Soviet chances of lagging seriously behind are high. Some will argue that at present levels of strength strategic weapons are no longer as critical to the power competition, that, in fact, if the strategic arms race can be contained by agreement, other factors, including conventional military power, could be enhanced and would better serve the security and ambitions of the USSR.

36. We see no way of forecasting how such arguments will net out. Obviously the concrete choices presented by the interaction of the two sides in negotiations will be more determining than arguments made in the abstract. We would judge, however, that at present the Soviet leaders have a consensus, perhaps a shaky one, that the option of strategic stabilization by agreement should be given a long, hard look through SALT.

138. National Intelligence Estimate¹

NIE 11–6–70

Washington, March 5, 1970.

SOVIET POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND
MEDITERRANEAN AREA

Summary

A. Over the last 15 years, the USSR has established itself as a major power factor in the Mediterranean world. By exploiting postcolonial resentments and especially the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Soviets have sought to deny the area to Western interests and influence. Their calculation has been that the displacement of Western with Soviet influence would constitute a broad strategic reversal for the West and a considerable gain for themselves. Nevertheless, they have not seen the area as one which engaged their most vital national interests; these remain focused on their relations with the US in general, on Eastern and Central Europe, and on their conflict with Communist China.

B. The Arab-Israeli conflict provides the Soviets with their greatest means of leverage in the Middle East, but it also faces them with the most severe complications. They have extended enough military aid to the radical Arabs to become thoroughly involved in the latter's cause, but their efforts have not created an effective Arab defense. Israeli military attacks, particularly against Egypt, intensify this Soviet dilemma. They wish to provide Egypt with effective defense, but seek also to minimize the risks of direct involvement; yet if they sought to defuse the situation by pressing the Arabs to make concessions to Israel, they would jeopardize their influence in the Arab world. Barring a de-escalation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Soviets will probably step up their aid to the Egyptians, and they may provide new weapons systems and additional personnel to improve Egyptian air defenses.

C. Despite the Soviet support for the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Moscow's relations with the radical Arab states are subject to occasionally serious strains; none of these countries is entirely

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, NIC Files, Job 79–R1012A, NIEs and SNIes. Secret; Controlled Dissem. According to a prefatory note, the Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Department of State, Defense, and the National Security Agency participated in the preparation of this estimate, which was submitted by the Director of Central Intelligence and concurred by all members of the USIB, except the Assistant General Manager of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who abstained because the subject was outside their jurisdiction. This NIE superseded NIE 11–6–67.

responsive to Soviet pressures, and each is jealous and suspicious of the others. The still more uncontrollable fedayeen movement is a problem for Moscow, chiefly because any direct Soviet support for it involves embarrassment in Moscow's relations with established governments; nevertheless, we think the Soviets will continue to develop relations with the fedayeen discreetly.

D. The Soviets have aspirations to establish themselves in the western Mediterranean as well, but Tunisia and Morocco remain generally wary of the USSR and retain strong ties with the West. Algeria has accepted Soviet assistance, but more recently it has been drawing nearer to its immediate neighbors and to France. Although the new regime in Libya has close ties with Egypt, it shows no signs of welcoming a Soviet presence, and Nasser is probably not anxious to encourage Soviet influence there. Among European states with interests in the area, Moscow must be concerned to avoid provoking alarm by its activities in the Mediterranean lest this compromise its policies in Western Europe; France, in particular, has ambitions to enlarge its role in the Mediterranean.

E. Since the June War in 1967, the Soviet military presence has grown in the area: roughly 5,000 Soviet military advisers are now stationed in several area countries; the Soviet naval squadron in the Mediterranean has been strengthened, and is supported by air and port facilities in Egypt. How the USSR might use its military strength in the Mediterranean area in times of crisis and war is examined in this paper in four major contingencies: (1) Arab-Israeli hostilities short of all-out war (paragraphs 41–48); (2) full-scale Arab-Israeli war (paragraphs 49–51); (3) other disputes in the area in which Soviet interests were involved (paragraphs 52–53); and (4) East-West hostilities involving both the US and the USSR (paragraphs 54–55).

F. The Soviet presence in the Mediterranean region is likely to prove durable. Radical nationalist forces will continue to work against Western interests and will continue to receive Soviet support. Thus the rivalry between the US and USSR in the area is likely to persist at least so long as it continues in the world at large.

Discussion

I. The Strategic Setting: Broad Soviet Considerations and Objectives

1. Soviet power first moved into the Mediterranean in the mid-1950s. Seizing on the opportunities for influence offered by Arab-Israeli antagonisms and by increasingly militant and anti-Western forms of Arab nationalism, and leap-frogging over the Middle Eastern members of the newly formed Baghdad Pact (Turkey, Iran, and Iraq), the USSR eased its way into both Cairo and Damascus with offers of arms, economic aid, and political support. During the 1960s, through

the use of these and other conventional instruments of influence and power, the USSR became the primary backer of the radical Arab states. Today the Soviet Union is a major factor in the Middle East, with a number of client states in varying degrees of dependency and with elements of its own armed forces now present in the area. The Soviet leadership almost certainly sees its gains here as the most extensive and successful of all its efforts to expand Soviet influence in areas of the world once dominated by the West.

2. Clearly, the Soviets have in this period looked upon the Middle East as an area of strategic importance. A part of this attitude no doubt was inherited from their predecessors; Czarist planners traditionally viewed this part of the world as a special Russian sphere of interest and periodically sought to expand Russian power southwards. In modern times, especially since the death of Stalin, this geopolitical emphasis has been accompanied by an ideologically inspired hope that the anticolonialist attitudes of the Third World could be made to work for social change and for the emergence of local power elites sympathetic to communism. And this has been joined with the view that the Middle East has become one of the main arenas of the Soviet struggle with the West and the US. The Soviets may see the area as more complicated and the opportunities less immediate than they did in 1955 when they first undertook a military supply program for Egypt. But they evidently still hope to bring the states of the region into an anti-Western alignment and ultimately to establish their own hegemony there. Finally, the area is seen in Moscow as a strategic military zone: in hostile hands, it could pose a threat to the USSR and block Soviet access to the Mediterranean; in friendly hands, it protects the USSR's southwestern border and permits Moscow to move its influence into the Mediterranean world and beyond. The Middle East and much of the non-European Mediterranean world are thus, in the Soviet world view, proximate, important, and vulnerable.

3. This is not to say that the Soviets attach the same weight to their problems and objectives in the Middle East and Mediterranean basin as they do to their prime concerns elsewhere. Their stake there is less critical to their interests than their relations with the US in general, their concerns in Eastern and Central Europe, and their conflict with Communist China. It is in these areas and with these countries that the most vital of Soviet national interests are directly engaged. There are in addition certain self-imposed limitations on Soviet policies in the Mediterranean area and the Middle East. The preservation of the USSR's position in the Middle East would not be worth the serious risk of nuclear war with the US, whereas its presence in, say, East Germany, might be. But at least until recently Moscow has been able to base its approach in the Mediterranean area on calculations of opportunity and risk within the area concerned without serious conflicts with its objectives elsewhere.

4. Inevitably, as the degree of its involvement in the area has grown and the level of its commitment risen, the USSR has found itself faced with mounting costs and risks. It has exhibited some anxiety to control these risks and to curb the excessive enthusiasms of some of its clients. But it has also chosen to live with danger, and its position is now potentially vulnerable to the pressures and perils of events over which it may have little or no control—the actions of the Arab states, of Israel, and even of the US. Broadly speaking, Moscow has behaved as if it wishes the Middle East to remain an area of at least some tension. It apparently believes that the risks attending this are manageable, and that continued polarization in the area will make it increasingly difficult for the conservative Arab states to maintain their ties with the US, thus decreasing US influence throughout the area. But the Soviets clearly recognize that in the event of another explosion in the Middle East they would be faced with some very hard choices.

II. Instruments of Soviet Power in the Area

5. In moving into the Mediterranean, the Soviets have used the conventional instruments of power available, short of the actual use of force, to exploit the opportunities open to them. They have used military and economic assistance as a means of penetration and as a way of promoting Arab dependence on the USSR; they have maneuvered politically to pressure and seduce and support; and they have introduced their own naval power into the area as a means of adding to their influence and diminishing that of their antagonists.

6. *Military Aid.* The first and still most important Soviet instrument of influence is military assistance.² Since the mid-1950s, the USSR has extended \$2.8 billion of such aid to four Arab states—Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Algeria; this represents roughly half of all Soviet military aid to non-Communist countries. Egypt, with over \$1.4 billion in aid, is by far the largest beneficiary. Iraq and Syria have also become almost wholly dependent on the USSR for weapons, equipment, and spare parts. It was Moscow's prompt and extensive resupply operation in the wake of the June War which quickly restored the leverage it had momentarily lost in the Arab world.

7. *Economic Assistance.* The USSR has also engaged in substantial economic aid programs in the Middle East and the Mediterranean area.³ Since 1957, the Soviets have committed at least \$2.6 billion of economic aid to Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Algeria, and Syria (in that

² See Appendix, Table I. [Footnote in the source text. The appendix is not printed.]

³ See Appendix, Table I. [Footnote in the source text. The appendix is not printed.]

order)—about 40 percent of their total economic aid commitments to all non-Communist countries. These programs serve different policy aims in different countries. In the case of Egypt, for example, the aim is to assist the development of the leading Arab nation as a Soviet client, and to reinforce the overall pattern of dependency on the USSR; with Iran, there is a solid economic basis for expanded relations as well as the political purpose of helping to loosen Iranian ties with the West. Though in other areas of the world Moscow is becoming more selective and tough-minded, the policy of economic assistance in the Middle East and the Mediterranean area is likely to continue on a substantial scale for the foreseeable future.

8. *Other Economic Interests.* Economic interests play a role in Soviet policy, but not a decisive one. The Soviets want to maintain access to the waterways of the area; over half the Soviet merchant marine tonnage is based in Black Sea ports. Continued closure of the Suez Canal increases the cost of Soviet shipping east of Africa, but Moscow has learned to live with this situation, however unhappily. The USSR also has some interest in Middle Eastern oil and gas, both for itself and for the countries of Eastern Europe. Although Soviet supplies of petroleum appear adequate for domestic consumption and substantial exports for many years to come, East European and Soviet imports from the Middle East would release corresponding quantities of Soviet oil and gas for additional sales in hard currency markets. But Communist imports are likely to remain a small proportion of Middle East oil sales, and such imports would be further limited by the desire of the producing states to sell elsewhere for hard currencies.

9. *The Soviet Military Presence.* The Soviets have substantially increased their military presence in the eastern Mediterranean since the June War. The number of military advisers attached to Arab forces has been greatly increased and the Soviet naval squadron has been strengthened. The squadron's political objectives apparently are to show the flag, to demonstrate support of the USSR's allies in the area, and to reveal to the world that the Mediterranean Sea is no longer an exclusive preserve of the US Sixth Fleet. Its primary military roles are to monitor the Sixth Fleet, to complicate and inhibit its operations even in peace time, to develop capabilities against Polaris submarines and, in the event of hostilities, to attempt to deny Western naval forces the use of Mediterranean waters. Currently, the Soviet naval units also seem to have some effect in deterring Israeli attacks on Egyptian ports.

10. From the few surface ships and submarines deployed in 1964, the Soviet Mediterranean squadron has since grown to become the largest Soviet naval force outside home fleet operating areas. Except for occasional peaks, the Soviet squadron usually consists of about

12 surface combatants, 2 or 3 landing ships, and 8 to 10 diesel and nuclear-powered submarines. Normally, between 12 and 15 auxiliary ships provide logistic support and 1 to 3 are intelligence ships. Normally, 2 to 4 of the surface combatants are equipped with surface-to-air or surface-to-surface missiles, and 1 or 2 of the submarines are nuclear-powered. In addition, 6 Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft (TU-16s), and 3 antisubmarine warfare (ASW) amphibian aircraft operate from Egyptian air bases in support of the squadron.

11. We estimate that the Soviets have roughly 5,000 military advisers stationed in the area—about 3,000 in Egypt, 1,200 in Algeria, 500 in Syria, a few hundred in Iraq, and lesser numbers in the Sudan, Yemen, and South Yemen. Although these advisers are not known to have command authority, in Egypt and Syria they occupy important advisory positions at or near command levels, and are present with units down to battalion/squadron level.

12. Since the June War the Soviets have concluded a number of “facilities arrangements” with Egypt which permit the Soviet naval squadron to make regular use of repair facilities in Alexandria and of storage facilities there and in Port Said. We have no evidence of any such approach to Syria. The Soviets would probably like to have similar facilities in the western Mediterranean. They apparently sought such arrangements with Algeria, but have been rebuffed. In fact, the Algerians have recently called for the withdrawal from the Mediterranean of the fleets of all non-riparian powers.

13. Soviet naval units, both surface and submarine, use the Egyptian facilities throughout the year; both surface vessels and submarines are at times supplied and repaired by Soviet tenders which remain on station in Alexandria. While not bases in the conventional sense—the Egyptians evidently retain formal control—these facilities do provide support services in much the same way. But in case of a major East-West crisis the availability of these facilities to the Soviets might be uncertain and would depend to an important degree on the circumstances of the crises.

14. For purposes of refueling and resupply, the Soviet Mediterranean squadron relies primarily on 12 naval anchorages (most in international waters). It uses Egyptian shore facilities more on a basis of convenience than actual need, though these do enable it to extend the length of time its diesel submarines remain in the Mediterranean from two months to six. We believe that the Soviets would be reluctant to undercut their anti-imperialist propaganda by seeking to establish bases of their own in Arab lands. And even the radical Arab governments would want to avoid the stigma of such bases (though Egypt no doubt derives some comfort from the presence of Soviet naval vessels as deterrents to Israeli action).

*III. Policies in the Middle East**The Arab-Israeli Conflict*

15. The evident damage done to Soviet standing in Arab eyes during the June War has since been repaired and the Soviet position strengthened. Moscow has established itself even more firmly as the champion of the radical Arabs, thus gaining an enlarged presence, a degree of Arab support for Soviet policies elsewhere, and a major voice in international negotiations concerning the area. The USSR has achieved this position at a price, not only in terms of the hardware involved in resupplying the Arabs but also in terms of the strains created by the increasingly critical Arab-Israeli conflict and the USSR's inability to produce either an acceptable solution or adequate protection for its clients. But these strains are not likely to undermine Soviet influence seriously so long as the Arabs have no alternative sources of great power support against Israel and continue to regard the US as committed to Israel's cause. In any case, the patron-client relationship involves a degree of Arab leverage over the Soviets as well as vice versa. For, in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Soviets are more a prisoner of Arab emotions than the architect of Arab policies.

16. The Soviets have not, however, harnessed themselves to the more extreme aims of the Arabs toward Israel, and it is unlikely they will do so. Moscow continues to accept the legitimacy of Israel's statehood and Soviet diplomatic activity proceeds from the premise that a negotiated settlement should give Israel security. Yet the Russians recognize that in order to maintain their position with the Arabs they must maintain a generally hostile posture vis-à-vis Israel and broadcast their firm opposition to Israel's policies.

17. There has clearly been a large element of temporizing in the USSR's approach to international negotiations on the Arab-Israeli question. It has sought through talks with the US and others to influence US policy in the area and to demonstrate to the world at large that the Soviet interest is in peace. The Soviets place a high value on their brokerage function; they would be extremely displeased if, for example, Egypt sought to by-pass them in any serious negotiations on the future of the area. But it seems certain that the Soviets are not ready at this time to urge on their Arab clients the kind of concessions which might open up the possibility of a genuine settlement.

18. This does not rule out the possibility of Soviet support at some point for steps toward a modus vivendi to defuse the situation. In certain circumstances, the Soviets might actively seek an arrangement which would diminish the dangers of renewed hostilities while still allowing them to enjoy the fruits of continued Arab-Israeli tension. Even here, however, Moscow must be concerned not only with the terms of the arrangement but with the Arab reactions to them. In any case,

Moscow is not likely to put very heavy pressure on the Arabs—such as a threat to suspend all arms aid—in order to bring about a *modus vivendi*.

19. The Soviets probably will be inclined to stay with a policy which will bend with events, hoping by it to avoid being drawn into conflict, while reinforcing their political and military presence in the area. It may be, however, that events—with an assist from the Israelis—will not permit the Soviets to maintain so comfortable and rewarding a course. Indeed, aggressive Israeli policies against Egypt point up a sharpening Soviet dilemma: whether to seek to preserve the Nasser regime by giving it a new level of support—thus increasing the risk of direct Soviet involvement—or alternatively, to press the Arabs toward a distasteful accommodation—thus risking a loss of influence in the Arab world.⁴

20. Soviet calculations have certainly taken into account that Israel has the capability to develop and produce, and might soon be in a position to deploy, nuclear weapons. The Soviets probably believe that such weapons would be chiefly useful to Israel as a deterrent against Arab invasion—something not likely to be attempted at any early date. Hence, while the USSR would take advantage of any Israeli nuclear weapons to mount a political campaign against Israel and to emphasize Arab dependence on the Soviets, it would probably not take seriously the possibility of their actual use unless Israel faced a desperate situation. Even in such circumstances, although Soviets have the capability to deploy nuclear weapons under their control on Egyptian territory, we think it highly unlikely that they would do so even under heavy Arab pressure. They would be more likely to threaten Israel from their own territory or from their ships in the Mediterranean.

The Arab States

21. The degree of Soviet influence over individual Arab states varies—and will continue to vary—considerably; it is probably highest in Egypt and nil in Saudi Arabia. Among the revolutionary states, Syria, Iraq, and South Yemen would be more susceptible to Soviet urging or advice than Algeria and Yemen. Kuwait, Lebanon, and Jordan are not anxious to cooperate with the Soviets but try to maintain good relations.

22. In Egypt, Moscow can influence the government's attitudes on a variety of external questions and can expect to play some role in the formulation of Egyptian economic and military policies. There is a great

⁴ Possible additional forms of military support that the Soviets might consider are discussed in paragraphs 41–51. [Footnote in the source text.]

deal, however, that the Soviets almost certainly *cannot* do in Egypt. They cannot guarantee that Nasser will remain in power; his fate will depend on his health and on his own political skills. They cannot dictate the choice of his successor since they lack either a strong political organization within Egypt or a candidate for the succession whom they could cultivate without alienating Nasser himself. And, in the last analysis, they cannot control Cairo's behavior on questions the Egyptians consider vital.

23. If Soviet influence over Egypt has its limitations, these are even more marked elsewhere in the Arab world. Ideologically, the regime in Syria has a good deal in common with Moscow, and it is almost wholly dependent on the USSR for military equipment. Offsetting this, however, are several negative factors. Syrian nationalism is xenophobic. Of the Arab states bordering Israel, Syria is the most intransigent, rejecting all efforts toward a political settlement and encouraging a "war of national liberation." Moreover, Syria is dominated by a frequently changing coterie of military men; close Soviet relations with today's leaders carry the risk of offending those of tomorrow. The latter consideration also applies to Iraq. In Jordan, the Soviets have had little success in expanding their influence since Hussein has so far chosen to deal with the Western powers which have long supported his regime and supplied his army. Soviet prospects would presumably improve if Jordan accepted Soviet arms or if the fedayeen came to dominate the regime.

24. Despite the USSR's extensive influence in some Arab capitals, the fortunes of individual governments in the Arab world are largely beyond Moscow's ability to control. The Soviets cannot guarantee a regime's survival, nor can they be assured of success should they seek to bring one down. The Soviets will thus probably stand aside in the event of important disruptions, moving in to attempt to capitalize on events as the dust settles. Though surely concerned about the uncertainties which would flow from Nasser's removal, and though they would seek to forestall such an eventuality, active Soviet intervention on behalf of Nasser would be unlikely. Revolutions in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, or Kuwait might be cheered by the Soviets, but could not now be inspired by them.

25. There are still further complications in Soviet dealings with the Arab world. The trade of most of the states of the area is still heavily oriented toward the West.⁵ Moreover, while the radical Arabs are united in their hostility to Israel, the governments of Egypt, Syria, and Iraq profoundly dislike and distrust one another. They are actively competitive in inter-Arab affairs, and Soviet policies concerning one may seriously complicate policies toward another.

⁵ See Appendix, Table II. [Footnote in the source text. The appendix is not printed.]

26. The Soviets have for the most part limited their dealings and their material support to existing governments, but there have been exceptions. Thus, the USSR provided arms and diplomatic support to the FLN during the Algerian revolution; it has consistently championed a special status for the Kurds in Iraq; it has also tried (though modestly) to promote the fortunes of Communist parties in such countries as Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.

27. With the fedayeen, the Soviets have dealt cautiously, mostly through intermediaries. This is partly because of the fedayeen's penchant for free-wheeling militancy, which Moscow cannot hope to control, and partly because of its reluctance to get involved in rivalries between them and governments of the area. Yet the Soviets now appear to believe that dealing with the fedayeen exclusively through the medium of Arab governments will no longer suffice in the face of an emerging sense of a Palestinian identity. Peking's vocal support of fedayeen extremism adds to Soviet inducements to keep lines out to these movements. Although a Fatah delegation has been in Moscow recently, the visit was unofficial, and arms to the fedayeen probably will continue to be channeled through area governments. Soviet support for the fedayeen will continue to be discreet, in an effort to avoid antagonizing Arab governments.

Non-Arab States

28. Concerning Israel itself, Moscow does not have full mastery over its own policies. It is obliged by its relations with the radical Arabs, in fact, to maintain a hostile attitude. This is made easier by the USSR's unremitting opposition to "Zionism," which the Soviet leaders see as an internal security problem in the USSR and Eastern Europe. As noted, Soviet policy does not seek the destruction of Israel. Not only would this remove the Soviets' principal leverage on the Arabs; Moscow also recognizes that Western military and political support makes Israel a factor with which the Soviets must contend.

29. The USSR enjoys no special relationship with Greece, Turkey,⁶ or Iran and, in fact, suffers from the legacy of the period when it posed an active threat to all three. Soviet ambitions in these states are curbed by the membership of all three in US-supported alliance systems and, in general, by the anti-Communist convictions of all three governments. Nonetheless, Soviet relations with these states have improved as a consequence of a major Soviet effort—begun almost a decade ago—to recast its image into that of a peace-loving and benevolent neighbor.

⁶ See NIE 29.2-70, "Turkey Over the Next Five Years," dated 3 February 1970, Secret. [Footnote in the source text; for text see *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume XXIX, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972.]

Economic aid to both Turkey and Iran, sales of military equipment to Iran, and promises of a profitable trade with Greece are intended to add substance to the new image.

30. Economically, at least, Iran has gone the furthest in response; it has contracted for at least \$115 million worth of Soviet arms, and a Soviet sponsored 650 mile pipeline—now nearing completion—will bring over \$60 million worth of natural gas annually from the Persian Gulf to the Soviet Caucasus. Turkey has accepted some Soviet economic aid and seeks to avoid antagonism in the relationship, but the climate between the two countries is certainly not warm. Greece under the junta is vigorously anti-Communist, and trade will probably remain the most significant contact with the USSR. Moscow probably expects at least Turkey and Iran to draw farther away from the US and hopes to benefit from such movement. But the chances for a significant increase in Soviet influence in these three countries will be limited for some time to come.

IV. Policies in the Western Mediterranean

North Africa

31. Though the western Mediterranean is not without its attractions and its opportunities for the makers of Soviet policy, the USSR's presence is far less conspicuous and its prospects are much less promising than in the Middle East. Two circumstances shape the politics of the area in ways not wholly congenial to Soviet interests. First, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia have had long associations with France which have shaped their cultures, their economic associations, and their political outlooks. Second, though there is wide popular support for the Palestinian cause within the west Arab states, their government leaders are less willing than the eastern Arabs to accept Nasser's leadership, less dependent on Soviet support, and more suspicious of the policies and motives of both Nasser and the USSR.

32. Recent developments in North Africa pose further obstacles to the growth of Soviet influence there. Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco are patching up old quarrels which for a time contributed to Algeria's desire for Soviet support. These states are, in addition, moving somewhat closer to France as a result of French efforts to improve relations. Moreover, in the wake of the Libyan coup, concern over the westward extension of Nasser's influence has grown in all three countries. Their tendency to draw together may in time produce a sense of community divergent from that of the eastern Arab nations.⁷

⁷ NIE 60-70, "The Outlook for North Africa," is scheduled for publication in March 1970. [Footnote in the source text. NIE 60-70 is in the Central Intelligence Agency, NIC Files, Job 79-R1012A, NIEs and SNIEs.]

33. Algeria is more revolutionary, more anticolonialist, and more anti-US than Morocco and Tunisia. It is thus easier for the Algerians to find a common cause with both the Egyptians and the Soviets. The Algerians have received substantial amounts of Soviet arms and military training assistance as well as Soviet support in a variety of economic development projects. But they have not allowed the Soviets to influence their domestic affairs, to interfere with their relationship with France, to reorient the great bulk of their trade away from Western Europe, or to guide the course of Algerian foreign policy in general. There has also been recent evidence of frictions in Soviet-Algerian relations. Algeria has views on some international issues which coincide with those of the USSR; yet it is not a client state, nor is it likely to become one.

34. Libya's military junta is unsure of its internal position and uncertain about both domestic and foreign policies. The junta, or at least its head, Colonel Qaddafi, has sought and received support—1,500 troops and several hundred technicians and advisers, as well as public backing—from Nasser. The latter no doubt welcomes the chance to extend his own direct influence into Libya, and he would be disinclined to see this eroded by the USSR's playing a major role there. The Libyan regime, perhaps at Cairo's urging, has several times rebuffed Soviet diplomatic overtures and Soviet offers of arms; it apparently prefers to buy from France and other Western suppliers. At least as long as the present junta stays in power, we think it unlikely that the Soviets will gain significant influence in Libya.

35. This is not to say that Libya lacks attraction for the Soviets. The USSR's Egyptian-marked reconnaissance aircraft flying from Egypt can cover the Mediterranean as far west as Sardinia. The use of Wheelus airfield in Libya would extend the range of TU-16 reconnaissance aircraft beyond Gibraltar. Moscow might thus seek to pressure Nasser into exerting his influence on the Libyan junta to provide these facilities for Soviet use. Nasser would be reluctant to do so, but he is deeply beholden to the Soviets, and it is possible that he might agree to some such arrangement—and the Libyans reluctantly acquiesce in it—if Soviet pressures were severe. Even in these circumstances, Soviet use of Libyan facilities would probably be limited and covert. Only a very small Soviet presence would be required, especially if Soviet activities were confined to refueling.

36. Malta is also attractive to Soviet planners inasmuch as its location is strategic and its economy faltering. If Malta is unable to strengthen its economy through assistance from the West, it may turn to the Soviets for aid. Overtures have been made by the Soviets, but thus far Soviet fleet visits have been denied and Soviet offers to provide economic assistance have been declined. Elections must be held by March 1971; a change in government could pave the way for closer

association with the Soviets. Although the Soviets may seek limited facilities in Algeria, Libya, and Malta through which to stage their reconnaissance aircraft, none of these countries is likely to extend such facilities at this time.

European States

37. In Western Europe, Soviet policy aims currently at promoting an atmosphere of détente and ultimately at reducing the US presence on the continent. Moscow will not wish to jeopardize these objectives by initiatives in the Mediterranean which would alarm the countries of Western Europe. It probably calculates that moves which seemed to threaten to cut off Western Europe from the Arab countries and their oil would stiffen the Western posture toward the Soviets—both in the Mediterranean and in Europe itself—and help consolidate ties between Western Europe and the US.

38. In fact, there are now signs of some change in European attitudes—a gradual increase in concern over the growing Soviet presence in the Mediterranean. No general alarms have yet been sounded, nor does there appear to have been any significant political pressure for changes in overall policies toward the USSR. But concern is increasing in West European military circles and this has been reflected in specific countermeasures under NATO auspices, such as the establishment of NATO machinery to monitor the activities of the Soviet naval squadron in the Mediterranean.

39. France, which has strong interests in certain Arab states, has been the most active of the West European states in the Mediterranean. In recent months Pompidou has sought to enhance France's position as a Mediterranean power by improving relations and influence with countries on both shores of the Mediterranean from Gibraltar to Greece. The Soviets have sought to take advantage of this policy, specifically of French support of the Arabs in their contest with Israel. But while Moscow has tried to use France to divide the Western powers—as in the Four Power talks on a Middle East settlement—the Soviets must also be concerned that the French are their rivals. The sale of French arms to Libya, for example, may have deprived the USSR of an opportunity to sell its own weapons to that country and prevented it from extending its influence over the Libyan junta. Similarly, France's efforts in North Africa will help to counter Soviet influence in Algeria and to block it in Morocco and Tunisia.

V. Soviet Capabilities and Intentions in Certain Contingencies

40. The enlarged Soviet military presence in the Mediterranean area has substantially increased Soviet influence and required all interested states, including the US, to take account of Soviet attitudes and possible actions. How and in what circumstances the Soviets might

make *actual* use of their military power is considerably less clear. The paragraphs which follow examine possible Soviet actions and capabilities in four major contingencies: (a) Arab-Israeli hostilities short of a full-scale conflict, i.e., the present situation; (b) all-out Arab-Israeli war; (c) other area disputes in which Soviet interests were involved; and (d) East-West hostilities.

Arab-Israeli Hostilities Short of All-Out War

41. The current success of Israeli military activities against the Arab states has no doubt added to Soviet disillusionment with the Arabs' ability to use modern equipment effectively. At the same time, Israeli activities increase Arab pressures on the Soviets for more advanced types of equipment. The Soviets have turned down a number of Arab requests in the past and have to date carefully limited both the quantity and quality of arms shipments, partly because of the Arabs' limited ability to absorb such matériel. They are in the awkward position of having provided enough to be thoroughly involved, but of not having supplied support of a kind or nature to do a successful job of defending Egypt. Appeals from Cairo for additional help have become more urgent as Israeli raids have intensified.

42. Moscow is clearly aware that greater direct involvement entails heightened risks. It must be concerned that substantially greater assistance to the Arabs would not satisfy them but only stimulate demands for even greater Soviet support in the future. Not only would large-scale effort be very costly to the Soviets, but it would involve such an enlarged Soviet presence as to change the character of the Soviet-Egyptian relationship in ways that would raise problems for both parties. Yet these hazards have to be weighed against alternatives which may seem to the Soviets to be at least equally unpalatable. Certainly Moscow does not like to see Cairo helpless in the face of Israeli air assaults. Certainly it does not wish this sort of circumstance to weaken Nasser's position and jeopardize domestic stability in the UAR. And certainly it would be fearful that a refusal to aid the UAR in its hour of need would threaten to disrupt relations with Egypt and damage Soviet prestige throughout the Arab world.

43. We believe that the Soviets will decide, if they have not already done so, that some sort of favorable response to Egyptian requests is necessary unless Israeli attacks near Cairo are soon stopped. A decision by the US to provide additional modern aircraft to Israel would make such a Soviet response even more likely. But it will not suffice to increase the flow of air defense equipment the Egyptians already have, as the Soviets have recently done. The principal Egyptian problem is the lack of certain more advanced weapons systems and above all of qualified personnel to operate an integrated air defense system effectively. Hence any significant improvement in Egyptian

defenses, at least in the short run, would almost certainly require Soviet personnel to man the network.

44. Additional Soviet support for Egypt's air defense could be at various levels. An integrated defense designed to protect the Cairo area might involve providing advanced interceptors, several battalions of advanced SA missiles, and additional antiaircraft artillery (AAA). Major elements of such a system would have to be directed, operated, and maintained by Soviet personnel, including pilots, for a considerable period, perhaps indefinitely. The Soviets might hope that this system would deter attacks on Cairo or subject the Israeli Air Force to unacceptable losses. While this system would leave other prime areas open to attack, the Soviets might calculate that it would suffice to serve Nasser's political needs.

45. If the Soviets felt that they had to provide protection for the bulk of Egypt's population, industry, and military installations, they would have to turn to more sophisticated equipment and establish air defense coverage of the lower Nile valley and the Suez Canal area. Such a system would require expanded early warning ground control intercept (EW/GCI) radars, many more advanced interceptors, greater numbers of improved SA missiles and additional AAA for key point defenses. To make the system operational within a few months would require the introduction of entire Soviet units involving many thousands of men.

46. The foregoing discussion of possible Soviet levels of support for Egyptian air defense is only illustrative; a number of variations are conceivable. The Soviets would of course strongly prefer to keep their support at the lowest possible levels of risk and cost. In deciding what levels of support would prove sufficient to their objectives, their risk/advantage calculus would have to weigh possible Israeli responses as well as Nasser's requirements. In view of the stake the Soviets have in Nasser's survival, and in the preservation of their relations with the radical Arabs, the Soviets may feel obliged to enlarge their risks.

47. To deter Israeli raids the Soviets might consider deploying in Egypt missiles with HE warheads capable of striking Israel proper. The Soviets, however, would have to weigh the chances that such a deployment would simply provoke the Israelis into larger attacks, perhaps on these missile installations themselves. Moreover, the threat of indiscriminate missile attacks on Israeli cities, let alone the actual delivery of such attacks, would involve the Soviets in an undertaking repugnant to much of world opinion, and one they would necessarily estimate would greatly increase the chances of direct US involvement. For these reasons, we think it highly unlikely that the Soviets would deploy such weapons. Similarly, we think it virtually inconceivable that they would consider deploying CW weapons there.

48. It might be that, coincident with moves for some form of greater support in Egypt's defense, the USSR would put pressure on the Egyptians to agree to military or diplomatic steps to defuse the present tension. Once Egypt's defenses seemed more formidable, the Soviets might feel more free to encourage a cease-fire, whether formal or tacit. They will probably continue to be unresponsive to US appeals for a formal agreement to limit arms shipments to the Middle East, but if the crisis continues to intensify, they might tacitly consent to curb additional arms shipments to Egypt if the US makes no additional aircraft sales to Israel.

Full-Scale Arab-Israeli War

49. Full-scale Arab-Israeli war could not be simply a replay of the 1967 war, if only because the Israelis now occupy extensive Arab territories. Whatever the course of the military action, the Soviets would surely not want to show themselves to be as helpless as they were in 1967. The presence of numbers of Soviet advisers with Egyptian and Syrian troops and of naval units in the area would make for a degree of involvement in any case. Whether the Soviets would consider intervening in a larger and more overt way would presumably depend on the course and duration of the war, and above all on their estimate of the US response.

50. Present Soviet capabilities to intervene in such a war with quick and decisive effect are significant but not appreciably greater than they were in June 1967. Although Egypt has made facilities available to the Soviet squadron and to naval reconnaissance aircraft, there are no Soviet ground or tactical air units ashore in the Mediterranean area. The Soviets could bring in such forces from the USSR, but they would have difficulty in making them operationally effective in a short-lived war. The USSR could also provide some covert military support—pilots in Egyptian-marked planes flying against Israel or, more likely, in defense of Arab cities; ground support crews; and perhaps some naval personnel.

51. But given the probability of Israeli victory in fairly short order, the odds would be high that the Soviets would fear involving themselves militarily in a losing cause, with all the political damage within and outside the area that this would entail. Since the Soviets would have an effect only if they intervened quickly, and on a scale which they would estimate would risk involving the US, we doubt that they would embark on such an adventure.

Intervention in Other Area Disputes

52. The instability of certain client states of the USSR and various disputes between Arab states could produce situations which threatened the USSR's friends or interests. In such circumstances, the Soviets might

be tempted to use military force—as they have done in a limited way in the Yemen civil war. Such possibilities could arise in the course of the chronic factional struggles in Syria or Iraq, or if there were a request for direct Soviet military help from Nasser in a domestic crisis. In a situation involving struggle between rival Arab groups, Moscow might think it could pre-empt a Western move by moving in troops itself. At present the Soviets have a limited capability for rapid intervention. There may be as many as 500 naval infantry troops with the Mediterranean squadron—sufficient for a token landing. A substantial force could be moved in relatively quickly from the USSR, but this would entail overflight problems with Iran, Turkey, or Yugoslavia.

53. The Soviets would almost certainly be reluctant to commit their own armed forces in the Middle East for such purposes. For one thing, coups in the Middle East usually occur too quickly for intervention by outside powers to be decisive. More basically, the Soviets have no wish to find themselves embroiled in Arab domestic strife, particularly if there is a risk of finding themselves on the losing side. And they are likely to avoid any actions—such as moving troops into Syria—which might bring about all-out Arab-Israeli warfare or threaten to involve the US. In general, the rule that the Soviets prefer to avoid risks in unpredictable and uncontrolled situations would apply in such cases.

East-West Hostilities

54. In nuclear war, the Soviets' primary concern in the Mediterranean would be to limit damage from Western strategic forces, particularly ballistic missile submarines. At this time, Soviet ASW capabilities against the latter are extremely poor, despite the deployment of more modern ASW surface ships, including the helicopter ship, Moskva. Newer classes of Soviet ships, including nuclear-powered attack submarines, may soon be deployed to the Mediterranean. By 1975 Soviet capabilities to detect Polaris-type submarines may be somewhat improved, especially in restricted areas such as the Mediterranean. But the Soviets would still be unable to impair gravely the value of Polaris as a strategic weapon in the Mediterranean.⁸

55. At present, Soviet military capabilities for non-nuclear war with Western powers in the Mediterranean are limited by the lack of tactical air support and an inadequate and vulnerable logistics system. A significant effort to ameliorate these shortcomings would be

⁸ For a fuller discussion of the ASW problem, see paragraphs 144 through 149 of NIE 11–14–69, "Soviet And East European General Purpose Forces," dated 4 December 1969, All Source. [Footnote in the source text. The text of NIE 11–14–69 is *ibid.*]

extremely expensive and would draw down from more pressing general purpose force needs elsewhere. Efforts to acquire military bases for use in such conflicts would be a difficult and politically risky course. In the event of a major crisis in this area, the Soviets would be able to augment their Mediterranean naval squadron. If conflict were to break out, they would seek to attack Western naval forces, particularly aircraft carriers. In addition, the Soviet threat to Western naval forces and lines of communication would be enhanced by the difficulties of detecting Soviet submarines, and by the USSR's capability of bringing more submarines into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic.

VI. Long Term Prospects

56. Some aspects of the Soviet position in the Mediterranean area are of course susceptible to direct Soviet control. The strength of the USSR's naval squadron, the size of its military and economic assistance programs, and the degree of its political support for radical Arab objectives all are dependent on decisions made in Moscow. But many of the basic circumstances which shape Soviet policy in the area are determined in the main by decisions made elsewhere—in Tel Aviv, in Cairo, in Washington. In the totality, then, the USSR is only one of several principal actors in the area and it is always possible that—as during the June War of 1967—it will find itself playing a part not entirely of its own devising.

57. It is true nonetheless that Moscow's assumption of a leading role in the area is a significant and probably durable accomplishment. It does not now appear that the USSR will again be content to play a minor role in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Even in the event of another Arab-Israeli war and another defeat for major Soviet clients, the Soviets would almost certainly retain some sort of position in the area—though it would probably for a time be reduced—and would continue to have a voice in the shaping of postwar configurations. With or without such a war, the political climate of the region is likely to remain generally turbulent. Radical nationalist forces will continue to work against Western interests in the area and in their endeavors will no doubt continue to find Soviet support.

58. It seems entirely plausible that Soviet estimates of the USSR's prospects in the Mediterranean basin do not depart substantially from the general picture sketched above. In any case the Soviets must be optimistic about their ability to remain among the major movers of the area. Still, over a decade of close involvement with their mercurial clients has probably persuaded them to be fairly cautious in their assessments. Certainly they can have few illusions about the military capabilities of the Arab states. And just as certainly they cannot believe that the problems of the more immediate future will always resolve themselves to the benefit of Soviet interests. By the same token, however, occasional setbacks

and miscalculations will probably not seriously discourage them or deflect them from their course. In any case, the rivalry between the US and the USSR in the Mediterranean is likely to persist at least so long as the contest between them continues in the world at large.

[Omitted here is the appendix comprised of two tables entitled “Soviet Military and Economic Aid to Area Nations, 1954–1969” and “Total Exports and Imports of Area Nations With Communist (USSR and East Europe) and Industrial Free World Countries, 1966–1968.”]

139. Letter From President Nixon to Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Kosygin¹

Washington, March 6, 1970.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing you to ask your government’s assistance in achieving full compliance with the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos.² These Agreements were intended to protect the independence and neutrality of Laos and to prevent the use of Lao territory for interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

The presence of over 65,000 North Vietnamese troops in Laos and their recent offensives represent a major violation of these Agreements. I believe that this situation calls for prompt action by your government and the other signatories of the Agreements.

The Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam has disregarded the Geneva Agreements from the very beginning. In 1962, only 40 North Vietnamese “advisers” and “technicians” were withdrawn from Laos through the inspection machinery set up for the purpose, while thousands of North Vietnamese troops remained in the country. Since then, in persistent, flagrant violation of the Agreements, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam has continued to send thousands of soldiers into Laos to fight there and through Laos to fight in South Viet-Nam.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 101, Vietnam Subject Files, Laos Statement, Vol. 2. No classification marking.

² On March 6, Nixon released a statement entitled, “About the Situation in Laos,” which announced that he was writing British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Kosygin as co-chairmen of the 1962 Geneva Conference to help in restoring the 1962 agreements. (*Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, pp. 244–249)

The record of North Vietnamese aggression against Laos has been documented in official papers published by the Royal Government of Laos, including messages to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, and in reports by the International Commission for Supervision and Control pursuant to its responsibility under the 1962 Agreements.

Under Article 8 of the Protocol to the Declaration of the Neutrality of Laos, your Foreign Minister is jointly charged with the Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom with supervision over the observance of the Declaration and Protocol. I assure you that my Government would welcome any reasonable steps which the Co-Chairmen might take to assure that the Geneva Agreements are complied with, that the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of Laos are preserved, and that Lao territory is not used for the purpose of interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Specifically, I understand that the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Laos has recently addressed an appeal to the Co-Chairmen to bring about consultations among the signatories of the Geneva Agreements on Laos under the provision of Article 4 of the Declaration. My Government would welcome such action on the part of the Co-Chairmen and is prepared to cooperate fully.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

140. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 10, 1970.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Dr. Lawrence E. Lynn

I met Dobrynin in the Military Aide's Office at the White House at 3:00 p.m. The meeting had come about because during our last conversation Dobrynin had indicated some doubt about the relationship

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 215, "D" File. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The conversation was held in the East Wing of the White House. Kissinger forwarded this memorandum to President Nixon under cover of a March 11 note.

between the Safeguard components for area defense and the Safeguard components of point defense, and I told him that I would give him a briefing explaining the difference.

I took Larry Lynn of my staff along. We talked briefly about the problem of area defense and of point defense, the various types of missiles that were necessary for both, and why the area defense we were planning was not a threat to the Soviet Union. It was clear, however, that Dobrynin was not interested in that. He asked a few perfunctory questions which, incidentally, showed that he had studied the subject very carefully. He then said that he wanted to talk to me alone.

He made the following points:

I. *SALT*. Dobrynin said he had been asked by the Soviet Government to make three points with respect to *SALT*:

a. The Soviet Government agrees with our proposition that he and I might have an exchange of views both before and during the *SALT* talks with a view to coming to a conclusion between us on some of the principal outstanding issues.

b. The Soviet Government wanted the President to know that the Soviets were approaching the Vienna discussions² very seriously and would try to find an area of agreement.

c. The Soviets were prepared to discuss either comprehensive or separate agreement. They believed that a comprehensive agreement would be better because it would lead also to a solution of other political problems. But they were prepared to make separate agreements, provided it was understood that the limited agreements would not preclude coming eventually to a comprehensive agreement.

Dobrynin said that the Soviet Government had some doubts about the seriousness with which we approached the negotiations and that it had some genuine worries whether we really meant to have a negotiation. I told him that we were extremely serious about the negotiations and that we were hoping to come to an agreement. I said that they should know the President well enough by now to realize that our approach was always concrete and detailed and that the way to find out whether we were serious would be for them to engage in serious discussions. I was sure they would not be disappointed.

Dobrynin then turned the conversation to the Middle East.

² The second round of *SALT* negotiations began in Vienna on April 16.

II. *Middle East.* Dobrynin said he had been asked by the Soviet Government to give me an answer to some representations I had made to him on February 10.³ These representations were as follows:

a. It had come to my attention that one of the junior officers of the Soviet Embassy had complained to one of our journalists that we did not take the Kosygin letter⁴ sufficiently seriously.

b. We are assuming that serious communications will be made directly by Dobrynin to me and therefore we will not comment officially.

c. We want Dobrynin to know that the Kosygin letter received the highest level attention. Given the fact that the Soviet side had distributed it in regular channels in London and Paris, we had no choice but to deal with it in a similar fashion here.

d. The President is prepared to have bilateral discussions on the Middle East in the Dobrynin–Kissinger channel with a view to finding a solution fair to everybody.

e. We want the Soviet leaders to know that the introduction of Soviet combat personnel in the Middle East would be viewed with the gravest concern. We are choosing this method of communication because we do not want to make any formal *démarche*. At the same time, we want to make sure that the Soviet leaders are under no misapprehension about the possibility of grave consequences.

Dobrynin said in reply to these propositions the Soviet Government wanted to make the following comments in strictest confidence:

“Under instructions from Moscow I would like in confidence to express some considerations in connection with the aggravation of the military situation in the Middle East.

“Guided by special responsibility of our countries for the maintenance of peace A.N. Kosygin has already drawn the attention of President Nixon to the dangerous escalation of Israel of military actions against the UAR and other Arab countries and called upon the U.S. Government to use its influence so that Israel stop its armed attacks, dangerous for the cause of peace. The head of the Soviet Government stated at the same time that on its part the Soviet Union would show good will and determination to act in the interests of peace in the Middle East.

“It has been noted in Moscow that the American side, persistently putting forward the proposal on the cessation of fire on both sides, gives as its reasons the need to create a favorable situation for the search of political settlement. At the same time the United States ignores the fact that Israel not only occupied by means of aggression substantial Arab territories for the liberation of which the Arab peoples are now

³ See Document 131.

⁴ Document 121.

fighting but continues barbaric air raids against areas deep in the UAR and other Arab countries.

“We would like to draw the attention of the American side to the need for a realistic approach towards this question with due regard to the political situation in the Arab countries caused by the people’s indignation at the Israeli aggression. In order to have the escalation of military operations in the Middle East discontinued it is necessary first of all that Israel take practical steps in this direction. We have reason to count that if the Israelis stop their bombings of the UAR, the UAR on its part will display restraint in its actions, without, of course, any official statements to that effect.

“I would like to ask you, Mr. Kissinger, to bring the context of this conversation to the attention of President Nixon. I would like to receive a reply to this communication.”

Dobrynin asked me what I thought of these propositions. I said it was very interesting; I would take it up with the President and let him know.

Dobrynin then said that he had to tell me in confidence that he had been instructed to call on Secretary Rogers⁵ and would offer the continuation of bilateral discussions. I said I had wondered when they would get tired of the quadripartite meetings. Dobrynin smiled and said, “We’ll let the quadripartite meetings go on, but we prefer to talk in the bilateral forum.” He said that, as he remembered it, there were two outstanding issues: one having to do with the state of peace, and the second having to do with the obligations of the two sides. He could tell me in strictest confidence that the hang-up on the first point would be met by the Soviet formulation.

Up to now, the Soviets had only offered a cessation of the state of war; they were now ready to talk about establishing a state of peace. As for the obligations of the two sides, the Soviet Union also was prepared to make a concession. Until now the Soviet Union had insisted that control of irregular forces would not be possible or would be solved automatically. They were now ready to offer a formulation which would make it the responsibility of the Arab governments.

He said there were a number of other issues with which he did not wish to bother me. For example, he said the Soviet Union wanted the UAR to have full sovereignty over the Sinai, but also that it recognized that Sharm al Sheikh and surrounding territories would be put under a UN force which could be removed only by the unanimous vote of the Security Council’s permanent members. In other words, we could have a veto over the international presence in Sharm al Sheikh.

⁵ See Document 141.

He asked me what I thought our reaction to these proposals would be. I said I would have to study them but he could be sure that if there were a positive possibility of making progress, we would be very receptive. I would be in touch with him next week about it. Dobrynin asked whether he could come to me if he reached some impasse with Sisco or the Secretary. I said I was always willing to see him.

Dobrynin then pointed out that it would be possible to arrange some formula for direct negotiations as long as we did not use the “Rhodes Formula.”⁶ And, of course, both sides would have to join the document.

(All these things seem to me major steps forward.)

III. *Vietnam*. At the end of the conversation, Dobrynin asked how the trip to Paris⁷ had gone. I said that it had been all right. I asked him what he had heard about it. He said the Vietnamese had told him that no real progress had been made and that I had had nothing new to say. He asked me whether I had been encouraged. I said I have been in this position too long to be either encouraged or discouraged. Dobrynin said, “Well, if there was any more than what they have told us, it would be the first time that they haven’t told us the truth.” I said I wouldn’t want to shake his confidence in his allies.

Comments:

Dobrynin made a number of significant concessions:

(1) He offered a ceasefire along the Suez Canal, thus enabling us to show the Israelis that we have achieved something for them with our policy on the Kosygin letter.

(2) In the negotiations on Egypt our policy of relative firmness has paid off on all contested issues. The Soviet Union has made a first move and, while it may not be enough, at least it showed that holding firm and offering no concessions was the right course.

⁶ See footnote 2, Document 87.

⁷ On February 21, Kissinger met secretly with Le Duc Tho at one of the residences of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Paris. On February 22, Kissinger sent Nixon memoranda of his conversations with Le Duc Tho. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 852, For the President’s File—China Trip, Vietnam Negotiations, Camp David, Vol. II) The memoranda are in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume VI, Vietnam, January 1969–July 1970, Documents 189, 190, and 191.

141. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

Washington, March 12, 1970, 1805Z.

36337. 1. Ambassador Dobrynin called at his request on Secretary morning March 11 and made detailed presentation, main thrust of which was that Soviets would like to resume US-Soviet Middle East talks and are prepared meet US wishes for more detailed formulation on question of peace providing US will be more forthcoming on question of withdrawal, particularly re Sharm al-Shaykh, Gaza and Syria.

2. Soviet Minister Counselor Vorontsov subsequently called on NEA/IAI Country Director Atherton with copy of Dobrynin's talking points. Vorontsov declined leave text but let Atherton read it and take full notes, on which following paragraphs are based.

3. *Begin Talking Points*. Further aggravation of Middle East situation makes it urgent that energetic steps be taken to arrest increasing tensions in area. Soviet Government believes that, in addition to ending barbaric Israeli bombings of UAR civilian centers, there is need for new effort by major powers to achieve political settlement.

4. Soviet Government continues to believe that Middle East settlement should result in just and lasting peace, not just unstable and temporary armistice. Given tense Arab-Israeli relations, there is need for cautious, protracted and serious work to bring positions of parties closer.

5. Soviet Government intends to continue seeking settlement through exchange of views with USG, although US January reply was far from constructive. Just and lasting peace is possible on basis of earlier Soviet proposals but, to facilitate agreement, Soviet Government has additional considerations to offer.

6. Taking into account questions raised by USG, Soviets are prepared to discuss those questions, including establishment of peace, in bilateral talks. Preamble of Soviet plan recognizes need for just and stable peace in Middle East. USG has stressed that this question is of prime importance and has said that if Arabs show readiness to establish peace this would remove serious barriers to agreement. Soviet plan is sufficiently clear on this point. Nevertheless, with view to achieving understanding, Soviet Government would be ready to supplement provisions in its plan on cessation of state of war by provision on establishing, as result of settlement, a state of peace.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 340, Subject Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger. Secret; Nodis; Noform; No Distribution Outside Department. Drafted by Atherton on March 11, cleared by Eliot, and approved by Sisco. Repeated to USUN.

7. Soviet plan has sufficient concrete provisions about obligations of parties resulting from cessation of state of war and establishment of peace. USG, however, seeks more detail on these points as is clear from its October 28 and December 18 papers.²

8. Soviet Government is prepared to meet US wishes on this question if US side shows due understanding of questions whose solution is of interest to Soviet side, first and foremost those questions concerning the unequivocal recording of provisions for the withdrawal of troops.

9. USG has still not indicated that it shares Soviet view that sovereignty over Sharm al-Shaykh belongs to UAR. USG has also given no assurances that Israeli troops are to withdraw from Gaza sector and that this Arab territory is to be restored to its pre-June 1967 borders with the previous situation there re-established. Soviet Government raised these questions in its December 23, 1969 document³ and USG has still not replied.

10. Replies on these points are important since Soviet Government is convinced that principal issue of settlement is withdrawal of troops and establishment of secure and recognized boundaries. Without exact formulations on these questions, there can be no possibility of moving on whole question of settlement.

11. In addition to agreement on withdrawal of troops from all occupied territories and status of peace, it would be useful to consider and agree on other unresolved provisions of UAR-Israeli settlement. Soviet Government proceeds from assumption that both our sides will strive to broaden area of agreement between them.

12. Question of Jordan-Israel settlement being considered by Four Powers in New York, but problem of Syria remains untouched in both Two and Four Power talks. Soviet Government notes that USG has avoided taking position on this question, citing as reason Syrian rejection of SC Resolution 242. In Soviet view, position of Syrian Government does not relieve us of task of working out concrete aspects of Syrian-Israeli settlement. If just solution found, Soviet Government is convinced difficulties stemming from Syrian position would disappear. Principal aspects of Soviet June 17, 1969, plan⁴ relate to all countries directly involved in conflict. Soviet Government expects USG to express concrete views on questions touching directly on problem of Syrian-Israeli settlement.

² See Document 98 and footnote 3 to Document 109.

³ See Document 109.

⁴ See Document 58.

13. Soviet Government wishes to raise another matter which it does not consider unimportant. Soviet Government expects USG to take measures to prevent leaks of information about confidential US-Soviet discussions, which adversely affect course of our consultations. Examples have been publication of text of Kosygin letter and Estabrook report in *Washington Post* of February 19 Four Power meeting.⁵

14. Soviet Government wishes to stress that it assumes USG will be guided by broad interests of international security and of development of relations between our two states. US and Soviet interests will be served by Middle East not becoming arena of unwanted confrontation. Soviet Government believes this can be achieved and will continue its efforts in this direction in hope USG will do the same. *End Talking Points.*

15. Secretary responded that we would study both the suggestion to resume bilateral discussions and the substantive Soviet proposals. He made clear that if we should agree to resume bilateral talks, there would have to be an understanding of what the resumption of those talks signifies. Our willingness to resume talks could not be interpreted to mean an acceptance of the Soviet proposals or that we were willing to make concessions going beyond our present position as reflected in the October 28 and December 18 documents.

Rogers

⁵ Reference is to a March 10 story in *The Washington Post* by Robert H. Estabrook entitled "France's Mideast Optimism Challenged." According to Estabrook "U.S. and British spokesmen took issue today with the statement by French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann that the Big Four's Middle East discussions have moved into a thaw." (p. A-14)

142. Letter From Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Kosygin to President Nixon¹

Moscow, March 13, 1970.

Dear Mr. President,

We have carefully studied your letter of March 6, 1970.² We have also received an appeal from Prince Souvanna Phouma with a proposal on conducting consultations between the States which signed the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos.

My colleagues and I are perturbed by the situation in Laos, which has lately become aggravated. And we, for our part, have pondered over the causes of this aggravation and over what measures could be undertaken to restore peace and tranquility to the territory of Laos.

I should not like, at this time, to go into the background of the present events in Laos, since this would hardly erase the differences that exist in the way our two sides appraise what is happening in that country.

The situation in Laos, as is quite obvious, is directly connected with the general situation on the Indo-Chinese peninsula. The cessation of the war in Viet-Nam and a political settlement would facilitate the restoration of peace in Laos as well.

To speak, in the present situation, about consultations between the States Parties to the 1962 Convention on Laos is, in our view, completely unrealistic. Do you think it possible to consider the situation appropriate for such consultations when the United States continues the war in Viet-Nam and expands armed intervention in Laos? Moreover, the coalition government created in Viet-Nam in accordance with the 1962 Geneva Agreements, in view of the actions of the right-wing forces, has been paralyzed.

It is precisely those right-wing forces which, supported by the American Airforce and actively using special troops under American command, carried out in September of last year attacks in the Kuvshinov [?]³ Valley area, which for a long period of time was under the control of the Pathet-Lao and left-wing neutralists. Patriotic forces took measures to return to their previous positions.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 765, Presidential Correspondence, USSR, Kosygin. Confidential. Translated by the Department's Division of Language Services.

² Document 139.

³ Brackets in the source text.

The matter of restoring peace in Laos should, obviously, begin with consultations between the political forces of Laos. The other day the Central Committee of the Patriotic Front of Laos proposed a concrete and, it seems to us, a highly realistic five-point program for a settlement. As a result of this program, peace would be restored in Laos if all countries respect the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos, in accordance with the provisions of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos, the cessation of U.S. intervention in Laotian affairs, including the bombing of Laotian territory, the non-participation of Laos in military alliances with other countries and the banning of foreign troops and bases in Laos, respect for the throne, the holding of general, free and democratic elections to the National Assembly and the formation of a democratic government of national unity, the holding during the period from the restoration of peace to the general elections of a political consultative conference with the participation of representatives of the interested parties of Laos for settling all the affairs of the country and forming a temporary coalition government, the uniting of Laos through consultation between the Laotian parties on the basis of the principal of equality and national consent. But, first of all, as set forth in the above-mentioned statement of the Central Committee of the Patriotic Front of Laos, it is essential that the U.S.A. put an end, in the near future, to the escalation of the war and completely and unconditionally cease the bombing of the territory of Laos—only thus can conditions be created which will permit the interested Laotian parties to meet with each other.

Thus, it is a question of the necessity, first of all, of the cessation of American intervention in the affairs of Laos, and of Vientiane maintaining a position of neutrality, as stipulated by the Geneva Agreements.

We welcome the planned contacts between Prince Souvanna Phouma and Prince Souphanouvong and consider that this is exactly the path which, in the event of the cessation of American intervention, will permit ensuring a détente in Laos and create the necessary conditions for a political settlement in that country.

As for the Soviet Government, it will, for its part, henceforth undertake efforts directed toward the cessation of military activities in Laos and toward the creation of conditions that will enable that country to develop along the path of peace, independence and neutrality.

Sincerely,

A. Kosygin⁴

⁴ Printed from a copy that indicates Kosygin signed the original.

143. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, March 13, 1970.

SUBJECT

The New Soviet Tactic on Middle East Talks

Secretary Rogers has sent you the attached account of his March 11 meeting with Ambassador Dobrynin on the Middle East.²

The Meeting. Ambassador Dobrynin proposed resumption of bilateral talks on a Middle East settlement. He indicated Soviet willingness to consider a more precise formulation on the obligations each side would undertake in a peace settlement provided the U.S. would indicate a willingness to consider the Soviet position that Sharm al-Shaikh would return to Egyptian sovereignty, that an irrevocable UN presence would be stationed there to assure freedom of passage through the Gulf of Aqaba and that Israeli troops should withdraw from Gaza with the pre-war situation there re-established. He also said that the Soviets would expect us to express "concrete views" on a Syria-Israel settlement.

Secretary Rogers responded that we would study these proposals. He made it clear, however, that if we should agree to resume bilateral talks there would have to be an understanding that this did not mean we accepted the substantive Soviet proposals or that we would be willing to make concessions beyond our present position.

What Does It Mean? It is not yet clear exactly what the Soviets are up to with this apparent switch from a propagandistic and unconstructive approach to more flexible tactics. As you know, an earlier signal came in the March 5 Four Power session where the Soviets rather suddenly began to indicate their willingness to resume a constructive dialogue after weeks of attacking us in that forum. This bid to resume the bilateral exchange—which was broken off in December when the Soviets responded to our proposals on the UAR-Israel aspect in a

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VII. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Drafted by Saunders and sent to Kissinger on March 13. On March 19, Haig returned this memorandum to Saunders under a covering memorandum with the following note: "Hal, please note HAK had some strong views to make concerning several paragraphs of the attached." The memorandum was not initialed by Kissinger and apparently did not go to Nixon.

² Attached but not printed is a March 12 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon reporting on the March 11 meeting with Dobrynin much as it is summarized in this memorandum. See Document 141 for an account of a subsequent discussion by Vorontsov and Atherton on the same issue.

strongly negative and retrogressive manner—apparently is a follow-on to that move. In neither case, however, have they indicated that they are prepared to yield substantially on the issue most important to us and the Israelis—a specific Arab obligation to control the fedayeen and on how the parties will actually negotiate a settlement. Instead, they continue to press for concessions that Nasser demands and that the Israelis would not accept.

It could be that the Soviets came to feel increasingly isolated in the Four Power talks as we persistently stuck to our proposals, the British backed us up and the French search for the middle ground floundered. They may have feared that we were growing tired of their abuse in the Four Power talks and were prepared, if necessary, to end the talks and leave the onus for the deadlock with them. It may also have become increasingly apparent to them that we were not ready to make any more concessions, at least without substantial *quid pro quo*.³

It may be that the Soviets are concerned to defuse the growing appearance of confrontation, which they themselves launched with the Kosygin letter. This course left them with the ultimate option of having to escalate their involvement. An additional tactical motive may relate to the Soviet sense of timing on the decision of supplying Phantoms to Israel. The Soviets may have thought a show of flexibility at this time would tip the outcome against a new supply.

I note that Dobrynin's presentation seemed to pick up the thought in your foreign policy report that our approach to the Middle East will be guided by broad interests of international security and development of relations between our two states—another suggestion the Soviets may be backing away from the confrontation track.⁴

Whatever the cause, there are indications that the Soviets and Egyptians want to keep the negotiating option open. These recent moves were immediately preceded by a visit of Deputy Foreign Minister Vinogradov to Cairo. Egyptian Foreign Minister Riad recently agreed to keep up "political activity" without making a concession on basic issues.

Conclusion: There may be some merit in letting the Soviets sweat it out a bit longer in hopes that they may change in substance as well as approach. They have come to us with a bid to resume the bilateral talks, but have not yet indicated any real give in substance. If we intend to stick with our proposals in their present form, there would

³ Kissinger wrote "Since when do the Soviets give a damn about being isolated" in the left margin, and "Maybe to hold [?] us quiet while they introduce SA-3" in the right margin.

⁴ Kissinger wrote "Adding Syria guarantees future [unintelligible] exacerbation with Israel" in the margin beside this paragraph.

seem to be little point in reopening the bilateral dialogue and ease the apparent pressure on the Soviets without any promise of substantive progress.

There is also the problem of what to do with the Four Power talks. The British and especially the French see this forum as being the most productive and might be dismayed to see us abandon it again for private talks with the Soviets. The French, of course, have been difficult and the British are showing signs of becoming somewhat of a problem, but both are still manageable. We may even be able to buy more time in the Four Power talks if our current gambit to shift them away from drawing up guidelines for Jarring to developing an interim progress report for U Thant works out. This could also serve to keep the heat on the Soviets.⁵

These are just preliminary considerations for your thought.⁶

⁵ Kissinger wrote "All this is trivial. Talks aren't ends in themselves. Question is what do we get out of 4-power or 2-power talks. Which forum is best? If we want 2-power talks, who cares about 4-powers" at the bottom of the page.

⁶ Kissinger crossed out this sentence.

144. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, March 13, 1970.

SUBJECT

Trouble in the Soviet Leadership

In the last week we have received several diverse reports that could point to trouble within the top Soviet leadership.²

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box SCI 17, Memos to the President, January–April 1970. Top Secret; Codeword. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates it was returned on March 17.

² On March 11, Sonnenfeldt forwarded a letter to Kissinger that alluded to reports carried by the Reuters news service, to the effect that Kosygin may retire and a major fight among the Kremlin leaders may ensue. Sonnenfeldt added, "the Kremlinologists at CIA and State are taking it all with a grain of salt so far. Stories of this kind are inherently hard to assess. However, there is probably enough meat here to warrant a brief report to the president, as a follow-up to the earlier more extensive memo of last month." (Ibid.)

—[1 paragraph (4 lines of source text) not declassified]

—Gus Hall, the American Communist leader, received information recently (reported by the FBI) that while Brezhnev had emerged as “head man” in recent months, there was maneuvering in the Kremlin leadership and that there would be a purge of “scapegoats” for failures in the economy.

—A Reuters report from Vienna, quoting sources in Yugoslavia and Prague, claims that Brezhnev and Kosygin have been attacked by other party leaders for major failures, and that these accusations were in the form of signed document; the challengers are supposed to be Shelepin, Maxurov and Suslov.

—[1½ lines of source text not declassified] suggested considerable nervousness on the part of the Deputy Premier Polyansky over his public “image.”

While the Reuters report seems dramatic and too detailed for plausibility, recent signs taken together seem to point to increasing problems within the leadership. As noted in an earlier memorandum to you, the heart of the problem seems to be the dissatisfaction over economic matters.

An “honorable” retirement for Kosygin might be a logical way to break a deadlock at the top. At the same time, there have been recurring reports of his failing health. Recently, a Soviet guide at the Soviet photographic exhibit here was overheard to say that Kosygin was due for an operation.

If there is major trouble of the kind reported by Reuters, however, this would be a different matter and could have more far-reaching policy implications. Unfortunately, there is never any sure way to confirm these events, until after they have already taken place, and we are faced with the results.

This bears watching, of course, and I will forward any reports that seem plausible, especially if there seems to be a relation to major policy issues.

145. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 20, 1970, 2:15 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Dobrynin opened the conversation by asking whether there had been some response to his *démarche* of 10 days ago.² I said, "Yes, as a matter of fact that is why I asked you to come to see me." I said we had taken the communication from the Soviet Government with extreme seriousness, as we do every other communication from Moscow. We had, in fact, begun discussions with the Israelis about a ceasefire and had obtained Israeli approval. But within 24 hours of calling them in to make it final and to establish definite time limits, we learned about the introduction of Soviet SA-3 missiles and Soviet combat personnel. I had warned Dobrynin about the serious consequences of such a step. The move was reminiscent of some tactics employed several years previously on the occasion of the Cuban crisis. The Soviet Government had to learn that the President could not be dealt with on this basis.

As a result, the President had canceled his request to the Israelis for a ceasefire, and the matter was now off. If the Soviet Union wanted to make a more equitable proposal some other time, we would be willing to consider it.

Dobrynin made some half-hearted comments to the effect that he didn't know anything about these missiles. But if they were defensive, why did we object? I said, "Because it might be that the ceasefire was just being used to improve the Egyptian military position—to improve Egypt's defenses. Once they were fully installed, Egypt could break the ceasefire and Israel would be at a great disadvantage." If the Soviet Union wanted to make a more equitable proposal, we would be willing to consider it.

Dobrynin said he would have to go to his government and come back with new instructions. He underlined Moscow's great eagerness to dampen down the Middle East situation, and he said he hoped that Secretary Rogers would reply soon to his overture of some weeks ago to restart the bilateral negotiations.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box TS 36, Geopolitical File, 1964–1977, Soviet Union, Chronological File, 3/69–6/70. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The conversation was held in the library of the White House residence. Kissinger forwarded this memorandum to President Nixon on March 26.

² See Document 140.

I then made a general comment. I said that we were at an important turning point. We were prepared to deal with the Soviet Union precisely, correctly, unemotionally, and thoroughly in the direction of détente, if the Soviet Union would forgo its policy of attempting to squeeze us at every opportunity. For example, when we recommended the ceasefire to Israel, we did so even though we knew the military situation favored our friends. The introduction of Soviet military personnel could only lead to a Vietnam for the Soviet Union, since all we had to do was send in equipment which they could only match by personnel. Nevertheless, we were not trying to take advantage of the situation.³

I could not say the same for the Soviet behavior in Laos, I continued. We were very disappointed by the Prime Minister's reply. Dobrynin said we completely misunderstood their role in Laos; they were only being kept informed. They were not making any suggestions and they thought, in any event, that the figures we gave for North Vietnamese troops in Laos were much too high.

Dobrynin then said that he had had a report from Paris that my conversations there were leading towards a positive direction. I said he had to check with his friends—that I would not give him any comment.⁴

Dobrynin then said the Soviet Union was eager to get the bilateral talks on the Middle East⁵ started. I mentioned that we were prepared to talk seriously on all issues and that we were ready to move to higher levels of conversations if there were progress, but that the Soviet Union could not continue to press in other areas without the most serious consequences.

³ Nixon highlighted this paragraph.

⁴ Nixon highlighted this paragraph.

⁵ Nixon underlined "Middle East."

146. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, March 21, 1970.

SUBJECT

Letter From You to Premier Kosygin

At the WSAG meeting on the afternoon of March 19,² it was agreed that one of the political moves which we might carry out in response to the situation in Laos would be to go back to the Soviets with a tough letter from you telling them that it was their duty to support the Geneva Agreements. In this letter we would make plain that we would not accept their contention that they had no responsibility and add that such a reaction might have an adverse effect on US–USSR relationships.

A letter to this effect from you to Premier Kosygin is at Tab A. I consider that this letter, which was drafted by State, appropriately conveys the message which we want the Soviets to receive, and also lets them know the gravity with which we view developments in Laos. I believe that your sending the letter to Kosygin would be a useful move. State proposes that we follow it up by sending letters from you to each of the other Geneva signatories calling attention to the threat to Lao-tian neutrality which now exists, and observing that the signatory powers accordingly have the responsibility of supporting Prime Minister Souvanna's appeal for consultations under Article IV of the Geneva Agreements on maintaining the neutrality of Laos.

Recommendation:

That you sign the letter to Premier Kosygin at Tab A.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 215, "D" File. Secret. Sent for action. Drafted by Holdridge on March 20.

² On March 19, from 1–2:20 p.m., the WSAG met to discuss the situation in Laos. Minutes of the meeting are in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume VI, Vietnam, January 1969–July 1970, Document 204.

Tab A³

Letter From President Nixon to Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Kosygin

Washington, March 21, 1970.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I wish to thank you for your assurance that you and your government are concerned about the situation in Laos and have considered steps that might be taken to permit peace to return to that country. While I agree with you on the importance of internal consultations among the Lao themselves, I am unable to share your view that consultations among the signatories of the 1962 Geneva Agreements on Laos are unrealistic and would not be helpful.

Indeed, I find the position of your government illogical and unconvincing. In your letter⁴ you connect the problem of Laos with the general situation on the Indo-China peninsula and refer to American interference in the affairs of Laos. Therefore, even though you do not refer to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's flagrant violations of the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Laos or its use of Lao and Cambodian territory for aggression against the Republic of Vietnam, you clearly recognize the international character of the problem of Laos, including violations of the Geneva Agreements of 1962 on Laos. A solution to the international aspects of the Lao problem is the proper responsibility of the mechanisms established by the 1962 Conference. I would be less than frank if I did not point out that the opposition of your government to the holding of consultations under Article IV of the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos is totally indefensible given your admission that you consider there have been violations of the neutrality of Laos. It is not a question whether the present situation is "good" for such consultations; it is precisely because the situation is not good that such consultations must be held. I call upon you, Mr. Chairman, as the head of one of the two governments most specifically charged by the Geneva Agreements with the supervision over their observance to fulfill your responsibility and, together with the United Kingdom, to call for consultations to consider measures which might prove to be necessary to insure the observance of the sovereignty, independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Laos.

³ No classification marking.

⁴ Document 142.

As I noted in my previous letter,⁵ the principal cause of the present hostilities in Laos is the presence there of over 65,000 North Vietnamese troops. The restoration of peace in Laos cannot, therefore, be accomplished solely through consultations among the political forces there as you suggest. Such internal talks can serve a useful purpose, as they did in 1961 and 1962, as an adjunct to international actions dealing with the basic cause of the Lao problem, North Vietnamese aggression in Laos and use of Lao territory for interference in the internal affairs of other countries. I need hardly remind you that the United States air activities in Laos are in response to these antecedent North Vietnamese actions.

I assure you that the United States Government will spare no effort to bring peace to Laos through full implementation of the 1962 Agreements. I welcome your assurances that the Soviet Government will continue to make efforts aimed at the cessation of military actions in Laos and the creation of conditions for the re-establishment of peace and neutrality. For there can be little doubt that failure to bring peace to Laos will have repercussions beyond the confines of that region of the world and adversely affect our relations. I confirm my Administration's desire to base our relations on the principle of negotiation rather than confrontation and I therefore call upon you to reconsider your position concerning consultations under Article IV of the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos. I again urge that your government join with mine and the governments of the other signatories in fulfilling the responsibilities we assumed in 1962.

Sincerely,

RN⁶

⁵ Document 139.

⁶ Printed from a copy that indicates Nixon signed the original.

147. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, March 25, 1970.

SUBJECT

Talk with President Nixon

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, DCI Helms Chronological File, Job 80–B01285A, Box 11, Folder 9, Secret. Drafted by Helms.

1. The President called Henry Kissinger and me into the Oval Office after the NSC meeting today for what turned out to be a 25-minute discussion of a variety of subjects, including SALT, Laos, Cambodia, Cuba, and black operations.

[Omitted here is discussion of Cuba and Laos.]

4. With respect to black operations, the President enjoined me to hit the Soviets, and hit them hard, any place we can in the world. He said to “just go ahead,” to keep Henry Kissinger informed, and to be as imaginative as we could. He was as emphatic on this as I have ever heard him on anything. He indicated that he had had a change of mind and thought that Radio Free Europe should be continued. I took this moment to hit hard on the point that I felt strongly the United States should give up nothing which constituted a pressure on the Soviet Union or an irritation to them without exacting a specific price in return. The President agreed with this and pointed out that we had had nothing from the Russians—in the recent past “except assistance on the shape of the table at the Paris talks.” I indicated that we were coming up with a paper on covert actions aimed at the Soviet Union.

RH

Director

148. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

Washington, March 28, 1970, 0302Z.

44154. 1. Following is the oral statement made by the Secretary in response to Dobrynin’s oral statement of March 11.² Secretary and Dobrynin met on March 25 with Sisco and Vorontsov also present. Vorontsov took careful notes on the following. No paper was given. Separate cable being sent which reports additional comments.³

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 653, Country Files, Middle East, Sisco Middle East Talks. Secret; Nodis; Noform. Drafted and approved by Sisco on March 25, and cleared by Hawley (S/S). Also sent to USUN. This telegram was attached to an April 8 memorandum from Saunders to Kissinger which is printed as Document 151.

² See Document 141.

³ Not further identified.

“We have studied carefully the oral statement conveyed by Ambassador Dobrynin March 11 and would like to comment on it point-by-point.

“We agree that there is need for steps to arrest the increasing tensions in the Middle East. This was the purpose of our proposals for restoration of the ceasefire and for arms limitation talks, which the Soviet Government has not accepted. We do not share the Soviet Government’s one-sided view that an end to Israeli bombing would in itself be productive. The Soviet Government knows that it was the UAR which initiated a policy of nonobservance of the ceasefire. There can only be a decrease in the level of violence if observance of the ceasefire is reciprocal. We urge the Soviet Government to reassess its position both with respect to the ceasefire and arms limitation talks.

“We agree with the Soviet Government on the need for new efforts to achieve a political settlement. This is why we have urged the Soviet Union to take a more constructive approach to the proposals of October 28, in which we sought to reflect joint US-Soviet views, and to the December 18 proposals.

“We note with satisfaction that the Soviet Government has reaffirmed the need for a just and lasting peace which is, of course, the stated purpose of Security Council Resolution 242. We are also pleased that the Soviet Government has referred to the need to bring the positions of the parties closer. This has been repeatedly emphasized by us as an essential element of both the Two Power and Four Power talks.

“We also note that the Soviet Government wishes to continue exchanging views on a bilateral basis. We have no objection in principle to resuming the Two Power talks at an early date. The probability that such talks would prove fruitful would be enhanced if the Soviet Union could provide beforehand certain clarifications of its position. In saying that it is prepared to meet the wish of the United States for greater detail on the question of peace, does the Soviet Government mean that it would accept Point 2 of our proposals? The Soviet answer to this question will contribute to a clearer understanding between us about the basis for resuming our bilateral exchanges. In saying this, we clearly understand that Soviet acceptance of the language of Point 2 would be contingent upon agreement on all other points of difference between us. Major power agreement on guidelines for Jarring must be a package just as the final agreement between the parties themselves.

“We note that the Soviet Government wants us to show understanding on questions of interest to it including above all the question of withdrawal. This question is also of interest to the United States, and we have said many times there can be no peace without withdrawal. We have made our position on withdrawal quite clear. As concerns the UAR, to which the Ambassador’s oral statement referred, we have said

Israel should withdraw to the old international boundary. We have also said that in our view there must be agreement between the parties on practical security arrangements in the Sharm al-Shaykh area. Such arrangements would have to provide an absolute guarantee of free navigation through the Strait of Tiran as called for in Resolution 242; it is not our intention that they should call into question UAR sovereignty over Sharm al-Shaykh.

“With respect to Gaza, our view is that it is a special case since the question of sovereignty there has never been resolved. The Soviet Government calls for the re-establishment in Gaza of the pre-June 1967 situation. That situation, however, was based on the Armistice Agreement of 1949, whereas we are now seeking a final peace. Re-establishment of the pre-June 1967 situation would be inconsistent with the view, expressed elsewhere in the Ambassador’s statement, that a settlement ‘should result in just and lasting peace, not just unstable and temporary armistice.’ In light of this consideration and of the unresolved question of sovereignty, we believe the disposition of Gaza is an appropriate subject of negotiations between the parties.

“We agree with the Soviet Government that it would be useful to consider other unresolved provisions of a UAR-Israeli settlement and that both our governments should strive to broaden areas of agreement between us. Among these unresolved provisions is the question of the method of reaching agreement, to which we attach importance and which must be considered in light of operative paragraph 3 of Resolution 242.⁴ The Ambassador’s statement did not refer to this question. Does the Soviet Government still accept the language on the Rhodes formula agreed between us in September? If not, does the Soviet Government have alternative language to propose which would make equally clear that the negotiating process under Ambassador Jarring’s auspices would include both indirect and direct negotiations at various stages as was the case when Dr. Bunche dealt with the parties in 1949.

“On the problem of Syria to which the Ambassador’s statement referred, our position is clear. Syria has rejected Resolution 242 and has not cooperated with Ambassador Jarring. In these circumstances, Jarring cannot carry out his mandate of promoting agreement on the Syrian aspect of a settlement since the process of reaching agreement requires the cooperation of both sides. There is thus no basis for developing guidelines for Jarring on the Syrian aspect. There is no other

⁴ Paragraph 3 reads as follows: “*Requests* the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist effort to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution.” (UN doc. S/RES/242 1967)

route to a settlement than Resolution 242 and the Jarring Mission. Once agreement has been reached and carried out between Israel and the UAR, and between Israel and Jordan, there should be no difficulties in the way of Syria's taking the necessary steps which would make possible consideration of a settlement also between Israel and Syria.

"With respect to the question of press leaks, we assure the Soviet Government that we share its desire to avoid such leaks. Both of us must recognize, however, that in view of the deep interest in Middle Eastern developments, press contact cannot be completely avoided. As for the leak of the exchange of letters between Chairman Kosygin and President Nixon, we reconfirm our previous assurance to the Soviet Government that it is not our policy to publish such confidential correspondence with other heads of government, that we did not do so in this case, and that we regret these letters were made available to the press by others to whom they were entrusted.

"Finally, the Soviet Government is correct in assuming that the United States is guided by a desire to strengthen international security and to develop the relations between our two nations. We are pleased that the Soviet Government feels, as we do, that it would serve neither of our interests for the Middle East to become an area of confrontation between us."

149. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

Exploitation of Tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

Attached is an excellent CIA paper describing covert action programs being undertaken to exploit tensions in the Soviet Union and

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VI. Secret; Sensitive. Drafted by Kissinger and Haig on April 6. Haig sent it to Kissinger on April 6 under a covering memorandum that reads: "Attached is a memorandum for the President forwarding the excellent CIA paper on Tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. I have informed Director Helms that you believe this is a first-rate paper and appreciate his forwarding it to you." The memorandum is an unsigned copy.

Eastern Europe and identifying activities which may be emphasized in the future. In assessing Soviet vulnerabilities the report notes that:

—Although the internal dissident is not likely to significantly influence Soviet society in the short term, existing trends toward more active dissidence could be affected by external developments. The discrediting of the regime by a serious economic crisis or another Czech-type crisis might promote radical changes in the internal political climate.

—Suppression of the growing intellectual dissent by Soviet authorities has disillusioned many foreign Communists and Soviet sympathizers.

—Among the non-Russian minorities in the Soviet Union dissent is vocal and widespread.

—There is also increasing criticism of the Soviet economy.

—In Eastern Europe where the tensions are greater and the Western orientation much stronger the Soviets will have to rely on force to maintain hegemony.

There are numerous indications of the effectiveness of the program CIA conducts to capitalize on Soviet vulnerabilities:

—Radio Free Europe, which broadcasts to an Eastern European audience of over 30 million that swells dramatically during crises, is frequently denounced by Communist leaders. Czech Party Secretary Husak, for example, has blamed RFE for his party's inability to win over the Czech population.

—Radio Liberty which broadcasts to the Soviet Union has had a significant role in increasing manifestations of dissent and opposition among the Soviet intelligentsia. Defectors have often commented on the significant impact of the broadcast of documents written by protesters.

—The \$150 million spent annually by the Russians for jamming operations which are only marginally successful is indicative of the value of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty which cost less than \$35 million to operate.

—Publication of smuggled manuscripts and magazines geared to the Eastern European audience and distribution of books not available in Communist countries have also made an impact.

Emphasis on the following activities is being considered in planning for future operations:

—greater exploitation of dissent through modernized radio transmitting facilities, wider dissemination of criticism by the intellectuals, and stimulation of nationality aspirations among Soviet minorities;

—attacks on Soviet activities outside the bloc and intensified exploitation of anti-Communist themes abroad;

—developing leaders capable of providing a democratic alternative to Soviet-supported front organizations;

—selective use [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] to increase distrust of Russians in developing countries and exploiting Soviet sensitivity to local hostility and exposure of their activities;

—preparations for covert programs to offset the threat of Communist election victories in the Free World. Past examples of successful operations include Guyana in 1963 and Chile in 1964.

Tab A

Paper Prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency²

Washington, undated.

TENSIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Introduction

At no time in the history of the Soviet Union to date have political forces outside the Communist Party leadership played a significant role in influencing events. The Party apparatus, the KGB and the deeply vested interests of the Soviet State hierarchy are experienced in coping with dissidence of all types, and have an impressive record of asserting their will at any cost to the rest of society. The KGB in particular has an almost perfect record of successful penetration, manipulation and suppression of opposition elements. In addition there is an historic tradition of public apathy, largely unchanged even today among the workers and peasants of Russia, and dissident elements find little encouragement at the grass roots. The authorities have often exploited the antipathy of the working class toward the intelligentsia in suppressing incipient demonstrations.

Thus the experience of Russian history strongly argues against the proposition that the internal dissident will significantly influence Soviet society in the short term. The conditions, nevertheless, which abet existing trends toward more active and articulate dissidence could be

² Secret; Nodis. Helms sent this paper to Kissinger under a March 30 covering memorandum that reads: "Pursuant to the interest expressed by the President [see Document 147] in a review of our covert action activities with respect to the Soviet Union and, more particularly, what we might additionally do, we have prepared the attached paper." (Ibid., Box 433, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, Black Operations)

affected by external developments. A discrediting of the regime by, say, another Czechoslovak crisis or a serious economic crisis, might well promote radical changes in the internal political climate. The paragraphs that follow should be considered in this light.

Intellectual Dissent

To describe the nature and scope of dissidence in the Soviet Union today poses the risk of over-emphasis. The Soviet regime is by no means on the brink of collapse. On the other hand, something new has indeed emerged in Soviet society since Stalin's death. The growing demand for freedom of expression has been widely reported in the Western press, and its suppression by Soviet authorities has in turn contributed to disillusionment among foreign Communists and Soviet sympathizers.

The top rank of dissenters in the Soviet Union includes leading scientists, some of whom share the views of Andrey Sakharov, an eminent scientist. In 1968, Sakharov in a long pamphlet advocated radical changes in human society the world over. Speaking of his own country, he called for tolerance of political opposition, elimination of censorship, and frank discussion of Stalin's use of terror. Later in 1968, other prominent scientists including Peter Kapitsa, the Soviet Union's leading theoretical physicist, told Western colleagues that they agreed with Sakharov. The Sakharov pamphlet has never been published in the Soviet Union, but through Western radio broadcasts and publications Sakharov's words have been carried back to his countrymen.

After the scientists, next in prestige come the writers, whose tradition of social concern goes back to Turgenev, Tolstoy and even earlier. Their involvement in politics and protest has almost always been reluctant. Alexander Solzhenitsyn tried for years to remain aloof, but his determination to write what he believed and his refusal to conform to the requirements of the Party put him squarely against the censors and the Soviet Writers' Union. Last fall the Writers' Union expelled Solzhenitsyn for his recalcitrance. Learning that he had been expelled without an opportunity to defend his position, Solzhenitsyn wrote a letter to the leaders of the Union that epitomizes the attitude of the creative intelligentsia toward the Party hacks who control the institutions of Soviet society. "The face of your clock has been rubbed out: Your clock is far behind the times. Open your heavy curtains. You do not even know that outside it is already day³ In this time of crisis in our dangerously sick society you are not able to suggest anything constructive, anything good, only your own hatred and your spying on others and your determination to coerce and never to let go."

³ All ellipses are in the source text.

Beyond the circle of leading scientists and writers there are the active dissidents themselves. Most of them are younger members of the intelligentsia, but their ranks also include workers, teachers, and other professionals. A leading physicist in this group runs the only "underground press" known to exist in the Soviet Union. In May 1969 fifteen of the most active dissidents organized a Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, and petitioned the United Nations to protest against violations of human rights in the USSR. They were joined by some fifty other persons who publicly announced their support of the Committee. When the first petition received no answer, they sent a second. Now, ten months afterward, ten of the fifteen of the organizers of the Committee have been imprisoned or placed in mental hospitals, a favorite device of the regime for handling awkward cases.

In April 1968 the group began a bi-monthly *Chronicle of Current Events*, reporting in detail on arrests, threats and other coercive acts the Soviet regime uses to suppress opposition, plus the latest news concerning underground literature and petitions. Ten issues of the *Chronicle* were subsequently circulated in hundreds of typewritten copies inside the USSR. A few copies of each reached the West, where they have been republished and broadcast back into the Soviet Union.

The writing and circulation of protest documents of many varieties, typed in carbon copies or handwritten, continues in the face of regime repression. In early 1968 the trial of Ginsburg and Galanskov inspired hundreds of Soviet citizens to risk censure, job loss or imprisonment by appealing to the authorities on behalf of the defendants. The petitioners and protestors have since supported other causes, and have proposed their own political programs as alternatives to the Communist Party's dictatorship. As one leader of the dissident movement, Lydia Chukovskaya, wrote: "The conspiracy of silence is at an end."

In reaction to the increasing repression of creative freedom in the USSR, outstanding representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia have forsaken their homeland for life in the West. In addition to Stalin's daughter, Svetlana, they include three distinguished writers, a prominent philosopher and editor, a young nuclear physicist, two outstanding musicians, a magazine editor, two leading experts on cybernetics, a movie director, a film critic and three students from Moscow University's Institute of Eastern Languages.

The picture of the Soviet Union that these defectors paint is one of increasing cynicism and alienation on the part of the intelligentsia, and apathy and bitterness in the working class. The philosopher mentioned above had this to say on the subject: "People are still afraid to trust one another entirely. I shared my real views only with three other men. Yet one knows how everybody feels—disillusioned, contemptuous of the bosses and frustrated by the Party careerists who know noth-

ing but how to win and keep power. Now these careerists sense their isolation from the rest of the population. They no longer believe in anything. There are no idealists like my father left among them. They only know that to keep their power they must stick together, like cattle surrounded by wolves."

Minority Repression

Among many of the non-Russian minorities in the Soviet Union, dissent is vocal and widespread. It is also vigorously repressed. In the Ukraine, the arrests of hundreds of Ukrainian dissidents in 1965 and 1966, and subsequent repressions, have been vigorously protested by leading Ukrainian scientists, artists, and writers, including Oleg Antonov, one of the Soviet Union's leading aircraft designers.

The contempt of the Baltic people for Soviet rule remains as strong as ever. It is no longer expressed in hopeless armed resistance, as it was twenty years ago. Instead, these small nations manifest a vigorous determination to preserve their national cultures. Even the local Communist Party apparatus has sought to assert a degree of autonomy. In Estonia many works of Western literature that have never been published in Russian are printed in the native language. Two of the major underground documents recently proposing alternatives to the Communist dictatorship originated in Estonia.

Economic Unrest

Since the December 1969 Central Committee Plenum, the Soviet press has given increasing attention to the lethargy of the economy. The best informed defectors and even Soviet economists depict the economy as suffering from overcentralization, rigid control, and a system of falsification and misrepresentation that prevents anyone from knowing what the true conditions are. A recent letter to Brezhnev circulated through underground channels in Moscow described the problems of the economy in the following terms: "It is obvious to everyone that in our system nobody is involved in real work. They only throw dust in the eyes of the bosses. Phony events, such as jubilees and special days, have become for us more important than the real events of economic and social life. . . . Other states in which the economy is not ruled from the heavens, but from earth . . . are outdistancing us more and more . . . Freedom to discuss problems openly, only such freedom, can put diseased Russia on the road to recovery."

Eastern Europe

In addition to its domestic problems, the Soviet Union has had chronic difficulty in managing its satellites in Eastern Europe. In Eastern Europe the tensions in society are much greater than in the Soviet Union, the Western orientation much stronger, and the possibility

exists that at some future time one or more of these countries may successfully make the transition that Czechoslovakia essayed in 1968. It seems inevitable that, as long as the Soviet Union maintains its current system, it will be impossible for the peoples of Eastern Europe to live in real harmony with the Soviet Union and that, to maintain hegemony in the area, the Soviets will have to continue to rely upon force.

Dissident elements in the USSR and Eastern Europe display remarkable sympathy and understanding for their fellows throughout the whole Soviet dominated region. Pavel Litvinov, Larissa Daniel and others were exiled from Moscow for trying to stage a peaceful demonstration against the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Others protested the biased reporting in the Soviet press and Soviet threats before the troops moved in. Intellectuals in all Eastern European countries have actively collaborated with the Soviet dissidents, and have expressed their sympathy for those arrested and imprisoned.

With its easier access to the West, Eastern Europe acts as a conduit for books, letters, manuscripts and ideas. The flow back and forth across the Soviet borders is relatively easy and constant. The fact that Eastern European standards of tolerance and freedom of expression, although restrictive, are well above the levels permitted in the Soviet Union makes the region's ability to influence the Soviet Union a consideration of major importance to the United States.

II

Covert Action Programs Targeted at Eastern Europe and the USSR

Current CIA operations targeted at Eastern Europe and the USSR are designed to foster the tensions and cleavages outlined above. Their aim is not to promote armed rebellion, but rather to encourage the movement for greater personal freedom within the Soviet Union and to weaken the ties between the nations of Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia.

Radio Broadcasts

Free Europe, Inc., and Radio Liberty Committee, Inc., were organized in 1949 and 1951 respectively by the CIA. The major activity of each operation is radio broadcasting. Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty programming centers are located in Munich, Germany. Their staffs, composed largely of Soviet and Eastern Europe expatriates with Americans in key policy positions, represent a unique concentration of expertise and professional talent.

Radio Free Europe (RFE)

RFE currently broadcasts 19 hours daily into Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, 12 hours to Romania, and 8 hours to Bulgaria. It also conducts an extensive and respected research program on Eastern

Europe. The radio has achieved a high degree of Eastern European listener acceptance as a station which identifies with their needs, thoughts and aspirations. It is estimated that over 30 million people listen to RFE broadcasts. This percentage rises dramatically during periods of international crisis. RFE is denounced almost daily by Communist media, and on occasion by key figures of the Eastern European governments. Czechoslovak Party Secretary Husak has publicly placed a large share of the blame on RFE for his Party's inability to win over the Czechoslovak population.

The station is a political force with which the Eastern European regimes must reckon. The reason for this lies partly in RFE's pattern of cross-reporting—i.e., reporting in detail to all the Eastern European countries on domestic developments in the individual countries. This is in effect the principal way the peoples of the area learn of significant developments in their own and neighboring countries. It can be demonstrated that RFE's repeated exposure of domestic policies and methods has forced modification of censorship and similar restrictions in several of the Eastern European countries.

RFE's role in the 1968 Czechoslovak crisis is a striking example of the radio's effectiveness. Prior to the ousting of Party First Secretary Novotny in January 1968, RFE was the chief source of factual information and research analysis on domestic affairs for much of the Czechoslovak population. After the Soviet invasion and the loss of their new-found freedom, the Czechoslovak people again became dependent on the round-the-clock reporting of RFE. Audience research indicates that RFE's listenership rose to 70 percent of the population. The station received thousands of letters extolling its programs, while the Communist news media unleashed an unprecedented series of attacks on RFE. The Soviet journal *Red Star* described the radio as the "most strategic weapon in the global psychological war being carried on by the United States against the world socialist system."

Radio Liberty (RL)

Radio Liberty broadcasts round-the-clock in the Russian language, 14 hours a day in Ukrainian, and at varying lengths in 15 other national languages. In contrast to RFE, RL is targeted against the more restrictive Soviet system. Effectiveness is more difficult to measure. However, letters from listeners, defector reports and legal travelers indicate that there is a sizeable audience. It is generally agreed that RL merits a significant share of the credit for the increasing manifestations of dissent and opposition among the Soviet intelligentsia. In this respect the Sinyavskiy–Daniel trial of 1966 was a landmark. RL played a unique role in conveying the facts, the significance, and Western reactions to the trial to the Soviet people. RL has also broadcast back into the Soviet Union detailed information on every important letter, protest

document, and piece of underground literature which has reached the West through underground channels. Recent Soviet defectors, among them the author Anatole Kuznetsov, have specifically cited RL's vital function in providing such information and thereby expanding the scope and depth of dissident attitudes.

Communist Attacks on the Radios

Soviet and Eastern European attempts to discredit RFE and RL are intensive and coordinated. The Communist regimes are particularly discomfited by the two radios' detailed news coverage and highly effective cross-reporting of internal developments, and by their exploitation of intellectual ferment, nationalist tendencies and general dissent within the Soviet Union.

A measure of the Soviet concern over Western broadcasts is the extent of the Soviet jamming effort. At this time, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria also extensively jam RFE broadcasts. According to a VOA study, the Soviets use 2,000–2,500 jammers at an estimated annual cost of \$150,000,000. As indicated above, however, the jamming is marginally effective inasmuch as the target audiences hear the radios on one or more frequencies. The cost of the Soviet jamming effort can be put into perspective by comparing it with the annual operating costs of FE, Inc., and RLC, Inc., \$21,723,000 and \$12,770,000 respectively. The radios represent a 20-year investment of over \$400,000,000.

Non-Radio Programs of Free Europe, Inc., and Radio Liberty Committee, Inc.

In addition to the radios, FE, Inc., and RLC, Inc., sponsor book distribution programs. FE, Inc., also administers a program of support for exiles who fled Eastern Europe during the early post-war period. RLC, Inc., sponsors the Institute for the Study of the USSR in Munich, Germany.

FE, Inc., and RLC, Inc., have distributed a total of two and one-half million books and periodicals in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since the late 1950's. The titles comprise works which are not available in those countries because their content is considered ideologically objectionable.

The book programs are, for the most part, demonstrably effective in reaching directly significant segments of the professional and technical elite, and through them their colleagues in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, with material that can inferentially be said to influence attitudes and reinforce predispositions toward intellectual and cultural freedom, and dissatisfaction with its absence.

The [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] is a research organization supported by Radio Liberty Committee, Inc. It is also heavily engaged in a publications program designed to counter Soviet prop-

aganda in underdeveloped nations. In 1969 over 135,000 copies of its publications were distributed to the Arab countries of the Middle East. The [less than 1 line of source text not declassified] also publishes the prestigious “Prominent Personalities in the USSR” and sponsors symposia which bring together the foremost Western experts on the USSR to consider new approaches to dealing with the Communists. A recent budget reduction levied on Radio Liberty Committee, Inc., has led to a decision to terminate the [less than 1 line of source text not declassified], although efforts are being made to find ways to carry on certain of its activities independently.

[6½ pages of source text not declassified]

Election Operations

There have been numerous instances when, facing the threat of a Communist Party or popular front election victory in the Free World, we have met the threat and turned it successfully. Guyana in 1963 and Chile in 1964 are good examples of what can be accomplished under difficult circumstances. Similar situations may soon face us in various parts of the world, and we are prepared for action with carefully planned covert election programs when U.S. policy calls for them.

150. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, April 7, 1970, 8 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Dobrynin
Mr. Kissinger

The conversation took place at Dobrynin’s initiative prior to his departure for the Soviet Union for consultations.

Vietnam

After an exchange of pleasantries, Dobrynin turned the conversation to Vietnam. He said that he wanted to understand our position: were we committed to maintaining an anti-Communist Government in Saigon or were we willing to settle for true neutrality?

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box TS 36, Geopolitical File, Soviet Union, Chronological, 3/69–6/70. Top Secret; Sensitive. The conversation was held at Dobrynin’s residence. Sent to Nixon by Kissinger under an April 13 covering memorandum that summarized the conversation.

I asked why he wanted to know. Dobrynin said that if we were interested in maintaining an anti-Communist Government, the war would inevitably go on. If we were interested in a neutral government, then the Soviet Union might be able to be of some help. He knew we could sustain the war for another seven years if we wanted an anti-Communist Government, but this wouldn't lead to any conclusion.

When I probed his comment that the Soviet Union could be of some help, he said it might be possible to find some formula for neutrality. I replied that it depended on what they understood by neutrality. If they meant that neutrality entitled them to select the participants in a government and that the process had to begin with our eliminating our allies and the people we had been supporting, then this was absolutely out of the question. If their definition of neutrality matched what was commonly understood by that term, then there existed a real possibility for progress.

Dobrynin then asked me about our views of a political settlement. I said that the sharing of political power was not an easy matter to define and that I did not want to be doctrinaire about it. It seemed to me, however, that:

—first, one had to accept the Saigon Government as an objective reality;

—secondly, some process had to be developed to consult the will of the people;

—thirdly, there would have to be guarantees that would enable the participants in the political process to survive defeat.

Dobrynin said that he would think about this and report fully to his government.

Middle East

Dobrynin next turned the conversation to the Middle East. He said that we might not believe it, but the Soviet Union was genuinely interested in a compromise. However, he had come to the conclusion that talking to Sisco was getting to be a waste of time. Sisco was trying to be a great diplomat and operator. He was dealing with Dobrynin as if Dobrynin did not have any experience in diplomacy himself. For example, Sisco was asking him to write down the conditions of peace or Arab peace obligations without in advance committing himself to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Egyptian territory. This was an amateurish maneuver. Sisco could choose those elements of the Soviet proposal he liked while the Soviets were compromising themselves with the Egyptians, who were not in any event enthusiastic about the whole negotiating process.

Dobrynin said that it would be good if I intervened. I replied that we had made one effort to intervene and had been tricked by the Soviet introduction of SA-3s.

Dobrynin said that he had been instructed to tell me that the offer of a cease-fire still stood. He did not understand why we should be bothered by the SA-3s which were purely defensive weapons.

I told him that one of the most difficult issues in the history of disarmament negotiations has been how to define “defensive.” If the Israelis were deprived of air retaliation, they lost their most effective counter to Egyptian guerrilla raids. Thus, SA-3 missiles could, in fact, enhance the Egyptian offensive capability. Dobrynin said that this was not true as long as the Israelis maintain air superiority on their side of the Suez Canal.

He then asked tentatively what we would say if the Soviets promised to keep their deployment confined to Alexandria, Cairo and the Aswan Dam. I replied this might be worth considering. Dobrynin said he would come back to this proposition.

Dobrynin repeated that the Soviets were interested in a real compromise. He said they were prepared to agree to establishing a state of peace and to spell out the conditions and obligations of peace with great precision once they knew what we were prepared to do. He thought that all we were doing was sending Sisco on a fishing expedition.

I said it was true that the President did not take the same active interest in the Middle East negotiations that he did, for example, on Vietnam and SALT. However, this could change if we saw some degree of Soviet cooperation on the Middle East issues that concerned us most.

SALT

Dobrynin said that he couldn’t recall our beginning a negotiation in which the two sides knew so little about one another. He said perhaps we should have made some concrete proposal to him informally on which he could have sounded out his government. In the previous Administration, Foster always let him know the Administration’s thinking.

I told Dobrynin that I had offered to talk to him but he had never picked this up. After some inconclusive fencing about who had been responsible for the offer not being taken up, Dobrynin said that his government was serious about these negotiations. However, my suggestion that he and I settle the matter in our channel presented a difficulty. Semenov was a Deputy Foreign Minister and it was hard for a mere Ambassador to interject himself. It would help their deliberations in Moscow if I gave him some feel for what our position was likely to be. They would consider that as a sign of our good faith.²

² Nixon highlighted this paragraph.

I told Dobrynin that before he left I would indicate whether our position involved a comprehensive or a more limited option, but I would not give him the substance. I reaffirmed my willingness to settle a more limited agreement in this channel with him.³

Possible Summit

Dobrynin then asked whether we would be prepared to expand trade. I said that this depended on the general state of our relationship.

This caused Dobrynin to say that he had noticed that at the beginning of each Administration there was great reluctance to make progress. Towards the end of an Administration the willingness for progress increased, but by then time had run out. For example, Johnson tried to have a summit in the last six months of his Administration when it no longer made sense. It would have been very easy to arrange one several years earlier.

I said that for us summits were instruments; everything depended on what we wanted to achieve there. In principle, though, we were willing to have a summit with the Soviet leaders if it would lead to some practical result.

Dobrynin became visibly attentive. He had thought we were not interested and had told his leaders that a summit was not possible before 1971–1972. They had been very interested last year but had been put off by us. He asked if I was sure we were willing to have a summit. I replied that we were, under certain circumstances, for example, if there were the prospect of a major breakthrough on Vietnam. I was willing to discuss the general framework of the summit with him in any event.

Dobrynin said that one good way to have a summit would be for Kosygin to head the delegation to the U.N. and then meet the President in this context. I told him I would want to consult the President on that and would let him know before he left.

Dobrynin said that the two most fruitful subjects for a summit were SALT and the Middle East. I said we, of course, were interested in Vietnam. He replied that Vietnam could not be put on the agenda for a summit, but it could certainly be discussed once the parties got there. I suggested that he discuss the matter in Moscow and we could then pursue the conversation after he returned. Dobrynin insisted that there was great interest in a summit in the Soviet Union, and he was certain that our talk would be well received by his superiors.

Dobrynin then showed me some films of Siberia and of the Bolshoi Ballet. I left the Embassy about midnight.

³ Nixon highlighted this paragraph.

151. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, April 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

Renewed Dobrynin Talks on Mid-East—Recapitulation

Following is a recapitulation of the four recent meetings with Dobrynin on the Mid-East. The Rogers–Dobrynin meetings of March 11 and 25 set the stage for two Sisco–Dobrynin meetings on April 1 and 6.

Rogers–Sisco–Dobrynin, March 11 [Tab A]²

In brief, Dobrynin indicated Soviet willingness to resume bilateral talks and to meet U.S. wishes for a more detailed formulation on the obligations of peace provided U.S. will be more forthcoming on the question of withdrawal, particularly re Sharm al-Shaykh, Gaza and Syria.

The key to reading the specific points Dobrynin made is to note that he is talking about modifications in the USSR's June 1969 proposals³—not the U.S. October 28 document.⁴ In other words, the Soviets seemed to be wiping the slate clean of Sisco's Moscow talks last July⁵ and Secretary Rogers' New York talks in September⁶ which provided the basis for our October 28 document.

Against that implicit backdrop—later made explicit by Dobrynin—Dobrynin made these specific points:

—The USSR would be ready to supplement provisions in its plan on cessation of state of war by a provision on establishing, as a result of settlement, a state of peace.

—The USSR is prepared to meet U.S. wishes for greater detail on the obligations of the parties resulting from a state of peace “if the U.S. side shows due understanding of . . . those questions concerning the unequivocal recording of provisions for the withdrawal of troops.”

—The U.S. still has not indicated that it shares the Soviet view that sovereignty over Sharm al-Shaykh belongs to the UAR.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 653, Country Files, Mideast, Sisco Mideast Talks, Vol. III. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates Kissinger saw it. Copies were sent to Haig and Lord.

² Ellipsis and all brackets are in the source text. See Document 141.

³ See Document 58.

⁴ See Document 98.

⁵ See Document 69.

⁶ See Documents 81 and 87.

—The U.S. has given no assurances that Israeli troops are to withdraw from the Gaza sector and that this Arab territory is to be restored to its pre-June 1967 borders with the previous situation there re-established.

—The position of the Syrian government does not relieve us of the task of working out concrete aspects of a Syrian-Israeli settlement.

Secretary Rogers made clear that if we agreed to resume bilateral talks this would not signify acceptance of the Soviet proposals or willingness to go beyond our October 28 or December 18 documents.

*Rogers–Sisco–Dobrynin, March 25 [Tab B]*⁷

This was the meeting right after announcement of the U.S. decision on Israel's arms requests. Secretary Rogers expressed concern over introduction of SAM-3's into Egypt and stressed several times our concern over involvement of additional Soviet personnel there. Dobrynin was "not in a position to comment." He maintained that U.S. expression of intent to maintain Israel's superiority was not helpful to U.S.-Soviet efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement; it would be better if the two sides were equal militarily. The Secretary reminded Dobrynin that Moscow had not responded to U.S. proposals for arms limitation talks.

In replying to Dobrynin's presentation of March 11, the Secretary made these points on the effort to achieve a settlement:

—We have no objection in principle to resuming talks soon. Chances would be improved if the Soviet Union could provide beforehand certain clarifications of its position.

—In saying that it is prepared to meet the U.S. wish for greater detail on the question of peace, does the Soviet Government mean that it would accept Point 2 of our documents [where the obligations of peace are spelled out]?

—We have made our position on withdrawal clear. As concerns the UAR, we have said Israel should withdraw to the old international boundary. There must also be agreement between the parties on practical security arrangements in the Sharm al-Shaykh area. These arrangements would have to provide an absolute guarantee of free navigation through the Straits of Tiran. It is not our intention that they should call into question UAR sovereignty over Sharm al-Shaykh.

—Gaza is a special case since the question of sovereignty there has never been resolved. The pre-June 1967 situation, which the Soviet Union wants restored, was based on the Armistice of 1949, whereas we are now seeking peace.

—Does the USSR still accept the language on the Rhodes formula agreed between the U.S. and USSR last September? If not, does the USSR have alternative language that would include both indirect and direct contacts?

⁷ See Document 148.

—The U.S. position on Syria remains clear. Syria has rejected the UN resolution. There is no basis for developing guidelines for Jarring on the Syrian aspect.

*Sisco–Dobrynin, April 1 [Tab C]*⁸

Sisco and Dobrynin reviewed where the talks stand. While Sisco noted the appearance of greater oral flexibility, his inclination was to press for written counter language from the USSR. Ambassador Beam concurred and added his doubt that Moscow would move quickly to contribute new language. When Sisco suggested that Dobrynin offer changes in the U.S. October 28 paper, Dobrynin said he had instructions to talk only from the Soviet June 1969 paper.

The specific results of the meeting were:

—The Soviets continued unwilling to join in an appeal to the parties to restore the cease-fire but proposed working quietly in Tel Aviv and Cairo for a de facto cease-fire.

—The Soviets continued adamant against arms limitation talks.

—The Soviets are willing to consider a formulation on peace along lines proposed by the U.S. provided the U.S. is willing to commit itself to total withdrawal, specifically including withdrawal from Gaza and Sharm al-Shaykh. Dobrynin refused to agree to point 2 of our October 28 document but said the Soviet formulation is close to ours.

—Dobrynin proposed a slight variant of the past Soviet proposal on the relationship between the timing of withdrawal and the entry into effect of peace obligations. This has the effect of advancing Arab de jure acceptance of peace.

—Dobrynin refused to accept U.S. language on controlling the fed-ayeen but maintained the Soviets had language in mind that might approximate this.

—The Soviets no longer accept the present formulation on the Rhodes formula. Dobrynin's informal alternative went something like this: The parties will have contact between themselves through Jarring with the understanding that he could use various forms.

—Dobrynin insisted that there be specific reference to a UN force at Sharm al-Shaykh, its removal being subject to major power veto. He categorically precluded any Soviet troops being involved in such a force.

*Sisco–Dobrynin, April 6 [Tab D]*⁹

Sisco suggested that the Soviets submit in writing any formulation they have in mind on peace and negotiations if they find U.S. formulations of October 28 unsatisfactory. Dobrynin reluctantly agreed to put this request to Moscow.

⁸ Tab C, attached but not printed, is telegram 47932 to Moscow, April 2.

⁹ Tab D, attached but not printed, is telegram 51251 to Moscow, April 8.

Dobrynin submitted a text calling for Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, Sharm al-Shaykh, Golan Heights, Gaza and West Bank. The slight difference from the June 1969 Soviet proposal is that it calls for a UN buffer to be established by stages as Israeli forces withdraw.

Sisco pressed for Moscow's reaction to Secretary Rogers' expression of concern over introduction of SA-3's into the UAR. Dobrynin refused to make any commitment.

Conclusion

The Soviets have reopened the dialogue by going back to June 1969. Sisco is pressing them to submit their views as emendations of our October 28 document which incorporated the results of the most constructive part of the U.S.–USSR dialogue last July–September. So far it is a stand-off. The ball is in the Soviet court to decide whether to submit views in writing.

152. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, April 9, 1970.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

Ambassador Dobrynin came in as we had agreed at the dinner on April 7th, to get answers to two questions: (1) whether we wanted the summit talks handled through a visit by Kosygin to the United Nations as Head of the Soviet Delegation, and (2) how we proposed to handle the SALT talks. In the latter connection, Dobrynin had told me that it would help him if he could get some advance information so that he could show that he is in direct and close contact on SALT matters with the White House.

I told Dobrynin with respect to the first question that if a summit meeting were to take place this year, we would prefer to handle it out-

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box TS 36, Geopolitical File, Soviet Union, Chronological File, 3/69–6/70. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The meeting was held in Kissinger's office at the White House. Kissinger forwarded this to Nixon under an April 18 covering memorandum that summarized the conversation. The covering memorandum bears the handwritten comment, "This should have sensitive handling."

side the United Nations and as a separate initiative. Of course, we would not preclude the Soviet Prime Minister coming here but, on the whole, we would like to take it as a separate initiative.

With respect to the SALT talks, I told Dobrynin that we would present a very comprehensive proposal at Vienna, including qualitative as well as quantitative restrictions. On the other hand, we did not exclude a simple agreement this year. The best way to handle it would be for the Vienna talks to concentrate on comprehensive measures, while he and I would try to work out a limited agreement in the interval. One way might be for a recess to be taken after a few months in Vienna, during which time the President and the Soviet Prime Minister could break a deadlock and then meet to ratify it at a summit. Dobrynin said he understood and he would let me have an answer when he returned.

Dobrynin then reverted to our discussion of two days previously and asked me much the same question about Vietnam that he had already asked. How did we propose to share political power? Were we really willing to have a neutral government? How did we visualize the political evolution? I told him that the situation in Vietnam could only increase the complexity for all countries, and that it would affect our attitude on many subjects, including the Middle East.

Dobrynin then asked me about the Middle East, again making the argument that we were not really pushing as hard on the negotiations as we could. I said, "No, we, not the Soviet Union, made the last proposals." We were standing by our October 28th position. Dobrynin said the October 28th position is an old story, and we need a new position. I told him that there was no sense debating the problem because the situation was as follows: The President did not really require the Jewish world since he had been elected largely without it and, in this respect, he was freer than any other President. On the other hand, as long as the war in Vietnam continued, he did not want to alienate people with so much influence in the mass media. Therefore, the key to our attitude on the Middle East would be found in the Soviet attitude toward Vietnam. Dobrynin said that he understood this, and he had in fact reported this to Moscow.

I then asked Dobrynin about possible changes in the Soviet leadership. He said he did not think any were likely before the Party Congress, but that it was very probable afterwards. He also reaffirmed that there had been no improvement in Sino-Soviet relations.

153. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

TASS Issues Statement on Cambodia

The Soviet news agency TASS has issued a formal statement (Tab A)² on Cambodia. The statement is generally cautious in tone, not committing the Soviets to any course of action but demonstrating their continued interest in and concern about developments in Southeast Asia. The statement does not explicitly repudiate the Lon Nol Government; it makes no reference to Sihanouk. It makes no mention of possible U.S. aid to Cambodia. It stands in marked contrast to the tough statements emanating from Hanoi and Peking. Moreover, although it expresses concern about the overall peaceful settlement of the problems of Indo-China, it makes no references to the recent formation of the "Indo-China Peoples' Front." In fact its references to a peaceful settlement "of the problems of Indo-China" might be a hint that the Soviet Indo-China conference proposal is not entirely dead. The difference in this Soviet statement and the Hanoi approach is particularly striking because there have been recent conferences between Hanoi Party First Secretary Le Duan and top Soviet officials in Moscow.

The TASS statement leads (and ends) with the following sentence: "It is believed in the Soviet Union that attempts to undermine Cambodia's neutrality and widen imperialist aggression in the Indo-China peninsula may have the most serious consequences for the cause of peace and security in Southeast Asia." The statement then condemns at length the reported massacres in Cambodia; it relates them to our policy of Vietnamization (allegedly setting Asians against Asians) and claims that this "cannot but cause concern among those who are interested in the earliest resolution of the dangerous conflict and a peaceful settlement of the problems of Indo-China."

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VII. Confidential. Sent for information. Drafted by Holdridge and Richard Smyser on April 24. The memorandum is an uninitialed copy.

² Attached but not printed.

154. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, April 27, 1970, 1545Z.

2114. Subject: Middle East: April 27 Meeting with Vinogradov. Ref: Moscow 2099.²

1. I opened meeting with DepFonMin Vinogradov by pointing out that we wished to clarify that in our view next step in Sisco–Dobrynin talks following Dobrynin’s return to Washington must be written Soviet indication of what they will accept of our Oct 28 formulations,³ particularly on peace and negotiations.

2. Vinogradov said Soviet impression was that Dobrynin had offered constructive new approaches to finding common ground on ME settlement, but Sisco had been vague in his responses and then left “abruptly” for tour of ME and meeting in Tehran. Vinogradov “did not think” question of receiving formulations in writing had come up, but if common ground was found it could be expressed in writing. Main question now is how USG envisages continuation of bilateral talks.

3. I pointed out that we had been extremely explicit on question of main concern to Soviets—withdrawal—in our Oct 28 paper and now it was Soviet turn to be explicit on peace, which was subject of major concern to US and Israelis.

4. Vinogradov said Sov Gvt had frequently heard that USG had gone as far as it could in Oct 28 proposal. Such language frequently used in negotiations but if US really means that its proposal is non-negotiable there is no point in further bilateral talks. He asked specifically if US plan subject to modification, adding that answer to this question was very important and would “help solve many problems, including organizational problems of further work.”

5. I replied that I was obviously not prepared to discuss any modification to our Oct 28 paper, especially since it was drafted to take account of Soviet propositions on a number of issues and was extremely explicit on withdrawal. US position is that we have been very forthcoming and now it is Soviet turn to be specific on peace. After studying

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VII. Secret; Nodis.

² Telegram 2099 from Moscow, April 27, provides the initial summary of Beam’s meeting with Vinogradov. (Ibid.)

³ See Document 98.

Soviet language on peace and negotiations, we could then decide how far we could go together in pursuit of goals of UNSC resolution.⁴

6. Vinogradov agreed that Soviets should be more specific at some time on peace, but said that as US has tried to produce balanced peace plan from its point of view, Soviet plan also balanced from its vantage point. "Frankly," he said, "Sov Gvt ready to negotiate, to continue bilateral talks, to find workable solution which would satisfy all countries of region as quickly as possible. Situation on ground getting worse from point of view of both sides, and action necessary." He expressed hope that both sides can reach stage where something can be submitted in writing (to four) but issue now was how to proceed in bilaterals since Dobrynin, who in hospital for medical check to be followed by rest, will not return to Washington before end of May. (Vinogradov returned to this point later to stress that end of May is earliest return could be expected).

7. As to procedure for next round of negotiations, I said that key element would be Soviet readiness to produce written language amplifying its unclear and inadequate position on peace.

8. Vinogradov said that the procedures to be adopted for talks would depend on who was conducting them. He said that if he were participating he would prefer to first identify all points of agreement and disagreement orally, then would try to bridge existing gaps in further oral discussions. After this, he would try to jointly formulate agreed language on points at issue. He objected to the idea of exchanging "artillery barrages of paper" which might prove unnecessary and have the further effect of binding the participants to new positions, at least for a time.

9. Speaking "off the record" Vinogradov criticized US Oct 28 position as a "good step forward" on borders combined with "several steps backward" on vital issues such as Sharm, Gaza and security arrangements which were left aside for "direct negotiations." He claimed that although USG "sold" its proposal nicely it came as big surprise to Sov Gvt which hoped bilateral talks would be marked by continuing progress forward rather than retrogression. Before I could nail him on this he went on to say that counter-accusations that the Soviets had reneged on Rhodes formula were incorrect, since Soviets have not stepped back from it in substance. Although Israelis destroyed viability of Rhodes formula, Soviets still for flexible formula providing for negotiations through Jarring.

10. Vinogradov said Soviet Gvt ready to talk to USG and talk extensively, basically to avoid confrontation in area but also to find means

⁴ Reference is to UN Resolution 242; see footnote 5, Document 2.

of working together to achieve peace. He agreed with my observation that there was great similarity in US and Soviet positions, though from different points of view.

11. I denied that our Oct 28 proposal represented a step backward in any sense in the US position, pointing out that the idea of neutral formulations to cover points where no agreement possible was a concept Soviets accepted. Accusations of Soviet bad faith following presentation of our Oct 28 paper were natural result of procedures followed, where Soviets advanced many informal ideas orally which evaporated later. In contrast, we produced our ideas in writing and then married them to Soviet ideas in our Oct 28 paper. Later this became “the American position” while the Soviet position on peace and negotiations remains vague.

12. I also argued that process of committing ideas to paper during negotiations binds neither party since negotiations ad referendum pending agreement on whole package. Neither side need commit themselves on paper but it is essential that each understand other’s position precisely.

13. Vinogradov agreed, saying “this should be done,” but added that the main question was where and by whom. He said Sovs would prefer round in Moscow, although if USG wishes it would be possible to continue with Vorontsov in Washington.

14. If talks to be held in Moscow, Vinogradov indicated he would head Soviet team and would prefer starting with brief session to review positions of both sides and identify issues where agreement exists. He said Soviet Govt and he personally would of course welcome Sisco as US negotiator.

15. Throughout discussion Vinogradov was amiable and non-polemic and attempted to give the impression of potential flexibility.

Beam

155. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, April 29, 1970.

SUBJECT

Memorandum of Conversation with Soviet Chargé Vorontsov

The Soviet Chargé, Vorontsov, called on me at his request at 3:30. He handed me the attached note. I pointed out that it said nothing about foreign troops in Cambodia. Vorontsov said the only foreign troops in Cambodia that were confirmed were South Vietnamese. I said that in view of his inadequate knowledge of Cambodia, there was no point in continuing the conversation and that I hoped that if there were another occasion to discuss Cambodia he would be better briefed.

He asked me if the President's speech² was firm. I said yes and I would call him in if I had anything further to say on the subject.

Tab A

Note Delivered by the Soviet Chargé (Vorontsov)³

I have informed Moscow of what you told me concerning Cambodia and I am instructed to forward through you to President Nixon the following.

Moscow would like President Nixon to be clear about our definitely negative attitude towards the United States interference into internal affairs of Cambodia. The enlargement of this interference in any form could not but further complicate the situation in Indochina area—which is dangerous enough even without that—and consequently the international situation in general, for what the United States would be fully responsible.

Therefore Moscow hopes that President Nixon will weigh once more all the consequences of such his step and will take a decision not to make it.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 711, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VII. Secret; Eyes Only.

² On April 30, Nixon delivered an address to the nation on radio and television about his intention to send U.S. forces into Cambodia. (*Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, pp. 405–410)

³ No classification marking.

This position of ours is defined by a consistent course of the Soviet Government which has come out in favour of respect of Cambodia's neutrality and of insurance of its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

156. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, May 5, 1970.

SUBJECT

The Kremlin Scene

For the last several weeks there has been unusual interest and speculation about the situation within the top Soviet leadership. You are probably aware of many of the rumors and the more sensational reports.²

The consensus inside the government, and concurred in by some leading scholars, seems to be that there has, in fact, been trouble in the leadership, but that the resolution, if only temporary, has been in Brezhnev's favor.

His image is sharper—as the result of intensive nation-wide television exposure; his confidence is apparently reflected in his wide-ranging speeches covering all important internal and external topics. And several second level personnel changes, [*1 line of source text not declassified*] suggest he is on top.

What is not clear, however, is the source of the trouble. One view is that it has been Brezhnev's doing: the result of the pointed attacks he launched last December against the government's management of the economy. This theory is documented mainly from material drawn from open sources.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Classified Files, Box CL 211, Geopolitical Files, Soviet Union, Chronological Files. Confidential. Drafted by Hyland on April 28. The memorandum was a copy with an indication that Kissinger signed the original. Sent for information. The memorandum indicates the President saw it on May 20.

² Telegram 424 from Moscow, January 26, reported press rumors about Brezhnev's absence from public view since December 19, 1969. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 15–1 USSR)

An alternative explanation is that Brezhnev was challenged for his many failures in economic policy (a CIA report³ to this effect from good sources [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] is the main evidence). He may have been on the defensive until fortuitous illnesses in the politburo, plus a possible opportunistic switch by Shelepin, shifted the balance in Brezhnev's favor and actually enabled him to score some temporary gains. Others feel Shelepin was beaten in a straightforward power struggle.

Whatever the dispute over scenarios, there is hard evidence of three politburo meetings between 24–27 March. About this time the violent press campaign on the economic failures abated, and Brezhnev emerged from his shell with his television speeches. Some observers believe that Brezhnev was only able to win the day by considerable compromise on his economic campaign—that is, by softening the harsh, purge-like atmosphere he was generating.

The question remains whether Brezhnev's gain has been at the expense of collective leadership in general, or only because of the weakening of some of the stronger, more senior members of the politburo (Kosygin and Suslov). Many observers believe that Kosygin will retire—honorably—and that this is part of the political play in Moscow.

Signs of Disarray

Though there is agreement that the "crisis" has been resolved for now, there are still some strange anomalies in Soviet behavior.

—For example, Malik's contradictory statements on a Geneva conference are still puzzling.

—A similar incident occurred in the Middle East. The Soviet press attaché in Amman was quoted (accurately, it is claimed) making outrageous new pronouncements on Soviet support for the liquidation of Israel. The next day he repudiated his remarks. Another Soviet diplomat, in Baghdad, made a somewhat similar comment recently.

A monumental mistake was uncovered in the 50,000 word Lenin Theses; it turned out that a long quotation of "social factors of force" attributed to Lenin was actually from the Austrian Social Democrat Otto Bauer, whom Lenin had roundly attacked as a "renegade." This was discovered by the East Germans, and then widely publicized by the Chinese.

—Finally, there was an amusing lapse by Andrei Kirilenko, a senior politburo member and a long-time associate of Brezhnev, dating back to the Ukraine and presumably one of the more powerful leaders. He made a speech in Yerevan on April 14, two days before the opening of SALT, which contained the following blooper:

"Preliminary talks were held in *Helsinki* on reducing strategic nuclear weapons. These talks (SALT) will continue in Vienna *in May*."

³ Not found.

Apparently Kirilenko's speech writers dusted off an old text from last fall and central censorship either didn't see it, or know the facts, or bother to correct a senior leader.

All of these suggest that there has been an unusual air of uncertainty and preoccupation in Moscow in recent months.

157. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, May 6, 1970.

SUBJECT

Kosygin's Press Conference on Cambodia

Premier Kosygin employed some harsh, denunciatory language in his press conference (May 4) *but* he made no new commitments, nor did he foreshadow any major diplomatic action by the USSR to support Hanoi.

His main theme was that our actions in Cambodia would reverberate on both US-Soviet relations and the "entire international situation." He sought to imply that other political issues would thus be affected: "What is the worth of international agreements in which the United States is taking part *or is going to take part* if it violates so unceremoniously the commitments it has assumed?" When asked, however, if he meant to imply if the Soviet position in the SALT talks would be broken off, he dodged a direct reply and said they would be "on guard."

In dealing with the immediate situation in Indo China, Kosygin's language was virulent, but he stopped short on a number of key points. He did not commit the USSR to a new level of material aid, but said that this would be "re-examined." He referred to Sihanouk as the "lawful head of state," but only in the past tense. He termed the fighting in Cambodia a "civil war," but did not disavow the Lon Nol government, or pledge Soviet support to Sihanouk, or the Indo China People's Front.

He did appear, however, to rule out any international conference, though this was in the context of the Indonesian effort.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret. Sent for information. The memorandum indicates the President saw it. Drafted by Hyland on May 4. On May 5, Rogers drafted a memorandum for Nixon about Kosygin's press conference, which bears the handwritten comment, "OBE'd per S[onnen]feldt's office." Rogers's memorandum is *ibid*.

Similarly, he evaded a direct reply on whether the ICC should be reconstituted.

On one point, Kosygin seems to have gone further than other Communist statements: he claimed that the bombing at North Vietnam “actually nullifies the decision of . . . President Johnson on the termination of all air bombings . . .”² He did not spell out what actions, if any, this meant for the Communist side.

There is little doubt that the Soviets have deliberately escalated their rhetoric, in a rather dramatic way by Kosygin’s unique participation. One motive presumably was not to be out-planked [flanked] on the left by the statements simultaneously coming out of Hanoi, Peking, and Pyongyang.

But the content, stripped of its expected propaganda stridency, leaves the Soviet position much the same as it was on the immediate issues in Southeast Asia, with the possible exception of another backward step away from an international conference.

Nevertheless, the Premier has set the stage for retaliatory political action by linking our action in Cambodia with the general international situation and implying an effect on the Soviet delegation position in the SALT talks.

I suspect that the Soviets are very uncertain what the effect of our Cambodia action will be on the situation on the ground in Southeast Asia. The Soviets may also be uneasy about our general posture toward them, in light of the publicity for their increasingly dangerous involvement in the Middle East. In these circumstances, the Soviet leaders apparently are not about to underwrite a vast new Indo China strategy, particularly if Chinese influence over Sihanouk and the new Indo China Front is going to grow.

The Soviet aim seems to be to give a general warning without trying themselves to any given course. They recognize, of course, that by implying a wider effect of Cambodia on other international issues, they can exploit concern in this country.

It appears uncertain whether the Soviets intend to withdraw from the SALT talks. It might seem an attractive way to exploit US domestic reaction but their interests in these talks go beyond the immediate problems of Southeast Asia. It seems more likely that the Soviets will downgrade the talks, and try to use the events in Southeast Asia as a means to make new overtures to the Europeans, trying to split our Allies (e.g., France) from the United States. Indeed, Kosygin noted in this press conference that the events in Cambodia made a European Security conference all the more necessary.

² Ellipses in the source text.

158. Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Helms to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, May 13, 1970.

SUBJECT

Action Program to Exploit "Tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—Challenge and Opportunity"

REFERENCE

Memorandum to the Director from Henry A. Kissinger, dated 14 April 1970,²
Subject: Exploitation of "Tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—Challenge and Opportunity"

1. This will be the first in a series of monthly progress reports³ that I propose to make on our program of action designed to put pressure on the Soviets. It will be keyed to my conversations with you on this subject, and will tie in with our *Tensions* paper. It will also respond to your 14 April memorandum, which asked for specific plans for operations that we consider feasible and for additional steps we recommend to exploit tensions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

2. I have instructed my staff to pursue this program as a high priority undertaking. Many of our on-going operations fit precisely into the pattern we have discussed, and while calling on our stations for an intensification of current effort in this specific direction, I propose at the same time to give you a more detailed picture of what is actually being done. Thus, Attachment No. 1⁴ presents a breakdown by region of a number of active operations, many of which are already causing the Soviets considerable discomfiture.

3. I have alerted [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] virtually all—of our stations and bases to the urgency I attach to rapid

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Executive Registry Files, Job 80–R01284, Box 5, S–17.10, *Tensions in USSR*, 1970. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. On June 16, Peter Jessup, staff member for the 303 Committee, informed Helms of the following: "General Haig requests that this office do the summary of the exploitation of tensions in the USSR and the bloc from now on. The first memorandum from Kissinger to higher authority was drafted by Commander [Jonathan] Howe. It seems perfectly reasonable that this should be done by the Chapin/Jessup/DePue axis, thereby reducing outside access to this material." (National Security Council, Intelligence Files, Box 7, CIA/Exploitation of *Tensions*, 4/7/70–12/4/72)

² Not printed. (Ibid.)

³ Monthly progress reports, using a similar format to this first report, were issued through 1972. Helms' covering memoranda and the reports are *ibid.*

⁴ Attached but not printed.

development of new initiatives in this field. I have made it clear that the objective is not only harassment of the Soviets, but sustained pressure through covert means to induce on their part a more cooperative posture on international issues of vital importance to the U.S. Government. This is to be done by exacerbating their sensitivities both within the USSR and East European countries, and abroad in areas where the Soviet presence or interests are significant political factors. The over-all program, however, is not to be limited to short-term impact operations. We will also give careful thought to corresponding action efforts of a long-term and positive nature, aimed at neutralizing Soviet covert political operations in important "third countries." In addition to stepping up the pace of their current operations, I have asked our stations to give us their best thinking and ideas for new programs. To date, we have received detailed and thoughtful responses [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*], and the outlook is encouraging.

4. To give you further perspective on this effort, I would like to say that we have refined our analysis of Soviet vulnerabilities somewhat since completing the *Tensions* paper, and it seems to me that the majority of our operational approaches will be concentrated in a number of sensitive zones where we believe the Soviets are particularly susceptible to covert action exploitation. These include the following:

a. Sino-Soviet tensions. The Sino-Soviet border conflict and the world-wide struggle for control of Communist parties make the Soviets highly susceptible [*1 line of source text not declassified*].

b. Soviet involvement in the Middle East. Because the Soviet presence in the Middle East entails many volatile factors, there will be opportunities for inducing strain between the Arabs and the Soviets.

c. Soviet relations with East Europe. The steady growth of nationalism in East Europe in the face of Soviet military intervention and economic exploitation makes this area a fertile ground for [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] operations to heighten tensions between the USSR and its vassal states.

d. Soviet/Cuban relations. Castro's well-founded suspicion regarding Soviet maneuvers to dominate political and economic life in Cuba, possibly affecting Castro's own future leadership, creates a situation that invites [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] manipulation.

e. Soviet domestic dissidence and economic stagnation. By fostering unrest among the Soviet intelligentsia it may be possible to create pressures inducing the Kremlin to curtail its foreign involvements in order to concentrate on critical domestic situations.

5. As we move ahead, I naturally expect to draw more heavily on proposals coming in from the field, supplementing what we have under way and what we can generate at the Headquarters end. Attachment No. 2⁵ will give you a cross-section of plans now in the mill, many

⁵ Attached but not printed.

of which I hope to go ahead with as soon as possible. Attachment No. 3⁶ offers ideas for possible action in the future. Most of these are still in the process of scrutiny and appraisal, but they give you a picture of our trend of thought.

6. I will look forward to your initial reaction to this material and I will be happy to discuss any aspect of it at your convenience.⁷

Richard Helms⁸

⁶ Attached but not printed.

⁷ At the bottom of the page is the handwritten comment, "P.S. Please return these papers for safe keeping. R.H."

⁸ Printed from a copy that indicates Helms signed the original.

159. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 2, 1970, 3 p.m.

Part I

SUBJECT

Middle East

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary	Ambassador Dobrynin
Assistant Secretary Sisco	Yuli Vorontsov, Minister-Counselor,
Mr. Dubs, EUR/SOV	Soviet Embassy

At the outset of the meeting, the Secretary asked about Dobrynin's health. The Ambassador said he felt good.

Dobrynin said he understood that the meeting this afternoon would focus on the Middle East. Nevertheless, he was prepared to discuss other matters, such as European affairs and SALT, in the future at the Secretary's convenience.

Dobrynin said that he had been authorized during his recent consultation in Moscow to inform the U.S. Government that he was prepared to continue discussions on the Middle East with Mr. Sisco. He hoped that mutual efforts would lead to a solution. The Soviet

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret; Nodis. Parts I–III, were drafted by Dubs on June 3. The meeting was held in Rogers' office.

Government was also interested in finding guidelines which Ambassador Jarring could use in the search for a settlement on the Middle East.

Dobrynin then referred to his conversations with Mr. Sisco prior to the latter's trip to the Middle East. Dobrynin noted that the U.S. side had expressed an interest during those talks in obtaining more detailed formulations on the nature of peace and the obligations which the sides would undertake. At the same time, the Soviet side had indicated an interest in more precise language from the U.S. on the question of withdrawal and other matters. Dobrynin said he was instructed to present formulations on the two points mentioned and that he hoped these points would meet the wishes of the U.S. Dobrynin then handed the Secretary two papers with the following formulations (*Note: these actually are extensions or modifications of points 3 and 11 of Section II of the Soviet paper of June 17, 1969*):

"Point 3, Section II

From the moment of deposit with the UN of the concluding document or documents the parties shall refrain from acts contradicting the cessation of the state of war and the establishment of the state of peace, in accordance with paragraphs 10 and 11, with the understanding that, juridically, cessation of the state of war and establishment of the state of peace will begin at the same time of the completion of the first stage of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territories occupied during the conflict of 1967."

"Point 11, Section II

The Arab countries, parties to the settlement, and Israel mutually agree

—to respect and recognize the sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability and political independence of each other and their mutual right to live in peace in secure and recognized borders without being subjected to threats or use of force;

—to undertake everything that is necessary so that any military or hostile acts, with the threat or use of force against the other side will not originate from and are not committed from within their respective territories;

—refrain from intervening directly or indirectly in each other's domestic affairs for any political, economic or other reasons."

Dobrynin commented that these two formulations along with others they had presented to Sisco previously would stand or fall together. In any event, he expressed the hope that they would remain confidential. The Soviet side looks forward toward movement from the U.S.

Commenting that we would look at the two formulations carefully, the Secretary then recalled his conversation with Dobrynin of March 25,²

² See Document 148.

at which time he had noted that the U.S. found the operational involvement of Soviet military personnel in the UAR defenses to be serious and potentially dangerous. The Secretary noted that in reply Dobrynin had expressed the view that Soviet actions were of a defensive nature and that Dobrynin had expressed the hope that the U.S. would be of some assistance in getting the Israelis to desist from deep-penetration raids. Since that conversation, the Secretary noted Israel has halted the deep-penetration raids and Israeli representatives have publicly stated that Israel would observe a cease-fire. In addition, Prime Minister Meir has publicly accepted, during a speech in the Knesset, Security Council Resolution 242. The Secretary said that Israel's position on deep-penetration raids was announced by Israeli Defense Minister Dayan on May 4. Subsequently, on May 26, Dayan went further by indicating that Israeli air activity was being limited to an area 30 kilometers west of the Canal. These moves on the part of Israel represented real progress, and we feel that we have been helpful in this context by urging Israel to cease its deep-penetration raids. Furthermore, in our view, Prime Minister Meir's acceptance of Security Council Resolution 242 provides a basis for negotiations.

The Secretary then said that the U.S. remained deeply concerned over the increased military involvement of the Soviet Union in the UAR. In view of this concern he wished to convey a statement,³ the text of which would be provided to the Ambassador after the meeting. The statement, which he wished to convey to the Soviet Government, reads as follows:

"The USSR has indicated that Soviet military activities in the UAR will remain defensive. We want to make clear that we would not view the introduction of Soviet personnel, by air or on the ground, in the Canal combat zone as defensive since such action could only be in support of the announced UAR policy of violating the cease-fire resolutions of the Security Council. We believe that introduction of Soviet military personnel into the delicate Suez Canal combat zone could lead to serious escalation with unpredictable consequences to which the U.S. could not remain indifferent. In this connection, we believe, and I am sure you do, it is neither in the interest of the Soviet Union nor the United States for the Middle East to become an area of confrontation between us."

The Secretary then noted that the Soviet Union had at one point indicated an interest in a cease-fire in the area. The U.S. side would like to renew discussions on this subject with Dobrynin as well as on the general matter of a Middle East settlement. With respect to the

³ According to Kissinger's memoirs, *White House Years*, p. 574, "Rogers called in Dobrynin to read him the following extraordinary statement, without informing me or (so far as I know) Nixon."

continuation of the talks between the Ambassador and Mr. Sisco, we believe this very desirable. We welcome the written formulations provided by the Ambassador and are willing to resume bilateral discussions very soon.

Mr. Sisco noted that the U.S. side would wish a bit of time to review the new formulations and to consider them in the light of papers that had been exchanged previously.

Dobrynin emphasized that the formula on mutual obligations should be kept very confidential. He had no particular problem regarding publicity surrounding meetings but did hope that the substance of the proposals advanced during conversations would not be revealed publicly. Dobrynin noted further that he had no objections to having the fact revealed that new proposals were advanced, so long as the substance was not disclosed. He warned that if the proposals were leaked, the Soviets would not feel bound by them. Mr. Sisco suggested that any public disclosure that new formulations had been advanced would only arouse curiosity and could lead to unwarranted speculation. Mr. Sisco, therefore, suggested that nothing be said publicly on this score. Dobrynin agreed.

The Secretary then asked Dobrynin whether he could provide any clarification regarding the Soviet Union's intentions with respect to Soviet personnel and military equipment in the UAR. Dobrynin replied that he was not qualified to discuss "military details." He referred to the Dayan statements regarding penetration raids and wondered whether these represented personal comments or whether they were sanctioned by the Government of Israel.

Alluding to the Secretary's remarks, Dobrynin said that the only thing that has happened in the Middle East is that deep-penetration into UAR air space and bombardment of heavily populated Egyptian areas by Israel have ceased. This is the only thing which has really changed in the Middle East. He added that the outlook for the Middle East was not very hopeful if U.S. policy was aimed at maintaining Israel's military superiority and Israel's policy of dealing from a position of strength. If, on the other hand, the U.S. wants to find a solution that would be fair to both Israel and the Arab countries, the Soviet Union would be willing to cooperate. Frankly, Dobrynin said, maybe the situation now is a little more equal in the military sense. Perhaps this provides a good opportunity to advance toward a settlement. The Soviet Union feels that the time may be ripe. Dobrynin stressed that the Soviet Union does not feel that anything has happened in the way of a developing confrontation between the Soviet Union and the U.S. He wanted to assure the Secretary that the Soviet Union does not want such a confrontation, even though he claimed that some forces in the world and pro-Zionist forces in the U.S. would like this to happen. Do-

brynin proceeded to repeat that nothing has changed drastically in the situation, looking at it coolly and realistically. A possibility for a peaceful settlement still exists, and there is no doubt from the Soviet side with respect to not wanting a confrontation.

In reply to Dobrynin, the Secretary said there should be no doubt that the U.S. wanted a fair and equitable solution. Our formulations of December 9⁴ indicated that. These proposals were unacceptable to Israel, and the UAR had not accepted the proposals either. With respect to other comments by Dobrynin, the Secretary said that we felt strongly that a shift in the military situation had taken place. It is conceivable that the Arabs, having felt deeply humiliated in the past, may be in a better frame of mind now. The basic question, however, is whether the Soviet Union and the Arabs really want a peaceful settlement. We feel that we should actively pursue a political solution. The Secretary underlined that any additional actions by the Soviet Union, especially toward the Suez Canal, could be highly explosive and that is why we felt it necessary to make the statement that we did. We believe that the time is ripe to work toward a peaceful settlement and we will work actively toward this end. The Secretary said that he could not think of anything that would be more helpful in improving the world atmosphere at the moment than a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. He reminded Dobrynin that Israel's actions and statements over the past weeks were not totally apart from what we have done in urging Israel to be more flexible in its positions. In addition to the statements and actions he had already referred to, the Secretary cited Foreign Minister Eban's comment that the world would be surprised at the concessions that Israel would make once genuine negotiations got underway. We have not seen anything similarly forthcoming from Nasser's side, however. The Secretary said that he hoped the Soviet Union would impress upon the Arabs the importance of a settlement. Otherwise, it can be seen that the fedayeen would become more and more a factor in the situation and unlikely to be subject to the influence of others.

In response to Dobrynin's request, Mr. Sisco said his office would provide Mr. Vorontsov with the text of the statement made by the Secretary as well as information bearing on the statements of Defense Minister Dayan and Prime Minister Meir to which the Secretary had referred.

*Part II*⁵

SUBJECT

NATO Communiqué and Declaration

⁴ See Document 104.

⁵ Confidential.

[Omitted here is the same list of participants as in Part I.]

During a meeting which focused on other matters, the Secretary noted that he had just returned from a NATO meeting in Rome.⁶ He wished to provide the Ambassador with copies of the NATO Communiqué and Declaration on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions.⁷ The Secretary commented that the Italian Government was asked by NATO to transmit these documents to European governments, including the Soviet Government. Nevertheless, he wished to provide a copy to the Ambassador as a courtesy, noting at the same time that we view these documents seriously and that we hoped the Soviet Union would give serious consideration to them and respond constructively.

Dobrynin suggested that he and the Secretary might talk about the document and other European matters in the near future. The Secretary suggested that they might get together next week.

*Part III*⁸

SUBJECT

SALT

[Omitted here is the same list of participants as in Part I.]

The Secretary took advantage of Dobrynin's call to indicate that Ambassador Smith had sent a cable to Washington suggesting that we impress upon the Soviets that it would be helpful if they would be more specific with respect to their SALT proposals and answers to our questions.

Dobrynin said that the Soviets were at a point of trying to sort out the proposals that had been advanced by the U.S. The Soviets were attempting to ascertain whether it would be useful to concentrate on a broad approach or to focus on items which might be the subject of an initial, limited agreement. Dobrynin indicated that he would convey the Secretary's comments to Moscow.

⁶ Rogers headed the U.S. delegation to the ministerial meeting of NATO, which was held in Rome, May 26–27. A text of his arrival remarks is in *Department of State Bulletin*, June 22, 1970, p. 776.

⁷ A text of the NATO communiqué is *ibid.*, p. 775.

⁸ Secret; Nodis.

160. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, June 5, 1970.

SUBJECT

Conversation with Yuly Vorontsov, Counselor at the Soviet Embassy, at the Motion Picture Association of America, June 4

The only substantive conversation was as follows:

Joe Sisco came up and, in the course of some banter about whether or not this would be a busy summer, said that the Soviets should recognize that large Congressional majorities could still be mustered for anti-Soviet positions. Specifically, he said, that the 76 [73] Senators² who are urging the President to sell Phantoms to Israel did so out of a deep concern over Soviet actions. It did not take much to arouse this country against the Soviets if a threat to our interests was sensed. Sisco said that this ready reservoir of popular US anti-Soviet sentiment could well make life more difficult for both our governments.

Vorontsov said the Israelis were trying to get the US and the Soviets embroiled with each other and were responsible for the Congressional actions. In Soviet judgment, most Americans understood the policies of confrontation could not accomplish anything vis-à-vis the Soviets, who could not be intimidated. Most US people wanted the US to keep its hands off in the Middle East and elsewhere. Only the Israelis and a few Americans were picturing the Middle East conflict as one between the Soviet Goliath and the Israeli David.

I said that Vorontsov should not underrate the suspicion of the USSR that remains among many Americans, even if it seems now to be largely beneath the surface. Americans were still capable of being aroused by Soviet efforts to damage our interests. It was a mistake to think that the Israelis alone were responsible for pressures on the Phantoms or for our concern about Soviet conduct in the Middle East.

Helmut Sonnenfeldt³

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 284, Memcons of Staff, January–September 1970. Confidential. Sent for information. Copies were sent to Kissinger and Ash.

² In reaction to the President's decision to postpone delivery of F-4 Phantom jet fighter-bombers to Israel, 73 Senators sent a letter to the President urging him to reconsider.

³ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

161. Memorandum of Meeting¹

Washington, June 5, 1970.

President's Meeting with his Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board

PARTICIPANTS

The President	Dr. William Baker
Admiral George Anderson	Mr. Franklin Murphy
Mr. Gordon Gray	Governor Nelson Rockefeller
Mr. Robert Murphy	Mr. Henry A. Kissinger
Mr. J. Patrick Coyne	
Brigadier General A.M. Haig, Jr.	

The President convened the meeting at 12:05. He introduced the meeting by pointing out that he was to have a National Security Council meeting sometime in the following week.² He made the following points to the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board:

—Escalation by the Soviets has put the heat on the United States and the recent action by 73 Senators³ outlining support for the President in this crisis underlines the importance of the event.

—The President pointed out that the Board should be aware that Arab moderates could be inclined to lean in the direction of the United States due to the Soviet aggressiveness.

—The Arab moderates obviously do not want the balance of power to shift them.

—It is difficult to maintain a balance in the Middle East with the introduction of Soviet combat personnel into Egypt. The President pointed out that some maintained position that we should do nothing. But if we do nothing the Israelis may be forced to act. Also, it is apparent that there will be no settlement without U.S. and Soviet agreement. This may be possible sooner or later. If we wait for later, then the President visualizes some flash point with great dangers which might then ultimately result in agreement. The Soviets on the other hand probably are delighted with a status quo since they are exploiting it with greatly increased influence.

The President also pointed out that the Soviets fear the fedayeen just as does Nasser. However, on balance, to the degree that we line up solidly with Israel, the Soviets acquire support from the other elements by default. Finally, the President emphasized that the main danger today is that Israel may move militarily and that we will be looking

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 275, Agency Files, PFIAB, Vol. IV. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting was held in the Cabinet Room.

² See Document 166.

³ See footnote 2, Document 160.

down the barrels with the Soviet Union again. On balance, the President believes that if there is to be a settlement, it must be imposed. It would be a settlement which would be not to the liking of either Israel or the Arabs. It is really a question of the degree of dissatisfaction shared by both. For this reason, the U.S. and the Soviets must talk, but at a time and under circumstances in which the Soviets feel it is in their interest to do so. They do not feel this way at present. So we must keep them worried about the Middle East. The President emphasized that he had no domestic political problem on this issue and it would be influenced only by the national interests. At present, he feels that it is necessary that we put Israel in a position that they can be a serious worry to the Soviets. The President added that the U.S. has no illusions about Four Power or Israeli/Nasser talks. The only solution would be one imposed by both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Franklin Murphy stated that the Arabs feel that the loss of oil is a deterrent to the United States and its actions with respect to Israel. He wondered whether or not we were studying the implications of what it would mean to lose Middle East oil. The President replied that this would be a serious turn of events, especially from Europe's point. On the other hand, the President pointed out the Arab oil producers cannot drink their oil and must have a market. This was the issue in Iran some years ago.

Franklin Murphy then added: Isn't there a wheel within a wheel. Without the benefits and revenues from the oil in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the fedayeen movement would collapse. Dr. Kissinger added that the fedayeen movement was fundamentally subsidized by the moderate Arabs, as well as some Soviet support.

Robert Murphy stated if we examine the Middle East issue in depth, I feel that what you have said will be largely verified. The President replied: Yes, this indicates that the oil problem is not quite so bad as frequently depicted, and that in any event the Arabs must sell their oil.

Admiral Anderson stated that it is also important that we, the United States, do not get isolated on this issue and that we keep our moderate Arab friends with us. The President agreed that this is necessary on the surface at any rate.

Governor Rockefeller stated that as we look down the road, we can see the Soviets behind all the problems in the Middle East and he wondered whether or not they could absorb all of the Middle East's oil.

Franklin Murphy stated that while these are the realities of the Middle East situation, the evidence is that the Soviet's role in the Middle East is not understood in the Moslem world and they view it as strictly an anti-Israeli problem. Dr. Kissinger stated that the Moslems worry about the Soviet Union on entirely different grounds. Robert Murphy stated that he believed that on balance the Soviets do not

enjoy that much prestige in the Middle East among the Arab nations. The President interrupted, nevertheless the wheels continue to turn. He wants to consider this issue on the 16th of June with the view of deciding where we go from here.

[Omitted here is discussion of Southeast Asia.]

162. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, June 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

Secretary Rogers' Conversation with Dobrynin

Attached is a copy of the memorandum of conversation between Secretary Rogers and Ambassador Dobrynin on June 2 (Tab A).² You are already familiar with the general outline of their discussion and the memcon adds little of importance to that. It does, however, give the text of the new Soviet formulations on the nature of peace and the obligations which the Arabs and Israelis would undertake in a peace settlement. You will recall that Assistant Secretary Sisco feels that these formulations represent a "slight advance." The following is a more detailed assessment.

The Formulations

Dobrynin informed Secretary Rogers that he was authorized to continue discussions on the Middle East with Assistant Secretary Sisco. He then referred to his discussion with Sisco earlier this year during which Sisco had asked for more detailed Soviet formulations on the nature of peace and the obligations which the Arabs and Israelis would undertake. At the same time, Dobrynin noted he had indicated the Soviet interest in more precise U.S. language on withdrawal and other matters. Dobrynin then handed the Secretary two papers with the following formulations (actually extensions or modifications of two points

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates Kissinger saw it.

² Document 159.

made in the original Soviet paper of June 17, 1969, with our underlining added):³

“Point 3, Section II

From the moment of deposit with the UN of the concluding document or documents the parties shall refrain from acts contradicting the cessation of the state of war and the establishment of the state of peace, in accordance with paragraphs 10 and 11, with the understanding that, *juridically, cessation of the state of war and establishment of the state of peace will begin at the same time of the completion of the first stage of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territories occupied during the conflict of 1967.*”

“Point 11, Section II

The Arab countries, parties to the settlement, and Israel mutually agree

—to respect and recognize the sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability and political independence of each other and their mutual right to live in peace in secure and recognized borders without being subjected to threats or use of force;

—*to undertake everything that is necessary so that any military or hostile acts, with the threat or use of force against the other side will not originate from and are not committed from within their respective territories;*

—refrain from intervening directly or indirectly in each other’s domestic affairs for any political, economic or other reasons.”

In conclusion, Dobrynin commented that these two formulations along with the others that had been presented to Sisco previously—that is the June 1969 Soviet document and presumably Soviet commentary since early March—would stand or fall together.

Background

The new formulations must be viewed against the background of the recent history of our dialogue with the Soviets on a Middle East settlement (see Tab B⁴ for a more detailed recapitulation). You will recall that in early March Dobrynin indicated to Secretary Rogers the Soviet willingness to resume bilateral talks and to meet U.S. wishes for more detailed formulations on the obligations of peace *provided* we would be more forthcoming on the issue of withdrawal, particularly regarding Sharm al-Shaikh, Gaza and Syria. He also said the USSR would be ready to supplement provisions in its plan on the cessation of the state of war by a provision on establishing, as a result of settlement, a state of peace. Dobrynin was not, however, addressing himself

³ Printed here as italics. See Document 58.

⁴ Tab B is printed as Document 151.

directly to our October 28 document⁵ but rather was talking about modifications in the USSR's June 1969 proposals.

Before Dobrynin returned to Moscow, he had three other meetings at State on the Middle East—another session in late March with Secretary Rogers which completed setting the stage for two Sisco–Dobrynin meetings on April 1 and 6. Secretary Rogers made it clear that we were unwilling to go beyond our earlier proposals (the October 28 document on the UAR and the December 18 proposals on the Jordan aspect), although we had no objection to resuming the bilateral talks. Assistant Secretary Sisco's talks with Dobrynin were not very fruitful, although the door was left open to further discussions. Essentially, they reviewed the state of play, and Dobrynin made clear he had instructions to talk only from the Soviet June 1969 paper.

Analysis

It is possible to see, as Sisco does, a "slight advance" over their earlier positions. The caveat should be quickly added, however, that this may be highly illusionary. The Soviets have made an apparent concession on one key issue—Arab control of the fedayeen—but seem to have retrogressed in other important areas since last March. On balance, therefore, it may be that there is really no net movement in our favor.

On the positive side, the Soviets, after many months of pressure from us, have finally agreed in effect to the principle of the Arab governments assuming the obligation to control the fedayeen after a settlement. This has been a key issue for us because there is virtually no chance of bringing the Israelis along without such an Arab commitment. They have also given us half a loaf on the juridical timing of peace by saying now that a formal state of peace can come into effect after completion of the first stage of withdrawal.

On the negative side, the Soviets, by talking about modifications in their June document, seem to be wiping the slate clean of Sisco's Moscow talks last July and Secretary Rogers' New York talks in September which provided the basis for our October 28 document. In effect, they are still rejecting our total package in favor of building on their initial, and to us unacceptable, approach of a year ago. In fact, Dobrynin's comment that the two new formulations on peace would stand or fall together with "others" that had been presented to Sisco has a somewhat negative ring.

The Soviets seem to have raised other new barriers to progress. Their continuing insistence on obtaining more precise language from us on the question of withdrawal is probably the best example. In the Four Power talks they have made total withdrawal without any border

⁵ See Document 98.

rectifications the condition for any further movement and they seem to be implying the same in our bilateral dialogue. At a minimum they want us to fill in the gaps such as Gaza, Jerusalem, Sharm al-Sheikh that we have so far left to the parties to negotiate. There is yet to be a satisfactory response from the Soviets on how the parties will negotiate, since they apparently wrote off the Rhodes formula last March.

Conclusion

On the whole it is difficult to hold out much hope for progress in the bilateral talks with the Soviets. They seem to be following a game plan that gives us just enough bait to remain interested while they try to sell us a position based on maximum Arab demands. For instance, the Arab commitment to control the fedayeen is important to us and the Israelis, but it hardly matches with our agreeing to spell out more on the withdrawal issue. Acceptance of control over the fedayeen is an important concession from the Soviets and Arabs but withdrawal is the foundation of the entire Israeli position.

The interesting question to ask, however, is: Does Moscow want these talks more than we do? It would seem to me that the USSR has a greater interest than we do in talking just for the sake of talking. They want to preserve the image of reasonableness while they help the Egyptians militarily and benefit from the deteriorating situation on the ground. Also, Nasser seems to want to keep the negotiating option open and it would be difficult for the Soviets to cut him off. Our main interest is in real progress toward a settlement. We have some interest in looking reasonable too, but in present circumstances we are billed as the obstacle to progress, so the talks do not provide much in that regard. They could be broken off *if* we chose some other move that would cast the U.S. as the peacemaker and the USSR as the obstructionist.

I will be sending you shortly a more comprehensive analysis of our talks with the Soviets on the Middle East.

163. Memorandum From William Hyland of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, June 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

Soviet Intentions in the Middle East and Our Options

Any decision made on the Middle East necessarily involves some basic assumptions about the character of the Soviet position.

The point is correctly made that had it not been for the deep penetration raids the Soviets would not have involved themselves directly. This is probably right. The Soviets had no master plan. We have the hardest possible intelligence that the decisions leading to the present situation were approved by Brezhnev on January 28–29, in the wake of Nasser's secret visit to Moscow. The Soviets had no choice but to support Nasser, and strong moves were obviously called for.

Nevertheless, it is highly irrelevant to our present policy choices whether the Israelis are at fault. The character of the Soviet move into the UAR should not be underrated simply because Israeli action precipitated it.

It is a unique turn of Soviet policy—never before have the Soviets put their own forces in combat jeopardy for the sake of a non-communist government. They have only done so now because of the enormous stakes involved for their power position. One of the dangerous consequences of their forward policy in the Middle East is that having accumulated a large vested interest, they have had to devise new ways to protect their gains. It is not only a question of Soviet willingness to accept a much higher level of risk, it is their willingness to do so in a situation over which their control is limited, and in which no one, including the Kremlin, can foresee the outcome. This is why it is a dangerous path the Soviets have embarked on, and why we must treat it with the utmost seriousness.

It is argued that now [that] the Soviets have rescued Nasser both of them may suddenly change their spots, and be prepared to negotiate seriously. This is to say the least, doubtful. Having scored an immense psychological gain, with apparent impunity, it has generally

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates Kissinger saw it.

been the Russians tactic first of all to consolidate their gains, and then press forward, testing the ground as they move. Clearly, there is no evidence from the Soviets that their bargaining position has softened. To seize on minor changes in old Soviet formulas as “movement” is a delusion. If anything, the Soviet position is tougher now than only a few weeks ago.

The toughening can only spring from their estimate of what their moves have cost thus far and what the future risks and gains are. Looking at our position and the Israeli standdown from deep raids, the Soviets must conclude that we have acquiesced in their direct intervention. Indeed, they could well read our latest statement (Rogers to Dobrynin)² as confirmation that we accept the Soviet claim of “defensive” involvement, and are only concerned that a movement toward the canal would not be “defensive.”

Thus, the question of whether the Soviets will in fact, begin to inch forward becomes a crucial determinant. The policy issue is: are the Soviets more likely to extend their protective umbrella if we proceed with the sale of aircraft to Israel, or if we withhold them?

The conventional wisdom is that the Soviets will probably not move, mainly because of the risk of combat with the Israelis. There is, however, some evidence that they are indeed already “inching” forward (the construction sites along the canal). Moreover, it would seem a logical extension of Soviet strategy to do so. The near term Soviet objective in the Middle East is to destroy Western influence. The main enemy is not Israel but the West in general and the United States in particular. The road to the displacement of the West, however, now lies through Soviet demonstration that they cannot only protect their clients, but reverse the losses they suffered in 1967.

One means of doing so is to negotiate a settlement. But this presumes that the Soviets prefer a stabilized situation to one of controlled tensions. The history of Soviet involvement demonstrates that their major gains have come during periods of tension and crises, and that during periods of relative quiet on the Arab-Israeli front, Soviet influence suffers. Thus, there is every reason to doubt that the Soviets want a settlement on any terms but Israeli capitulation, unless the Arabs themselves are prepared to make the concessions.

The means to humiliate Israel and force their withdrawal is first of all to demonstrate that Israel has waning international support and, of utmost importance, waning support from the US. Second, the Soviets and the Arabs must demonstrate in practice that Israel’s options are gradually but steadily narrowing.

² See Document 159.

The Soviets could conclude that the present situation represents a sufficient gain to test the possibilities of discussion with us. Their opening moves in New York and in the conversation with Secretary Rogers do not support such a conclusion. Indeed, the two and four power talks seem a dismal failure. Thus, one suspects that the key to the next phase is our reaction on the ground. If we do nothing or very little to support Israel, the Soviets will then be tempted to cut a further slice of the salami and inch forward to the canal. If, however, we support Israel the Soviets will be forced to pause and consider the consequences of their increasing involvement.

As for the argument that this is exactly what the Soviets want us to do because it will demolish our position in the Arab world, this also is debatable if not altogether wrong. (It is made exclusively by Arabs and not Sovietologists.) The Soviets respect power and strength. They understand military strength best of all. This does not mean, of course, that they are eager to fight, or that they believe in the indiscriminate use of force. But they do not understand restraint; it confuses them, and in the end leads them to conclude that there is room for their own forward movement.

If the United States does not support Israel demonstratively with military assistance, the Soviets will ponder why we refuse to do so. Ultimately, they will conclude that we are deterred because of either domestic, political and economic concerns or because of the consequences of military escalation. Soviet denials, talk of confrontation and their attempts to blame Israel for such notions suggest sensitivity (and vulnerability) to strong US moves. No one can *guarantee* what the Soviets will do if we do reinforce Israel but one can be fairly confident that a display of weakness will not be met with conciliation and compromise.

Our Options

The two strategies presented in the first Review Group paper in effect reject this analysis. The essential judgment as presented in that paper is that it is preferable to exploit the present situation to put Israel under pressure, than to “confront” the Soviet Union. And that if this fails we can always confront Moscow.

The way in which the Options and argumentation are constructed, one cannot but agree.

No one should want to confront the USSR deliberately in the way it is described in the State paper. It would be insane. For example, having decided on some undefined posture of “confrontation” we close off all escape hatches for the USSR by breaking off the diplomatic contact.

There are a number of aimless military “moves” described. The only principle seems to be that to move pieces on a chess board is a

policy. What would the Soviets conclude? That we were about to fight? Not likely. More likely that we were engaging in some bluff. What would be the objective of military posturing? What would our demands be? They are nowhere spelled out. Are we seeking Soviet withdrawal? A settlement? Or, as is seen from this scenario, a whopping open-ended crisis.

One can only conclude that this course was described in such a way as to increase the attractiveness of the second strategy—the “path of accommodation.”

Presumably, no one opposes the “path of accommodation” but how to embark on such a course is the real issue. The paper presumes that putting Israel under pressure is the best way. Suppose, by some wild stretch of the imagination, that Israel buckled under our pressures. Would a compromise settlement then be likely? If the Arabs and the Russians sense this trend why should they make concessions. Better to wait, they would reason.

Our aim should not be an imposed settlement, which could not possibly be durable, but one that emerges from the common interests of both sides. This is a cliché, but still valid. The course described in the State paper, however, could only feed Arab ambitions and frustrate the Israeli to the point of desperation.

The immediate task is to create a political-military environment that provides an incentive to both sides to either stabilize the present situation or make mutual concessions.

This leads to the main point. It is mandatory to the creation of such an environment that we counter the Soviet intervention with a credible demonstration of our own—a demonstration that we are not cowed by the prospect of escalation or by the costs to our political and economic interests in the Arab countries.

Warnings alone are not enough. Indeed, since we have presented several serious warnings, the more we present the less credible. Breaking off contacts serves no end, and moving military forces is at least premature (the Pueblo fiasco should demonstrate the futility of moving aircraft carriers and airplanes that we do not intend to use).

Because the dispatch of aircraft to Israel has become the symbol for measuring our policy, it has, perhaps unfortunately, become the only immediate issue.

Only *after* demonstrating our willingness to take up this option can we expect to convince Israel of the need to make some political concession and convince the Soviets and Arabs that we are not deterred by their recent actions.

How many planes [and] in what sequence are secondary issues which should not obscure the primary challenge of the Soviets. The

announced basis for such a move should be that the Soviets by their direct involvement have threatened the military balance, that we have failed to receive a satisfactory explanation of their aims or reassurance of their intention. Accordingly, we are committed to maintain the position of Israel.

164. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 8, 1970.

SUBJECT

Soviet Moves on Southeast Asia

We have learned that a Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, N.P. Firyubin, is coming to New York next week to "visit" the Soviet UN Mission and confer with Ambassador Malik. The interesting aspect is that Firyubin's area of substantive responsibility includes Southeast Asia. Moreover, visits by Soviet deputy foreign ministers to the UN (when little is happening there currently) are not usual, although Firyubin may be filling in for First Deputy Minister Kuznetsov who normally supervises Soviet UN activities but is currently tied up in negotiations with the Chinese. With the next UN General Assembly being a special one in view of the 25th anniversary, Soviet planning for it may be more than routine and might include a trip here by Kosygin. Other heads of government are planning to attend. It is quite likely, however, that Firyubin's purpose may not only be to talk with Malik on UN matters, but to make himself available for contacts with us. Any such contacts, in view of his responsibilities, would logically focus on Cambodia, Laos or Vietnam.

He could simply be on a fishing expedition to gain first hand a better insight into our policies and future moves. If Firyubin has some special message he will undoubtedly take the initiative to let us know.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret. Sent for information. Drafted on June 4 by Sonnenfeldt who forwarded it to Kissinger under a covering memorandum that reads: "As you requested, I have done a memorandum for the President (Tab A) speculating on some of the reasons behind the unusual visit of Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Firyubin to New York." A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it.

Whether this trip could involve an important political break in the Communist position on Indochina is simply not predictable. On the record, it seems unlikely that the Soviets are in a position to take any major initiative at this time because of their more complicated relations with Hanoi and Peking. It seems likely that the Soviets, therefore, are acting on their own.

They may have in mind, however, testing our reaction to some future moves on the negotiating front, including the possibility of a new international conference or the re-establishment of the ICC in Cambodia.

Our Embassy in Moscow speculates that Firyubin will sound out U Thant and interested states on Cambodia, in anticipation of U Thant's trip to Moscow in mid-June.

It is also worth recalling that Malik has played a key role in breaking two crises (in 1949 and 1953). This was remembered at the time of his trial balloon on an Indochina conference in April. Perhaps Firyubin wishes to discuss some new scenario with Malik and insure a better coordination with Moscow.

In short, we cannot be at all sure what is up. It does seem that this is no routine visit and the Soviets may be probing for some new contacts or testing the ground for future moves on the Southeast Asia front. Some light might be shed on the Soviet position when we learn the details of Gromyko's discussion on Indochina during his current Paris visit.²

² Gromyko visited Paris June 1–5. In a memorandum from Rogers to Nixon drafted in EUR but apparently never sent, the Secretary described Gromyko's visit as follows: "Although Gromyko's visit was useful to the French in calling attention to their role as an independent major power, it yielded nothing new on the substantive side and disappointed them in some respects. The problem was the Soviets' unwillingness to make concessions these days, even to please friends like the French. Additionally, if some reports can be credited, Gromyko was not very adept at sugar-coating the unpalatable pills he dispensed to his French hosts." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 1)

165. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, June 9, 1970.

SUBJECT

Evolution of Positions in US-USSR Talks on the Middle East

Attached is a detailed study of the evolution of the U.S. and Soviet positions on a Middle East settlement through six negotiating phases over the last 15 months.² Since that study is comprehensive, the following is an analytical summary of the changes on each major issue.

Negotiating Procedure

The US has insisted throughout—either in text or in gloss—on direct negotiations at some stage. In September–October of last year, the U.S. added the concept of Rhodes-type talks to the discussions and text.

The USSR in early phases urged us not to complicate the process by emphasizing direct contacts. In September, Gromyko told Rogers he would agree to Rhodes-type talks³ (though he appears to have understood that direct talks were involved only at signing) if the U.S. were more precise on boundaries. In December, the USSR returned to the position that the big powers should not commit the parties to any particular form of negotiation, but the Soviet December 23 response⁴ seemed to leave open the door to some procedure comparable to Rhodes talks. In April, Dobrynin told Sisco that the Soviets could no longer accept the Rhodes formula. Dobrynin's informal alternative was that the parties would have contact between themselves through Jar-ring with the understanding he could use "various forms."

Timing of Withdrawal and Peace

The US has insisted throughout that Israeli withdrawal would begin at the same moment the state of war is ended and a formal state of peace begins.

The USSR has persistently struggled to create a distinction that would satisfy Israel by having the peace agreement come into effect on

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 646, Country Files, Middle East, General, Vol. VI, August 1970. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. The memorandum was not initiated by Saunders.

² Attached but not printed.

³ See footnote 2, Document 87.

⁴ See Document 109.

the day Israel begins withdrawing but would permit the Arabs to say that final peace does not come into being until withdrawal is completed. Until recently, they have tried to do this by distinguishing between de facto (beginning of withdrawal) and de jure (end of withdrawal) peace. In their most recent formulation, however, the Soviets have compromised by saying that juridically cessation of the state of war and establishment of the state of peace will begin when the “first stage” of Israeli withdrawal is completed. The USSR has also dwelt on a two-phase Israeli withdrawal which would permit UAR troops to move into the Canal area as soon as Israeli troops have withdrawn 30–40 kilometers.

Obligations of Peace

The US has enumerated the general obligations of nations to one another as defined in Article 2 of the UN Charter. In addition, the US has insisted on a stipulation that governments control all hostile acts from their territory, specifically including those of non-governmental individuals and organizations.

The USSR accepted in its June 17 document⁵ the general obligations of Article 2 of the UN Charter, but until recently resisted inclusion of any specific stipulation that would have the effect of committing the Arabs to control the fedayeen. They have recently (June 2), however, given in to us on this point.

Boundaries

The US position has evolved:

—March 24: “Rectifications from pre-existing lines should be confined to those required for mutual security and should not reflect the weight of conquest.”

—October 28: Israel should withdraw to the pre-war UAR-Israel border provided adequate security arrangements can be negotiated in Gaza, Sharm al-Shaykh and the Sinai.

The USSR has insisted throughout on total withdrawal to pre-war lines. Since we went to our fallback position on October 28,⁶ the Soviets have increasingly pressed us to be more detailed and specific especially on Gaza, Sharm al-Shaykh and the Golan Heights. They appear to be in the process of making any further progress contingent on this issue as they have already done in the Four Power Talks.

Demilitarized Zones

The US position has evolved from stating that the entire Sinai should be demilitarized to holding that the belligerents should negotiate their size and the procedures for enforcing them.

⁵ See Document 58.

⁶ See Document 98.

The USSR has consistently held that demilitarized zones should be on both sides of the borders, not giving advantage to either side. The UN Security Council should work out procedures for enforcing them.

Waterways

The US has insisted throughout on freedom of passage for Israel through the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal. In our October formulations, we have linked security arrangements at Sharm al-Shaykh to securing free passage through the Straits.

The USSR has accepted the principle of free passage but linked passage through the Canal to the Constantinople Convention of 1888 which permits governments sovereign over canals to close them to states with whom they are at war. This has provided the UAR's justification for closing the Canal to Israelis in the past. [The US has resisted this.]⁷

Refugees

The US has accepted the principle of free choice for the refugees between repatriation to Israel and resettlement with compensation. But the US has balanced this with progressively more specific provisions to give Israel control over the individuals and the total number of refugees allowed repatriation. The latest formulation includes an annual quota.

The USSR simply calls on Israel to carry out past UN resolutions which call for repatriation or resettlement with compensation. The USSR has resisted any restrictions, although at one point they were willing to discuss it as a possible side understanding.

Nature of Agreement

The US, while experimenting with language, has from the start insisted that the final accord should be an agreement or contract between the parties, should be reciprocally binding, should be signed by the parties, and should be deposited with the UN for endorsement by the four permanent members of the Security Council.

The USSR in earlier stages clearly accepted the idea of a binding document—a final accord *between* the parties—signed by the parties and deposited at the UN. However, the December 23 reply ignored this point entirely and the Soviets have not clarified it since then.

Conclusions

What most strikes me after completing this review is how little real progress we have made after 15 months of talking with the Sovi-

⁷ Brackets in the source text.

ets on the Middle East. For all practical purposes, we are now effectively back to where we began when the Soviets presented their working document to us in June 1969. After actively discussing a joint document between June 17—when they produced their draft—and September 30, the Soviets in December simply turned aside our October 28 formulations—containing a major concession from us on boundaries—as providing no basis for a joint document.

Now they have reopened the dialogue with a concession to us—Arab control of the fedayeen—but have linked it to our being even more forthcoming on the withdrawal issue (in effect asking us to bargain away all of Israel's position). Moreover, by continuing to insist on talking only about modifications in their June documents, the Soviets seem to be wiping the slate clean of Sisco's Moscow talks last July⁸ and Secretary Roger's talks in September⁹ which provided the basis for our October 28 document.

Beyond this there are a number of important issues on which the Soviets have either retrogressed (negotiating procedures, withdrawal, nature of agreement), held firm (waterways, refugees, demilitarized zones) or not moved enough on to make any real difference (timing of withdrawal, juridical state of peace).

It is hard to escape the conclusion that the Soviets are not negotiating in good faith with us. They seem to be too content with the present situation on the ground and our difficulties in the area to back down much from the maximum Arab demands. This has taken place when—as a review of the above positions shows—we might well reach agreement if they would take as much distance from the Arab position as we have taken from Israel's. Yet we have no evidence that the Soviets intend to do this.

If this is a valid interpretation, the logical question then arises as to why the Soviets seem intent on keeping up a dialogue on the Middle East. It may be that they view the bilateral talks as a potential escape hatch if the situation on the ground begins to get out of hand and their commitments to the Arabs start them down the road to a confrontation with us and Israel. They are after all playing a dangerous game with their SA-3s and pilots. It may also be that the Soviets view their talks with us as a way of keeping us a bit off guard as their military presence increases in the area and as a potential safeguard against some precipitate act by us to reverse the situation. Finally, there is the apparent fact that Nasser still wants to keep the political settlement option open and the Soviets would rather do his bidding than let him alone with us.

⁸ See Document 69.

⁹ See Documents 81 and 87.

166. Editorial Note

On June 10, 1970, the National Security Council met from 9:36–11:24 a.m. to discuss the Middle East. In an unsigned and undated memorandum for President Nixon about issues for the meeting, Henry Kissinger, the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, described the "implications of the Soviet presence in Egypt":

"The character of the Soviet move in the UAR should not be underrated.

"You may hear the argument made (by Defense) that this move was precipitated by Israeli action or that it is purely defensive and does not threaten Israel. These arguments do not meet the main point: This is a unique turn of Soviet policy—never before have the Soviets put their own forces in combat jeopardy for the sake of a non-Communist government.

"It is argued that now the Soviets have rescued Nasser both of them may suddenly change character and be prepared to negotiate seriously. This seems doubtful. Having scored a psychological gain with apparent impunity, it has generally been the Soviet tactic first to consolidate their gains and then to press forward, testing the ground as they move.

"The problem, therefore, is not simply that the Soviet military presence may have, at a minimum, limited Israeli military options. The problem is that the USSR has established a new kind of foothold in the UAR and the U.S. has a strong interest in preventing its consolidation and expansion.

"Some Common Perceptions—A Critique

"You will hear argument over what the U.S. interest requires and how far the U.S. should go in trying to check the USSR. Some of this argument rests on assumptions that should be carefully examined.

"1. The Israeli view is that if Israel and the U.S. will only stand fast, the USSR and the Arabs will decide to negotiate. This means that the U.S. must give Israel all the equipment it needs and make no concessions to the USSR.

"The problem with this is that the Israelis have not really offered the Arabs a negotiating position the Arabs could even consider accepting. So the Arabs feel they have no choice but to fight. Thus the U.S. is left backing Israel in a war of attrition that seems likely to lead only to another war—probably involving the USSR—without any negotiating escape to offer Moscow.

"2. The Defense Department view is that all we have to do is to get the Israelis off the Suez Canal to begin the process of reaching a settlement and that will prevent further erosion of U.S. influence. Their argument is that the U.S. has no interest in the Mid-East great enough

to warrant a nuclear showdown with the USSR. The U.S. is militarily over-extended and has every interest in avoiding involvement in the Mid-East. Besides, the Arab-Israeli problem is not susceptible of military solution.

“The problems with this view are that: (a) If the U.S. shows that it does not have enough interest in the Mid-East to warrant a showdown, then the USSR will never back off. (b) If Israel does not believe the U.S. will defend its existence against the USSR, Israel will have no incentive whatsoever to agree to a settlement based on withdrawal from present lines.

“3. It is also commonly said that the Soviets are acting in the UAR purely in a defensive capacity and that the U.S., therefore, need not be concerned because the Soviets will not threaten Israel.

“Yet it would be logical for the USSR to extend its influence as far as possible. The near term Soviet objective in the Middle East is to destroy Western influence. The main enemy is not Israel but the West in general and the U.S. in particular. Therefore, it must be assumed that the USSR will do all it can to that end—over and above defending their client.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1155, Harold Saunders Files, US Peace Initiative for Mid-East, 6/10–7/23/70)

At the NSC meeting on June 10, President Nixon opened by asking Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms for a briefing on the Middle East:

“Mr. Helms began by noting that the new Soviet presence required careful evaluation. Israel retained military superiority, but the elements of the Soviet presence are under careful study.

“The Soviets have 4–5 regiments of SA–3 missiles in the UAR and 3–5 squadrons of Soviet-piloted MIG 21 aircraft.

“The President interjected: ‘Are you stating that as a fact? Are we now convinced?’

“Mr. Helms replied that we feel no doubt that these forces are there. The debate within the intelligence community is over how they have been used. We have intelligence on the forces themselves [*2 lines of source text not declassified*] On the basis of intelligence from all these sources, the presence of the missiles and the pilots is unquestioned. The big issue is how the Soviets intend to use them.

“The President asked what the number of Russians in Egypt other than diplomats is. Mr. Helms replied that it is in the neighborhood of 10,000. It has doubled in the last six months.

“Mr. Helms continued, saying that the Soviet forces are located mainly in the Nile valley. The Israelis have confined their recent attack to the area adjacent to the Suez Canal. The question now is whether the Soviets will refrain from moving their missiles and pilots into that area

near the Canal and whether the Israelis will refrain from challenging the Soviet pilots.

"Intelligence confirms 13 sites of SA-3 missiles. These are manned by 2600-3700 Soviet personnel. There are probably 6-7 other sites under construction. These are located in the Nile Delta north of Cairo, west of Cairo, south of Cairo in connection with a Soviet-manned airfield and at Aswan. The Israelis have unconfirmed reports of SA-3 sites—but not equipment—along the Canal.

"This equipment arrived in March and April. Three squadrons of Soviet-piloted aircraft are flying from three bases—15 aircraft in each squadron with about 90 pilots by present count. The pilots arrived in February and March. [2 lines of source text not declassified]

"As a rule, the Soviets stay clear of the Suez Canal. The one major exception [4 lines of source text not declassified]

"Israel has publicly stated that it would avoid the Nile valley but would maintain supremacy over the Canal. Israel has said it would bomb anything along the Canal. They have been bombing heavily bunkers they maintain are being built to house equipment related to the SA-3 missile. U.S. intelligence analysts are inclined to think that these sites are for the SA-2 missile, but they have been so heavily bombed that we may never know what they were intended for.

"On the ground, the Israelis only have some 5-700 men along the Bar Lev line on their side of the Canal. There are some 93,000 Egyptians on the other side of the Canal altogether. Dayan says that the main Israeli objective is to keep these Egyptians from massing for a cross-Canal attack.

"As far as the Arab-Israeli military balance is concerned, the UAR has some 210-250 aircraft in 20 squadrons. But it does not have enough qualified pilots. Israel has 81 supersonic aircraft and 121 subsonic aircraft and 500 jet pilots. Israel's superiority rests on pilot quality. We assume that Israeli pilots are the equal of ours. Israel keeps 85% of its aircraft flying, while the Egyptians keep only about 75% in the air. The Israelis are able to mount 5 sorties per aircraft per day, while the Arabs can only manage 2. Israeli aircraft have superior performance characteristics. The addition of some Soviet pilots will improve the UAR ability to intercept Israeli attackers if the Soviets engage. Soviet pilots are probably more capable than the Egyptian pilots. But they lack combat experience.

"The new factor in the situation is the potential for attrition of Israeli aircraft in a prolonged contest with the Soviets. They could exhaust the Israelis in both aircraft and pilots. Israel could at some point come to consider losses intolerable. The present Israeli losses are somewhat less than the annual traffic toll. In terms of economic or demography Israel could stand such levels of losses. But Israel takes losses

hard and any level of losses creates a psychological factor on which the Israeli level of tolerance is relatively low.

“This is why Israeli strategy is based on the pre-emptive strike to keep the enemy from bringing its numbers to bear against Israel. This strategy now seems unworkable. It has for some time because of the dispersal of Arab aircraft and the hardening of protective hangars on Arab airfields. Now there is the additional factor that the presence of Soviet pilots could bring on a U.S.-Soviet clash. With the strategy of pre-emption perhaps lost to Israel, the Israelis have more reason than ever to try to control the area along the Suez Canal. The Israelis believe that unless they sustain their present level of attacks or increase it, the Arabs will be so emboldened as to step up the war of attrition.

“Israel’s ability to maintain air superiority seems to depend on what the Soviets do. The indicators of Soviet intention are the fact that one Soviet pilot on May 14 did pursue an Israeli aircraft and the [*less than 1 line of source text not declassified*] which indicate the possibility that the Soviets are moving SA–3 missile sites up to the Canal. On the other hand, since May 14, there has been no identified incidents of Soviet pilot pursuit. If the Soviet pilots are ordered to keep their present pattern this situation could go on for some time. If they move up to the Canal, Israel could be quickly worn down. Even at that, the impact of such a Soviet move might be more important psychologically than militarily.

“At the least, the Soviet presence has probably already emboldened the Arabs. At most, a situation has been created in which the balance could be altered to Israel’s disadvantage. Again, the real effect on the balance will depend on what the Soviets decide to do.

“U.S. assistance to date is as follows: 40 Phantoms have been delivered and 3 have been lost; 10 remain to be delivered. Eighty-eight Skyhawks have been delivered with 12 remaining.”

After a brief discussion of [other subjects] Nixon returned to the Soviet Union:

“The President said that he wanted to be sure he understood one point: Is it true that, since World War II, the Soviets have not lost any men in non-Communist countries in combat situations? Mr. Helms replied that Soviet officers have been lost in Egypt in the last year. They may also have lost a few in Korea which we never identified—some Soviet pilots.

“The President said this fact underscored for him the enormous significance of this recent Soviet step. It involves Soviet personnel in becoming casualties in a combat situation outside a Communist country. To them, this poses a very serious problem. [*2 lines of source text not declassified*]

“Mr. Helms replied that [2 lines of source text not declassified]. The judgment which he had described was not just a casual one.

“The President asked what the Soviets say about the fact that they have generally had a free ride for the last 25 years, using proxies to do their work for them.

“Secretary Rogers said the Soviets do not talk about numbers of combat personnel. They do not deny or admit that they have combat personnel or pilots in the UAR. They say that the reason the Soviets are training Egyptian forces is that the Israeli deep penetration raids in January made this necessary. Whatever the Soviets are doing, the Soviets say has a purely defensive role. They say that they have to back up Nasser. The Secretary concluded that, as long as the deep penetration raids do not continue, the present posture will probably be maintained.

“Secretary Rogers continued that this is a good time to try to get negotiations started. The parties have never really negotiated with each other. This is a good time. Israel is concerned about its future. Nasser is concerned about the Soviet presence. The Soviets are possibly willing to help with a political settlement, though maybe this possibility is remote. But for the first time the Soviets seem to be talking in more serious terms.

“The Secretary proposed that the U.S. use the next three months to try to get negotiations started. He felt that we should continue to sell planes to Israel at about the same rate as in the recent past. At the same time we should make a major effort in New York under Ambassador Jarring to get negotiations started. ‘We think there is a good chance Israel will go along now.’ The Secretary said his plan is to have a low-key announcement in about a week. He thought there was a possibility to get negotiations started. Until we do, there is no possibility of a settlement. He repeated that he felt the Israelis and the Soviets are interested.

“The President turned to Dr. Kissinger to brief on the issues involved.

“Dr. Kissinger said he had intended to draw together some of the issues which had been raised in the Special Review Group meetings on this subject, but he would like to go back a half a step to start with.

“The immediate issue is aircraft for Israel. The State Department view has been as Secretary Rogers outlined it—that we should continue some shipments of aircraft to Israel while we launch a diplomatic initiative. The Defense Department view has been that we should provide no planes now because deliveries would inflame the Arab world.

“Dr. Kissinger continued that discussion of some of the issues underlies any decision we may make on aircraft. For instance, although the facts of Soviet intervention in the UAR are pretty agreed, there are

different views of Soviet purpose and of the significance of the Soviet move:

“—One view is that the Soviet move is entirely defensive, that the Soviets had no choice but to make this move in response to Israel’s deep penetration raids and that the significance of the move is therefore limited.

“—Another view is that, whatever Soviet intentions are, we are confronted with certain results. The Soviet move does free the UAR to be more belligerent. Even if there is an Arab-Israeli settlement, if the Soviet forces remain in Egypt, the UAR will feel stronger in whatever adventures it decides to pursue. Britain did not want an empire; it simply acquired one in the course of seeking coaling stations on the commercial route to the Far East. The practical consequence of a Soviet presence in the UAR is that it is a major geopolitical fact with which we have to deal. The consequences cannot be judged by Soviet intent.

“Secretary Rogers asked what difference it makes which view one takes. Dr. Kissinger replied that the view one takes makes some difference on whether the USSR is confronted now or not. The President said there was a question of whether the USSR should be confronted on a broader front. Dr. Kissinger pointed out that even if the Arab-Israeli dispute is settled, that still leaves a problem for the U.S. in that the Soviet Union can work behind the radical Arabs in further eroding U.S. influence in the area.

“The President asked whether it is in the Soviet interest to see an Arab-Israeli settlement. The USSR may not want to see Israel ‘go down the tube.’ It may well be that the Soviets have an interest in having Israel there as a ‘burr under the U.S. saddle.’ The President said he questioned whether the Soviets have an interest in a real settlement; he could understand their interest in a truce or a cooling of the situation but had more question about a full settlement. He felt that Dr. Kissinger’s point is relevant and that it is not right for the US to look at what the Soviets are doing in the UAR as an isolated problem.

“Secretary Rogers said he thought everyone could agree to that.

“Mr. Packard noted one Soviet interest that had not been mentioned: The Soviets want the Suez Canal open.”

After discussion of other Middle East issues, Kissinger raised additional points about the Soviet Union. According to minutes of the meeting:

“Dr. Kissinger returned to the thread of his briefing, noting that the third element that must be dealt with in any strategy is the USSR. The normal pattern of Soviet activity is to begin with a relatively modest step and then to inch forward testing the ground as they go.

“The President interjected by asking how the Soviets proceeded in Cuba. The replies were vague, and Dr. Kissinger continued briefing.

“Dr. Kissinger said that the problem with the USSR is to convince them that their present course has incalculable risks. But at the same time we do not want to engage Soviet prestige and leave the Soviets no escape. The choice for the U.S. is not whether to try for a settlement or to confront the USSR. The choice is how to do both in order to achieve a settlement.”

After a brief discussion of other factors affecting a Middle Eastern peace settlement, discussion returned to the Soviet position:

“The President said he still came back to a basic point that militates against a settlement: What is in it for the Soviets? The present situation is costing them some money. They may be concerned about a possible confrontation with the U.S. But if they look at that proposition coldly, they know as well as we know around the NSC table that the likelihood of U.S. action directly against them is ‘in doubt.’ It did not use to be in doubt. That was what the Lebanon invasion of 1958 was about.

“Again looking at the Soviets: they have made noises that they would like to see a settlement. They have a muscle-bound bureaucracy and have trouble seeing things in gradations. It may be that as far as the Soviets are concerned our job is to get them to play a role in imposing a settlement. The ingredient that is missing and has to be supplied in some way is the incentive to them to play that role.

“Secretary Rogers noted that the Soviets are concerned about the Chinese and about the Fedayeen. Soviet officials often allude to those problems. Nasser is concerned about what has happened in Jordan and that he may be in some danger.

“Ambassador Yost said that the Soviets do not call the tune in Cairo. If a settlement in Arab interests emerges, he did not believe that the Soviets could prevent it.

“Mr. Sisco said that, while he agreed about the Fedayeen and the Chinese, he put greater weight on what the Soviets think of American will. The real leverage on the USSR is fear of a confrontation with the U.S. We ought to be looking at the 6th Fleet to see whether it is projecting American power to the maximum extent. His conclusion, he said, is that the Soviets feel now that they can broaden the conflict. We are essentially up against a Soviet political strategy, but at the end of the line they must feel that they could run into a confrontation with the U.S.

“Mr. Richardson indicated his agreement. He felt that we need to find a way to use the only lever that we really have—the Soviet fear of confrontation.

“Mr. Packard said that this is a matter of timing. He said we have to move ahead soon. We should avoid moving planes. He liked the idea of having a pool of aircraft perhaps in Texas as a reserve for Israel which would not be moved to Israel unless the situation required.

“The President concluded the meeting by saying that he would look at all of this.”

(National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-109, NSC Minutes, Originals, 1970)

167. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 10, 1970, 7:05–7:34 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

The President
Ambassador Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

Prior to our departure for the *Sequoia*,² the President asked me to take Dobrynin to the Map Room in the Residence where the President joined us for a few minutes.

The President said that he was delighted that we were going to the *Sequoia* for a talk and he hoped that we would enjoy the breeze and talk fully. He wanted Dobrynin to know that I had his full confidence and that this was the channel in which he wished things to be settled. He also stressed to Dobrynin that things that were in the public arena might be put in other channels but, if serious business was to be done, it was to be done in our channel.

He reminded Dobrynin that at their last meeting, he had told Dobrynin that he had been in office nine months and it was about time that the baby was born; therefore, there was a certain disappointment that there had been no progress. He wanted him to know that he was prepared to let bygones be bygones and start afresh if the Soviet Union was prepared to take a similar approach. He wanted it clearly understood that the course on Vietnam was set and there was no sense in trying to press us to change our policies. Similarly, he understood certain Soviet security requirements that we were not disposed to challenge. He wanted Dobrynin and me to speak in this spirit.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2, Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. The conversation was held in the Map Room at the White House. The time and place of the meeting are from the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid., White House Central Files)

² The Presidential yacht.

Dobrynin asked whether he could make a few comments. He said that he appreciated that spirit and he felt the same way. It was time to let bygones be bygones and concentrate on the future. There was no sense in arguing about how we got into Cambodia and other areas of the world. The future would determine how able we were to solve the problems of peace. He did want to say, however, that the Soviet Union was very eager to come to an agreement on the Middle East, but was being constantly thwarted by the petty legalism of Sisco's approach. He would like to urge the President to take a personal interest in the negotiations, because only a willingness to deal with the problems at the highest levels would make it possible to come to a conclusion.

The President emphasized that we had an NSC meeting on the Middle East³ and that this was one area in which matters could get out of control because of the pressures of public opinion. He said, "The Fed-ayeen are not in your control, and our public opinion is not in our control." Dobrynin said, "The Fedayeen are not in our control but we don't let them control our actions, and we make very sure that we keep tight control of our military forces." The President said that he just wanted Dobrynin to understand that we were serious in our efforts, but that we were pragmatic and precise. He hoped that he and I would speak in that spirit.

³ See Document 166.

168. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 10, 1970, 7:30 p.m.–1 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

After a brief meeting with the President, which is the subject of a separate memorandum of conversation,² Dobrynin and I left for the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2, Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. The conversation was held on the *Sequoia*.

² Document 167.

Sequoia.³ Dobrynin began the conversation by saying that he hoped for very complete results and complete discussions. The difficulty with some of our present negotiators was that they didn't seem to be well briefed, like the Secretary of State; or if they were well briefed, like Sisco, they were too petty and never saw the wood for the trees.

He said that Cambodia had had at first a very severe impact on the Soviet leadership. When he had come to Moscow with my suggestion for a summit meeting,⁴ Podgorny, Brezhnev, and Kosygin had been extremely interested. However, as time went on after the Cambodian events, opinion shifted and they believed I had mentioned a summit meeting merely to hold them quiet while we were preparing the Cambodian invasion. I said it was probably futile to argue this point but I could assure him that the Cambodian invasion was not planned before April 20, and as he remembered, I warned Vorontsov immediately that if North Vietnamese attacks on Cambodia did not stop we might have to take drastic measures.

Dobrynin asked what North Vietnamese operations we objected to. I said that as long as they stayed in the base areas we could live with the situation, though we didn't like it. Once they left the sanctuaries, however, they represented an intolerable threat to the security of our forces by turning the whole country into one base area. Dobrynin said that he was prepared to speak about Cambodia a little later, but he first wanted to pick up the President's points which were that we should forget about the past and concentrate on the future, and in the future it was necessary to come to some very concrete understandings between the United States and the Soviet Union. He suggested that we take up the subjects in the order mentioned by the President: SALT, first; the Middle East, second; Europe, third; and, Vietnam last. I said I could agree except that I wanted to put Europe in the last spot and put Vietnam and Southeast Asia before it.

³ Earlier that day, Kissinger sent Nixon talking points for his meeting on the *Sequoia*. Kissinger explained that this was his first private meeting with Dobrynin since April 9. Nixon initialed his approval of Kissinger's positions. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2, Vol. 1)

⁴ Kissinger's talking point on a summit reads: "At our last meeting I had indicated the possibility of you and Premier Kosygin breaking a Vienna SALT deadlock and ratifying the agreement at a summit meeting. Dobrynin said he would explore this in Moscow and have an answer upon his return. I plan to let him take any initiative on the question of a summit meeting. I would say that I will take this up with you, while repeating that we would be interested in a summit that was assured of a significant agreement on at least one issue." (Ibid.)

SALT

We then turned to SALT.⁵ Dobrynin said that he wanted to find out whether our understanding of April was still adequate, i.e., whether we were still prepared to have a limited agreement, and if so, how we should handle business in Vienna. Should we tell our negotiators in Vienna that they had gone far enough or that we wanted them to explore a little further; or did we want to charge them with making specific agreements?

I told him that it seemed to me that the negotiators in Vienna could go on for another three weeks, during which time he and I might discuss the specific principles of a settlement and agree on a general outline. We could then decide whether to have that taken up at Vienna or whether we should have it discussed in some other forum. Dobrynin said this was agreeable to him and that their delegation would be instructed accordingly.

He then asked me what I understood by a limited agreement. I said that to us a limited agreement meant a ceiling on offensive weapons and a limitation on defensive weapons to what we call national command authority levels. Dobrynin said this was not a very limited agreement because it encompassed the whole range of strategic forces.

I asked him whether the Soviets had another definition. He said that to the Soviets limited agreement meant that the Soviets probably would prefer a limitation on ABM deployment with some general agreement about protection against provocative attacks, which he explained meant third country attacks. I told him that this was almost certainly unacceptable to us. It would be more useful to explore some package that involved ceilings on all strategic forces.

Dobrynin then said that this raised a number of issues. Our package had been weighted against the Soviet Union. For example, we had established a ceiling of 1,710 missiles and a separate ceiling of the existing forces of bombers, giving us 500 and giving them 250. This established an inequality which was unfortunate, of course. There were some Soviet scientists who said both sides already possessed overkill and therefore it didn't make any difference. He did not want to argue that point, but he did wish to point out that the symbolic effect of the Soviet Union accepting inferiority in any category would be very bad and very hard to sell.

Another aspect of the bomber package was that the Soviet Union had no equivalent for our aircraft carriers and, therefore, there should be

⁵ The second phase of the strategic arms limitation talks between the United States and the Soviet Union began in Vienna, Austria, on April 16, 1970.

some limitation on their deployment. I pointed out that aircraft carriers did not play a significant role in our strategy against the Soviet Union, but that any limitation on their deployment would affect their utility against other countries. Dobrynin said that if we were concerned about aircraft carriers we had to agree to the principle of some form of compensation for the Soviets, either in the form of giving them additional units of missiles or in some other way. He also pointed out that we were counting their tanker planes as bombers while we did not count ours.

I told him that the way to advance this problem would be for him to give me some idea of what they meant by compensation. If it was a symbolic compensation, we might consider it. If it was a major one, it would be difficult. I also pointed out to him that NCA levels involved limitations on radars and not just on missiles. He asked me to explain this, and I gave him a brief explanation of the differential lead time between missiles and radars. Dobrynin replied that radars useful for missile tracking were clearly distinguishable from others. He thought this was a proposition that could be entertained as long as it did not involve the destruction of existing radars and only limitations on building new ones. We summed up the results of this part of the discussion as follows:

1. The Vienna Conference would go on for another three weeks exploring the packages.
2. In the meantime, Dobrynin and I would work on the general principles.
3. He would give me some idea of what the Soviet Union understood by compensation.
4. I would explore whether there were other limitations available on the bombers. (I was thinking of the fact that budgetary reasons might force us to reduce our bomber force and that we might throw that into the equation.)

Middle East

Dobrynin then launched into an impassioned discussion on the Middle East. He said that we completely misunderstood Soviet motivations and intentions, and that we had to look at the problem from the Soviet point of view. We might not believe it, but the Soviets had not taken advantage of a tenth of the opportunities they had had to place military forces into several of the Arab countries. In 1967 the Egyptians had offered them naval bases and free use of all of the air bases if they only came in. Since then they've had repeated offers from Egypt and from Syria to put military forces into their countries, but they had always refused.

However, the deep penetration raids of the Israelis had left them no choice. They could not permit one of their friends in the Middle East to be totally humiliated and destroyed and there were no other

means available to protect them. The Soviet Union desired no military presence in Egypt and it thought that the time was ripe to make a comprehensive settlement.

On the other hand, a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East was out of the question along the lines of the Sisco–Dobrynin conversations. Sisco constantly was raising pettifogging objections and was trying to draw him into drafting specific clauses of an agreement. Dobrynin said, for example, that the two offers he had brought back with him from Moscow matched almost verbatim the formulations that Sisco had demanded of him. Nevertheless, it was treated as only a minor concession because he had referred him to the Soviet June 9 document rather than to our October 28 document. He said we had to understand the fact that the Soviet Union could not accept the United States document as a basis for a settlement. On the other hand, it would not insist on its own and in its final formulation would come up with something that would not be ascribable to either side.

The major decision that had to be made was whether both sides were willing to make significant progress now. This required filling in the gaps of the agreement: specifically, on withdrawals, on Sharm-el-Sheik, on demilitarized zones and similar matters. This would then be put as a recommendation to Jarring who would take it up with the parties.

I asked whether he was talking of an imposed settlement. Dobrynin said, “No, not imposed. But of course our recommendations would carry a great deal of weight.” And he added, “Believe me, that if we make a proposition to the Arabs, we will also see to it that it is accepted.” However, he said it was essential that we make a prior decision that there would be a concrete agreement. He said that the time was short and that there were only a few months left before events could take an unpredictable turn.

I told him that for us the presence of Soviet combat personnel in Egypt was a matter of the very gravest consequence which sooner or later would produce a major difficulty with the United States and could perhaps even lead to a confrontation. We have no incentive at all in a settlement which would leave combat personnel in Egypt.

I, therefore, wanted to know whether, assuming that there were a peace settlement, the Soviet Union would be prepared to withdraw its combat personnel. Dobrynin asked what would happen if the Israelis started deep penetration raids in this period. I said I was talking about what would happen after, not before, there was an agreement between the Israelis and the Arabs.

Dobrynin said that under those conditions it was conceivable to him that the Soviet Union might agree to withdraw its personnel. He said he would query Moscow and get me an answer at our next meet-

ing on whether the Soviet Union would withdraw its combat personnel as part of a general Middle East settlement.

Dobrynin then asked me if I had anything specific to propose on the Middle East. I said that under the right circumstances it was not inconceivable to me that we would be prepared to discuss a general settlement of the Middle East issues with the Soviet Union as long as it was understood that the Soviet Union would ask for some sacrifices from the Arabs commensurate to the sacrifices we would have to ask from the Israelis.

This led Dobrynin into a long exposition of the Soviet position and an explanation of the many sacrifices they had already made, specifically with respect to Sharm-el-Sheik, demilitarized zones, conditions of peace, and control of the Fedayeen. Dobrynin then asked me what was new in my proposal. I said the newness in our proposal was the willingness to discuss the specific terms of the settlement and not just the general outline. Dobrynin said frankly there was nothing new in that because Rogers had already made that proposition to him when they were having drinks on Monday, but he was happy to see that it was backed by the President.

Dobrynin then read to me a long statement which he allegedly got from the newspaper and which paralleled the State Department recommendation to the President. He asked me what I thought of it. (I later learned from Sisco that the Secretary gave most of this to Dobrynin at their meeting on June 8.)⁶ I told Dobrynin that this was one of the proposals that was before the President. Many elements of it might have interesting aspects, but I did not want to comment prior to a Presidential decision.

Dobrynin again made an impassioned plea for a settlement of the Mid-Eastern issue which could only drag us all into incalculable results. He said that the Soviet Union was willing to guarantee access through the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal. When I raised the objection that the Soviet Union had gone no further than to guarantee the 1888 Convention, he said this was only because it represented the only usable legal document to guarantee free access. They were prepared to define access in any way that would meet Israeli objections.

We left it that I would talk to the President and inform him before we made a major move and that he would find out from Moscow whether the Soviet Union would be prepared to withdraw combat personnel as part of a general settlement.

⁶ Kissinger is in error; the meeting was on June 2. However, Kissinger received a memorandum from Saunders on June 8 summarizing the conversation. See Document 159.

Southeast Asia

The conversation then turned to Southeast Asia. Dobrynin said that he found it very difficult to understand how we thought a peaceful settlement was now possible. He did not doubt the military gains that we had made in Cambodia, but on the other hand, we had given the Chinese a tremendous shot in the arm. The Chinese were now using Cambodia as a campaign against the Soviet Union, and had tried to induce the Soviet Union to cancel all meetings with the United States. Also, China was clearly in the ascendance in Hanoi. The result would be that it would be very difficult to make a settlement. The Chinese would never accept a pro-American government in Cambodia and neither would Hanoi.

I said that we did not expect them to accept a pro-American government in Cambodia. We were perfectly willing to live with a Sihanouk-type government provided it did not give Communist supplies access into the sanctuaries. Dobrynin wanted to know whether we had been prepared to accept the sanctuaries if the North Vietnamese had not moved out of them. I told him that, of course, we had accepted them for many years and that we had never made any plans for attacking them until after their threat to Cambodia had become evident.

Dobrynin said that I might not believe it, but they had no particular interest in a Communist government in Cambodia because such a government was certain to be dominated from Peking. He hoped that we had noticed that they had maintained a Chargé in Phnom Penh and had not recognized Sihanouk, even though Kosygin had written him some letters. He also called my attention to the article in the *New York Times*. He added, "Well, whatever has happened in Cambodia has happened, and there's no sense in talking about past history." He wanted to know what sort of political settlement for Cambodia we had in mind. I replied that we would certainly be willing to accept a government that had the general composition of the Sihanouk government. In fact, the government in Phnom Penh was the Sihanouk government minus Sihanouk.

Dobrynin then wanted to know whether we were prepared to partition Laos. He said he had heard this as a suggestion from the State Department. I said that there were many ideas floating around but we were certainly prepared to discuss any reasonable plan that would assure the neutrality and security of Southeast Asia.

With respect to South Vietnam, Dobrynin said that for the North Vietnamese, the only interesting point was the political settlement. They did not much care about the rate of American troop withdrawals. They did not believe in a process of free elections, and as long as we insisted on them, there was no hope of a political solution. I pointed

out to him the passage in the President's April 20th speech⁷ that indicated that we were flexible with respect to the determination of the popular will. Dobrynin wondered whether this proposal was still open. I told him all proposals had been reiterated in the April 30 and June 3 speeches.⁸

Dobrynin asked me about my assessment of my talks with the North Vietnamese. I said that the North Vietnamese had missed a great opportunity, and that if they had told Moscow that we had been rigid, they were severely mistaken. After all, the President need not send his personal advisor to negotiate if he wanted merely to have the stalemate that already existed in Paris. There was no sense in repeating standard positions. Dobrynin obviously had not read a very full account of the meetings because he kept saying that the impression that Hanoi had left with them was that we had been very rigid. Dobrynin said he didn't see any possibilities for great movement at this moment, but that the situation might change after the end of our Cambodian operation.

Europe

We then turned to Europe. Dobrynin said that we were the chief obstacle to the European Security Conference idea that they had put forward. I said that they had never explained satisfactorily why it was necessary to have a big conference simply to settle cultural and trade matters. Dobrynin said that it was impossible to please the United States. When they had proposed to Johnson to have a European Security Conference, they had been accused of wanting to settle too much. In this Administration, they were accused of trying to settle too little. He said we were oscillating between being too specific and being too vague.

For example, he simply did not know what we meant by mutual balanced force reductions and, frankly, he had the impression that we didn't know ourselves what we meant by the term. As an example of how impossible it was to deal with us, he mentioned the luncheon conversation he had had with Elliot Richardson.⁹ He said Richardson had handed him a State Department working paper on mutual balanced

⁷ The relevant passage reads: "A fair political solution should reflect the existing relationship of political forces within South Vietnam. We recognize the complexity of shaping machinery that would fairly apportion political power in South Vietnam. We are flexible; we have offered nothing on a take-it-or-leave-it basis." For a full text of Nixon's "Address to the Nation on Progress Toward Peace in Vietnam," see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, pp. 373–377.

⁸ On April 30, Nixon gave an "Address to the Nation on the Situation in Southeast Asia." (Ibid., pp. 405–410) On June 3, Nixon delivered an "Address to the Nation on the Cambodian Sanctuary Operation." (Ibid., pp. 476–480)

⁹ A memorandum of Richardson's conversation with Dobrynin is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII.

force reductions and had asked him to comment on it. Dobrynin replied it was very unusual for a foreign diplomat to comment on a working paper of another foreign office. When he had called this to the attention of Richardson, the latter replied that he needed Dobrynin's comments in order to bring the military around in our country. I told Dobrynin that I would be ready to talk in concrete details about mutual balanced force reductions later this summer, after we had worked out our own thinking a little more fully.

Soviet-American Relations

We then turned to the general subject of Soviet-American relations. Dobrynin said that when the Administration had come into office, the leadership in Moscow was very concerned, given the past reputation of the President. Then, there was a period of relative hopefulness. This was dashed by the visit to Romania and there was a period of stagnation. Then, just when things began to pick up again, we had invaded Cambodia. Nevertheless, the Soviet leadership was willing to let bygones be bygones, as long as we understood that their desire for an agreement did not reflect weakness and that their domestic difficulties were figments of the American press.

I told him that we recognized the Soviet Union as a major country. We, of course, assumed that any agreement they made would reflect mutual interests and could not be imposed by either side. Our view was that either we could proceed along tactical lines as we had for most of our relationship in the post-war period, or we could make an effort at a fundamental improvement in relations. If we did the latter, the United States would be prepared to make a serious effort in the channels that the President had indicated, with the purpose of marking this Administration as the one in which the basic turning point towards peace had been made. Such an agreement would, of course, have to include that neither side would take advantage of any difficulties that the other might face in other parts of the world.

This led Dobrynin to ask me how we were getting on in our relationship with China. I said that it was very interesting that China was vitriolic in its public attacks but very polite in its private conversations. Dobrynin said that he suspected as much. He said, "Are you going to try to get on better terms with Communist China?" I responded that we would continue talking but their own experience must teach them that progress would not be very rapid. Dobrynin believed China would try to lead a crusade against us. I said that we were relaxed about this and would probably try to stay in contact with them.

Conclusion

We then summed up the conversation by listing the things that were going to be done. Dobrynin would try to get an idea from Moscow

of what was meant by compensations in SALT and a position on the withdrawal of Soviet forces from the Middle East in case of a settlement. I would give him some idea of the range of limited agreements that we could discuss and some procedure for approaching the Middle East problem.

There was some extended conversation about the various personalities with whom Dobrynin had worked here, and his own estimate of them which was extraordinarily shrewd. For example, he said that he had never been much for Robert Kennedy because he thought that underneath his liberal facade, he was an extremely tough man. After about a year, he would have been the most intransigent cold warrior that had ever been in the Presidency. Of the Secretaries of State that he had met he thought Dulles was the most impressive and Rusk was the most reliable. I did not ask him to speak about any members of the present Administration.¹⁰

¹⁰ On June 15, Kissinger sent Nixon a memorandum, drafted by Winston Lord, summarizing his June 10 conversation. Kissinger's memorandum bears Nixon's handwritten comment "K—good job—now we shall see." In the summary of Kissinger's discussion with Dobrynin about SALT, Nixon wrote "very significant! (China) (phase II)" next to Kissinger's statement: "The Soviet definition consists of limiting ABMs to defense against third country attacks." In the section about Dobrynin's comments on South-east Asia, Nixon underlined and wrote "interesting" next to Kissinger's statement: "While we had made some military gains, Chinese influence in the region had been bolstered and prospects for a settlement set back." (*Ibid.*, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2, Vol. I)

169. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 19, 1970.

SUBJECT

Ambassador Jacob D. Beam's Meeting with President Nixon,
June 18, 1970, 3:30 p.m.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Beam. A June 22 covering memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger explained that "the conversation actually occurred in reverse order to that indicated in the notes, with the President asking Beam a series of questions for about 15 minutes and then giving Beam guidance toward the end of the meeting." A copy was also sent to Rogers.

The President gave me his views as follows on a number of basic issues between the US and the USSR. He strongly favored an increase in American commercial sales to the USSR (including Gleason gear) under conditions of a hoped-for and an anticipated improvement in the atmosphere later this summer. He did not want to attach explicit conditions since this would provoke a bad reaction, but economic moves could “kick along” the process of working out a live-and-let-live arrangement.

Within this context the President wished me to get the idea across that he was resolved to lay the basis for realistic negotiations with the Soviet Union. We had a policy and plan for Vietnam, which would take on further substance at the end of our Cambodian operation and he was determined to stop the war.

As regards the Middle East, we envisaged initiatives which would open up possibilities for negotiations in this area as well. The Soviets should, of course, display restraint.

The President said we were also intensely serious about SALT and it was clear both sides would profit from an understanding which would lighten the financial burden for us and would spare the Soviet Union a costly competition in keeping up with our technology and military production.

The President hoped that the range of subjects he was offering as suitable for negotiation would prove attractive to the Soviets. Although the establishment of true friendship between the two countries was probably illusory because of Soviet attitudes, the basis could be laid by which the two competing great powers could order their affairs for the furtherance of world stability. The President wished it to be made clear that our intentions and plans were to move forward. He thought there were signs recently of Soviet movement, too.

The President mentioned some personal ideas about pursuing the relationship further.

The President asked me for my views on the Middle East and Indochina. I gave reasons why I thought the Soviets neither wanted the total elimination of Israel nor chaos in the Middle East, especially because of their involvement with Communist China. As regards Indochina, I felt North Vietnam was the apple of their eye in Asia and in fact the main base for Soviet influence, present and future, in Asia. As a result of Sihanouk's defection in the direction of Communist China, the Soviets were extremely concerned about losing the North Vietnamese to Chinese domination. The Soviets were waiting to see how they could best protect their interests in a sorting out of developments in Indochina. Possibly they had considered multilateral discussions, as indicated by Jacob Malik's suggestion in New York, but they had apparently been unable to obtain Hanoi's consent.

The President asked me about leadership problems in the Soviet Union. I referred to changes which might take place either in the wake of the Supreme Soviet elections which have just been held, or in connection with the Party Congress mooted for late October or early November. The President thought the regime might well wish to have some kind of an agreement in SALT before or at about the time of the Party Congress.

In reply to the President's question, I expressed the view that chances of change in the Politburo could be about 50–50 during the course of the current year, resulting from the aftermath of the Supreme Soviet elections and the Party Congress. I felt Brezhnev would probably profit and stressed the point that he was a man not to be underestimated. Although he was held to be unimaginative, he is forceful, a good administrator and a formidable personality in debate. (I had in mind information from Czech sources about his handling of Dubcek at the critical meetings before the Soviet invasion in August 1968.)

The President said he was considering sending out Secretaries Hardin and Stans to Moscow, perhaps in August. The President will make his decision in July. He said he would like to receive some Soviet political personalities in return, but I pointed out this might be difficult before the end of the year because of a possible Soviet Party Congress session in the fall.

170. Editorial Note

On June 20, 1970, Secretary of State William Rogers and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph Sisco met with Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin to present United States proposals on securing a Middle East peace settlement. Rogers stated the following U.S. position:

“a) We are proposing that the UAR, Israel, and Jordan promptly begin discussions under Ambassador Jarring's auspices, according to whatever procedures are recommended by him, for the purpose of the agreed implementation of the November 1967 Security Council Resolution.

“b) We are proposing, as a basis for the commencement of Jarring's efforts, that the UAR, Israel, and Jordan make identical statements that they (a) accept Resolution 242 and (b) agree that the purpose of the discussions to be conducted by Ambassador Jarring is to reach agreement on the establishment of a just and lasting peace between them based on (i) mutual acknowledgment by the UAR, Jordan and Israel of each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and

political independence; and (ii) withdrawal of Israeli forces, both in accordance with Resolution 242.

"c) To facilitate Ambassador Jarring's mission we are further proposing that the UAR, Israel, and Jordan subscribe to a full restoration of the ceasefire, effective July 1 until at least October 1.

"d) To be effective, the ceasefire would have to include an understanding that (a) both sides would stop all incursions and all firing, on the ground and in the air, across the ceasefire lines, (b) the UAR would refrain from changing the military status quo (by emplacing SAMs or other new installations in an agreed zone west of the Suez Canal ceasefire line), and (c) Israel would observe a similar standstill on new installations in a similar zone east of the Canal.

"e) We are suggesting that this proposal be incorporated in a report from Ambassador Jarring to Secretary General Thant, which the parties would accept as a basis for talks under Ambassador Jarring's auspices.

"f) The U.S. Government is making every effort to secure Israel's acceptance, and our hope is that the USSR, jointly or in parallel with us will seek the acceptance and cooperation of the UAR."

After hearing Rogers's points, Dobrynin expressed two concerns. First, would the procedures in the new formula for bringing parties together overcome the traditional practice of one side insisting on direct negotiations while the other side insisted on indirect discussions? Second, was the United States not, in effect, "throwing away" the results of the Two-Power and Four-Power negotiations? To the first concern, Rogers replied that the "wording of formula in effect gave Jarring discretionary power with respect to procedural arrangements." Sisco added that "each side would have to justify entering negotiations with other side within framework of its own policy and its preferred procedure of negotiations." On Dobrynin's second concern, Rogers "took considerable pains to assure Dobrynin that Two-Power and Four-Power negotiations would continue in parallel with negotiations between parties directly concerned and that once latter under way the Four Powers would be in a position to influence their course and make a real contribution to a settlement." (Telegram 97773 to Moscow, June 20; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1155, Saunders Files, US Peace Initiative for Middle East, 6/10-7/23/70, Vol. 1, 3 of 5)

At a press conference on June 25, 1970, Rogers made the following statement about the Middle East that incorporated the points made 5 days before to Dobrynin:

"Recent and disquieting events in the Middle East led President Nixon, on April 29 to order a thorough review of all political and military aspects of the problem. That review has now been concluded. As a consequence of the review, the United States has undertaken a political initiative, the objective of which is to encourage the parties to stop shooting and start talking under the auspices of Ambassador Jarring in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council. Our

objective in launching this initiative has been to encourage the parties to move towards a just and lasting peace which takes fully into account the legitimate aspirations and concerns of all governments and peoples of the area. In light of that objective, we believe it would not be useful to disclose at this time details of the political initiative or to discuss publicly military assistance for Israel. We believe that this is the time for such an initiative which we have launched directly with the parties and with other interested powers." (Department of State *Bulletin*, July 13, 1970, page 26)

171. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 23, 1970, 6:45 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

The conversation came about in the following way. First, there were indications that the Soviet delegation wanted to wind up the SALT talks in Vienna. Secondly, Gerry Smith was pressing for new instructions authorizing him to offer a more limited option. Third, the President did not want the settlement to be arrived at in Vienna but, if possible, at a summit meeting. He asked me to find out from Dobrynin what the Soviet real intentions were, especially with respect to the conversations we had had in April² prior to Dobrynin's departure for Moscow where it was agreed that, if possible, if there should be a deadlock in Vienna, we would break it at a summit.

I saw Dobrynin in the Map Room of the White House and said to him that we were at a point where some decisions had to be made with respect to instructions for the Vienna delegation and that it would help us to understand Soviet intentions properly. I said Semyonov's suggestion of an early end of the Vienna phase could lead to three interpretations: (1) the Soviet Union did not want an agreement on SALT this year at all; (2) the Soviet Union wanted an agreement at Vienna and was using this device in order to elicit a different American proposal; and (3) the Soviet Union wanted an agreement but not at Vienna

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 2, Vol. I. Top Secret; Sensitive. The conversation was held in the Map Room at the White House.

² See Documents 150 and 152.

and was stalemating the talks there in order to permit the other leaders to settle the issue. I would appreciate Dobrynin's guidance.

Dobrynin, who was noticeably more businesslike and less cordial than at previous meetings, said the first interpretation was clearly out of the question. The Soviet Union did want an agreement on SALT even though our two positions were not yet close enough to set a definite date. As for Vienna, it was the Soviet Union's judgment that an agreement, including offensive and defensive weapons, could not be negotiated in the time available at Vienna. As for the third interpretation, he was without instructions and he would have to inquire in Moscow.

Dobrynin asked what I thought of an agreement confined to ABM. I said I saw no reason to change our position since the last time we met. I also mentioned to Dobrynin that I had been waiting for him to give me some answers to questions I had put to him on the *Sequoia*.³ Dobrynin said that I have so many questions that it was hard for him to know to which I was referring. I said that this was the first time that I had seen Dobrynin miss a point, and I was particularly concerned about the Middle East. Dobrynin did not take the bait about the suggestion of Soviet troop withdrawal in case of a settlement. Instead, he said, "We offered you bilateral talks. We made a major proposal. We considered it a significant concession. In return, we have had no reply for three weeks, and then you make a unilateral overture. It is your problem now, and we are out of it. We suspect that you may have to come back to us later, but whether our concessions will still be open then remains to be seen."

I said that the American initiatives should be seen as a corollary to the two-power discussions, not as a substitute for them. Dobrynin replied that I well knew his attitude towards Sisco's conduct of the negotiations and until we started getting serious, there wasn't really too much hope for progress. At any rate, it was no longer the Soviet Union's problem and was ours. Dobrynin promised me an answer by the time we returned from San Clemente.⁴

³ See Document 168.

⁴ Nixon and Kissinger were in San Clemente June 26–July 6. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

172. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 25, 1970.

SUBJECT

The Soviet Leaders Speak Out

Last week the three top Soviet leaders—Brezhnev, Podgorny and Kosygin—all gave their “election” speeches. Taken together they represent a rather comprehensive report on current Soviet policies.

No major shift is foreshadowed in the three speeches on foreign policy. All of the leaders seemed to take a somewhat softer line than might have been anticipated in light of tensions in the Middle East and Asia. We came in for what appears to be a standard share of criticism, some of it sharp and pointed, especially for our policies in Southeast Asia. Yet there seemed to be an effort to insulate Soviet-American relations in general, from specific crisis areas.

Kosygin was the most forthright in calling for establishment of good relations; Podgorny was the more pessimistic in describing our relations as “frozen.” Brezhnev, who was in the middle, rhetorically asked if good relations were possible, and answered positively. In particular, he took pains to stress that it would be possible to solve major international problems with the U.S.

There was no mention whatsoever of SALT, in marked contrast to Kosygin's press conference² of May 4 in which he warned that our Cambodian operations generated distrust that could affect SALT.

The Soviet position on Vietnam and Cambodia, stripped of some of the propaganda hyperbole, was rather guarded. Brezhnev spoke of Soviet support for the “just principles and demands of the patriotic forces of the peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos as the basis for a political settlement,”—thus slighting the military aspects.

On the Middle East, however, the Soviet position remained tough. Brezhnev boasted that the “defense capacity” of the Arab states had been “restored,” and that the “liberation” of the captured Arab territories was the “key prerequisite” for a settlement.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Confidential. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. A copy was also sent to Sonnenfeldt, who drafted the memorandum to the President based on a June 10 memorandum from Hyland to Kissinger summarizing Kosygin's foreign policy address, and another on June 12, summarizing Brezhnev's election speech. (Both *ibid.*)

² See Document 157.

The most optimistic note in all three reports concerned European affairs. Relations with Germany was singled out for a positive evaluation, and Brezhnev generally anticipated a favorable conclusion to the current negotiations with Bonn on a renunciation of force treaty. (He spoke before the recent German elections which may have the effect of inhibiting Brandt's policy.)

In contrast to the favorable impression of their Western prospects, all of the Soviet leaders were critical of Peking and pessimistic over their border talks. Kosygin was more restrained, Podgorny the sharpest, and Brezhnev, again, in the middle.

Most of the speeches of the leaders were taken up with internal matters, with all making the usual pledge of a better lot for the Soviet people. Sharp differences were apparent, however, over the question of continuing the economic reform. Brezhnev mentioned it only in passing, Podgorny added a critical note, and only Kosygin made a spirited defense of the reform. All this suggests that drafting of the next five year plan, which is now underway, may be causing divisions within the leadership. This may be part of the growing speculation, confirmed by several sources, that Kosygin will go into voluntary retirement this year, which probably would strengthen Brezhnev's predominance.

173. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, June 26, 1970.

SUBJECT

Kosygin Reply to Your Letter on Laos

After a three-month interval Premier Kosygin has replied to your March 21 letter,² appealing to interested states to renew international

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 765, Presidential Correspondence, Kosygin. Confidential; Exdis. A note from Rosemary Woods to the NSC Secretariat indicates that Kosygin's letter was sent directly to Kissinger, who had Saunders work on a response to it. Holdridge and Sonnenfeldt forwarded this memorandum on June 22 to Kissinger with the following comments: "We note that the [Kosygin] reply is very hard, and characteristically blames the U.S. for all the problems of the Indo-China region. It makes no reference to the presence of North Vietnamese troops anywhere in Indo-China. We recommend that no further action be taken by the President, but that you call in Dobrynin or Vorontsov to set the record straight on the North Vietnamese responsibility for the tensions in Indo-China."

² Tab A, Document 146.

consultations concerning Laos (Tab A). The reply, as anticipated, rejects your appeal. The tone, however, is polemical and tough.³

Kosygin emphasizes that your appeal “sounds unconvincing” because of our “armed intervention” in Laos, and our failure to make a similar appeal at the time when operations intensified last autumn and led to the capture of a series of areas long under the control of the “patriotic forces.”

As for convening the Geneva conference (1962) in “one form or another”, this is rejected by Kosygin as “unreal in present conditions . . .⁴ when there is going on a war unleashed by the USA against the Vietnamese people as well as armed intervention in the affairs of Laos and now also Cambodia.”

He adopts a much tougher position than heretofore on the Souvanna Phouma Government, claiming that there is “no such government (of national union)” as created by the Geneva accords. It must be created by the “political forces” of Laos, he asserts. And he cites as the basis for internal consultations among the Laotians, the proposals of the Pathet Lao. He adds, however, that even these consultations cannot lead to the restoration of peace: “the war cannot be brought to a close” or consultations “moved off dead center” as long as the U.S. continues bombing and “generally interferes in Laotian internal affairs.”

Substantively, this reply represents some hardening of the Soviet position, which is consistent with the tougher line reflected in the recent letter from Souphanavong to Souvanna Phouma and the increased military action of the Communist side. It comes close to saying the Geneva agreements are a dead letter, and that even those parts pertaining to the coalition government are no longer valid. This is probably intended to increase the pressures on Souvanna, who is always concerned with signs that the Soviet might formally withdraw recognition of his government. The letter stops short of this, however. One possible sign of flexibility is the failure to make cessation of the bombing a precondition to talks among the Laotians.

The hard line taken by Kosygin in his reply can be considered pro forma, in that the Soviet position on Laos has consistently been to support Hanoi and the Pathet Lao, and to blame the U.S. for all the problems of Vietnam, Laos, and now Cambodia. The tone of the reply may also reflect Soviet frustrations over the way that Soviet influence in Hanoi has declined recently as Chinese influence has grown. Koysgin

³ Nixon circled “polemical and tough” and wrote: “K—perhaps our statements and ltrs have been too soft and thus misunderstood? Toughen them up.”

⁴ Ellipsis in the source text.

may in effect be saying that the Soviets simply do not want to be involved in Indo-Chinese affairs under present circumstances.

I do not believe that the reply merits any further action on your part. We do not wish to become engaged in an unproductive exchange with the Soviets. However, for the purpose of setting the record straight on the causes of the tensions in Indo-China and denying the Soviets the last word on this, I believe it would be useful for me to set the record straight with Dobrynin when I next see him and lay it on the line as to the presence of North Vietnamese troops in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia as the source of all the trouble.

Tab A

Letter From Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union Kosygin to President Nixon

Moscow, undated.

Dear Mr. President:

We would like to make several observations concerning your letter regarding Laos.

It was pointed out in your letter that the Government of the United States does not spare any efforts to secure peace in Laos by means of the full implementation of the 1962 Geneva agreements. One could only welcome such a statement, if it indicated the intention to end the American intervention in Laos, which would conform to the obligation of the USA under these agreements. Unfortunately, the situation has been and is entirely otherwise; the American Air Force continues the bombardment of the territory of Laos; American "Advisers" are in the ranks of the armed forces of one of the Laotian sides and frequently participate directly in military operations.

In these conditions the appeal to other states by the U.S. Government to fulfill the 1962 Geneva agreements and to maintain the independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Laos sounds unconvincing at the very least. You, Mr. President, directly admit the presence of "American Military—air activities in Laos." But instead of the cessation of these actions your letter only poses the question of international consultations. More to the point, for some reason the U.S. Government did not raise the question of international consultations when, last autumn, as a result of American armed intervention, military operations in the Plain of Jars and the central part of the country sharply intensified which led to the seizure of a series of areas that for a long time were under the control of the patriotic forces of Laos.

We cannot share also your appraisal of our position on the question of holding consultations among the countries participating in the 1962 Geneva conference on Laos. Bilateral consultations and exchange of opinions between governments on the question of the situation in Laos take place almost continually. In particular our attitude toward the February 28, 1970 message of Souvanna Phouma was communicated to the Laotian representatives in Moscow and Vientiane. A reasoned (*motivirovanny*) answer was given by us to the government of England concerning the inappropriateness of sending message on this question on behalf of the two Cochairmen. The Soviet Government maintains contacts with appropriate socialist countries. As far as we know, the British Cochairman also has exchanged opinions on this question with a number of countries in addition to the Soviet Union.

If the U.S. Government has in mind not this type of consultation but the convening in one or another form of a conference of participating states of the 1962 Geneva conference, then it is completely obvious that the convening of such a conference is unreal in present conditions, when there is going on a war unleashed by the U.S.A. against the Vietnamese people as well as armed intervention in the affairs of Laos and now also Cambodia. It is hardly possible to deny this.

Let us take only the question of the representation of Laos at such a conference. The Government of National Unity of Laos, established in conformity with the 1962 Geneva agreements, would have to be represented at it. But after all it is well known that at the present time there is no such government. It is necessary to recreate it, and only the political forces of Laos themselves can do this. The patriotic front of Laos, in its March 6 statement, proposed concrete measures aimed at the re-establishment of the Government of National Unity and the restoration of peace in Laos. Precisely in connection with this we expressed the opinion in our March 13 letter that the matter of the normalization of the situation in Laos should begin with consultation among the political forces of Laos, and that a good foundation for these consultations is the proposals advanced in the above-mentioned statement of the patriotic front.

I would like to point out that our letter of 13 March in no way contends that consultations among Laotian political forces can by themselves, if left to their own, lead to the restoration of peace there. As was justly pointed out in the March 6th statement of the patriotic front, the war in Laos cannot be brought to a close and the matter of a settlement will not get off dead center while the U.S.A. continues bombing Laotian territory and generally interferes in Laotian internal affairs.

The Soviet Government has already stated its opinion concerning how much American armed invasion in Cambodia has complicated the situation in Indo-China as a whole. I do not intend now specially to

dwell on this question. In this instance it is necessary only to note that this invasion makes even more unreal raising the question of some kind of “international consultations” on Laos.

In conclusion I would like to express great regret, which is shared by my colleagues in our leadership, that the U.S. Government, instead of taking realistic measures for the cessation of the war against the Peoples of Indo-China and the establishment of peace in Southeast Asia, has taken the the path of spreading this war. This complicates the situation not only in Southeast Asia but in the whole world and naturally cannot but affect also the relations between our countries. I would like to express the hope that the Government of the U.S.A. and you personally will arrive at the only correct conclusion the cessation of interference in the internal affairs of the People of Indo-China and the withdrawal of American forces from this region. We are convinced that such a decision would radically change the situation in this region in favor of peace and would meet the interests of the whole world.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin⁵

⁵ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

174. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, June 26, 1970.

SUBJECT

Middle East Dialogue with the Soviets

The Soviets have now tabled their new formulations² in the Four Power talks. Since this step brings into the open the debate over their significance, I thought you might want to look at this issue in detail.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 646, Country Files, Middle East, General, Vol. VI, August 1970. Secret; Nodis. Sent for information. Not initialed by Saunders. The memorandum indicates Kissinger saw it.

² See Document 159.

You will recall that those formulations (a) concede Arab control of the fedayeen and (b) advance the time when peace would become effective.

At Tab A³ is a memo produced by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at State on the new Soviet formulations. I call it to your attention because it presents a much more hopeful interpretation than either Bill Hyland or I have provided you in recent memos and because it will have a lot to do with conditioning State's interpretation.

Following are a brief summary of the major points in the INR memo and a short critique of it.

INR Memo

The INR memo argues: "The fact that Moscow is now willing to advance beyond dead center on two questions which the UAR has in the past been unwilling to confront and which involve a long-resisted Egyptian surrender, in principle, of the strongest Egyptian bargaining ploys against Israel, implies that the USSR has strong policy reasons for moving to this position." Since presumably the Soviets were willing to use their new leverage with Cairo to extract these concessions, "the resultant impression is that the USSR means to convey a signal of its desire to bargain seriously."

Moscow's move is seen as having two immediate tactical advantages:

—First and foremost, it appears designed to force the U.S. to face up to the problem of its relationship with Israel. Moscow expected its move would complicate the U.S. decision on jets for Israel. But more important, Moscow may see this as the ultimate inducement to press Israel to withdraw.

—Second, it may have been calculated to remind us that no direct U.S. approach to Nasser attempting an end run around Moscow can succeed.

The memo then moves on to discuss Soviet motivations:

—It is assumed that the Soviets would not have made their move if they had not been prepared for a positive U.S. response that could eventually lead to a settlement on favorable terms. Moscow's postulated readiness to settle the Arab-Israeli problem rests on indications that they are still considerably worried about an Israeli attack against the Arabs and a possible American military involvement in future hostilities as well as the effect of heightened tension in the Middle East on important ongoing Soviet-American relationships in other fields.

³ Attached but not printed is a June 9 intelligence brief, "USSR-Israel-Arab States: Moscow's Push Toward a Middle East Settlement," prepared by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research for the Secretary.

—The Soviets would like to open up the Suez Canal.

—It is asserted that the USSR no longer believes that its leverage with the UAR and other Arab states depends on opposing a settlement. Even with a settlement it is thought that Moscow would have many things going in its favor in the Middle East.

The INR memo concludes that, even though Soviet interest in dampening the Arab-Israeli dispute now seems substantial, it is unlikely that it is strong enough for them to willingly undercut the position they have so painstakingly and expensively built up in the area. The new positions communicated by Dobrynin imply that Moscow means business *but* that the deal will have to meet Arab sensibilities on regaining their territories and on the refugee problem. Finally, the Soviets will be anxious to keep the diplomatic action in our bilateral channel in order to emphasize their co-equal role with us in the region and as the best way to overcome both Cairo's possible faint-heartedness and Tel Aviv's probable obstructionism.

Critique

While many of INR's points seem valid, it seems to have been written out of the context of the record of the past year's negotiations. A review of that negotiating history clearly reveals that after 15 months of effort there has been little, if any, net progress toward coming up with a joint document. It is true that the Soviets have suddenly reopened the bilateral dialogue, which for all practical purposes was suspended since late last October, but they have done so in a way that attempts to wipe the slate clean of all we have discussed over the last year.

The simple fact is that their new formulations are changes in *their* June 1969 document, which we felt we passed in our drafts of last July and October. One of their two opening concessions on the peace issue—Arab control of the fedayeen—is important but it simply does not stack up to what they want us to do in return. They want us to give away Israel's entire position on withdrawal before the peace negotiations—which their document ignores—even begin.

It is correct, as the INR memo says, that the Soviets have again signalled a desire to bargain. However, the terms are such that I question whether we are yet within range of serious negotiation unless the U.S. is prepared to press now for Israeli acceptance of certain borders before negotiations begin. Moreover, while I can find several strong incentives for the Soviets to keep the talks open, I still see none that are compelling enough for them to back down very far from the maximum Arab positions. I can see why they might want to re-open the negotiating door as a safety exit because the potential for their military involvement. But my guess is that they would like to draw the present

situation out just as long as they can—see the U.S. position eroded just as much as possible—before they turn to political settlement.

Attached at Tab B⁴ is a copy of a memo I recently sent to you spelling out in more detail my analysis of our bilateral talks with the Soviets.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

175. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, June 30, 1970, 1608Z.

3592. Subj: Meeting with Gromyko on Middle East. Ref: A. State 102700;² B. Moscow 3589.³

1. I spent ninety minutes June 29 discussing our ME initiatives with Gromyko. He was accompanied by MEA USADiv Chief Korniyenko. Although Gromyko seemed somewhat tired, he listened carefully through my presentation. He put his remarks and questions to me in a direct, serious, and non-polemical manner.

2. Following my presentation, based on para 2(a) through (j) of reftel a, and subparas 6(a) through (g) of State 102616, Gromyko said he wished answers or clarifications to several questions. First, the US says it would not be good if the Arabs and USSR put forward as a preliminary condition for negotiations the demand that Israeli forces must withdraw from all, he said, occupied territories. Is the US against this demand as a general thesis or only as a preliminary condition? It was, Gromyko added, very essential to have an answer to this question.

3. I said we would oppose the demand if it were a preliminary condition for negotiations, simply on practical grounds. In any event, it would not be attainable before negotiations could take place since boundaries and the modalities of withdrawal were to be the subject of

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR. Secret; Priority; Nodis.

² Telegram 102700 to Moscow, June 28, provides instructions for Beam's talk. (Ibid.)

³ Telegram 3589 from Moscow, June 29, provides a brief summary of Beam's talk. (Ibid.)

negotiations themselves. If the Arabs insisted on their demand as a preliminary condition, there would be little prospect of a political settlement either through Jarring's mission or through major-power talks. I pointed out that the principle of withdrawal and non-acquisition of territory is set forth in UNSC Res 242, which we support. That res, however, does not specifically stipulate withdrawal to the June 5, 1967, line.

4. To seek a formula which goes beyond the wording of the Res, I said, would delay the start of talks under Jarring and slow down progress in the major-power talks. Meanwhile, there would exist the danger of military escalation and further reduction of our ability to be helpful as a result of this delay. I added as final comment that the US is already on record in its Oct and Dec documents as envisaging no substantial changes in June 1967 lines, and that we endorsed total Israeli withdrawal from UAR territory.

5. Gromyko asked if we intended to submit our proposals to the four-power talks in NY. I replied that since all the appropriate parties had been apprised of our proposals, I assumed they would be discussed at NY although I was not certain as to how this would be done.

6. Gromyko then asked if the USSR could expect a clear answer to the latest Soviet proposals put forward in our bilaterals and tabled in the four-power talks.

7. I said I was certain the Soviets would receive a reply. I went on to say that what we were now proposing was an emergency procedure to get talks started between the Israelis and Arabs. If they are started, the two- and four-power talks would continue, aimed at working out detailed instructions and bringing pressure and influence to bear for the purpose of narrowing the gap.

8. Gromyko said the USSR was pursuing its study of our new proposals, and could give no final answer now, particularly since Moscow had not yet received detailed analyses of the US proposals from appropriate Arab govts. He added that in general Moscow knew their viewpoints.

9. Gromyko then asserted that the US proposals lack clarity on certain major questions. For example, on the question of withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied territories, he repeated his question, does the US oppose this demand as a preliminary condition or as a general thesis? The question of withdrawal of forces and the establishment of peace are major questions to which clear US explanations are required, he said.

10. Furthermore, Gromyko continued, the US advocates continuation of the Jarring mission—as does the USSR. The question arises of what will Jarring be guided by in carrying out his contacts with both sides. He needs detailed guidelines. However, apart from the general provisions of UNSC Res 242 and a temporary ceasefire, the US pro-

posals contain nothing concrete, no detailed instructions. Gromyko went on to suggest that if the USG did not wish to work out guidelines for Jarring in our bilateral channel, the USSR still felt guidelines were necessary and that they could be worked out in the four-power talks. Moscow would accept any form for working out instructions so long as they lead to positive results.

11. Finally, Gromyko said, Moscow still has not received reactions from Washington on some other Soviet ideas, which perhaps were under study by the US. He then reiterated that his preceding remarks were aimed at eliciting clarification on a number of unclear points in the US proposals and that his remarks had been of a preliminary nature. He would return to a final assessment of the US proposals.

12. I said we would take note of his questions and in the meantime I would reply on the basis of information available to me. I went on to say that the purpose of our proposals was to start the two parties negotiating under Jarring's auspices. No one could dictate. Jarring was there to launch the negotiations, to mediate to the best of his abilities. If both sides could, without qualification, accept UNSC Res 242, they could meet indirectly under Jarring's mission. Meanwhile, if Jarring needed assistance and guidance, this could be provided by the two- and four-power channels.

13. The essential thing, I stressed, was that the two sides be brought together in a negotiating stance even if it is impossible at the outset to give Jarring instructions. It was also our view that the problem will become clearer more quickly once talks begin. The danger is that while we wait for agreement on instructions in the two- and four-power talks, the situation on the ground is likely to get worse and military pressures on both the US and USSR will increase.

14. Gromyko asked if Israel had given its reply to our proposals, to which I answered I knew of no such reply to date.

15. He then remarked that the US takes the position that the sooner the talks start the better. However, he went on, experience shows that if there is no agreement on guidance for Jarring, there is no progress. The Soviet Union does not want to put the damper on Jarring, whom it supports. However, while Moscow wants the start of negotiations, it sees no point in starting just for the sake of starting. Is it our goal, he continued, to have Jarring go to the area and return without anything? Gromyko emphasized that among the govts which share major responsibility there must be understanding and agreement regarding the major tasks and questions. Otherwise there can be no positive results.

16. I replied that if the USG could get Israel to accept UNSC Res 242, indirect negotiations, and the principle of withdrawal, this would be a great step forward in contributing to the start of negotiations. As regards the Arabs, I referred to my initial presentation which pointed

out that under the US proposals we are asking them to do no more than they themselves have earlier they were prepared to do. Our proposals ask more of the Israelis than of the Arabs. What we are proposing, I said, was an important procedural step to break an impasse; an urgent initiative of this type was called for. I added that the the two- and four-power talks could at the same time deal with substantive questions.

17. After asking us again to reflect on the questions he had posed, Gromyko returned to suggesting that we should give Jarring clear instructions regarding withdrawal and the establishment of peace. I replied that the first thing was to get the parties together in negotiations which would clarify the substance of the issues.

18. At the end of the meeting I commended to Gromyko's attention the very carefully drafted presentation the Dept had given me to put before him. (At Fonoff request the text is now being checked by Polansky with the Soviet interpreter.)

19. At reception last night for visiting Mayor Washington Korniyenko made it clear that the two major points the Soviets will hammer away at are (1) absence of instructions for Jarring, and (2) failure to deal with "the Arab demand for total Israeli withdrawal." Since the Soviets frequently offer lack of response as an excuse for doing nothing, I suggest we again try to tie these questions down as best we can.

Beam

176. Memorandum From Harold Saunders of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, July 2, 1970.

SUBJECT

Soviet Response to Middle East Initiative

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 646, Country Files, Middle East, General, Vol. VI, August 1970. Secret; Nodis. Originally sent for information, but Saunders changed it to action. Copies were sent to Haig and Lord.

Assistant Secretary Sisco met again July 1² with Ambassador Dobrynin concerning our new Middle East initiative. This account is as interesting in revealing the emerging nature of our diplomatic initiative as it is in confirming emerging outlines of the Soviet response.

Summary of Conversation

Sisco began by explaining, in answer to a question Gromyko had asked Ambassador Beam,³ that we oppose the Arab demand for an Israeli commitment to total withdrawal as a pre-condition to negotiations or to Four Power agreement on guidelines for Jarring. He said we feel that the final borders must be agreed between the parties, not imposed, but should exclude other than insubstantial changes. Sisco also said that we wanted positive reaction from the parties before submitting our proposals in the Four Power forum and that delaying tactics in hope of getting the initiative changed through the major power talks would simply not work. Finally, Sisco noted that the new Soviet formulations (presented last March directly to us and more recently in the Four Power talks) are a “step forward” and our reply would be influenced by (1) whether the negotiating process under Jarring begins and (2) by the degree of Soviet military aid to the Egyptians.⁴

Dobrynin took the line that our proposals were too thin and that in his opinion it would be best to table our initiative in the Four Power talks where they could be strengthened with the suggestions of other powers. Why, he wondered, had the U.S. taken a unilateral initiative instead of discussing it first in the major power forum, particularly when the Soviets had just made a forthcoming move on the issue of peace that we had stressed so much. Dobrynin stressed the continuing Soviet interest in the U.S.–USSR talks and Moscow’s disappointment over the delay in the U.S. answer to the new Soviet peace formulations.

Comment

In our official contacts with the Soviets on the new initiative, they have at all levels indicated their suspicion of our strategy. A certain measure of mutual suspicion is probably inevitable in dealing with the Soviets, but in this case, it is probably increased by the timing of our initiative which did come on the heels of what they regard as the first real concession they have made in over a year of talks on the Middle East. That concession (Arab control of the fedayeen) is only one aspect

² In telegram 105385 to Manila, Beirut, Cairo, and additional posts, July 2, the Department reported on their discussion. (Ibid., Box 1155, Saunders Files, U.S. Peace Initiative for Middle East, 6/10–7/23/70, Vol. 1, 4 of 5)

³ See Document 175.

⁴ Kissinger wrote “What proposals are new initiatives?” in the margin.

of the larger problem and came with unacceptable strings attached (acceptance of the rest of the Soviet proposals and especially a prior Israeli commitment to total withdrawal) but it presumably was carefully weighed and probably intended to draw us out from behind our inflexible position. Now, in the Soviet eyes, we have responded, for all practical purposes, by sidetracking the Two Power and Four Power channels in favor of a unilateral and direct approach to the parties with essence of our earlier proposals.

More important, however, than this Soviet suspicion, is their concentration on the issue of total Israeli withdrawal. Dobrynin did not get directly into this but from all indications, including Ambassador Beam's recent talk with Gromyko, this is why the Soviets keep harping on fleshing out our initiative in the Four Power forum. Of course, it might be natural to expect positions on both sides to harden on this issue just before a possible negotiation.

The most important question for the Soviets, and for that matter for Nasser, is whether the U.S. is prepared to press the Israelis to withdraw totally from the occupied territories if the Arabs make the concession of agreeing to negotiations. All of the Soviet talk about the need to give Jarring more detailed guidelines really boils down to the Soviets pressuring us to settle the boundary issue before Jarring resumes in contrast to our insistence on having negotiations start before boundary issues as Gaza, Sharm al-Shaikh and Jerusalem are worked out. This has been the essence of the Soviet strategy in the Four Power talks for some time and they apparently intend to pursue it in response to our new initiative.

The most important insight that comes to me out of the first week's maneuvering over our initiative is this: It is, at the moment, little more than an energetic effort to rush the Soviets and Egyptians to agree to begin negotiation in hope that the U.S. will make the key concessions on boundaries in return. We have hinted; but we have not decided. We may not want to make that decision. But Dobrynin sees the effort for what it is, and I will be surprised if the Egyptians and Soviets let us get away with it. We are asking them to play their key card with no more than a hint that we might play ours in return.

177. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 7, 1970, 2:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

SALT

The conversation came about because Dobrynin had sent me an Aide Mémoire² while I was in San Clemente in reply to the conversation I had had with him on June 23, 1970.³ In this reply, the Soviet Government indicated that they would be prepared to make an agreement at Vienna on ABMs and on the issue of accidental and provocative attacks, but that they did not think it likely that an agreement could be reached on the limitations of offensive weapons at Vienna. I wanted to get clarification on that point.

I deliberately conducted the meeting in a somewhat cool and aloof manner. I asked Dobrynin how he explained the first section of his Aide Mémoire. Did it mean that agreement on offensive weapons was impossible or that agreement would be very difficult? Dobrynin said that in view of all the important obligations that they had raised, the offensive limitations would have to be dealt with in two stages—an agreement in principle to be followed by detailed negotiations. He did not believe that this could be accomplished in the three weeks that were remaining in Vienna. He did want me to know, however, that the Soviet leaders had shown their good faith by instructing Semyonov first, to stay in Vienna at least until August 1st, and secondly, to concentrate for a while on the provocative and accidental attack aspect in order to give us a chance to develop our position.

I said to Dobrynin that we were going to have a meeting the next day to consider various aspects of the matter, particularly whether we could agree to a separate ABM ban. I also told him that I noticed that the last two paragraphs of his Aide Mémoire explicitly established the concept of linkage which they had strenuously rejected the year before. Dobrynin replied that they had become convinced by the persuasiveness of my argument that this was a correct course. We left this part of

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Geopolitical File, Box TS 36, Soviet Union, Chronological File, 7/70-1/71. Top Secret; Sensitive. The conversation was held in the Map Room at the White House.

² Attached. Sent to Kissinger from Dobrynin, through Colonel Kennedy, while Kissinger was in San Clemente.

³ See Document 171.

the conversation with my saying that I would let Dobrynin know after the meeting of our advisers whether we would agree to a separate ABM ban. Dobrynin added that, if that were done, the agreement could be signed later on this summer by the Foreign Ministers, perhaps at the United Nations. I said that this was a matter we could discuss after there had been an agreement in principle.

Middle East

Dobrynin then raised the subject of the Middle East in a much more conciliatory way than in the previous conversation where he said that the Soviets were practically out of it. He said he couldn't understand why we made the statements we did in San Clemente.⁴ He thought that at such a delicate moment, it would have been best for us to keep quiet, but he wanted me to know that the Soviet Union sought no confrontation and that the Soviet leaders were eager to have a political settlement. I responded that somehow or other I had gained the impression from our last conversation that he thought that now that the US was negotiating with the Middle Eastern parties directly, the Soviet Union was absolved of any direct responsibility. Dobrynin replied that if he gave that impression, he regretted it. He wanted me to know that he was fully authorized to talk to me at any moment and to come to an agreement with me. I said that I did not have enough time to discuss the Middle East at this particular moment, but that when I gave him our answer on the ABM proposal, I would let him also know about our thinking on the Middle East. Dobrynin again effusively reiterated his desire to have an understanding with us, and we let the matter drop there.

Comment

It would be difficult to exaggerate the change in tone between the conversation on June 23rd and this conversation on July 7th. Dobrynin was conciliatory, effusive, and obviously taken aback by the various comments that had been made about the Middle East.

⁴ On July 1, while in San Clemente, Nixon was interviewed by the American Broadcasting Company and talked about a variety of foreign policy issues, including the Middle East. A text of these comments is in *Public Papers: Nixon, 1970*, pp. 543–559.

Attachment⁵

Aidé-Mémoire From the Soviet Union

Moscow, undated.

President Nixon's and Dr. Kissinger's considerations regarding the course of strategic arms limitation talks in Vienna have been carefully studied in Moscow, and I am instructed to outline the following considerations of the Soviet side in this connection.

1. Soviet-American strategic arms limitation talks have been underway for over two months now, and we agree with the opinion of the American side that the time has come to sum up certain results of the exchange that has taken place and to try to determine how these negotiations could be most productively continued.

The Soviet Union views with importance the problem of strategic arms limitation and is prepared to conduct fruitful talks in this field. At the Vienna negotiations we have advanced a broad program of measures which is a comprehensive one and embraces all strategic arms systems capable of delivering nuclear strikes against targets on the territories of the sides. We have chosen this approach proceeding from the necessity of ensuring equal security for both sides which constitutes an indispensable condition for agreement.

The proposals outlined by the US delegation have been carefully considered in Moscow. While those proposals have been presented to us as based on a broad approach to the problem of strategic arms limitation, we have noted that the American side proposes to include into the framework of agreement not all types of strategic arms leaving aside the question of US aircraft-carriers, aircraft and forward based missiles carrying nuclear charges, as well as of other systems the geographic location of which makes it possible to strike targets on the territory of the other side. Such a proposal, clearly, cannot be taken as a basis for solving the problem of strategic arms limitation because it would give advantages to one of the sides.

A number of other proposals by the US side has also been aimed at attaining one-sided advantages. These include proposals to the effect that Soviet heavy missiles be singled out as one separate category and a special ceiling be placed on them, that a quantitative level for strategic bombers be secured to the advantage of the US, as well as proposals regarding a ban on mobile launch missiles, limiting wing missiles, Diesel submarines, etc.

⁵ Top Secret; Eyes Only.

With the view of surmounting the existing differences we have come out for, in case the US retains forward-based nuclear means, the Soviet Union's receiving an adequate compensation. Such compensation could take the form, for example, of quantitative reduction of corresponding armaments from the other side. However, before citing any specific figures in this connection it is necessary to come to terms in principle on all these questions.

In analysing the situation at the talks one has to state that there exist differences between the sides which could be overcome only in the process of further thorough and all-round consideration. It is hardly possible to envisage that this could be accomplished at the present Vienna stage of the talks.

We would like to hope that the US Government will again give thought to our considerations and arguments, outlined in Vienna, in favor of such comprehensive solution of the problem of strategic arms limitation that would ensure equal security for both sides.

2. It has been noted in Moscow that certain points in common have emerged in the questions of limiting ABM development and of measures for reducing the danger of missile-nuclear war between the USSR and the US resulting from accidental or unsanctioned use of nuclear weapons.

Considerations have been advanced from the American side concerning the possibility of reaching agreement on limiting the ABM systems to two points/Moscow and Washington/. We are prepared to consider this proposal as a basis for obtaining agreement on the question of limiting deployment of the ABM systems.

As regards specific questions which arise in this connection/number of launch installations, their location and the like/, these, in our view, could be agreed on without difficulties.

The same applies also to the problem of reducing the danger of missile-nuclear war between our countries. The Soviet delegation in Vienna has necessary instructions for a concrete discussion on this question.

In conclusion we would like to say that, in our profound conviction, one of the most important conditions for a successful development of the strategic arms talks which have such a paramount significance for the destinies of world peace, is the state of the international situation as a whole.

It is believed in Moscow that for speedy achievement of agreement it is necessary in every way to avoid complications in the international situation and to apply all efforts to make healthier the world atmosphere. It should be emphasized that the Soviet side attaches great importance to this.

178. **Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)**¹

Washington, July 7, 1970, 7:30 p.m.

K: Mr. President

P: Hi Henry

K: I just wanted to tell you I talked to Dobrynin today.²

P: Yeah, yeah. (Wanted to know about the outcome)

K: I don't know what you did with the Arabs . . .³

P: Pleasant talk

K: Want an agreement on SALT, we can sign at any level. He said about the Middle East—why did you raise it now? I told you I wanted to talk to you. (Didn't raise it the last time I saw him.) He said come to dinner, come to lunch. I told him I just may.

P: Do you think he really is frightened?

K: Frightened, we are getting their attention. After this thing, he said we will offer you these (proposals?), he was drooling all over the place.

P: Nothing about Vietnam. Push him off, we will handle it ourselves. The press and newspapers are getting very [omission in the source text]. About the Russian SAMs, want to know how you can let them get away with it.

(Three new SS-9s were mentioned)

P: I hope he is disturbed.

K: Yes, he is disturbed I think on the Middle East. If we don't pull away too much . . . Sisco . . . (the only contribution I have, it isn't enough we may have to do more).

P: I am for Israel, for reasons. Want to let a little country survive—can't let the Russians come in and control the crossroads of the world. I think the fact our perils [sic] work so closely, the big stakes is Soviet/American confrontation.

[Omitted here is discussion of topics unrelated to the Soviet Union.]

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 364, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² See Document 177.

³ All ellipses in the source text.

179. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 9, 1970, 5:30 p.m.

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

SALT

After some desultory talk about my new office, I opened the conversation by telling Dobrynin that I had followed the reporting from Vienna with great interest. As a specialist in the Congress of Vienna,² I could only congratulate Semyonov on having learned some of the tactics. I referred specifically to the note he handed over to Smith at a concert which seemed almost to suggest a form of alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union against countries that had engaged in provocative acts. Dobrynin said he did not know how the note was handed over, but of course, he was familiar with the formulation.

I said that I looked at the accidental war problem on two levels: (1) the technical means of notification which we were studying and which I did not think would present any undue problem; and (2) the political implications of some of the cooperative arrangements that they were suggesting which represented a significant change in the international environment as it had developed since the war. I wanted to talk to him about that second aspect a little later, but I wanted first to turn to the overall issue of SALT. Dobrynin interjected to point out that the formulation handed by Semyonov to Smith had been prepared by the Delegation in Vienna. He could tell me frankly that he, Dobrynin, had had his doubts about it because he was afraid that too great significance was going to be read into it. If we wanted an agreement without that particular clause, this would not become a sticking point. Dobrynin indicated that the major political fact for the Soviet Union was an agreement on provocative attack, not individual clauses, and there would not be any undue haggling. I told Dobrynin that we should defer discussion of this until I gave him our general view.

I said that the President had decided after careful study that it was not possible to separate the components of a SALT agreement—that it was necessary to have a limitation on offensive weapons together with a limitation on ABM's. We were prepared in principle to discuss accidental war limitations. I added that recent missile starts of SS-9 and

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 1, Vol. 2. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting was held in Kissinger's White House office.

² In 1957, Kissinger published *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh, and the Problems of Peace, 1812–1822*, which analyzed the Congress of Vienna that established a post-Napoleonic European settlement.

SS-11 groups underlined for us the danger of an ABM limitation which would leave our Minutemen exposed to a Soviet first-strike. Dobrynin said that I knew they didn't intend to make a first strike. I replied that I knew no such thing, looking at their weapons deployment; in any event, it didn't make any difference what I knew but what reasonable people could deduce from the weapons situation.

Dobrynin said that he didn't think it would be possible to come to an agreement under these conditions. I replied that perhaps the delegations could be instructed to emphasize the ABM part to get that out of the way. Dobrynin asked, "Well, why not then agree on the partial accord after all?" I said this was not possible for the reasons I had given to him. I added, however, that I would be prepared to continue discussions with him during the summer and that I was certain we could narrow the differences to a manageable form. Dobrynin said that he would be prepared to do this but he thought that SALT was in essentially good shape and that we could come to an agreement, if not this year, then in the early months of next year. He emphasized again that they would be prepared to drop any offending clauses in the accidental war part of the agreement, that these were not matters of principle with them. I said that this was not the issue—the issue to us was not to break out the defensive from the offensive parts of the agreement.

Dobrynin then raised the question of how long the recess should be, saying that the Soviet Government would prefer November 1st. I said we would prefer something like September 15th. When Dobrynin asked where that would leave us, I replied that it seemed self-evident to me that it takes two to start a negotiation. He said he wanted us to understand that the November 1st deadline was unconnected with any deliberate attempt to slow down the talks, but had rather to do with the internal operating methods of the Soviet government. Many of their key people would be on vacation in August, and they would not be able to do a systematic review until September.

Dobrynin also asked me what would be new in our package. I said it was hard to go into precise detail, but there would be a limit on offensive units and a sub-limit on heavy missiles. He asked me how we would handle the problem of compensation, i.e. the issue of the relationship between IRBM's on their side and forward deployed tactical aircraft on our side. I said it seemed to me the best way to handle it was through exclusion—that they would not be counted on either side. Dobrynin indicated that this would not present an insuperable difficulty. He again called my attention to the part of the Soviet Aide Mémoire³ which said that an ABM agreement could, in their view, be agreed on "without difficulty." He said this was a very significant statement. I

³ See the attachment to Document 177.

replied that I understood, and that we should, however, now proceed to work as expeditiously as possible on a comprehensive statement.

The conversation then turned to general subjects. I said that I wanted him to know that the President had read the article that Semyonov had handed to Smith at a concert with the greatest care. He had come to the conclusion that the most significant aspect of it would be the political one; however, such a politically important matter should not be handled within the context of SALT, but should be handled at a higher level. I therefore wanted to return to my conversation of April 12th⁴ in which I had suggested a specific procedure for coming to an understanding of fundamental issues so that major progress could be made. Dobrynin evaded the issue and said that he had thought that Cambodia had ended this concern and, in any event, he was prepared to discuss the Middle East with me.

Middle East and Summit Meeting

He then launched into a long discussion of the Middle East. He said, "Talking to Sisco is like throwing beans against a wall," which is allegedly a Russian proverb. On the other hand, he said, Beam was always totally uninstructed and only listened politely to what Gromyko had to say, whereupon he would then insist that he had to go for new instructions. He thought it was essential that we come to a political agreement and he said he was fully authorized to deal with me.

I stated that he still owed me an answer to the questions which I had put to him three weeks ago. In contrast to his meeting with me just before San Clemente,⁵ he now remembered the question very well. He said, "Look at it, Henry; you have never stated a proposition to me of a political settlement in the Middle East. All we have from you is one question, namely, whether we will withdraw our troops in case of a settlement. On the other hand, we don't know what you mean by a political settlement." I asked, "Do I understand then that if I tell you what we understand by a political settlement, you will tell me that you are prepared to withdraw your troops?" Dobrynin indicated that this might be a fair conclusion, but he was not totally unambiguous about it. He said he thought that he and I could settle the matter of the Middle East between ourselves. I responded that I doubted that this would be possible because it was a matter of extraordinary delicacy for us and we had to do it in the right framework.

I then returned to the formulation at Vienna, but Dobrynin turned the conversation by saying that this was not the most crucial aspect. I fi-

⁴ No record of a meeting on that date has been found. Kissinger was apparently referring to his April 14 meeting with Dobrynin.

⁵ See Document 171.

nally got straight to the point and said as follows: "Anatoliy, when I spoke to you on April 12th, you know very well that I was not talking about how to handle the Middle East. We had made a specific proposal to you about a meeting at the highest level. We are proposing this because it is early enough in our Administration to have a fundamental departure in our relationships with the Soviet Union. However, if too much more time is spent, we are going to make whatever agreements we do at a point in the Administration when they can no longer be effectively implemented. Therefore, the decision is up to you, but there's no sense beating around the bush." Dobrynin became very serious and dropped his jocular manner. He said, "You recognize, of course, that Cambodia and the approaching Party Congress make this a difficult matter for us." I said, frankly, I was looking at problems from our point of view, and it was up to him to take care of his problems.

Dobrynin then stated that this was a matter, of course, of the greatest importance which had to be reported directly to Moscow, and he would want to sum up his understanding: (1) the President was proposing a summit meeting; (2) the summit meeting should consider a fundamental reappraisal of American-Soviet relations. I said that was correct. Dobrynin asked when the meeting should take place—were we thinking of 1971 or 1972? I replied, no; we were thinking of this year. In response to his query, "before or after the elections?", I said that this was to be settled after we knew how it was going to be discussed.

Dobrynin then asked what the agenda of a summit might be. I said, "SALT, the Middle East, European security, and any other issue that either party wanted to place on the agenda." Dobrynin replied that if it is to be on the Middle East, he and I had to make some agreement ahead of time to see whether there was some progress. I said I was prepared to talk to him. Dobrynin asked whether he understood correctly that I would not be prepared to talk to him unless there were to be a summit. I responded that I had no instructions on that point, but that obviously the President's attitude would be affected by how the Middle East would fit into the general picture. Dobrynin said, "It is clear, and I will report back to you."

He then launched into a long discussion along familiar lines of Soviet good faith in the Mid-East negotiations. He repeated that they had made two significant concessions, both of which had been ignored. He said they had always wanted to settle it with us. He insisted that the two alleged concessions still stood, and that he had waited for us to give him a response. In contrast to his previous meeting with me before we went to San Clemente, he reiterated the urgent desire to settle the Mid-East problem. He said, "I am authorized by the Soviet Government to tell you that we seek no confrontation." I replied, "I am authorized by the American Government to tell you that we seek no

confrontation. We were not threatening you; we were stating an objective fact of the trend." He said he wished we hadn't used the word "expel," for this had a tendency to make people feel that their national pride was involved and issues of backing down would be raised. I said that it was not a question of backing down but a question of the objective reality in which, despite what the great powers might want, events might force them on a collision course. Dobrynin asked me whether I thought we were on a collision course now. I said that reluctantly I had to conclude that we were.

Dobrynin reiterated that the Soviet Union sought no confrontation and was prepared for a political settlement. He said that while he did not know the details of Soviet deployment in Egypt, he thought it had been blown up out of all proportion, and the Soviet Union was not advancing forward. There were shifts within a well-understood plan. On the other hand, he said, the Soviet Union could not accept the proposition that air supremacy over both sides of the Suez Canal was an Israeli right that could never be challenged. I said, "Well, this is a point of disagreement between us, but it is not one that we can settle now. The main point you have to understand is that the introduction of Soviet combat personnel into Egypt represents serious problems for us, and the more permanent it appears, the more serious the problem grows." I told Dobrynin also to remember that the President moved circuitously, but that he eventually always did what he said he would do. Dobrynin said, "It is clear, and we ought to try to work on a political settlement and time is getting very short." I said I agreed with him.

He then asked me whether we would be prepared to discuss a European Security Conference at a summit. I replied that we probably would be. Dobrynin then said that as far as he could understand it, the agenda would be SALT, European security, and the Middle East; he told me that he would be back to me.

Comment

The meeting took place in an extremely cordial atmosphere. Dobrynin's affability was much more pronounced than at the meeting before we went to San Clemente, and his eagerness to prove Soviet good faith was sometimes almost overpowering.⁶

⁶ On July 16, Kissinger sent Nixon a summary of the highlights of his conversations with Dobrynin on June 23, July 7, and July 9 and attached copies of the memoranda of conversation. The President saw the summary. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 1, Vol. 1)

180. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, July 11, 1970, 1158Z.

3835. Subj: Call on Gromyko on ME. Ref: Moscow 3825.²

1. At seventy-five-minute meeting July 10 Gromyko was attentive but seemed to be stalling for time. He was non-belligerent and avoided giving offense. Following is full account of discussion.

2. I noted that Sisco had seen Dobrynin July 1³ to answer some of the questions Gromyko had raised with me June 29.⁴ I then told Gromyko we would like his reactions to our answers in due course but now wished to raise the problem of the ME military situation which was causing us great concern and worry. I told him I had been asked to recall Secy Rogers' June 2 conversation with Dobrynin⁵ and went on to read him the following, with particular reference to the Secy's June 2 statement.

3. "Asst Secy Sisco in his talk July 1 with Amb Dobrynin replied to the questions you asked regarding the Arab demand for total withdrawal and the relation between the US initiative and Four-Power talks. Sisco also described our views regarding consideration of the Syrian aspect. We would be interested in having in due course your reactions.

4. "In the meantime an especially serious development has come to the fore. I have been asked to recall Secy Rogers' conversation with Amb Dobrynin June 2 and to refer particularly to Secy Rogers' statement about Soviet military involvement and to Amb Dobrynin's comments that the SovGov wished to avoid a US-Soviet confrontation. Amb Dobrynin remarked then that maybe the situation now is a little more equal in the military sense and perhaps this provides a good opportunity to advance toward a settlement. He said the possibility for peaceful settlement still exists and said there should be no doubt that the Soviet side does not want a confrontation.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1155, Saunders Files, U.S. Peace Initiative for Middle East, 6/10–7/23/70, Vol. 1, 5 of 5. Secret; Priority; Nodis. On July 8, Sonnenfeldt and Saunders sent Kissinger a memorandum seeking his approval of instructions for Beam's talk with Gromyko on the Middle East. Kissinger initialed his approval on July 8. (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII)

² In telegram 3825 from Moscow, the Embassy provided Beam's highlights of his meeting with Gromyko on July 10. (Ibid., Box 1155, Saunders Files, U.S. Peace Initiative for Middle East, 6/10–7/23/70, Vol. 1, 5 of 5)

³ See Document 176.

⁴ See Document 175.

⁵ See Document 159.

5. "We would like to know whether these views are still valid as of today. We ask this question because indications have been increasing during the past that Soviet military personnel have in fact moved into close proximity to the Suez Canal. New deployments of Soviet surface-to-air missiles make this conclusion inescapable.

6. "I have been asked to re-read to you the text of Secy Rogers' statement to Amb Dobrynin of June 2, which is as follows (Ref para 3 State 085691).

7. "I have been asked to say that in our view the latest Soviet actions in support of UAR military activity in proximity to the Canal cannot be characterized as defensive, since their net effect is to bolster UAR policy of violating the ceasefire. There is a serious question whether new Soviet support of the UAR in the Canal combat zone has not now led to a major qualitative change in the military balance. Given the UAR policy of attacking along the ceasefire line, we view Soviet activity as contributing to a serious escalation of the conflict.

8. "To understand our own position it is useful to go back to Premier Kosygin's Jan 30 [31] message⁶ to the US, France, and the UK. The US replied to Premier Kosygin in a flexible, constructive manner.⁷ Then on March 23 Pres Nixon announced deferral on arms delivery for Israel. However, the result has been no ceasefire, no arms limitation talks, but indeed the introduction of new modern arms into the UAR. Another pressure developed on the USG when 79 [73] senators declared that the US should accede to Israel's request for more aircraft. This has not been done. We came forward with a procedural initiative to get the parties themselves to begin discussion. Furthermore, we have continued our restraint on arms deliveries.

9. "We have previously on numerous occasions requested an authoritative statement of the Soviet Union's intentions with respect to Soviet personnel and military involvement in the UAR but have received no satisfactory reply. A clear understanding on our part of Soviet intentions might help us avoid a serious miscalculation. We would still welcome such a statement. We will in any case interpret concrete Soviet actions in their own right and will be required to consider appropriate steps in the light of such Soviet actions.

10. "The final question is the opportunity which the present moment offers for a movement toward a settlement. We hope we may soon receive your reaction to our proposal for getting the parties negotiating under Jarring. This in turn would provide a favorable opportunity for greater activity in the major-power talks. As Sisco said to

⁶ Document 121.

⁷ Document 126.

Amb Dobrynin, the US initiative offers the Soviet Union and the UAR an excellent and rapid way to test the seriousness of the US about peace.

11. “The escalating situation along the Canal again underlines the need for more speedy and effective efforts toward political settlement and validates the relevance of the US initiative. We again strongly urge that the Soviet Union not allow the opportunity presented by our initiative to slip by.”

12. After hearing my statement, Gromyko said the question arises as to how one should explain this appeal to the SovGov. Is it not, he asked, explained by the fact that the USG is preparing the soil for giving arms to Israel? In other words, the question arises because, on the one hand the USG has stated its readiness to renew the Jarring mission; on the other hand, we have statements such as the one you have made today. If the USG really would like to renew the Jarring mission, moreover with the aim of having it succeed, the USSR has been and is for its resumption. Why then are hints being made regarding possible developments of events such as are contained in your statement, Gromyko went on.

13. The USSR has always proceeded from the position that we must find a political settlement to the ME situation and remove the dangers inherent in that situation. The USSR has repeatedly stated this, for example in the Soviet PriMin’s letters to Pres Nixon, in statements by Soviet leaders at the time of the Supreme Soviet elections, and in his discussions with ME. The USSR has repeatedly stressed it wants a political settlement of the ME situation, to eliminate an aggravation of the situation and to bring about a radical change in the interests of peace.

14. Gromyko went on to say that if one looks objectively at the situation, one cannot find differences between the words and concrete deeds of the USSR in the ME. He asserted that the USSR does not wish to see contradictions within the positions of the govts with which it is exchanging views on the ME. He said there should not be contradictions in the positions of the USG and would like the USG to occupy the same position in words and deeds.

15. He said my statement contained the assertion that Soviet personnel in the UAR represented a danger and that their presence in certain areas of the UAR can or may lead to an escalation or an increase in tension in this area. Gromyko said the USSR categorically rejects this assertion.

16. He went on to say that the USSR has a certain number of advisers in the UAR. They had said so in statements made by the head of the SovGov, for example at a recent press conference. These personnel are in the capacity of advisers. Their number represents a threat

to no one and their presence in the UAR cannot lead to an exacerbation of the situation. They have a purely defensive character and operate in this capacity.

17. Gromyko then said he did not wish to touch on purely military aspects of the question. He did not wish to refer to types of arms and their locations mentioned by ME and about which he presumed I had information from Washington. He then went on to say that even if something along the lines of what I said had taken place, one could not but draw the conclusion that the question relates to purely defensive actions on UAR territory. He said Israel was occupying foreign territory, that the area across the Canal belongs not to Israel but to the UAR, and represents territory captured by the Israelis. He said he wished to repeat that even if such things had taken place, they would be purely defensive actions. He went on to stress that he had not used the conditional tense accidentally.

18. Israel, he said, is spreading tendentious information and conjecture which the USG should not believe. The Israelis have a definite purpose in doing so, and if one should believe them, then one would think that Israeli and Soviet pilots are clashing. This is totally absurd. Perhaps, he went on, the Israelis wished to cause provocations, but we should not let them get away with this. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it thinks the USG should proceed coolly toward the problem and be guided by the lofty considerations of a political settlement of the ME situation.

19. In various discussions the Soviet Union has held, it has tried to convince everyone of the need to strive for political settlement of the ME problem, to establish a firm peace in the ME with guarantees for a peaceful, independent existence for all states in the region, including Israel. This settlement should include the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all occupied territory.

20. Gromyko said the Soviet Union follows this policy, and its latest proposals were guided by it. At the same time, he alleged the USSR begins to notice a lessening of interest on the part of the US in seeking ways for a political settlement. Even on questions in which the USG has expressed views similar to those of the USSR, he alleged that Moscow sees a diminution of US interest. He said he thought we would have welcomed the latest Soviet proposals, but instead Moscow has been puzzled by a lowered US interest, for example on the question of withdrawal and the establishment of peace.

21. Regarding a Soviet response to the US proposals, Gromyko said the Soviet proposals had been made earlier and Moscow had not heard from the USG. Therefore, the USSR has a more convincing reason to expect an answer from the USG first. Moscow would like to know the US position on the withdrawal of troops and the establishment of peace

which the USG has until now considered to be the crucial issue, and probably still considers as such.

22. With respect to the US proposal about the resumption of the Jarring Mission, Gromyko said this was no great problem. The USSR has always advocated its renewal if it could lead to successful results. The question is not one of the resumption of the Jarring Mission. It is a matter of solving the basic question, the solution to which will not come of itself. He then asserted the USG always seems to dodge away from the main issues when there is need to move forward on questions of substance.

23. He then said his remarks were not a final, formal reply and that the Soviets would give an answer to the US proposals. In doing so they would take into account the statements I had made today as well as other statements.

24. I told Gromyko I had several remarks to make about his comments. We were addressing our appeal to the USSR because the indications we had were that Soviet military support and activity in the UAR has increased. The available evidence has impressed the USG, which would not have raised the issue if there were not a substantial increase, which creates a more dangerous situation in the area. It is important that the USG is convinced of the validity of the information and may have to act on it. The USG has not, as far as I know, been preparing new deliveries to Israel. We have suspended action on the Israeli request for more planes. We have done so in the interest of not escalating the situations, of not making it more tense.

25. I said it was well known the UAR had repudiated the ceasefire and was acting in violation of the ceasefire. Its actions are not purely defensive in this sense. Soviet support and increased military aid has changed and is changing the military situation between the Arabs and the Israelis. This increases the possibility of undesirable and unforeseen actions. Furthermore, it is forcing the USG to review its own position with respect to Israel where we have, until now, shown restraint by not escalating our military deliveries.

26. We do not have precise, accurate information from the Soviet side regarding its military activity in the UAR. This situation may engender exaggeration and speculation, but the evidence available to us is impressive and very disturbing. I went on to say that I was sure he would believe that the US is taking it seriously and that is why we have spoken on sober terms in Moscow and Washington.

27. I then went on to point out that we were happy to note that the Soviet Union, like the USG, believes in the necessity for political settlement of the situation in the ME. Regarding withdrawal and a peace settlement, the USG was certainly no less interested in these points than the USSR. We were glad to note that there was some

advance in the latest Soviet proposals. Far from ignoring these proposals, we thought they offered something to build on in the proper setting and at the proper time.

28. I went on to stress that our initiative was not intended to set aside the Two- or Four-Power talks or the Soviet proposals. It was suggested as an emergency measure to bring the parties into discussion on the basis of firm acceptance of UNSC Res 242. We were not asking anything of the USSR or the Arabs to which they had not already agreed. On the other hand, we were asking the Israelis to engage in indirect negotiations and to commit themselves to withdrawal. The purpose was to revive the Jarring mission and to get talks started.

29. Discussions have taken place in NY and Washington for over a year on the matter of giving guidance to Jarring. We still think it will take time to reach agreement on precise instructions and guidance to Jarring. In the meantime, the opportunity would be lost to bring together the parties and to reduce tensions and ease the exceedingly dangerous situation which is building up. It is our view that once talks start under Jarring, the Two- and Four-Power talks will have much more meaning.

30. The USSR and the USG will have the duty and the opportunity to narrow the gap between the two sides. I said that up until now the talks in NY and Washington had been operating in a vacuum, and Gromyko broke in to ask in what respect. I answered they had not brought the two parties together, and our aim was to launch Jarring and to bring the parties into discussion. We hoped our procedural suggestion would appeal to all concerned as an emergency measure, as a way of escaping from a dangerous situation. I stressed again that we wanted the Soviet govt to consider seriously the advantages.

31. Gromyko responded by saying that if any undesirable developments take place in the ME, this would be due to actions undertaken by the Israelis or by the wishes of the USG. Otherwise, there can be no undesirable developments in the area. He went on to say that the USSR was not only against an exacerbation of the situation but for finding a solution to the problems of a political settlement. He then reiterated this assertion that any undesirable developments in the ME would be due to actions taken by the Israelis and USG toleration of such actions. He said that if there are hotheads in Tel Aviv who want to exacerbate the situation and to provoke a major incident, he hoped the USG would find ways to cool these hotheads. The USG should proceed from the fact that it has interest in preserving peace. He went on to say that he understood the Arabs plan to answer the USG proposals.

33. [*sic*] I told Gromyko I thought it was unfair of him to accuse us of doing undesirable things. We were trying to get Israel to accept

UNSC Res 242 and firmly to accept the principle of withdrawal and to engage in negotiations.

34. Gromyko broke in to say he understood this. He said the USG thinks it would be achieving a great deal to get Israel to accept the principle of withdrawal. However, what the USSR wants is total Israeli withdrawal from all territories. What troops and what territories, these are the main questions. The UAR does not want to discuss the issue if it is only a question of withdrawal of Israeli troops from Sinai. In the Soviet view, it would not be a very great advance if the USG were able to get the Israelis to agree only in principle to withdrawal.

35. I told Gromyko our concern was to get the two parties together so that they could negotiate this issue along with the question of frontiers which must be established by agreement. I went on to stress that our concern was about the developing military situation. I said that if the Soviet Union could provide clarification about the actual state of affairs and its intentions, it might help to reduce our anxiety.

36. Gromyko said he had nothing to add. He wished to say only that the USG should approach the situation coolly and not make any judgments based on the views of certain govts or hotheads.

38. [*sic*] In conclusion I expressed the hope he would treat seriously our concern about the developing military situation in the ME.

Beam

181. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, July 13, 1970.

SUBJECT

Meeting with Ambassador Dobrynin

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 340, Subject Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger. Secret; Nodis; Personal; Eyes Only. On July 17, Kissinger forwarded this to Nixon under a covering memorandum that reads: "You will see that Sisco made some extremely useful points concerning recent Soviet moves in the region, their unwillingness to explain their actions, and the nature of your personal approach and policy. I think Sisco's presentation should prove helpful and is another reason for you to compliment him when you see him." Nixon wrote the following note on the covering memorandum: "K—Tell Sisco an *excellent* follow-up to my recent instructions to him."

I wrote a very brief telegram² covering my last conversation with Dobrynin. What is not contained in the telegram is that I gave the Ambassador some personal impressions—strictly personal—of the atmosphere which the continuing increased Soviet military involvement in the UAR is creating which increases the risks of possible confrontation with us. I said that it would be well for Dobrynin to reflect that the President at the outset of his Administration had declared an era of negotiations. For seventeen months we had negotiated in good faith, and we feel that the Soviets have not come half the way; and that our restraint on the military side has not been met by restraint but rather by a fundamental decision on the part of the Soviet Union to involve its personnel in an operational capacity. This is a most serious decision for the Soviets to have taken, and our concern has increased not only because of the creeping process in recent weeks, but also because of Soviet unwillingness to tell us quietly and confidentially what their intentions are and what the outer limits of their involvement may be as they see it.

I said I had watched our President for months and felt that he had offered political proposal after political proposal, and political option after political option in the context of the United States exercising great restraint in the face of pressures for providing Israel with substantial numbers of additional aircraft. I hoped that Dobrynin was not reporting to Moscow that our involvement in Vietnam reflected any lack of resolve in the Middle East. The President was a man of peace, a man who wanted a negotiated settlement, but also a man of firmness and toughness, which it would be well for the Soviet Union to take fully into account as it develops Middle East policy. He would not be pushed around in the Middle East or anywhere else. These were only personal judgments I was expressing; but I would advise Dobrynin to take very, very seriously the words expressed by the President some months ago that the United States would view with deep concern any attempt by the Soviet Union to dominate the Middle East.

Dobrynin responded critically of the recent “tough talk” which he said would not force the Soviet Union to make decisions of the kind it would not wish to make. He remonstrated several times that the emphasis on the Soviet role was creating a crisis atmosphere, and that it was not making it easier for Moscow to take constructive initiatives during the current discussions with Cairo. At the same time, he was quick to say, these were personal remarks and we would be receiving the replies to our political initiative at an early date.

² Telegram 111425 to Moscow, July 13. (Ibid., Box 490, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Vol. 3)

I concluded this portion of the conversation by saying that I just wanted personally to get this off of my chest, and that I had no authority to say any of this. I wanted to say what I said because the Soviets in the past have miscalculated regarding United States intentions and it was important he reflected to Moscow the resolve and the fiber and the determination of the President, as I read the situation.

I have brought this memorandum to the attention of Secretary Rogers.³

J.J. Sisco

³ At 5:40 p.m., Kissinger and Sisco spoke on the telephone about Rogers' reaction to Sisco's meeting with Dobrynin. According to a transcript of the telephone conversation, Kissinger told Sisco that the President was behind him. Sisco replied, "Well, between you and me the only flack I got was from the Secretary of State." Kissinger responded, "Really? The President is a terribly perceptive man. He told me he would bet me a thousand to one that you got hell from the Secretary and he wanted me to call you and reassure you. I didn't pick that up. What did he give you hell about?" Sisco replied, "It's a long story. Let's just say that I took it and it's over. I just don't want this thing to go on." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 364, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

182. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

The Moscow Communiqué on Nasser's Visit

The joint communiqué issued at the conclusion of Nasser's 19-day visit to the Soviet Union (attached)² concentrates most heavily on the Middle East situation, although there are references to other major world problems. Typical of such pronouncements, the communiqué is a carefully worded document reaffirming mutual support and friendship and shedding very little light on what actually transpired during Nasser's extended talks with the Soviet leaders. One of its more

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 712, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. VIII. Secret. Sent for information.

² Attached but not printed. Nasser returned from the Soviet Union on July 17.

significant aspects is the fact that the communiqué appears to align the UAR with the USSR on a global basis although not in every detail nor in every way.

The Middle East

There is almost no hint of conclusions reached and the U.S. initiative is not even mentioned.

On the terms of a settlement, it is a standard reiteration of the Egyptian position which the Soviets have long supported. The line is the usual insistence that the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East can only be realized by the adoption of measures insuring the cessation of Israeli "aggression" and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all occupied territory as well as the full implementation of the November 1967 Security Council resolution and the application of UN resolutions pertaining to the Palestinian refugees.

On further Soviet aid to the UAR, there are no details. Continuation of assistance is affirmed in general terms, and there is one reference to the need for "urgent measures" to compel the Israelis to withdraw.

For the most part, however, the general tone is relatively calm, unemotional and non-belligerent. There are, of course, some of the usual references to "aggressive imperialistic forces" and their plots and Israelis "aggressive and expansionist policy" supported by the U.S., but this is not overdone. More notable is the recurrent stress on peaceful settlement.

It may be notable that, in addition to omitting any mention of the U.S. initiative, there is no effort to respond to our statements from San Clemente.³

If anything, this statement seems to support the conclusion that we will get at least a qualified reply to our initiative rather than a flat rejection.

Other Topics

One of the more interesting aspects of the communiqué is its breadth in mentioning a wide range of international issues.

On these other issues, it is substantively a rather routine document, broadly alining Nasser with the Soviets but still preserving a good deal of distance between the UAR and the USSR. In particular, on European questions, while the UAR joins the Soviets in applauding those who have recognized the "sovereignty and independence" of both the FRG and the GDR as well as approving post-war European

³ See footnote 4, Document 177.

borders (not mentioned by name, incidentally), Nasser is specifically *not* cited as endorsing Soviet proposals for a European security conference. Nor is there in the communiqué an overall attack on NATO, as would be normal between the USSR and a Communist satellite. On the other hand, on subjects of long-standing Soviet-UAR agreement—anti-colonialism, Rhodesia, South Africa—the communiqué records the usual congruence of views. The U.S. is attacked only once—for supporting Israel. SALT is not mentioned, but the disarmament negotiations in Geneva in which the UAR has generally supported the Soviets—and in which our differences with the Soviets are not as great as in the past—are referred to favorably.

Indochina

The portion of the statement dealing with Indochina appears to be merely pro forma and even somewhat moderate in some of its formulations. While it reiterates the customary attacks on U.S. “interference” and “aggression” it does not support the more extreme Hanoi position. It merely describes Hanoi’s ten points as a “a good basis” for a political settlement. This could be attributed to a Soviet desire at this point to distance itself somewhat from Hanoi’s diplomatic moves, or might be designed to conform to the general tone and content of the Soviet-UAR communiqué itself.

183. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 20, 1970, 10:30 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Mr. Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting was requested by Ambassador Dobrynin. He was extremely jovial and friendly, and opened the conversation by asking me whether I could recommend any good movies. I said no, I very rarely went. He said he had read reports that “Patton” was very popular in

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 1, Vol. 1. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The conversation was held in the Map Room at the White House. Under cover of a July 21 memorandum, Kissinger sent Nixon this memorandum of conversation and a summary of his conversation with Dobrynin. (Ibid.)

the White House. I replied that I had seen these reports also. He asked how I compared "Patton" with the "Battle of Kursk" which he had shown at the Motion Picture Association. I told him they were not easy to compare. "Patton" was about a romantic hero and stressed the role of the individual while the "Battle of Kursk" stressed the role of matériel, not of the individual.

Dobrynin said the only individual who really counted in World War II in the Soviet Union was Stalin, and his great attribute was that he had absolutely iron nerves. He was the one senior leader who refused to leave Moscow even though the Germans were only 10 miles away and, by this act of defiance, he rallied a lot of doubters. Also, Stalin had unbelievable powers of concentration. He, Dobrynin, was a young aide in the Foreign Office and he remembers that on the way to the Tehran conference, Stalin gave orders to be left alone in his compartment. He was not shown any documents and he sat there for three days, as far as anyone knew just staring out of the window, thinking and concentrating. Then, from the Soviet point of view, he gave an absolutely masterly performance at Tehran.

Dobrynin also told me that Stalin personally picked the Soviet Chief of Protocol in 1943 at the Tehran Conference because there was a young Soviet diplomat who knew a Churchillian idiosyncrasy which was always to ask for three Scottish tunes from visiting bands that no one had ever heard of in order to embarrass them. The young diplomat found out and when Churchill requested these tunes, the Soviet honor guard was ready to play it. Stalin asked who had thought this up and immediately appointed him Chief of Protocol in the Foreign Office even though he was only 30 years old at the time. Dobrynin said that he turned out to be the best Chief of Protocol the Soviet Foreign Office had ever had. He added that being Chief of Protocol in the Soviet Union was even more difficult than here because we had only one man in charge, while after Stalin, placing the Soviet leaders in their proper order was an act of political significance.

European Security

Dobrynin then turned to the subject at hand. He read me a Note Verbale which his government had asked him to transmit to us. The text is as follows:

"In continuation of our exchange of views on the questions touched upon at our meeting of June 10² I would like to say the following to be transmitted to President Nixon.

² See Document 168.

“The affirmations made in the course of the above meeting by President Nixon and, on his instructions, by you, Dr. Kissinger, concerning the interest of the US in maintaining the territorial status quo in Europe and the absence of intentions on the part of the US to act counter to this or in general to take any steps in the direction of aggravation of the situation in Europe, have been noted in Moscow. Likewise noted in Moscow was President Nixon’s statement to the effect that the US Government recognizes special interests of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and has no intention to ignore or undermine them due to the unrealistic nature of such a course. Those are, without doubt, realistic judgments.

“Likewise, the Soviet Union is convinced that recognition of the realities that have come into being in Europe, constitute that necessary foundation upon which a stable peace on the continent as well as in the world at large can and must be built.

“An important step on the way to strengthening peace in Europe would be speedy preparation and convocation of an all-European conference on problems of security and cooperation in Europe as proposed by the Soviet Union and other European Socialist countries.

“It should be emphasized that the Memorandum adopted by the Governments of European Socialist countries in Budapest on June 22³ takes into account also the wishes of other possible participants in such a conference expressed in the course of bilateral and multilateral consultations. Taken into account, too, are the wishes expressed by the American side both with regard to participation of the US in the all-European conference and regarding questions to be discussed at the conference or in connection with it.

“Taking into consideration, in particular, the wishes of the US Government the Soviet Government together with the other Governments which adopted the said Memorandum, have come to the conclusion that consideration of the question of reducing foreign armed forces on the territory of European states would serve the interests of détente and security in Europe.

“In our view, this question could be discussed in a body on questions of security and cooperation in Europe which is proposed to be established at the all-European conference. At the same time we are prepared to discuss this question also in another manner acceptable to interested states, outside of the framework of the conference. Such an approach opens wide possibilities in selecting appropriate methods of

³ The Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact nations met in Budapest June 21–22 and approved a memorandum on the holding of an all-European conference to deal with security and cooperation.

discussing this question and takes into account the experience that has already been accumulated in considering outstanding problems of such kind, in particular between the USSR and the US.

“The questions of man’s environment, which the American side is interested in, could be, in our opinion, discussed within item 2 of the proposed agenda for the all-European conference.

“We proceed from the assumption that in view of these clarifications the United States should have no reason for delaying further convocation of the all-European conference by way of presenting various preconditions. We hope that the US Government will adopt a more constructive position and will thereby contribute to making the preparation of the all-European conference a more practical business.”

I asked what the phrase meant that in connection with a mutual balanced force reduction, an approach “opens wide possibilities in selecting appropriate methods of discussing this question” on a bilateral basis. He responded that the choice of appropriate forums could be determined after we had agreed in principle. He said he recognized that he owed me some answers to other questions, and they would be forthcoming within the next few weeks. I told him, of course, that I had to check my answer with the President, and I wanted to remind him that I had listed European Security as one of the three topics at our last conversation. I thought the tone of his note was constructive, and we would try to handle our reply in a constructive manner. I would let him know what the response would be.

SALT

Dobrynin then turned the conversation to SALT. He said that we had not yet presented our formal proposals and he wondered when they could expect them. I replied that they would have them certainly the next day, but they would be along the lines foreshadowed in my recent conversation. He said he recognized that we would not split off ABMs as a separate agreement and asked about the accidental war question. I told him that Smith was under instructions not to split off anything, but that I would be willing to explore with him separating out of the accidental war question those issues which concerned only our two countries, such as unauthorized launches of missiles or mass flights of bombers, from issues that affected third countries, such as the note Semyonov had handed to Smith at a concert. I stated that there might be a possibility of a limited technical agreement along these lines, but that Smith was not authorized to negotiate it. This would have to be done between Dobrynin and me. Dobrynin said he would come back to me on that.

Southeast Asia

Dobrynin then raised the question of Laos. He said he had read press reports that we were planning a Cambodian-type operation there.

What was there to such reports? I replied, “Anatoliy, you wouldn’t believe me if you suspect us of planning a military operation. Nothing I say will convince you. If we are not planning one, it would be stupid for me to say anything, so I will not talk about military operations.”

He said he didn’t think we would launch one, but that there was a chance that the South Vietnamese would launch one. I asked him why he raised the question. He replied that he wanted me to understand that the Soviet Government attached the greatest importance to the neutrality of Laos. He thought we could work cooperatively for a solution of that problem and he wanted us to know that this was the spirit of the Soviet Government. I stated we were in favor of both Laos and Cambodia being neutral. Dobrynin said Cambodia was a much tougher problem and perhaps the way to get at it was first to assure the neutrality of Laos. I said I’d always be willing to listen to specific proposals.

He then asked about Thieu’s readiness to have a coalition government. I replied our position on that subject was well known, but that I would hardly have talked to Le Duc Tho if we were not prepared to have serious discussions. It was up to Hanoi to meet us with equal seriousness.

German-Soviet Talks

Dobrynin then asked about the conversation with Scheel.⁴ I replied that we had done nothing to discourage Scheel and we were in general in favor of a relaxation of tensions. He asked me for my personal views of the document. I said that I thought that Gromyko was a very good negotiator, but I repeated that we would do nothing to discourage the Germans and that we in general favored a relaxation of tensions.

Dobrynin said that he would be in touch with me when he had other things to communicate and he hoped I would do the same.

The meeting concluded after about an hour.

⁴ Foreign Minister Walter Scheel of the Federal Republic of Germany visited Washington July 17–18. During his visit, Scheel discussed the talks that would begin at the end of July between the FRG and the Soviet Union on the mutual renunciation of force.

184. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 23, 1970, noon.

SUBJECT

Middle East

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary

Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador

Joseph J. Sisco, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

Adolph Dubs, Country Director, Soviet Union Affairs

Ambassador Dobrynin, at his initiative, called on the Secretary to present an oral statement on the Middle East.

The oral statement, a text of which in both the English and Russian languages was handed to the Secretary after Dobrynin's presentation, reads as follows:

Begin text

"The Soviet Union, as the Government of the United States is well aware, from the very start of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East has consistently sought a settlement of this conflict through political means on the basis of the UN Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967. With this aim in mind the Soviet Union repeatedly introduced proposals directed towards practical implementation of this Resolution.

"The U.S. Government declares now that it agrees to a resumption of the mission of Ambassador Jarring, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in the Middle East. It is well known that the Soviet Government has always insisted on the necessity of carrying out the mission entrusted with Ambassador Jarring, that it put forward appropriate proposals to this end and made efforts so that his mission be effective enough.

"That is why the Soviet side not only holds no objections to this effect but, on the contrary, it reiterates its position with regard to the necessity of resumption by Ambassador Jarring of his mission. Positively evaluating the possibilities in Ambassador Jarring's mission, we are ready to go on making contribution in the future as well so that

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1155, Saunders File, U.S. Peace Initiative for Middle East, 6/10/70–7/23/70, Vol. 1, 5 of 5. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Dubs and cleared by Sisco in draft. The conversation was held in the Secretary's office. The memorandum is part I of III.

contacts between the sides through Jarring which could be resumed in the nearest future could produce positive results.

“As we know, the Governments of the UAR and Jordan have expressed their readiness to cease fire for a definite period of time if Israel also takes upon herself the same obligation. The Soviet Government’s attitude to this is positive.

“Undoubtedly, the success of Ambassador Jarring’s activities requires that both sides unequivocally declare their readiness to implement the above mentioned Resolution of the Security Council in all its parts. The Soviet side hopes that the American side is being guided by the same motivations. The Governments of the UAR and Jordan have repeatedly stated and are confirming now that they are ready to implement the Resolution in all its parts. Therefore it is necessary that Israel should also clearly state her readiness to implement this Resolution. Otherwise the sides would find themselves in an unequal position: one of them does recognize the November Resolution of the Security Council and expresses its readiness to implement it while the other side ignores it.

“At the same time in the interests of success of Jarring’s mission it is important that he should have a definite enough understanding as to the basis upon which contacts should take place between the sides in search of ways to implement the Resolution of the Security Council. For the success of Jarring’s mission first of all a direction is required on the main questions of settlement—the withdrawal by Israel from the Arab territories occupied during the conflict of 1967, including the question of secure and recognized boundaries along the lines which existed prior to the conflict in June 1967, and the simultaneous establishment of a just and stable peace in the Middle East. The U.S. Government, on its part, has also repeatedly emphasized the utmost importance of the above mentioned questions. Both of these questions are organically connected with each other and should be considered jointly. Appropriate proposals to this effect have been put forward by the Soviet Government in the course of Soviet-American exchange of opinion on June 2² and also at the four-sided consultants in New York. The American side has not given so far its reply to the above mentioned proposals—neither in the course of bilateral exchange of opinion nor at the four-sided consultations. Yet these proposals are in complete conformity with the Security Council Resolution and the Soviet Government is expecting a reply from the U.S. Government.

“Parallel to the resumption of activities by Jarring and the initiation through him of contacts between the parties the four-sided consultations

² See Document 159.

in New York should be made more active to work out agreed guidelines for Jarring. The Soviet Government on its part will be doing its best to facilitate it." *End text*

After making his oral statement, Dobrynin commented as follows, presumably on instructions from his Government:

"Our statement has been made in the expectation that the American Government will, indeed, make necessary efforts towards achieving a just political settlement of the Middle East problem and will exert due influence upon Israel.

"Besides, we are taking into consideration the clarifications by the American side that—with Jarring's activities resumed—the bilateral consultations will continue and that the American side will show an active and constructive approach to the discussion of matters of settlement in the Middle East both in the course of the four-sided and of the bilateral consultations."

After thanking Dobrynin, the Secretary recalled that one of the important considerations in our proposal regarding a ceasefire was that each side would commit itself not to improve its military position. The Secretary said we assume that a military standstill as part of the ceasefire is also acceptable to the Soviet Union. Dobrynin responded affirmatively adding, "Yes, of course." It was his understanding that Foreign Minister Riad's statement to the Secretary covered this point.

The Secretary asked whether the Soviet side saw any objections to releasing the Arab response to our initiative. Dobrynin replied that it was his understanding that the UAR did not intend to publicize its response. In any event, he suggested that this matter be raised with the Egyptians. The Secretary said it would be helpful from our standpoint to make public the simple UAR statement accepting our proposal. He understood Dobrynin's remarks to mean that publicizing the response would be acceptable to the USSR if this matter could be worked out with the UAR. Dobrynin said that he did not anticipate any objections from the Soviet side.

The Secretary added that the U.S. would do its part in support of Jarring to bring about a settlement, and he indicated our willingness to continue the Two and Four-Power talks. The Secretary said that he viewed the Soviet's response as an indication that the USSR was interested in a peaceful settlement. Such a settlement would be in the mutual US-USSR interest and in the interest of the world community.

Dobrynin stressed that the USSR has no objections whatsoever to having Jarring resume his mission in a few days. He wanted to be sure that the U.S. understood that the comment in the oral statement referring to the absence of a U.S. reply to the Soviet June 2nd proposals was not meant to be a Soviet precondition for resumption of Jarring's mission.

Dobrynin asked whether the U.S. Government had had any reply from Israel. The Secretary indicated that we would inform Dobrynin as soon as we could regarding his query.

(An official translation of the text of the Soviet oral statement³ is attached. The official translation does not vary in any substantive respect from the English translation made by the Soviet Embassy.)

³ Attached but not printed.

185. Memorandum Prepared by the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, July 23, 1970.

Conversation with Dobrynin—July 23, 1970

Dobrynin was at the White House in his capacity as Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps for the reception of President Kekkonen.² He had called me earlier to tell me that he had been instructed to deliver the Soviet reply to our Middle East peace overture at noon at the State Department. But, as a matter of courtesy, he wanted to leave a copy with me two hours before then. I therefore suggested to him that he join me in the Map Room after the ceremony.

In the Map Room, Dobrynin was extremely cordial and asked me whether I was now optimistic about the Middle East. I said, "I'm always realistic—neither optimistic nor pessimistic." He asked me what I thought would be a logical place for the conference to occur. I said it might be Cyprus or New York. Dobrynin replied that he felt the Soviet Union would prefer New York, but it was not a key issue.

He then handed me the Soviet note³ which is attached. After I had read it, Dobrynin asked me whether I thought it was in a constructive spirit which I affirmed. Dobrynin then asked who I thought would win the Nobel Prize for having brought about this peace settlement—Rogers or the White House. I said that we were not in competition and,

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 1, Vol. 1. No classification marking.

² President Urho Kekkonen of Finland visited the United States July 23–27.

³ The note is identical to the text presented to Rogers the same day; see Document 184.

in any event, he was such an acute observer of the American scene that I had no doubt that he had formed his own conclusion. Dobrynin said that in his whole experience he had never seen foreign policy decisions so centralized and he knew where the real power lay. I said that we had collective leadership, and on this note, we parted.

186. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon¹

Washington, July 23, 1970.

SUBJECT

Ambassador Dobrynin's Reply to the U.S. Mid-East Initiative

At Tab A is the text of Ambassador Dobrynin's statement.² At Tab B is a detailed commentary on it.

Perhaps the most important element in the Ambassador's exchange with the Secretary was Dobrynin's categorical assurance that the cease-fire will also include a military standstill. As we defined "standstill" in describing our initiative last month, that would mean no major troop movements and no new installations in the combat zone. This will be a key element in our approach to the Israelis.

The Soviet response is:

- mild and non-polemical in tone;
- substantively complementary to the UAR response;
- tantamount to a Soviet endorsement of the UAR acceptance with no unexpected hooks.

While they do not refer explicitly to our formula for beginning of talks under Jarring, they say that they favor both a cease-fire and resumption of Jarring's mission.

The Soviets have emphasized—as did the UAR—that it is essential for the Four Powers to provide Jarring with detailed guidelines. The next major issue then—if the details of the cease-fire were confirmed and the Israelis accepted—would be debate over how detailed the U.S.-Soviet agreement should be before Jarring begins talks. The

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 489, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1970, Part 1, Vol. 1. Top Secret; Nodis. Sent for information.

² See Document 184.

U.S. would have a case for resumption on the basis of its formula alone, but the Soviets could slow the beginning of a substantive exchange pending more detailed U.S.-Soviet agreement.

To put the Soviet reply in perspective, it must be kept in mind what the Soviets are gaining and what they are conceding.

They would be getting *indirect* talks started—if the Israelis accepted—and would be getting Israelis acceptance of at least the principle of withdrawal. Whatever that may mean in precise terms, it is more restrictive rather than less. The USSR also seems to see greater promise than in the past that the U.S. is prepared to press Israel. If it is genuinely concerned about further military escalation, it is also getting an opportunity to stop the shooting while the Soviet involvement appears on a rising trend of effectiveness.

They would be conceding a commitment to talk without a precise U.S. or Israeli commitment to total withdrawal. If they honored the military standstill, they would be stopping short of depriving Israel of air supremacy over the Suez combat zone. They would also be accepting the success of a unilateral U.S. initiative to get talks started. While they have their own image of increasing military effectiveness along the Suez Canal to rest on, they could also appear to have been influenced by the firm stand taken in San Clemente. They would also appear to be acknowledging tacitly their own desire to limit their military involvement.

Above all, of course, it must be remembered that the Soviets will be in an advantageous position if Israel does not accept. If Israel accepts, the U.S. will have brought the situation over the first major political hurdle but there will still be the cease-fire to be defined in credible terms and hard bargaining ahead on both sides, perhaps even before a serious substantive exchange can begin.

Tab B

Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff

Washington, July 23, 1970.

COMMENTARY

1. The USSR reaffirms that it continues to seek “a settlement of this conflict through political means on the basis of the UN Security Council resolution.”

Comment: The USSR has been consistent on this general point. The issue has always been the price to be paid for a political settlement.

2. The USSR agrees to “the necessity of resumption by Ambassador Jarring of his mission.”

Comment: The USSR nowhere specifically mentions the U.S. formula for getting Jarring started. It seems implicit that the UAR response, in Soviet eyes, takes care of that. Therefore, the Soviets seem to be saying that they are willing to facilitate resumption of talks on the terms the U.S. has proposed, although that is not explicit.

3. The USSR’s “attitude is positive” toward Egypt’s and Jordan’s expressed “readiness to cease fire for a definite period of time if Israel also takes upon herself the same obligation.”

Comment: We have had no response from Jordan ourselves, so it is interesting that the USSR is speaking for Jordan. This may partly result from a slip in Egyptian coordination. The main point is Soviet endorsement of the cease-fire. What remains imprecise is whether both Egyptians and Soviets accept the U.S. definition of cease-fire to include military standstill—no major troop movements and no new installations.

4. Jarring’s success “requires that both sides unequivocally declare their readiness to implement” the UN resolution in all its parts. The UAR and Jordan have declared their readiness. It is “necessary that Israel should also clearly state her readiness . . . ”³

Comment: This introduces an element of uncertainty. There has been a theological argument for more than two years over the word “implement.” Because the UAR claims that the Security Council resolution intends total Israeli withdrawal, it contends that agreement to “implement” the resolution is agreement to total withdrawal and that all that is needed is a timetable for withdrawal. Because the Israelis claim that the resolution only intends negotiation of an agreement on final boundaries, it has refused to use the word “implement.” We have supported the Israeli argument that negotiation must precede implementation. The element of uncertainty grows from the fact that the U.S. formula for beginning talks—which the UAR has now accepted—avoids this argument. It does not seem that the USSR is setting a new condition for beginning talks—it does not suggest a modification of the U.S. formula to include this and seems tacitly to leave that to the UAR. On the other hand, it does say that Jarring’s success “requires” such a declaration by Israel.

5. “. . . in the interests of success of Jarring’s mission it is important that he should have a definite enough understanding as to the basis upon which contacts should take place between the sides in search of ways to implement ‘the UN resolution’. . . first of all a direction is required on the main questions of settlement—the withdrawal by Israel from the Arab territories occupied during the conflict of 1967—in-

³ All ellipses are in the source text.

cluding the question of secure and recognized boundaries along the lines which existed prior to the conflict in June 1967—and the simultaneous establishment of a just and stable peace in the Middle East.”

Comment: The UAR in its written response also made the point that Jarring must have detailed guidance. What this means is that the Arabs and the Soviets would like the U.S. and the USSR to do the preliminary negotiating and drafting while Jarring tries out various drafts on the parties. The U.S. preference is for the big powers to do less of this formally and turn over the bulk of the drafting job to Jarring with help from us in the wings.

6. The USSR is expecting a U.S. reply to its June 2 proposals.

Comment: Pressure for U.S. response is consistent with the above point. The Soviets want the U.S. to re-engage in the big-power talks.

7. Parallel to resumption of Jarring’s activities, the Four Power talks should be “made more active to work out agreed guidelines for Jarring.”

Comment: It is difficult to know what to make of Soviet emphasis on the Four Power forum in their formal document, except that the Soviets have had some success in establishing better cooperation with the French in the last couple of months. We prefer the two-power forum. In the supplementary note on top of the basic Soviet paper, Dobrynin did make it clear that Moscow wants the two-power talks to continue active.

187. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, July 25, 1970, 0915Z.

4134. Subject: Soviet Reply re Soviet Arms to UAR and Gromyko Comments on Procedures for Jarring Mission. Ref: Moscow 4131.²

1. Following is informal Embassy translation of statement on Soviet arms to ME handed to me late afternoon July 24 by Gromyko (Ref-tel). He said this was not identical to the one handed by Dobrynin to Secy July 23,³ which related to Jarring mission. July 24 statement was

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1155, Saunders File, U.S. Peace Initiative for the Middle East, June Initiative, 6/10/70–7/23/70, Vol. 2, 2 of 5. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

² Telegram 4131, July 24, briefly reported Gromyko’s call on Beam about procedures for the Jarring mission. (Ibid.)

³ See Document 184.

of more general nature, and was Soviet reply to our request for information about their military intentions in ME.

2. *Begin text:* A. In connection with your July 10 statement⁴ concerning the ME situation, and similar statements made by the American side to the USSR Amb in Washington, it is requested that the following answer of the SovGov be brought to the attention of your Govt.

B. The Soviet Union has always proceeded and proceeds from the conviction that a way can and must be found toward a political settlement of the ME conflict and thereby the elimination of the danger which has been created in this region. This is our firm position. One would wish that the USG would also adhere to such an approach.

C. As we have already repeatedly stated to the American side, we consider that the establishment of a firm peace in the ME by means of a political settlement of the conflict corresponds to the interests both of the countries which are direct participants in the conflict, as well as the interests of the USA and USSR. Only in this way can the existence and independence of all states of this region, including Israel, be guaranteed. It goes without saying that such a political settlement implies (*Podrazumevayet*) the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the territories which they are occupying. It would not be realistic to count on firm peace in the ME without this.

D. All Soviet proposals during the exchange of views with the American side, including also our most recent proposals on the key questions of a settlement, to which the American side until recently has attached—in its words—great importance, have been aimed at achieving the goals of a just political settlement in the ME. And if now the bilateral Soviet-American exchange of views has been halted, then this is not at all our fault. It is then turn of the US to answer our most recent proposals, during the formulation of which the desires of the American side also were taken into account.

E. In the statements made by you, as well as in certain other statements recently by American officials, assertions are contained about allegedly existing discrepancies between the SovGov's line for a political settlement of the ME conflict and its steps toward rendering assistance to the UAR in the matter of strengthening its defense capability. However, without contradicting facts and common sense, it is impossible to prove that the actions aimed at halting Israel's continuing aggression against neighboring Arab states—whatever parts of the territories of these states such action touch upon—do not have a defensive but some other kind of character. In that connection, the assertions that measures for strengthening the UAR's air defense signify allegedly a change in the military balance between the sides are also

⁴ See Document 180.

totally without foundation. If one follows this logic, then it turns out that when the Israeli air forces were able to bomb with impunity the UAR's territory, this was considered by the US as evidence of some sort of "balance," but when they are deprived of such a possibility, this is declared to be a "dangerous violation of the balance."

F. Such a logic, of course, suits Israel, which is not squeamish about disseminating various sorts of concoctions for its provocative purposes. But when statements, which obviously do not correspond to the real state of affairs, emanate from the American side, then, naturally, the question arises: what purposes are being pursued by this. If this is being done in the hope of somehow "justifying" further steps for rendering military support to Israel, the consequences of such a course of action and the responsibility which would lay on it in this instance should be clear to the USG.

G. Thus, in confirming its firm policy of searching—together with the USA, given its readiness for this—for ways for a peaceful political settlement in the ME, the SovGov deems it necessary to state that an undesirable development of events in the ME can take place only in the event that it will be caused by corresponding actions of Israel and in the event the USG desires this. We do not see other reasons for an unforeseen development of events in the way of exacerbating the situation in this region. One would hope that the USG will act, carefully weighing all circumstances, and will be able to cool the ardor of those hotheads in Tel Aviv who would like to undertake new, dangerous provocations.

H. As regards the question of activation of the Jarring mission, we do not see great difficulties in this question. We have always advocated the maximum use of the possibilities of this mission and we are for its success, about which the SovGov once again informed the USG on July 23. But the main thing is the essence of the questions of a settlement, which is the goal also of Jarring's mission, and the essence of the positions of the states on these questions. *End text.*

3. I told Gromyko I would send this statement to Washington. I then said that, regarding the suspension of bilateral talks, no blame or accusations had been made. The reason related to the presentation of our initiative, to which we now have UAR and Soviet responses.

4. Regarding the two statements I had made, their aim was to seek clarification of Soviet military programs in the UAR. We had no ulterior motives, or intentions to cover up further US deliveries to Israel. In this respect, in fact, we have shown restraint regarding new deliveries. We were seeking information and clarification from the Soviets in order to be reassured that the military situation in the ME would not escalate. I said we would carefully study Gromyko's statement and Washington would have to determine its significance and whether it provided us with more information.

5. Gromyko said if USG wished to contribute to a lessening of tension, the first step would be to influence Israel to give a positive reply, to state in clear terms that it accepts and will fulfill UNSC 242. Israel should do what the UAR has done. Gromyko said he did not know if Jordan had replied yet. Then, Gromyko continued, Jarring presumably should go somewhere and meet with some persons to begin the exchange of views.

6. Gromyko said the important thing was the substance of the matter. The Arabs will be asking Jarring what is the nature of the Israeli and US positions. If Jarring says they have no position, Gromyko said he did not know how long negotiations would continue. Therefore, agreement should be reached—and the sooner the better—on the platform by which Jarring should be guided.

7. I told Gromyko we believed the first step was to gain acceptance by both sides of UNSC 242. If we could bring this about, Jarring would have a useful basis to begin his talks.

8. Gromyko then indicated that the Soviets would be interested in having our reply to their proposals. (He obviously had in mind their new formulations on peace, State 102698; and Dobrynin's June 2 meeting with the Secy, State 85691.) I said Washington was continuing to give them careful study. He then said that Amb Dobrynin would be leaving for vacation "in a few days."

9. I asked Gromyko if he thought the Four-Power talks would now go more slowly, with the action shifting to Jarring. Gromyko pressed the point that the Four-Power talks must continue, in order to provide the basis for the beginning of Jarring's negotiations. Without such guidance, there was the danger that the contacts would not result in anything. Gromyko expressed the view that mere acceptance by the parties of UNSC 242 would not be enough for success. Jarring would have to have in his possession recommendations worked out in the Four-Power talks. At the same time, Gromyko indicated Moscow would not object to bilateral talks in this matter.

10. I again pointed out the importance as a basis for Jarring's mission of having both sides accept UNSC 242. By way of example, I drew his attention to the fact that Bunche had undertaken his earlier ME mission without detailed guidance. Gromyko responded by saying the situation was much more complicated now.

11. Rather than continue this aspect of the discussion to the point where Gromyko might feel compelled to say that the Four-Power talks would have to provide Jarring with instructions before he could begin his negotiations, I said that we would carefully consider his remarks and that we would doubtless have ideas of our own about future procedures.

Beam

188. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Soviet Ambassador (Dobrynin)¹

Washington, July 27, 1970, 8:45 a.m.

D: Two things I would like to mention to you. First, I am going home for consultations on Wednesday.² Before I go I have something I would like to tell you about the question you raised.

K: Would you like to come out here?

D: No, I will probably write to you. I will put it in a paper then and give it to your man. The essence is that we are prepared to do this one but it should be on a mutual basis and take into consideration the political settlement.

K: What does mutual mean?

D: I mean only one side . . . obligation.³

K: But we don't have any.

D: Then it is better for you.

K: I understand and that is the right way to put it.

D: Same as on the question of arms limitations. Same as before and in the same context we are prepared to discuss the second question you raised. I will put it as briefly as possible and give it to your man.

K: I will send Colonel Kennedy again.

D: My government considers it very important our contacts on the Middle East.

K: Between our governments or you and me?

D: It is the same thing. I mean our contacts, you and me and then general. But first our contacts.

K: I appreciate all of this—how long will you be gone?

D: I don't know—maybe two to three weeks. After the consultations I will spend some time with my family. Maybe to the end of August. You don't have anything to say about the European thing I discussed with you?

K: No, except we are going to try to apply them in a constructive spirit.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 364, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² July 29.

³ Ellipsis in the source text.

D: If you have anything to tell me I will be here till Wednesday.

K: Let me talk to the President today. I will call you in any event before you leave. And don't be gone too long—you don't want me to get into mischief.

D: No, I am sure there will be no problem.

K: It seems to be going along well.

D: I will tell you what—not a unilateral approach and second is the political settlement and third—there are really three things—the importance of the contacts and we can work out a settlement on the Middle East.

K: I will talk to the President, but should I send Colonel Kennedy over immediately?

D: Yes.

K: I will send him over in the next hour.

189. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and the Soviet Ambassador (Dobrynin)¹

Washington, July 28, 1970, 3:25 p.m.

K: I am sitting on back patio thinking about peaceful coexistence.

D: Good for you, Henry. I am living with the same thought. I will be in Moscow thinking in the same way.

K: When you talk to your leaders I hope you convey that thought to them. I gave your message² to the President. This is not the way to give you an answer but we thought it was a constructive reply and we will be taking a personal interest, as you have also recommended to us on this problem from now on. We will also know some of the details from now on, but not as well as our friend Sisco.

D: I understand.

K: On the other matter which you brought up with me, we also looked at this and we also find elements of discussion on it when you return.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 364, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² See footnote 3, Document 185.

D: Elements for discussion?

K: What we need, Anatol, on that is some program of how to get from here to there which I have often suggested to you. We need to work out some procedure for getting things going on the European thing.

D: On the European?

K: On the European. We will talk to you when you return. We are looking at it in a constructive attitude.

D: From here to there? On the main question.

K: Well, that too but I am assuming that you will reply when you are ready. We have never really had any discussions on European matters, you and I, and it would be useful to clarify some of that. The President has asked me to let you know of our constructive spirit.

D: This is No. 2.

K: Yes.

K: When are you leaving?

D: Tomorrow night.

K: When are you coming back?

D: I hope by four weeks—just enough to gain strength to conduct discussions.

K: That will give you an unfair advantage.

D: What about you?

K: I am working on the budget. You are building so many SS–9's. You are upsetting the balance.

D: Do you expect reply only on what I said to you—but on when we begin to move.

K: Well, I would think fairly soon after that but it would be helpful to have you where we can talk to you, particularly on the issue which you brought back in your message to me. I think that would be easier to discuss on a restricted basis.

D: Yes. This is out of question. I was thinking on the more diplomatic side.

K: What way? Do it in Moscow?

D: On your proposal on how we will move.

K: We would then try to get the ceasefire agreed to.

D: I think you already discussed this with the Egyptians in my impression.

K: Yes. If I may make suggestion, it would be extremely helpful if you would exercise restraint.

D: I think meeting productive.

K: I think shortly afterwards one can start activating the [omission in the source text].

D: It could begin in New York.

K: That would be one possibility. I have heard Cyprus as another.

D: We will say nothing. New York is a good place.

K: We have no objection to that. It is a natural place.

D: I think it can be worked out.

K: Whom do I deal with when you are gone?

D: I hope you won't spoil my vacation. I hope that there will be no surprise like last time when I went home to Moscow on major issues. There will definitely be no answer to No. 1 question.

K: Watch your language. I don't anticipate anything. You know our basic position. If your friends in Hanoi do something, we would have to react. But you should expect nothing from us.

D: I am talking about our conversation.

K: I understand very well.

D: I also.

K: Come back reasonably rested but not so much that you have the advantage over us. I will be dealing with Vorontsov.

D: I will be here.

K: I don't anticipate any bilateral business but if we want to get urgent message to you—

D: I will be the man.

K: We look forward to seeing you when you come back.

D: I got letter today thanking me for very good reception at White House when your assistants were there. They gave your personal greetings.

K: Thank you very much.

190. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, July 28, 1970, 4 p.m.

K: Just wanted to tell you I have talked to Dobrynin² and I just told him we considered his reply.³ I said be absolutely sure it stays in channel. I said we would get answer to big question when he returns. He said he hoped we would not surprise him as the last time. I said unless our friends in Hanoi do something, we anticipated nothing. He was slobbering all over me. He said he and I would have a lot of business when he returns.

P: You figure about three weeks.

K: About the middle of August.

P: What we mainly want to do is keep all of this in strictest of confidence. On the Middle East thing, it may break. If we could just keep the situation confused for a while—keep it from breaking down.

K: On the one hand, keep it confused but also keep the Israelis from starting something and also from telling so much that the Israelis would bring their troops out. That would be a tremendous coup.

P: A reduction of arms too. That would put the Israelis in a pretty good position.

K: I talked with Bill [Rogers] several times about his conversation with Rabin. I am going to stay out of it. We have given Rabin assurances on the first two points. Bill is working the rest out. We will get answer today or tomorrow.

P: It will be interesting. You gave him exactly the right line. We are not going to be quiet if other side does something.

K: I think they want meeting as much as we do. They didn't have to give us these two answers.

P: I have the feeling that they want a meeting to solidify their framework. More and more they have historical perspective. They cannot look without concern on the enormous colossus of China. Also they feel that the Chinese may not give a damn. They could not only wipe out 20 or 30 Russian cities. What do they care.

K: They could march into Siberia. That is pretty unpopulated.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 364, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² Documents 188 and 189.

³ See footnote 3, Document 185.

P: It is desolate there.

K: Things are certainly travelling much more than we thought they would.

P: We must be quite firm but not give them anything to bitch about. I know that their position is not changed.