

DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL RECORD [NIXON PROJECT]

DOCUMENT NUMBER	DOCUMENT TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE OR CORRESPONDENTS	DATE	RESTRICTION
2	memo	Sonnenfeldt to HAK	2/5/70	B
3	memo	HAK to the President	n.d.	B
4	memo	HAK to the President	n.d.	B

FILE GROUP TITLE

NSC

BOX NUMBER

340

FOLDER TITLE

(6)

RESTRICTION CODES

- A. Release would violate a Federal statute or Agency Policy.
B. National security classified information.
C. Pending or approved claim that release would violate an individual's rights.
D. Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy or a libel of a living person.

- E. Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information.
F. Release would disclose investigatory information compiled for law enforcement purposes.
G. Withdrawn and return private and personal material.
H. Withdrawn and returned non-historical material.

HAK

Done. prepared
sent!

Do you want me
to draft a note to
Sirco from you - or
will you do by phone.

do note ✓

I'll call —

HAK

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

July 17, 1970

SECRET/NODIS/EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *K*

SUBJECT: Sisco-Dobrynin Conversation

Attached at Tab A is a memorandum from Joe Sisco reporting the sensitive aspects of his July 13 talk with Ambassador Dobrynin. 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.

Attachment

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Historical File

PRESERVATION COPY

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 13, 1970

PERSONAL - EYES ONLY
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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Meeting with Ambassador Dobrynin

I wrote a very brief telegram 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

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- 2 -

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.

I concluded this portion of the conversation by saying that I just wanted personally to get this off of my chest, 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.


Joseph J. Sisco

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July 14, 1970

TO: Henry A. Kissinger

FROM: Winston Lord

Sisco has sent you his promised memorandum on the personal points he made to Dobrynin on July 13. (At Tab 2 is Sisco's brief reporting cable.) I assume you will want to forward this to the President, particularly since he is seeing Sisco tomorrow.

Accordingly, attached at Tab 1 for your signature is a memorandum enclosing Sisco's paper.

Recommendation:

That you sign the memorandum at Tab 1.

Attachments

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WL:ms:7/14/70

*Sisco/Dobrynin
new/cons*

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JUL 17 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger
SUBJECT: Sisco-Dobrynin Conversation (disped) HK

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Attachment

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 13, 1970

PERSONAL - EYES ONLY
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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Meeting with Ambassador Dobrynin

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I have brought this memorandum to the attention of Secretary Rogers.

JJ. Sisco
Joseph J. Sisco



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1. Sisco had brief 30-minute meeting with Dobrynin to review current state of play re US initiative. Nothing new or startling emerged. Dobrynin said discussions continuing in Moscow and that he could not give Sisco any specific date as to when reply would come. He expected that we would receive a reply directly from UAR and a reply also from USSR.
2. In reply to Sisco's expression of increasing concern over continuation of Soviet creeping process and unwillingness of Soviets to indicate outer limits of their involvement, Dobrynin reiterated familiar arguments what they are doing is defensive.

END

[ROGERS]

GP-3

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NEA:JCSisco:msb

DRAFTING DATE:

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APPROVED BY:

Joseph J. Sisco

CLEARANCES:

S/S Mr. Brown

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N O D I S

SUBJECT: Sisco-Dobrynin Talk April 6

REF: STATE 50459

70 APR 8 AM 8:53

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

1. Sisco opened conversation by saying he first wanted to say a word about tentative plans he had for a trip to the Middle East. There was no firm decision as yet. In our minds the bilateral talks had priority. It was desirable, however, for him to take a trip to the area and get a reading on attitudes there. This would be helpful in terms of our joint efforts in both the Two and Four Power talks. We were always ready to receive anything the Soviet government had for us. Messages during Sisco's absence could be conveyed to Amb Beam, Ass't Sec Davies and the Secretary

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NEA/IAI:HHStackhouse:slb

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4/7/70

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APPROVED BY:

NEA - Joseph J. Sisco

CLEARANCES:

NEA:ALAtherton, Jr.
EUR (info)
IO (info)
S/S-Mr. Brown

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himself. Dobrynin asked for definite confirmation that Sisco trip was on since he said he was likely to go to Moscow for this two week period. Sisco later confirmed to Dobrynin trip definitely scheduled.

2. Sisco said he wanted to raise a subject that Atherton had already mentioned to Vorontsov and that the Secretary had mentioned to Dobrynin March 25, our concern regarding the introduction of SA-3 missiles into the UAR and in particular Soviet personnel to operate them. Dobrynin would recall that the Secretary had stressed that we wanted the Soviets to take our decision on Israeli arms as an indication of US willingness to exercise restraint. The Secretary had said that this arms decision had been made without reference to the bilateral talks and had expressed the hope that the Soviets would act with restraint. He had underlined our concern about the introduction of SA-3's and particularly about the introduction of Soviet personnel ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~UAR~~ in an operational capacity into the UAR. Based on

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what Dobrynin had said at that meeting we had had the impression that he would be reporting to Moscow these expressions of our concern. Sisco expressed the hope that the Soviet Government had given careful study to the Secretary's comments. We had expected and were ready to receive any comment that Dobrynin might have.

3. Dobrynin said that he had reported to Moscow what the Secretary had said and that he had nothing to add. Sisco inquired whether we might expect any further comment or observations on this matter from the Soviets.

4. Dobrynin said the Soviet view was and is clear. There was nothing to add about the SA-3's, which were a purely defensive weapon and no threat to Israel. What kind of a threat did we think they were for Israel? They were in the UAR to protect it from Israeli air attack. The Soviets did not understand why the US used this kind of argument.

5. Sisco said this was a matter of concern to us because it related to the war of attrition initiated by the UAR]

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last year. It related as well more broadly to the dangers and risks in the area. The question of defensive and offensive weapons was a difficult one to answer. Clearly the efforts to achieve a ceasefire worked out by the UN or by the Powers were related to the kind of climate present in the area.

Sisco said he would report Dobrynin's remarks to the Secretary.

6. Dobrynin then referred to his remarks made at his last meeting with Sisco concerning a de facto ceasefire. Sisco said we were studying this and would be giving further thought to it.

7. Turning to the efforts to obtain a peace settlement Sisco said that we had reviewed carefully the Soviets' and our oral statements and the record of his subsequent meeting with Dobrynin April 1. He found both positive and negative elements in the exchanges of the past two weeks. We did note a willingness on the Soviets' part to be more precise on the points related to peace and we were generally encouraged by expressions of this willingness in Dobrynin's

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oral statement and what he had said subsequently to Sisco. But, Sisco said, in order to make progress it was essential to receive from the Soviets in writing their formulations. Sisco recalled that for many weeks of discussion in meeting after meeting Dobrynin had indicated to him that the Soviet government would be more specific on peace if the US was more specific on withdrawal. Dobrynin expressing similar line now. We felt that we had met this specificity requirement in our October 28 document, which was intended to reflect a common US and Soviet position. The October 28 document was a Soviet-American baby. In particular it was very specific on the question of withdrawal. We were encouraged when the Soviets expressed a readiness to be more specific on the question of peace. But Soviets had failed to respond specifically on peace whereas we had been specific on withdrawal. If the language of point 2 of the October 28 document was not satisfactory to the Soviets, then it was up to them to suggest precisely and in writing what formulation it

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willing to accept. This was a practical point. We considered these talks as a means of bringing the parties along. If there were alternative Soviet proposals then we should have them in writing. There was not a ghost of a chance of bringing the Israelis along with the kind of general remarks the Soviets had been making. We needed a precise text. Until now we did not see anything different from the Soviet side than in the past. What is meant when Soviets say they willing to be more detailed and come closer to our formulation? This is not enough; we require a precise text from Soviets if it does find present point 2 in October 28 paper unsatisfactory.

8. Another question, Sisco continued, was that of negotiations. Based on Dobrynin's remarks to the Secretary and to Sisco we had understood that the Soviets did not see the Rhodes formula as viable, though it was a formula we had worked out together in the Waldorf Astoria. The Soviets had indicated that they had some ideas regarding negotiations. In our view what is important is that any formula provide for both direct and

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indirect negotiations. We appreciated as the Soviets did the need for a formula of constructive ambiguity. We strongly prefer Rhodes formula and regret Soviet back-off. We were prepared to consider alternatives to the Rhodes formula, but Soviets must provide precise text. In absence any new, specific Soviet text, we must hold^{to}/the formula expressed in our October 28 document.

9. Sisco continued, for many weeks we had made the assumption that we were trying to find common ground on the basis of the October 28 document. Thus, Sisco said, he was taken aback by Dobrynin's reference in their previous conversation to the Soviets' June document. We had assumed and know that the October document was an attempt to marry the Soviet June document and ours of July. Dobrynin's comment had cast doubt that we were talking from the same document. Moving back to June 1969 Soviet document is a move backward.

10.

9. Dobrynin said he would speak first to the last of

Sisco's points. He said the Soviets had never accepted the

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October document as a joint document. There was nothing new in the Soviet position on this. In their view the October document was a US document. He did not understand Sisco's surprise at this. There were two plans, that of the Americans and that of the Soviets. There was no question of the Soviets accepting the US plan as a basis for proceeding.

11. There were several basic issues involved, Dobrynin continued. We should look at them and attempt to find a mutually acceptable formula. But the Americans would not say anything new. The Soviets had indicated they were prepared to go further if the US was prepared to talk about Gaza and Sharm a-Sheikh. It was a waste of time to argue whether the October document was joint or not. Let's have a look at the basic issues.

12. At this point Dobrynin passed over three pieces of paper in English and Russian versions. The three formulations concerned (a) withdrawal procedures, (b) Gaza and (c) Sharm al-Shaykh. Item (b) is identical to Point 6 in the Soviet

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June 17 paper. Item (c) is identical to Point 7 in the Soviet June 17 paper. FYI. These papers are thin gruel; they are only a slight variant on June 1969 Soviet document and call for total GOI ~~withdrawal~~ withdrawal from Sharm al-Shaykh, Gaza, Sinai, West Bank, and Golan Heights. END FYI. Revised item (a) reads as follows:

QUOTE. On the day of deposit with the UN of the concluding document or documents recording the accord reached (Section IV), withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the territories occupied during the conflict of 1967 shall begin. The withdrawal shall be carried out under the observation of UN representatives, by stages during agreed periods, not to exceed a period of two months in all (or as agreed).

During the first month (or as agreed) Israeli troops shall withdraw from a part of the Arab territories to certain intermediate lines on the Sinai Peninsula (as well as on the west bank of the Jordan River and from Syrian territory out of the El Quneitra area).

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The international UN troops, excluding the Arab armed forces, shall take the positions on the territories from which the Israeli armed forces are being withdrawn.

On the day when Israeli armed forces reach the intermediate lines of the Sinai Peninsula which have been stipulated in advance (for instance, 30 or 40 kilometers from Suez Canal), the Government of the UAR shall bring its troops into the Suez Canal area and begin the clearance of the canal for resumption of navigation.

During the second month (or as agreed) the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces to the lines they held prior to June 5, 1967 shall be completed. During the second stage the international troops would evacuate the territories on which they were deployed already on the first stage, and would follow the outgoing Israeli armed forces. The administration of the UAR (or the corresponding Arab country) shall be completely restored in the vacated territories and its troops and police forces shall be introduced. UNQUOTE

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~~12.~~ Dobrynin noted that by the Soviet proposals Israeli troops would still be in occupied territory at a time when peace was juridically established--i.e., peace would become effective at intermediate stage of withdrawal on understanding that second stage was brief. The Soviets were prepared to put on paper QUOTE at the ~~proper~~ proper time UNQUOTE its formulation regarding peace. The Soviets would like to have US comments on the formulations here presented.

14.

~~13x~~ Sisco said we would study the Soviet formulations carefully. He welcomed the fact that the Soviets had submitted formulations in writing but he was disappointed to see the formulations related and were so close in substance to the June document. He again asked that the Soviets submit language in writing on peace and negotiations. Then we could begin to focus on what the issues are. We had a common interest in making progress.

15.

~~14x~~ Dobrynin said these points were clear. He reiterated that the Soviets did not accept the October 28 document as

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a basis for discussion. QUOTE Your paper is your paper. UNQUOTE
The Soviets wanted to understand better the US position on
secondary points, then we could proceed. The Soviets wanted
to avoid retrogression.

16

28. In subsequent informal, QUOTE off record UNQUOTE
discussion, Sisco said US would be able to make specific
substantive comment on the four critical issues: negotiations,
peace, withdrawal and boundaries, once all talks on table
in writing. Sisco told Dobrynin bluntly we unwilling to
buy a QUOTE pig in the poke UNQUOTE. What did Soviets mean
by hinting they will come closer to our formulation on
peace? We had heard this from Dobrynin before. Dobrynin
initially insisted he must first have US comments on
language he had just presented. When Sisco pressed Dobrynin
as to whether he was saying Soviets would not give us
language on peace and negotiations in absence such prior
comments from us, Dobrynin backed down and said he would put
Sisco's request to Moscow.

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NODIS

1. At working lunch April 1, Dobrynin and Sisco agreed that in this first follow-up meeting after Dobrynin's session with Secretary March 25 it would be well to examine as precisely as possible where we are and to try to determine what possibilities of agreement were. Principal results of meeting were:

(a) Soviets continue unwilling to join appeal to parties to restore ceasefire, but propose as alternative that US and USSR work quietly with Cairo and Tel Aviv to achieve an informal understanding on de facto ceasefire;

(b) Soviets continue adamant against arms limitation talks on ground Arabs feel this would only result in freezing a military balance clearly favorable to Israel;

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APPROVED BY:

NEA - Joseph J. Sisco

CLEARANCES:

EUR/SOV - Mr. Dubs

S/S - Willoyd

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(c) Soviets are willing to consider a formulation on peace along lines proposed by US to include explicitly obligation that there be QUOTE a ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ cessation of war and establishment of peace UNQUOTE provided we are willing to commit ourselves to ~~XXX~~ total withdrawal. Dobrynin explicitly specified this included Israeli withdrawal from Sharm al-Shaykh and Gaza, with latter to be explicitly designated as an Arab territory.

(d) Soviets propose a slight variant of past USSR proposal on relationship between timing of withdrawal of Israeli forces and entry into effect of peace obligations. Variant was described by Dobrynin as follows: (1) Once agreed document was deposited with UN, both sides would be obligated not to take any actions contrary to agreement; (2) Withdrawal would proceed by stages, and UN forces would be introduced at the end of the first stage during which UAR personnel would be limited to clearing Suez Canal

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rather than be introduced in area initially evacuated by Israeli forces. (3) At the end of the first stage there would be a de jure acceptance by UAR of both cessation of war and the state of peace. (4) With the understanding that the second stage of withdrawal would not be a long one (a month or two), UN forces would occupy the additional territories evacuated in that stage, and UAR forces would return to the Sinai with a UN buffer retained between the opposing sides. Dobrynin refused to be drawn out on the area of demilitarization or on whether UN buffer was to be on one side or on both sides of the border.

(e) Dobrynin refused to agree to the formulation on peace contained in Point 2 of the October 28th document but insisted that the formulation USSR has in mind is close to that of the US. When asked whether he agreed to US formulation as it related to the fedayeen, he did not accept this formulation but maintained Soviets had language

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in mind that might approximate this.

(f) On the question of negotiations, Dobrynin ~~XX~~ said Soviets no longer can accept present formulation on Rhodes formula, reiterating argument made previously that interpretation given to it by the parties has made this unacceptable. When pressed by Sisco for an alternative formula, Dobrynin said something roughly along the following lines: The parties will have contact between themselves through Jarring with the understanding he could use various forms.

(g) On Sharm al-Shaykh, Dobrynin insisted that there be explicit reference to UN force, its removal being subject to major power veto, and indicated willingness to suggest ~~XXXXXX~~ that UN Secretary General consult with the parties on question of composition and command of that force. He categorically precluded any Soviet troops being involved in such a UN force.

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2. Sisco pressed Dobrynin on two procedural points without success: (a) Sisco suggested that while Dobrynin exposition was useful and helpful in understanding Soviet position, best vehicle for making progress would be for Dobrynin to offer specific new language as ^{emendation} ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ to October 28th document which we consider to be a joint US-USSR effort and not solely an American product; and (b) Sisco ~~XXXXX~~ suggested that in next session, which now set for afternoon April 6, he and Dobrynin discuss all other points in order to be sure that there are not other significant areas of disagreement. With respect to first point, Dobrynin insisted that he was under instructions to talk in terms of emendation of the Soviet June 1969 paper. Re (b), Dobrynin refused to focus on these other points unless and until US reacted to latest concrete Soviet suggestions. Sisco pointed out these gave rise to difficulties since (1) there were a number of points of difference between June and October]

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documents, (2) October document was based on a precise format in which obligations were undertaken between parties in relationship to one another, whereas Soviet June document was considerably less so, and (3) Soviets were asking us to react and to make concession on concrete points of particular interest to them in circumstances where US did not even know whether common ground could be found on these decisive points or just where we stood on other matters such as freedom of passage through Suez Canal, Straits of Tiran, refugee question, etc.

3. During meeting, Sisco also said he wished to raise one broad question which he thought more fundamental than any other in determining whether common ground can be achieved: Would Soviets be willing to agree to guidelines for Jarring based on assumption of other than total withdrawal? Dobrynin said he could not reply to this question and suggested he and

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Sisco concentrate on concrete points they have been discussing.

COMMENT: Above exposition by Dobrynin represents no appreciable advance in Soviet position. It does contain appearance of greater oral flexibility and a few additional enticements (e.g., timing of peace, possible new formulation on negotiating procedures). Our inclination is to continue efforts smoke Dobrynin out and press for written counter language from Soviets, and, meanwhile, to show no signs of give in our position. Would appreciate Ambassador Beam's comment on this tactic.

END

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SUBJ: Dobrynin-Secretary Rogers Meeting March 11

1. Asst Sec Sisco informed Israel Ambassador Rabin March 12 that during Dobrynin meeting with Secretary previous day Soviets proposed resumption of bilateral conversations and, as follow-up to Malik^{statement} at March 5 Four Power meeting, Dobrynin indicated willingness to consider kind of precise formulations re peace contained in Oct 28 and Dec 18 proposals.

2. Secretary told Dobrynin USG will study procedural suggestion re resumption bilaterals as well as what latter said about substance.

3. Sisco urged Rabin to hold above very closely and noted that Soviets had complained to Secretary about a number of recent leaks. Rabin said he understood.

END

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NEA/IAI:ALatherton

S/S - Mr. Eliot

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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

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NEA - Joseph J. Sisco

CLEARANCES:

S/S - Mr. Eliot
IO - Mr. Greene (Info)

EUR - Mr. Swank (Info)

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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.

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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.} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ 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.

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]

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and December 18 papers.

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 document and USG has still not replied.

10. Replies on these points are important since Soviet Government is convinced that principal issue of settlement

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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

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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 plan 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.

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.

14. Soviet Government wishes to stress that it assumes]

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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.

~~XXXXXX~~

15. Secretary responded that we ~~XXXX~~ 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

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reflected in the October 28 and December 18 documents.

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H. Powers

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SUBJECT: Sisco-Dobrynin Meeting April 6

Following is summary Sisco-Dobrynin meeting April 6.

Detailed report by septel.

1. In U meeting with Dobrynin April 6, Sisco suggested that the Soviets submit in writing any formulation, ^{USSR.} has in mind on peace and negotiations if it finds unsatisfactory the present formulations on these two key points in Oct. document. Dobrynin was ^{reluctant} to doing so, but agreed to put this request to Moscow. At the same

meeting Dobrynin submitted a text, calling for total

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Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai, Sharm el-Sheikh, Gaza, West Bank /and Golan Heights. The slight difference between this proposal and the June 1969 Soviet position is that it calls (not precisely defined) for a UN buffer/to be established by stages as Israeli forces withdraw. Sisco indicated that while we would study the latest Soviet formulations, it is of critical importance that US know precisely and in writing just what the Soviets will accept insofar as commitments to peace and negotiations are concerned. Once this is made clear by the Soviets, the US would be in a position to make specific substantive comment on four critical issues being currently discussed: negotiations, peace, withdrawal and boundaries. Dobrynin expressed dissatisfaction with Sisco's unwillingness to alter the US substantive position on Sharm el-Sheikh and Gaza and his insistence that the Soviets either accept language on peace and negotiations in the Oct. 28 document or submit precisely an alternative for our consideration. Our assessment is that Moscow will take some time before

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SISCO - DOBRYNIN, II
SUMMARY

TAB A ... May 6 - Sisco-Dobrynin Meeting

Sisco presented part of our proposed Arab-Israeli agreement. He explained the following U.S. proposals:

- A settlement would be based on the UN resolution, the settlement would be a package, a formal state of peace would exist, all claims or states of belligerency would end including terrorist raids, and the parties would agree to abide by the UN charter in settling future disputes.

Dobrynin did not comment directly on any single item and said Moscow would have to examine our entire document before giving a positive reply.

Dobrynin felt U.S. may have misunderstood Soviet position on borders. They want withdrawal to pre-war lines, but have no objections if the parties want to change their borders.

TAB B May 8 MEETING

TAB C May 12 MTC

Tab D May 19 MTC

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Feb. 24, 1970

To General Haig

Copies of the attached will not
be made available through the
Secretariat.

HAR

I showed Hal
President's comments
on your memo since
he prepared it. @

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS

ACTION

February 24, 1970

Mr. I send
dk

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KISSINGER

FROM: Helmut Sonnenfeldt *[initials]*

SUBJECT: The President's Comment on your Memorandum of February 4
(Log 7124) on the Kosygin Letter

In rereading the memorandum (which, you recall I originally sent to you and which you then forwarded to the President with slight modifications), I felt that the President's disagreement with one of the paragraphs might have been based on a misunderstanding.

I don't know whether you may have already discussed the issue with the President or whether you wish to pursue it further. It is actually quite an important one: the risks attendant on Moscow's undoubted progress in building their own role and further eroding ours in the Middle East.

I have tried in the attached (Tab A) to clarify the thoughts in the paragraph at the bottom of page 2 of your memo of February 4.

RECOMMENDATION

That if you wish to pursue this matter with the President, you sign the memorandum at Tab A.

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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Soviet Position in the Middle East

When I sent you a memorandum earlier this month commenting on Kosygin's Middle East letter, you noted your disagreement with one of the paragraphs. You noted that far from suffering a defeat in 1967 the Soviets succeeded in further cementing their friendship with the Arabs while we ended up as their enemy and that in the long run this serves Soviet interests.

I am sorry that the point I was trying to make did not come through clearly. It was that at present the Arabs were suffering from Israeli military action and that the Soviets by identifying us so closely with Israel were making it appear as though we do better by our client than they do by theirs. My conclusion was that since it was unlikely that a cease-fire would take place, the pressure on the Soviets to provide more effective aid to the Arabs would rise. I felt that Kosygin himself, by sending you the letter, had contributed to those pressures. This was why I described the letter as 'disturbing.' In other words, while the Soviets are undoubtedly advancing their long range objective of further alienating us from the Arabs, they are also committing more and more of their own prestige and at some point might find it necessary to do something dramatic to counteract Israeli military actions.

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Soviet Position in the Middle East

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MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION 7054

February 3, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Reply to Kosygin

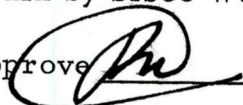
Attached are a draft reply to Kosygin's message and Secretary Rogers' recommendation. The Secretary's memo makes essentially the points made in my earlier memo to you but adds these:

1. The Kosygin message may have been designed to delay our response to Israel's arms requests, since Nasser has probably asked the Soviets for more and the Soviets know the UAR problem is lack of trained manpower and not lack of equipment.
2. While it might be tempting to stand back and let pressure on the UAR and USSR mount further, this carries an element of risk. Soviet prestige is involved, and they might see themselves under increasing pressure to do something visible to reverse the present trend. It is, on balance, in the U.S. interest to restore the cease-fire.

I agree and the draft reply is written with this in mind.

The Secretary urges an early response. I understand your view to be that we should deliver our reply Wednesday, mainly not to reply in a time frame suggested by Dobrynin. I agree because the onus for delay cannot be placed on us; our response says we have already been in touch with both sides about restoring the cease-fire. Moreover, Nasser delivered a strongly anti-American speech Monday, and there is some advantage in ignoring him.

Recommendation: That you approve the attached text and delivery to Dobrynin by Sisco Wednesday morning.

Approve 

Disapprove _____

SECRET/NODIS FEB 3 1970

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 2, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

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. 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.

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 Conference 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

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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 materiel 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 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.



William P. Rogers

Attachment

Suggested reply to Soviet Premier Kosygin

SECRET/NODIS

Suggested Reply

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your message of January 31 has been studied carefully. 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, 1967 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

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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 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...". 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 Assembly this last fall and subsequently was again taken up with Mr. Gromyko by Secretary Rogers, and our strong preference for limitations was reiterated as recently as

January 25. 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}/there 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, 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 unresponsiveness 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.

Dispatched by Special Messenger on 2/4
at 12:30 a.m. to be held in State Operations
Center for Delivery to Ted Eliot opening of
business 2/4/70 per General Haig.

Florence Gwyer 2/4/70

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS

February 3, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: Al Haig 

SUBJECT: Reply to Kosygin Note on the Middle East

Attached is a memorandum for your signature to the Secretary of State enclosing the original of the President's reply to the Kosygin note on the Middle East, together with copies of the letter to be furnished by the Department of State to the Ambassadors of France and Great Britain.

I have coordinated this package with Hal Saunders who is also furnishing you a separate memorandum containing guidance to Joe Sisco for handling the necessary press backgrounder on this subject. I believe you will want to call Joe Sisco this evening and inform him of the action taken with respect to the reply and mention to him that Hal will be in touch with him to provide guidance on the background.

Attachments

SECRET/NODIS

SECRET/NODIS

February 3, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT:

Response to Chairman Kosygin's Message
of January 31, 1970

Attached is the response to Chairman Kosygin's message of
January 31, 1970 on the Middle East.

The President has approved Assistant Secretary Sisco's delivering
this response, in person, to Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin some
time Wednesday morning.

Additional copies of the President's reply are attached for delivery
to the Ambassadors of France and Great Britain, following delivery
of the original.

Henry A. Kissinger

Attachments

SECRET/NODIS

Dispatched 2/4/70, Rpt. #1039

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 4, 1970

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your message of January 31 has been studied carefully. 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, 1967 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 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 ...". 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 Assembly this last fall and subsequently was again taken up with Mr. Gromyko by Secretary Rogers, and our strong preference for limitations was reiterated as recently as January 25. 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, 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 unresponsiveness 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,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard Nixon", with a stylized, cursive script.

His Excellency
Aleksey N. Kosygin
Chairman of the Council of Ministers
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Kussinger Lake
Eyes Only

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 B 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 Freeman that we have a message and will talk to him before replying. I will reach Ambassador Lucet 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 ldraft reply for your consideration on Monday. My recommendation is that we should hold it, however, until at least Wednesday and preferably Thursday.

Attachments

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- 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;
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I have also told Ambassador Freeman that we have a message and will talk to him before replying. I will reach Ambassador Lucet 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. My recommendation is that we should hold it, however, until at least Wednesday and preferably Thursday.

Attachments

SECRET/NODIS

Feb. 2, 1970

7054

file

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Harold H. Saunders

SUBJECT: Reply to Kosygin

President Nasser's speech was delivered this afternoon. I have taken this into account in the covering memo to the President. Hal Sonnenfeldt has no problems with the attached.

SECRET/NODIS

HHSaunders:tmt 2/2/70

SECRET/NODIS

ACTION 7054

FEB 3 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Reply to Kosygin

Attached are a draft reply to Kosygin's message and Secretary Rogers' recommendation. The Secretary's memo makes essentially the points made in my earlier memo to you but adds these:

1. The Kosygin message may have been designed to delay our response to Israel's arms requests, since Nasser has probably asked the Soviets for more and the Soviets know the UAR problem is lack of trained manpower and not lack of equipment.
2. While it might be tempting to stand back and let pressure on the UAR and USSR mount further, this carries an element of risk. Soviet prestige is involved, and they might see themselves under increasing pressure to do something visible to reverse the present trend. It is, on balance, in the U.S. interest to restore the cease-fire.

I agree and the draft reply is written with this in mind.

The Secretary urges an early response. I understand your view to be that we should deliver our reply Wednesday, mainly not to reply in a time frame suggested by Dobrynin. I agree because the onus for delay cannot be placed on us; our response says we have already been in touch with both sides about restoring the cease-fire. Moreover, Nasser delivered a strongly anti-American speech Monday, and there is some advantage in ignoring him.

Recommendation: That you approve the attached text and delivery to Dobrynin by Sisco Wednesday morning.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

SECRET/NODIS

HAK;DRY;jlp;2/2/70

Retyped HHSaunders:rn:2/2/70 5 p.m.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 2, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

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. 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.

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 Conference 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

SECRET/NODIS

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
not automatically declassified

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 materiel 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 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.



William P. Rogers

Attachment

Suggested reply to Soviet Premier Kosygin

SECRET/NODIS

Suggested Reply

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your message of January 31 has been studied carefully. 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, 1967 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

SECRET/NODIS

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
not automatically declassified.

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 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...". 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 Assembly this last fall and subsequently was again taken up with Mr. Gromyko by Secretary Rogers, and our strong preference for limitations was reiterated as recently as

January 25. 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} ~~there~~ 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, 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 unresponsiveness 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.

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 far 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.

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.

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.

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-a-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, 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.

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.

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 compell 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.

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.

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

Sincerely,

A.Kosygin

SECRET/NODIS

February 1, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger
SUBJECT: Message from Kosygin

The key points in the message from Kosygin which Ambassador Dobrynin gave me last night (Tab A) 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.] 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 US-USSR confrontation.

SECRET/NODIS

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.

- 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 US-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-a-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 B reflecting your views on the elements of a reply. Assistant Secretary Sisco is drafting an answer.

I have also told Ambassador Freeman that we have a message and will talk to him before replying. I will reach Ambassador Lucet 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. My recommendation is that we should hold it, however, until at least Wednesday and preferably Thursday.

January 31, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Soviet Message on the Middle East

The President wishes the numbered points below to be used as guidelines in drafting a response to the Soviet message. He also wishes the response to take into account consultations with the British and French.

1. We will use our influence to bring about restoration of the cease-fire provided that the Soviet Union will use its influence in the same direction, in particular as regards Fedayeen attacks.
2. The situation could only be complicated if outside powers became involved directly or indirectly. At the same time, we have made clear that if necessary we will take steps to correct any imbalance in armaments in the region.
3. We are prepared to continue working toward a peaceful settlement. We have noted your statement that if the question of withdrawal were resolved, agreement on other issues would fall into place. We made detailed and fair proposals including withdrawal on October 28. We believe that a response from you -- especially on the other elements -- in the same spirit could provide a basis for the parties to begin negotiating.
4. It is our assumption that an effective cease-fire, including irregular forces, would have to exist for negotiations to proceed in good faith. At the same time, the existence of such negotiations will provide an incentive to maintain an effective cease-fire.

The attached communications and all other documents connected with them should be given distribution exclusively on a need-to-know basis.

Henry A. Kissinger

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY

February 2, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Attached is a copy of the letter I mentioned to you on the phone this morning. It is, of course, furnished strictly for your eyes only.

/s/

Henry A. Kissinger

Attachment

Cy of incoming Kosygin note dated Jan 31, 1970

HAK:AMH:ms:2/2/70

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY

Unofficial translation
from Russian

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 far 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.

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.

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.

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-a-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, 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.

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.

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 compell 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.

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.

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

Sincerely,

A. Kosygin

Уважаемый г-н Президент,

По известным в настоящее время данным, израильское руководство, игнорируя решения Совета Безопасности, фактически вновь начало военные действия против арабских государств, в том числе и бомбардировки населенных пунктов ОАР, находящихся в непосредственной близости от Каира. Удары наносятся не только по военным объектам ОАР и Иордании, но и по мирному населению, подвергаются разрушению города и населенные пункты, промышленные и другие сооружения. Цели этих авантюристических действий ясны — вынудить соседние арабские страны принять выдвигаемые Израилем требования. Все это происходит в то время, когда ОАР и другие арабские страны, выполняя решения Совета Безопасности, не предпринимают пока ответных ударов по Израилю.

В данном случае, как и вообще при определении своей позиции в ближневосточных делах, израильские руководители, очевидно, исходят из того, что США будут и впредь поддерживать Израиль и что в этих условиях четыре великие державы не сумеют прийти к единому мнению насчет выполнения решений Совета Безопасности.

Существует опасность, что военные действия в ближайшее время могут приобрести широкие масштабы, а решения Совета Безопасности и Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН в глазах мировой общественности будут терять авторитет.

Мы изучаем сейчас вопрос о том, в какой мере расчеты Израиля на политическую и иную поддержку извне оправданы и скоординированы с дипломатическими акциями некоторых держав. Однако мы считаем своим долгом привлечь Ваше внимание к в высшей степени рискованным последствиям, которые может иметь курс действий, избранный израильским руководством, как с точки зрения положения на Ближнем Вос-

токе, так и международных отношений в целом.

Мы исходим из того, что на Ближнем Востоке может и должен быть установлен прочный мир. Советский Союз неизменно стремится к этому и соответственно влияет на своих друзей. Если бы, с другой стороны, правительство США свои заявления в пользу мира на Ближнем Востоке подкрепило практическими шагами, и в первую очередь перед израильскими руководителями, то не было бы такого положения, что два с половиной года захватчик удерживает оккупированные земли, сотни тысяч арабов вынуждены покинуть свои дома и продолжают погибать люди.

Продолжение Израилем его нынешнего курса способно лишь расширить и углубить конфликт, увековечить напряженность в одном из важнейших районов мира, так как невозможно заставить арабские страны смириться с агрессией, с захватом их территорий.

В интересах всеобщего мира и международной безопасности — предостеречь правительство Израиля от авантюризма, предпринять безотлагательные и твердые действия, которые помогут пресечь нарастание военной напряженности и побудят Израиль прислушаться к голосу разума. Мы думаем, что это отвечало бы и национальным интересам Соединенных Штатов.

Мы хотим со всей откровенностью сказать Вам, что если Израиль будет продолжать свой авантюризм, бомбить территорию ОАР и других арабских государств, то Советский Союз вынужден будет позаботиться о том, чтобы арабские государства располагали средствами, при помощи которых можно было бы дать достойный отпор зарвавшемуся агрессору.

Обстановка на Ближнем Востоке срочно диктует необходимость того, чтобы Израиль немедленно прекратил свои опасные вооруженные нападения и вылазки против ОАР и других арабских государств.

Четыре державы в состоянии и обязаны заставить Израиль отказаться от проведения политики вооруженных провокаций и сделать так, чтобы на Ближнем Востоке был установлен прочный мир.

Мы полагаем, что сейчас необходимо также эффективно использовать механизм двух- и четырехсторонних консультаций, чтобы: I/ добиться скорейшего вывода израильских войск со всех оккупированных арабских территорий, 2/ добиться установления мира на Ближнем Востоке.

Вывод войск — ключевой вопрос для установления мира. Если он будет разрешен, то вряд ли встретятся особые трудности на пути к договоренности по другим вопросам.

Мы хотели бы, г-н Президент, чтобы Вы оценили положение под углом зрения особой ответственности за поддержание мира, лежащей на наших странах. Что касается Советского правительства, то у него нет недостатка в доброй воле и решимости действовать в интересах мира на Ближнем Востоке.

Соответствующие обращения направлены нами премьер-министру Вильсону и президенту Помпиду.

С уважением

А. Косыгин

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

File.
ACTION

SECRET/NODIS

February 2, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Reply to Kosygin

Attached are a draft reply to Kosygin's message and Secretary Rogers' recommendation. The Secretary's memo makes essentially the points made in my earlier memo to you but adds these:

1. The Kosygin message may have been designed to delay our response to Israel's arms requests, since Nasser has probably asked the Soviets for more and the Soviets know the UAR problem is lack of trained manpower and not lack of equipment.
2. While it might be tempting to stand back and let pressure on the UAR and USSR mount further, this carries an element of risk. Soviet prestige is involved, and they might see themselves under increasing pressure to do something visible to reverse the present trend. It is, on balance, in the U.S. interest to restore the cease fire.

I agree and the draft reply does so.

The Secretary urges an early response, perhaps Tuesday. His arguments are:

1. An early reply would inform Kosygin of the efforts we launched several days ago to urge Israel and the UAR to restore the cease fire.
2. Undue delay in replying would play into Soviet strategy of placing onus for the current situation on the U.S. and of garnering credit in the Arab world for applying pressure on the U.S. and Israel.

I believe the original idea of a Thursday reply would be preferable. The parties involved already know what we are doing. A hurried reply makes it look as if we feel vulnerable.

There is one immediate operational problem. The Four Powers will meet today (Monday), and we will have to instruct Ambassador

SECRET/NODIS

Yost to stand off any Soviet effort to turn this into a Four Power exercise. The fact is that we have already (last Thursday to Saturday) urged Israel and the UAR to return to observance of the cease fire. What we want now is comparable action by the USSR.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That, as soon as you have approved the attached text, Sisco inform the British, French and Israelis.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

2. That, when you have received a report on their responses, you authorize delivery of our response by Sisco to Dobrynin Thursday.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

Not yet seen by
Secretary Rogers.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

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. 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.

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 Conference 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

SECRET/NODIS

GROUP 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
not automatically declassified

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 materiel 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 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.

William P. Rogers

Attachment

Suggested reply to Soviet Premier Kosygin

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ACTION

SECRET/NODIS

February 2, 1970

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There is one immediate operational problem. The Four Powers will meet today (Monday), and we will have to instruct Ambassador

SECRET/NODIS

RETURN THIS RECEIPT IMMEDIATELY TO

REGISTRY NO.

Henry A. Kissinger

HAK-10

UNCLASSIFIED DESCRIPTION
(Serial No., File No., Subject)

DATE

**Secret/Nodis/Sensitive Memo,
S M O T M E**

1/31/70

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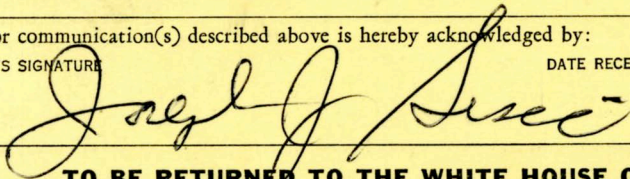
ADDRESSEE

**The Honorable William P. Rogers
The Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.**

Receipt for communication(s) described above is hereby acknowledged by:

ADDRESSEE'S SIGNATURE

DATE RECEIVED



TO BE RETURNED TO THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

CLASSIFIED MATERIAL RECEIPT

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GPO

~~MEMORANDUM~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS

February 3, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KISSINGER

FROM: Helmut Sonnenfeldt *HS*

SUBJECT: Guidance to Ziegler on Kosygin Middle East Message

I note in General Haig's memorandum on this subject that Ziegler is to say that it would be erroneous to categorize the message in terms of containing a threat.

The fact is that

1. the note does contain a threat;
2. you said it did in your memo to the President and Secretary Rogers said so in his;
3. you told Ambassador Freeman -- and I subsequently told Lucet -- that it was moderately threatening;"
4. any one who reads the note, when it becomes fully public will see that it contains a threat;
5. our proposed response, at least in the version that I saw and on the basis of which Sisco is consulting the allies, contains a passage that warns against major powers getting drawn in more deeply and of our intention to maintain the balance; i. e., it responds to a threat and when our reply becomes known it will be so interpreted.

It seems to me that we should either conform our public posture to our private one or refuse to give any characterization whatsoever, even one that rejects someone else's.

Whatever one may think of the purposes and nature of the Soviet move -- and I am increasingly impressed with its stupidity and shortsightedness (see my forthcoming memo on this) -- the Soviets knew very well that they were making a threat. And Dobrynin tried to accentuate it by trying to hustle

SECRET/NODIS

you into an immediate answer. It will do us no good in our relations with the present Soviet leaders to turn the other cheek to what is plainly a threat -- which is what we are doing by explicitly denying that it is one.

Consequently, I strongly urge you to change the guidance to Ziegler so that the answer to the "threat" question is identical to the one immediately following, on whether the letter contained a "warning," that is, make no comment on contents, and say we are studying the note and will reply in due course.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS

February 3, 1970

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SECRET/NODIS

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February 4, 1970

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your message of January 31 has been studied carefully. 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, 1967 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 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 ...". 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 Assembly this last fall and subsequently was again taken up - with Mr. Gromyko by Secretary Rogers, and our strong preference for limitations was reiterated as recently as January 25. 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, 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 unresponsiveness 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,

His Excellency
Aleksey N. Kosygin
Chairman of the Council of Ministers
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

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WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

'70 FEB 4 AM 11:38

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET

February 4, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: U.S. -Soviet Exchange on the Middle East

The President has asked that U.S. officials refrain from commenting on the recent exchange of notes between himself and Chairman Kosygin on the Middle East situation.

I would be grateful if you would disseminate the President's desires on this matter to the appropriate members of your staff and have already taken steps here to insure that my staff is fully cognizant of the President's wishes.


Henry A. Kissinger

SECRET

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

February 4, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Reply to Note from Chairman Kosygin
on the Middle East

Attached is a copy of our reply to the Kosygin note, the text
of which I furnished to you via this channel on Monday.

Henry A. Kissinger

Attachment

Xeroxed copy of Ltr to Chairman Kosygin
signed by President Nixon 4 Feb 70

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/SENSITIVE

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: Further Background on the Kosygin Letter

In an earlier memorandum 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. The full text of the intercepted conversation between Brezhnev and Defense Minister Grechko seems to confirm this.

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. The conversation 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." The conversation 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

SECRET/SENSITIVE

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 demarche 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.

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.

SECRET/NODIS

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Reflections on the Middle East

In view of our current efforts to restore the cease-fire, Kosygin's message and the active discussion between Hussein and Nasser of our documents in Cairo this weekend, you might be interested in a few reflections on the forces at work.

It is an oversimplification, but the two following propositions do help sharpen thinking on the present situation:

1. the Israelis hold the key to war;
2. Nasser holds the key to negotiations.

The Likelihood of War

It is mainly the Israelis who will determine whether or not there will be another full-scale military clash. While the Arabs could provoke Israel, they cannot now sustain a coherent military operation. The Israelis control the air and have the power and ability to intensify and sustain a conflict to any degree they choose within obvious limits.

The Israelis have tried to walk the fine line between escalating their attacks on the UAR enough to put pressure on Nasser but not enough to have the major powers call them for renewing the war. By bombing military targets around Cairo, they have gone just a little too far and have provoked independent responses from both the US and the USSR.

The question now is whether they will be satisfied that they have made their point by sending Nasser running to Moscow or whether they will feel compelled--lured by the taste of success--to follow through and see if they can accomplish what two previous wars have not achieved--toppling Nasser.

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They say their official policy is willingness to return to the cease-fire provided Nasser indicates his willingness. Since Nasser publicly disavowed the cease-fire, some Israeli diplomats have said he would have to reaffirm his adherence to it publicly. This at least leaves open the question whether what they really want is not to bring Nasser to restore the cease-fire or to negotiate--but to bring him down.

The Israelis may recognize that by bringing the USSR into direct communication with the US they have gone too far for the moment. They may reduce the intensity of their raids, though they are unlikely to stop unilaterally lest that be read as bowing to Soviet pressure. However, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the Israelis may still seek the right time to strike one very sharp blow to try to bring Nasser down.

The Limits on Nasser

We know less about Nasser's state of mind, but it holds the answer to following question: Can the combination of our firmness and Israeli pressure produce a negotiation from the present situation, or should we be content with renewed observance of the cease-fire to await a further change of Egyptian and Soviet thinking?

The present situation and recent reports give us a closer look at Nasser's mind than we have had for some time. Jordanian Foreign Minister Rifai has recently returned from talks with Nasser and Foreign Minister Riad, and we have full reports from those conversations. Eugene Black has also seen Nasser. And now we have Kosygin's message giving indirect evidence of the concern Nasser must have communicated to the Soviets.

Nasser's main objective is not to get the Sinai back but to stay in power. His dilemma is that there has been enough dissatisfaction with his leadership over the past five years that, even if he makes peace he may be eased aside. Until now he seems to have judged that he was better off in a no-peace, no-war situation. Now that option is being narrowed as the war moves to the outskirts of Cairo.

The following seem to represent the main elements in Nasser's thinking as they emerge from recent reports:

1. He is deeply concerned over the recent series of Israeli air attacks around Cairo and feels under considerable pressure to do something about them.

--He has apparently been concerned enough to turn to Moscow.

--He has tried to give the impression of not appearing concerned that he will be toppled. But the Jordanian Foreign Minister did report that the raids had created confusion among Nassër's advisers, that his enemies were using the raids against him and that Nasser himself had said he had to retaliate or he would be "dragged from office."

--He may be less concerned about what has happened to date than about what could happen. If there were large numbers of civilian casualties, he says he would be forced into retaliatory action (unspecified).

2. He knows he does not have the option of a real military response.

--At the Rabat summit he was open in acknowledging that he does not have the capability to inflict more than pinprick retaliations.

--Therefore, his first objective must be to try to call off the Israeli attacks (i. e. restore the cease-fire).

--If he feels he cannot pay the price of a public statement that the UAR will observe the cease-fire, he will face the choice between continued attacks at some level and trying to achieve an overall settlement.

3. Nasser still seems to be hoping for a political settlement, but he seems to see this more as something the US and USSR do for him than as the result of compromises he himself makes.

--He has been very careful not to close the door on our proposals. He must know we alone can press Israel.

--He has encouraged the Jordanians to see what they could get out of us.

--He may even desire to talk directly with us, but feel constrained to avoid this because of the short rein the Soviets may have on him. This being the case, he has put the Soviets on the spot where they feel they must press us.

--But so far he seems to prefer the choice of going down in an "honorable" battle with the Israelis to that of negotiating with them on their or our terms. This would be a repudiation of his own policy of almost twenty years.

4. In the long run, he has no interest in cutting himself or the Arabs off from the U.S. --but only because he needs us.

--At the Rabat summit, he opposed a resolution requiring all Arabs to break with the U.S.

--He has apparently urged the Libyans to look to Paris and not Moscow for arms.

--He has often told American visitors that he wants a U.S. presence to balance the Soviet presence in Egypt.

--At the same time, he is deeply suspicious of the U.S. He may well feel that, in a crisis, he can depend only on the USSR. He says the Soviets are sensitive about his talking with us. He may suspect that our proposals are really aimed at driving a wedge between him and Soviets.

Conclusion

These reflections point up the shortcomings of Egyptian and Soviet policy. The Israelis have demonstrated Nasser's impotence, and he has put himself in a political position where it is difficult for him even to return to observance of the cease-fire without appearing to bow to Israeli pressure, let alone negotiate. Now that he has turned to Moscow to lean on us to press Israel to stop the bombing, he is about to demonstrate Soviet inability to get him out of his box.

At the same time, the Israelis have demonstrated what a fine line it is they are walking. They have made their political (and military) points--that Nasser is incapable of defending Egypt and that Moscow

(so far) seems unable to bail him out. But their attacks have now struck so close to raw Soviet nerves that Moscow has felt it necessary to approach us at the highest level and at least apparently to think (though apparently rejecting for now) about intervention in some form to help Nasser.

The advantage to us is that the Arabs will come to realize that it is the US and not the USSR that holds the key to what they want. The problems, of course, are (1) that we cannot move Israel unless Nasser himself makes the difficult decision to compromise and (2) that the harder Israel presses, the greater becomes the danger of direct Soviet involvement.

There are two schools of thought on how we should deal with the situation:

--One is that we should conciliate the Arab radicals insofar as possible. This would mean not supplying more arms to Israel now, diluting somewhat our position and squeezing Israel to accept. The problem with this is that, even in the unlikely event that we succeeded, the situation may be enough out of control that Nasser (and Hussein) may fall and there will be no one left to make peace.

--The other is to let Israel keep the pressure on, with the assumption that the only way to peace is for Nasser and the Soviets to come to terms with the reality of Israeli power. The two question marks in this approach are (1) whether Nasser could survive politically if he could ever bring himself to negotiate peace and (2) whether, if he judges that he cannot, the Soviets can stand aside in the face of continuing Israeli pressure.

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INFORMATION

FEB 4 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

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, disturbing 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.

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

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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 complete 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 our

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.

HSonnenfeldt:mm:2/4/70

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 by Israel of military actions against the UAR and other Arab countries and called upon the US 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 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.

RETURN THIS RECEIPT IMMEDIATELY TO

Henry A. Kissinger

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The Honorable William P. Rogers
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