

Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969–1972; Jordan, September 1970

Middle East Region

1. National Security Study Memorandum 2¹

Washington, January 21, 1969.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

SUBJECT

Middle East Policy

The President has directed the preparation of two papers on Arab-Israel problems for consideration by the NSC. One paper should consider alternative US policy approaches aimed at securing a Middle East settlement, including (1) direct Arab-Israeli negotiations (2) U.S.-Soviet negotiations and (3) Four Power negotiations.² The paper should also consider the possibility that no early settlement will be reached, and US interests and policies in such a situation. The second paper should consider alternative views of basic US interests in the area and should include consideration of the issues listed in the attachment.

The President has directed that the NSC Interdepartmental Group for the Near East perform this study.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-126, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 2. Secret.

² The first study required by this NSSM is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

The first paper should be forwarded to the NSC Review Group by January 25, 1969. The second paper should be forwarded to the NSC Review Group by February 24, 1969.

Attachment

1. What is the role of the Middle East today in U.S. global strategy? What are the real U.S. interests there and how important are they?
2. What is the nature of the Soviet threat to the Middle East? How likely is Soviet dominance or predominance? What forces will tend to limit Soviet influence?
3. What is the precise nature of the Soviet threat to NATO via the Middle East?
4. What is the present state of the U.S. position in the Middle East? Is it eroding drastically? Or is there a level of common interests shared with some nations in the area which will prevent it from deteriorating beyond a certain point? Is an early Arab-Israel settlement essential to preserving the U.S. position?
5. In the light of answers to these questions, what is the most appropriate U.S. posture toward the Middle East? What level and kinds of involvement are appropriate in view of our interests and U.S. and Soviet capabilities?

2. Paper Prepared by the Interdepartmental Group for Near East and South Asia¹

NSCIG/NEA 69–1B (Revised)

Washington, January 30, 1969.

BASIC US INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This paper examines some of the basic interests and assumptions that underlie US policy formulation in the Middle East. Alternative

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-020, NSC Meetings, Briefing by Joint Staff: SOIP, 2/4/69. Secret. This paper was prepared in response to NSSM 2, Document 1. A January 24 version of this paper is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-020, NSC Meetings, Middle East, 2/1/69. Saunders's comments on the paper, sent in a January 23 memorandum to the chairman of the IG, are *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 1233, Saunders Files, Basic Policy, Middle East, 1/20/69–12/31/69.

views on the following questions are addressed: (1) How important are our interests in that area? (2) How grave is the Soviet threat to these interests? (3) To what extent does the expansion of Soviet influence in the Middle East threaten NATO? (4) What is the present US position in the area? (5) How important is an early Arab-Israel settlement to the preservation of our interests? (6) What posture should the United States adopt vis-à-vis the conflicting states and groupings of states in the area?

1. *What are our interests and how important are they?*

In the Northern Tier of the Middle East region, the independence and integrity of our NATO allies, Greece and Turkey, and perhaps of Iran are generally recognized as *vital* US interests.

While there is also general agreement that the area south of the Northern Tier, comprising the Eastern Arab world and Israel, is important, the degree of its importance is debatable. At one end of the spectrum is the view that the area as a whole is *vital* on the grounds that it represents, in toto, a conglomerate of Western interests whose loss would tip the global strategic balance in favor of the Soviets. This view leans heavily on the importance of Arab oil to the Free World and the need to prevent its becoming a pawn subject to the whims of regimes under Soviet influence or control. Supporters of this view argue that the Arabs control the only geography and resources of vital importance to us in the area and would have us cast our lot firmly with the Arabs.

At the other extreme, it is argued that the foregoing view is based on outmoded strategic concepts (e.g., we no longer rely on forward air bases) and on an oversimplified picture of the Arab world as a homogeneous entity. While not denying the importance of Arab oil to the Free World, supporters of this position argue that the oil flow will not be interrupted for political reasons because the Arabs have nowhere to market their oil except Western Europe. As a corollary, it is also argued that the US commitment to Israel makes that nation's security a vital US interest—an argument frequently bolstered by the contention that a strong Israel offers the best hope for holding the line against further Soviet penetration of the Middle East.

Neither of these theses, it seems to us, correctly defines the degree and ways in which the Arab-Israel area of the Middle East is important to the United States. It is difficult to prove that this area is *vital* to our security, in the sense that our own survival would be threatened by the extinction of any state in the area. With the possible exception of Israel, which is a special case, developments in or affecting a given country at a given time do not vitally affect the United States. On the other hand, the collective or substantial loss of the area to the Free World by incorporation into the Soviet orbit would present a serious long-term threat to the American position in the world.

Although we have no treaty commitment to the preservation of Israel's security, there is a long-standing national consensus that we have a basic interest in Israel's survival. That fact, and Arab opposition to Israel's existence, complicate the analysis. Leaving aside subsidiary though significant considerations related to investment, trade and communications, we are perforce deeply involved in the Middle East for two fundamental purposes: (1) because we wish to assure the survival of Israel, and (2) because, in terms of our global strategic interests, we do not wish the land mass, population and resources of the eastern Arab world to fall under Soviet domination. We seek the achievement of both purposes. But, given the underlying forces of conflict in the area, pursuit of either purpose tends to militate against achievement of the other. While neither purpose is "vital" in the strict sense that failure to achieve it would *require* us to go to war to safeguard our national security, both are of sufficient importance that we cannot disengage from the area without sustaining a serious blow to our Great Power position.

Under any definition of our interests in the Arab-Israel situation, the avoidance of military confrontation between the Soviets and ourselves is the Number One priority. Next in order of priority are the prevention of the introduction by a Middle East power of strategic missiles or nuclear weapons into the area, the avoidance of a situation in which the use of US military forces in the Arab-Israel conflict would be necessary and the avoidance of another war itself between Israel and the Arabs. Beyond that, we see a continuing American interest in Israel's ability to defend itself against any combination of Arab states and in Western access to Arab oil as well as to transit and communications through the area.

2. *How grave is the Soviet threat?* The Soviet Union continues its efforts to reduce Western, and particularly American, positions and influence in the Middle East, and to expand its own. It has established strong—but not "dominant"—positions in the UAR, Syria, and Iraq. It has replaced the bulk of the military equipment lost in the war by these states.² It has increased the number of its military advisors substantially. It has sought to exploit opportunities to expand Soviet influence in the Yemen and the new state of South Yemen. The Soviets have bartered military equipment to Iran and have offered military assistance to Jordan and Lebanon. The Soviet Navy has been strengthened in the Mediterranean, and Soviet ships have made port calls in the Indian Ocean–Persian Gulf area. The Soviet Navy has been allowed greater use of Egyptian ports and repair facilities, and a small number

² The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War. See *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, volume XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967.

of Soviet aircraft (with Egyptian markings) have been conducting reconnaissance operations over the Sixth Fleet.

However, while the Soviets have undeniably made great gains in the Middle East in the past dozen years, it can also be said they were starting from zero and are still a long way from "dominating" the area. The Northern Tier states (Greece, Turkey, and Iran) are strongly concerned over the expansion of Soviet influence over the Arab states. Among the Arabs themselves, indigenous forces of nationalism, xenophobia and desire for full independence are major obstacles to the achievement of Soviet aims. Regional and bilateral rivalries among the Arabs militate against Soviet dominance. Language, religion, and other cultural factors also play their part.

Therefore, powerful indigenous and limiting forces make it unlikely the USSR can ever "dominate" the area, but the high-water mark of Soviet *potential* influence has not been reached.

3. *Is NATO threatened?* There are those that see Soviet successes in gaining access for their military forces in Arab states as the beginning of an outflanking of NATO and the Northern Tier, which could become critical if the Soviets are given full-fledged use of Arab territory for military purposes, including possibly emplacement of strategic missiles. It is our judgment, however, that the threat to NATO is manageable and likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. The Arabs are unlikely to grant the USSR full-fledged military bases on their territory. Even if they did, it would not basically affect the policies of Greece and Turkey, which would continue to play their roles within NATO. The expansion of Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean has mainly political rather than military significance.

4. *What is the current US position in the Middle East?* There are those who see the June 1967 war and its aftermath as having dangerously accelerated the erosion of US influence in the Middle East. The trend toward polarization has intensified, driving the radical Arab states further into the Soviet orbit and making it increasingly difficult for the Arab moderates to maintain ties with the United States. On the other hand, some see our position as difficult but not by any means untenable over the longer run. In this view, the Arabs and Soviets recognize and respect the great power they know we can bring to bear in support of our interests in the Middle East. The Arab moderates will maintain their ties with us because it is in their interest to do so. Our basic position has not really been hurt by the loss of influence in radical Arab states.

To place the foregoing conflicting views in perspective, it is necessary to understand the fundamentals on which the US position in the Middle East is based. Unlike some other areas where the US position is anchored in alliance systems sometimes coupled with a military

presence, in the Arab-Israel area the US position rests largely on how other states, both within and outside the area, assess our capacity and intentions vis-à-vis their own objectives. Viewed in this sense, the principal positive elements of the US position in the Arab-Israel area can be summarized as follows:

(a) Recognition by the countries of the Middle East that the United States is a major global power with the capability, if it chooses to use it, to bring its power to bear in the area.

(b) Desire on the part of the countries of the Middle East for the United States to provide a counterweight against Soviet domination. This consideration weighs more heavily in the Northern Tier and the moderate Arab states than among the radical Arabs but is a factor with the latter as well.

(c) Recognition on the part of the Arabs and the USSR that only the United States has the potential to influence and restrain Israel, which is today the strongest military power in the Arab-Israel complex and which the Arabs see as a threat to themselves.

(d) Recognition by Israel that US support is fundamental to its national existence over the long run.

(e) Arab recognition that the US presence—financial, managerial, and technical—in Arab oil development, production, and marketing, while important to the United States, is also important to the Arabs at the present juncture.

(f) The pro-United States orientation of many members of the Arab elite based on deep-rooted historical, religious, and educational associations.

Viewed in light of these factors, the US position is neither as bad as the Cassandras claim nor as unshakeable as their detractors insist. Our position is still significant, but it is probably vulnerable to the erosion of time. At the present juncture, the key elements of strength in our position are (a) the Arab and Soviet recognition that we alone could exercise some effective influence over Israel, and (b) the Israeli awareness of how important our support is for Israel's survival. However, if the Arabs lose hope that we will use our influence, *or* if the Israelis conclude that we will not use it no matter what they do, these elements of strength will become rapidly wasting assets and our potential for playing a decisive role in the area will be seriously diminished.

Furthermore, despite the various positive elements in our position as sketched out above, it is only too clear that there are limits on how far we can influence any state in the area on any given issue. For example, the Israelis evince a fierce independence of any outside influence on issues which they consider basic to their survival as a state. And it is still most uncertain whether we (or the USSR) can bring sufficient influence on the Arabs, and particularly the radical Arabs, to accept what we would consider as a reasonable settlement.

5. *How important is an early Arab-Israel settlement to our position in the Middle East?* Israel wants "true peace," but the Arabs are not ready

for it. The relevant question is whether any Arab state or Israel is prepared in the near future to make the compromises and concessions necessary to the conclusion of a political settlement that would at least defuse the situation and offer a reasonable basis for stability.

The Government of Israel is the leading advocate of the view that the Arabs are not ready to move for a true peace. The Israelis contend, furthermore, that neither Israel nor the United States need be in a rush to settle for something less that would not remove the roots of Arab hostility. The problem with the latter view, in our judgment, is that it ignores certain dynamics in the Middle East that contain risks for the United States if a settlement is not soon achieved. These include the possibility of a collapse of the regime in Jordan if it cannot recover the West Bank, with potentially dangerous repercussions elsewhere in the area; the growing strength of the fedayeen which could limit the freedom of action of the UAR and Jordan to move toward a settlement; and the opportunity for the USSR to expand its influence with the Arabs under conditions of continuing Arab-Israeli hostility.

6. *What posture should the United States adopt in the Middle East?* It is generally agreed that the US position in the Middle East (and particularly in the Arab world) has deteriorated and is in some jeopardy; also, that the best chance of improving our position would lie in an early Arab-Israeli settlement. It is also agreed that we should continue our close alignment with Greece, Turkey, and Iran.

The basic alternative answers to the question of what posture we should adopt, then, hinge on differing assumptions concerning certain key issues involving the Arab states and Israel: the possibility of achieving a reasonably general settlement in the near future; and the importance of US relations with the Arab states broadly, and particularly with the radical Arab states.

All are agreed that it will be very difficult, and perhaps not possible, to achieve a reasonable *general peace settlement between the Arabs and Israel* in the near future. Argument centers on whether there is enough hope to make it worthwhile to pursue the effort, or whether we should conclude that a general settlement is not now in the cards and concentrate instead on a settlement between Israel and Jordan.

(a) One view is that there continues to be some reasonable hope for a settlement that would encompass both the UAR and Jordan and thus resolve major elements of the Arab-Israel problem. Given the importance of such a settlement, we should emphatically not give up on the effort at this time. This view also holds that a narrower settlement between Israel and Jordan is not feasible because Jordan does not have the strength to break with its radical Arab neighbors on this issue, and that an effort by Hussein to reach a bilateral agreement with Israel would mean the end of his regime.

(b) A second view is that the UAR and Israel will not be able to come to a political settlement, and that our efforts should now be directed toward achieving a separate Israel-Jordan settlement. This view holds that an Israel-Jordan settlement could be the first step to a broader agreement. It also contends that we can be more influential with Israel if we confine our efforts in this regard to the more limited bilateral settlement. The risks to Hussein are recognized, but the gamble is advocated because the present trends, if continued, probably mean he will be eliminated in any case, and also because our arming of both Israel and Jordan becomes harder to explain and defend.

As for *relations with the Arabs*, there is considerable sentiment that we cannot protect and promote our enduring interests unless we base ourselves broadly in the area. This view accepts the particular importance of keeping good ties with the moderate Arab regimes (such as Jordan) but holds that we cannot count on the survival of those regimes under conditions of acute tension between the Arabs and Israel; these conditions impel the moderate states (including those in North Africa) to become increasingly radical and increase the opportunities for the expansion of Soviet influence. It is therefore essential, in this view, to benefit from opportunities to improve our relations with the radical Arab states.

A second view notes that the potential growth of Soviet influence in the Arab world is limited primarily by the internal forces in the Arab states, and holds furthermore that unless we are willing to compete at high cost with the USSR in the radical states, our influence in these states can only be marginal under presently foreseeable circumstances. It holds that to maintain broad ties with the radical Arab states would adversely affect our relations with other states, especially the moderate Arab states and Iran; that especially in the absence of a settlement, such broad ties would not mitigate the adverse effects on moderate regimes of fedayeen activities; that it is in the Northern Tier, Israel, and the moderate Arabs that our primary interests lie; and therefore we should remain aloof from greater involvement with the radical Arabs.

In summary, the issues faced by the United States are highlighted by *two differing viewpoints*:

(1) A broad Arab-Israeli settlement is very important and there is enough possibility of achieving it to make its continued pursuit worthwhile. It is important that we seek to establish a broader base for our relations and possible influence with the Arabs, but not at Israel's expense. We should continue to press Israel to agree to withdrawal from major territories it occupied in June 1967, in return for a peace settlement. We must simultaneously exert all the influence we have to prevent Israel from going the route of nuclear weapons and strategic missiles.

(2) A broad settlement, although desirable, is not possible in the near future; without writing off publicly or completely our hope for a more general settlement, we should concentrate on bringing about a

bilateral settlement between Israel and Jordan; we have little to gain in expanding our relationship with the radical Arabs, and should not compete with the Soviets; it would be improper and perhaps impossible to force Israel to give up the militarily important Sinai to a hostile Egypt; our highest and most immediate priority with Israel is to prevent the introduction of strategic missiles and nuclear weapons.

The posture summarized in the first viewpoint is considered preferable by the Interdepartmental Group with the exception of the Defense (ISA) representative. The Defense (ISA) preference is represented by the second viewpoint above.

Both courses would call for a greater involvement by the United States than at present in the affairs of the area. Both assume that the United States retains elements of strength in the Middle East; we need not be panicked into precipitate actions or abandonment of sound positions out of fear that the Soviets are about to take over. On the other hand, there are no grounds for complacency. Our approach should be one of deliberate speed, to take advantage of opportunities attendant on the advent of a new US Administration. Under either viewpoint, it is only realistic to recognize that the realities of the situation in the area and of the limits on external influence are such that the odds for any political settlement between the Arabs and Israel cannot be rated high. As we seek progress along this line, we should also be examining how we can best protect our position in the area in the continued absence of a settlement.

3. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, February 1, 1969.

NSC MEETING ON MIDDLE EAST

PARTICIPANTS

The President
The Vice President
The Secretary of State, William P. Rogers
The Secretary of Defense, Melvin R. Laird
The Secretary of the Treasury, David M. Kennedy

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-109, NSC Meeting Minutes, NSC Minutes Originals 1969. Top Secret. Drafted by Saunders on May 1. According to an undated draft of the minutes, the meeting was held from 9:35 to 11:55 a.m. (Ibid., Box H-120, NSC Draft Minutes, NSC Meeting—February 1, 1969) All brackets are in the original.

The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle G. Wheeler
The Director of Central Intelligence, Richard M. Helms
Under Secretary of State, Eliot L. Richardson
State Department Counselor, Richard F. Pederson
US Ambassador to the UN, Charles Yost
Assistant Secretary of State, Joseph J. Sisco
Former Assistant Secretary of State, Parker T. Hart
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Rodger P. Davies
Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness, General George A. Lincoln
Colonel Alexander Haig
Harold H. Saunders
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Briefings

Helms: *History* of Arab-Jewish relations and the course of Arab nationalism (disunity).

Fedayeen movement (Fatah, PLO, PFLP): adamantly opposed to any solution other than the destruction of Israel. Their influence makes it questionable whether any Arab government could reach settlement with Israel. Current significance is that terrorism brings on Israeli reprisals, which raise likelihood of broader conflict.

Military balance: Israelis will almost certainly retain military superiority for next year or so. Superiority qualitative—depends partly on pre-emptive strategy. Jericho missiles—10 or so could be deployed 1970–1. Arabs' 1967 losses just about made up—assume USSR believes equipment sent is about all Arabs can now absorb.

Soviet interests: USSR has leapfrogged Northern Tier. Soviet naval expansion—steadier, more effective than Khrushchev's² rather opportunistic move to put missiles in Cuba.

Question:

President: You talk about USSR's "measured, effective plan." Does this emanate from military strategy or something that just happens? Do they have a meeting like ours here today, decide on policy and then execute it? Or do they just muddle along.

Policy result of high-level decision—considered policy—or just happen?

Helms: Highest level decision. Considered policy.

Briefing (continued)

Helms: *Soviet peace plan*. Acknowledge that peace is a package plan. Arabs want imposed peace. These Arab objections main reason for Israeli rejection of plan.

² Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, Chairman of the Communist Party, 1953–1964, and Premier of the Soviet Union, 1958–1964.

Arab attitudes toward U.S.: Growing hostility—see us as backing Israel—Arab “gift for twisted analysis”—Arabs see even those things we do for them as somehow directed against them.

US image good in Israel. But Israel has its own brand of reservation about our inability to see the Arabs through Israeli eyes, tendency to rely only on themselves.

JCS briefing:

1. Significance of Soviet fleet.

—Sharp increase in 1967 and 1968 [President assured himself that trend was always low before 1963 and that present trend is new.]

—Primary concern: missile and torpedo threat.

—60 technicians at Mers-el-Kebir in Algeria.

—A “challenge” to US operations. Could affect future US decisions to commit forces in the area.

2. Strategic implications for US of renewed conflict.

—Arab-Israeli balance.

[President: Looking at chart showing 2 bombers in Israeli air force asked how Israel was able to take out Arab airfields with just 2 bombers. General Wheeler answered: “fighter-bombers.” President nodded quickly.]

Vice President: How do present air inventories compare with those of June, 1967.

Wheeler: Qualitative differences here and there but generally comparable.

Lincoln: How do Soviet advisors operate in Units.

Wheeler: Strictly advisory. Arabs xenophobic and not likely to submit to Soviet command.

Briefing (continued)

JCS: Imbalance in supersonic aircraft could be dangerous to Israel by June 1969

Strategic implications

—US intervention capability. US contingency plan designed to drive a wedge between opposing forces.

Questions

President: I understand your contingency plan is based on intelligence estimate that local conflict main possibility.

I agree that US–USSR conflict remote, but what if one of Arab countries where Soviet fleet present is attacked?

Wheeler: Contingency plan if US–USSR

President: What if a more limited Soviet involvement?

Kissinger: What if Israeli raid on Aswan dam or Israeli city shelled by Soviet fleet?

President: Could you give some thought to that?

Wheeler: Possibilities we are examining:

- US attack on Soviet bases in Siberia.
- Sink one Soviet ship in Mediterranean.
- Seize Soviet intelligence trawler.

President: Could you consider what we could do indirectly through the Israelis.

Seems to me Soviet naval presence is primarily political. Therefore, we must be prepared for a less-than-military contingency.

Wheeler: Primarily political. But Soviet presence in ports puts a Soviet umbrella over those ports. In a tenuous sense, fleet therefore does have military use.

Briefing continued

Described plan for introduction of US ground forces—initial force, follow-on and on-call forces. Plan could be fulfilled but would degrade strategic reserve.

Final arrival of on-call forces 39 days; 18 days for follow-on; 2–17 days initial. Airlift.

Questions

President: Are we capable of repeating Lebanon-type operation?

Wheeler: I believe so. Would modify this plan.

President: Any military exercises politically useful?

Wheeler: Continuous US bilateral and NATO exercise. NATO has just put together surveillance unit to keep track of subs.

President: Are Sovs, Israelis, Arabs aware of these things?

Wheeler: Yes. This is one purpose of exercises.

Laird: Sixth Fleet not as “ready” as it should be in manning levels. Have to look at this as situation heats up.

President: How is Malta being used?

Wheeler: NATO has returned small air surveillance unit to Malta. Tenuous relationship of Malta to NATO via Secretary General, mainly to keep Soviets out.

President: Is Sixth Fleet NATO-related?

Wheeler: US controlled in peace; in war under NATO.

President: In a Lebanon-type situation, who controls Sixth Fleet?

Wheeler: “You do sir.”

President: Isn't there significant British and French presence?

Wheeler: Significant French and Italian presence. French navy in Mediterranean. Navy most cooperative since French withdrawal till de Gaulle³ blew whistle.

President: Could Italians and French block or compete with Soviet past presence?

Wheeler: Mers-el-Kebir main instance. Little opportunity for us to exercise influence.

French still have residual influence which, depending on de Gaulle, could be helpful. But unlikely France could swing Algerians away from Soviet backing.

President: What has happened to French political influence?

Lincoln: What if USSR says its fleet will screen UAR coast?

Wheeler: Have to go ashore in Israel.

President: Could we phase deployment?

Wheeler: Yes—move into Europe, for instance.

Vice President: Could we involve NATO instead of us?

Wheeler: We couldn't involve NATO. Only last few months that NATO concerned about Soviet presence.

President: NATO pathological on point of involvement. For instance, may even be problem if Berlin, one of their own cities, threatened.

Vice President: Is that true about political moves?

Wheeler: Not as true.

Kissinger: To what extent could Soviet fleet be used as a hostage in Berlin crisis.

Wheeler: Yes.

President: I'm just thinking about symbolic acts.

Lincoln: If Israeli port attacked, might be unclear who did it.

Wheeler: We have pretty fair surveillance activity. We could identify—though not necessarily prove. This political problem.

Briefing continued

JCS: Main military problem (Soviets would have same problems):

1. —Deployment routes and staging areas. Need Azores or equivalent.

—Transportation resources: would require "major revision of our worldwide program."

2. Would USSR intervene? Paratroops. Two routes—Western over Yugoslavia.

³ General Charles de Gaulle, President of France, 1958–1969.

Questions

President: If Sovs flew troops into Cairo or Damascus, what could we do?

Wheeler: Fly into Crete, Italy, Athens. Turkey not possible. Incirlik not usable in 1967. Malta airfield not good enough. Greeks cooperative in 1967.

Briefing continued

JCS: Syria offers best landing place—eastern overflight route over Iran.

41,000 troops into Damascus in 2 days, without supporting equipment.

By sealift using maritime fleet, could move 6–10 divisions from Baltic (transit 13 days), 3–10 divisions from northern division (15 days), Black Sea 6–10 divisions (3 days). They have exercised in small way in Black Sea.

Impact of local conflict on US commitments. Cause problems in NATO somewhat like Czechoslovakia.

Question

Lincoln: Are Soviets stockpiling?

Wheeler: Not in UAR but in Algeria there is equipment the Algerians can't possibly use.

President: In State briefing, could you include country-by-country relations with us.

Briefing continued

Hart: In *Turkey*, attitude not pro-Arab but rather pro-Israeli but Turkey focuses on Cyprus and that requires Arab votes. Tend favor moderate Arab states. Want good relationship with Iraq, because of Kurds. Trying to bind Iraq quietly to Turkey (gas line). Relations with US basically good, though strains.

President: Is this one area for patting on back—a little preventive medicine? In terms of planning of visits, Turks and others, let's have meeting soon.

Hart: Yes, sir. We have strategic and intelligence installation. Conditions of use—Turkish permission.

Morocco—Algerian tension. Never broke with us, generally friendly relations. Get as much as it can from us. Some influence on other Arab states.

Libya—Considerable US influence. Fears Nasser. US–UK bulwark against radicals.

President: Get in best team we can in terms of ambassadorial appointments. "Get heavy weights in there."

Algeria—If we renewed relations with.

President: What influence does Tito have?⁴ Could he be helpful?

Hart: Mainly in UAR.

Sisco: Shift in his view since Czechoslovakia.

President: I would be open to meeting with Tito if you recommend it.

Briefing continued

Hart: In principle, it would help with radical states—even Iraq—marginally.

Sudan—broke relations but represented there. Would be one of first to resume.

Lebanon—delicate democracy. Genesis based on fear of Muslim majority around it.

Syria—unstable. Will be last to resume relations with us.

Iraq—basic instability. Will not be quick to resume relations unless regime changes.

Arab-Israeli—The main interests involved—Arab fear of Israeli expansion and Israel wants formalized peace. Johnston and Johnson missions.⁵

In 1948, no Arab *state* lost any territory; it was Palestinians who lost their homes.

Fedayeen riding ground swell of popularity.

In a way, Jordan and UAR have—by accepting UN resolution⁶—accepted existence of Israel.

Jordan most committed to peace settlement but Hussein caught between radicals and need to get land back.

If we resume relations with Arabs, that will strengthen moderates.

⁴ Josef Broz Tito, President of Yugoslavia, 1953–1980.

⁵ The Johnston Mission, led by President Eisenhower's Special Representative Eric Johnston, was organized in October 1953 to secure an agreement among Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Israel to develop the Jordan River basin. By 1955, the mission had ended. The Johnson Mission, led by Joseph Johnson, President Kennedy's Special Representative to the Palestine Conciliation Commission, was established in 1962 to help resolve the Palestinian refugee problem. Johnson resigned January 31, 1963.

⁶ A reference to UN Security Council Resolution 242. Following the Arab-Israeli War in June 1967, this resolution was passed on November 22, calling for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict" and for the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force." (*Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1967, pp. 257–258)

Questions

President: If we have a Lebanon-type situation in Jordan, what capability would we have—if, for instance, we faced a fedayeen takeover in Jordan?

Wheeler: “Could probably—of course would have problems.”
Problem: Israelis not basically interested in survival of Hussein.

Hart: “I’m not sure they’ve made up their minds finally on this.”
If Jordan became a radical state, easier for Israel to move.

President: “That kind of thinking is a death wish. They must not be given any encouragement.”

The political problem in the US—“we just can’t tote that.” Extremely difficult for us to move in to save Israel.

Laird: What’s the possibility of Israel-Jordan settlement?

Hart: Hard without UAR. Have to be simultaneous movement.

Rogers: We don’t think Hussein could survive separate settlement.

Laird: Hope Israel doesn’t misinterpret mood in US.

Rogers: On basis my talk with Rabin, “I don’t think they misinterpret.”

President: Dayan⁷ says we should have good relations with Arabs.

Lincoln: We should make clear to Israel and its friends importance of Hussein.

President: Harder to explain to Israel’s friends in US.

Rabin–Dayan have fatalistic attitude—it will blow and they’ll take care of it.

Wheeler: Rabin explained deep Israeli feelings against Hussein—in 6-day war Jordanians inflicted much heavier casualties.

Briefing continued

Hart: Israel suspicious of UAR intentions.

Politics in Israel will reduce Israeli flexibility between now and November.

Siege atmosphere in Israel. Don’t trade territory for political agreements.

Status quo of today works against peace and even Israel’s long-term security.

Settlement will require pressure on Israel—for arrangements that will include well-policed demilitarization.

President: Guaranteed by whom?

⁷ Moshe Dayan, Israeli Minister of Defense, 1967–1974.

Hart: UN sanctified.

Lincoln: Who pays for UN forces?

Hart: Senator Javits⁸ interest in refugee settlement.

Briefing continued

Hart: Have to be clear where Israel and US coincide: We don't want Israel destroyed but don't have stake in boundaries. Want lasting settlement. Above all, want to avoid war with USSR.

In deciding how much pressure we apply on Israel, have to decide how UAR can be brought along.

Important to develop maximum public understanding in US.

Sisco: Elements in our policy as it evolved after June War:

—Commitment to territorial integrity.

—Nasser's May 1967 blockade, he was overturning post-Suez US arrangements.

—We wanted to try this time to achieve lasting peace.

—These combined in 5 principles of June 19, 1967. "Parties to conflict, parties to peace." These incorporated in November 22 resolutions.

The equation: withdrawal in return for end of belligerency.

While resolution adopted unanimously, there were not unanimous interpretations. We really passed these differences on to Jarring.⁹ Reflected in semantic argument "accepting and implementing" the resolution.

Rogers: Rabin says Arabs are trying to "force us into settlement short of peace."

Sisco: July 1968, we got Israel to soften stand on (1) direct negotiations as a precondition to exchanging substance, (2) peace treaty. Parties have been exchanging views through Jarring. But Israel wants binding commitment on peace.

President: Israel insists on bilateral agreements. What is Israeli view toward outside participation?

Sisco: Israel wants to be left alone to deal with Hussein—and the UAR.

Israel-Jordan exchanges. Allow plan as non-starter with Hussein.

Israel nervous about big-power intervention. Last Soviet note—"a five-legged horse that could move in any direction."

We don't honestly know what USSR intends.

⁸ Senator Jacob Javits (R-NY).

⁹ See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972, for documentation on U.S.-Soviet negotiations and the efforts of Gunnar Jarring, a Swedish diplomat, who served as the UN representative in the Middle East appointed to negotiate the details necessary for the implementation of UN Resolution 242.

Shall we await Soviet reply or develop a plan of our own to discuss.

Whatever we put in, we have to be sure we can produce Israel.

Israel's Cabinet divided—explains inability to decide on territorial objectives. Arabs made it easy for Israelis to avoid decision. Election will make flexibility difficult.

President: Javits or somebody mentioned USSR made propaganda hay. What's the answer?

Sisco: Soviets have had a propaganda ride. We didn't refute publicly because we wanted to work out our response without appearing to throw cold water.

Lincoln: Could Israel and Jordan consider Allon Plan¹⁰ with UN force?

Sisco: May be feasible.

President: Israel says it wants peace via bilateral agreements. Yet in intelligence we hear extremists so strong that Arab governments can't control them. Do sophisticated Israelis discount outside guarantees?

Rogers: Fedayeen raids not significant now. Could be handled if contractual peace.

Israelis afraid we'll be stampeded by tension. Say Russians are heating up atmosphere to panic us. Russians won't use nuclear weapons. Arabs won't start war. Sovs won't intervene; they don't have air cover over this fleet. Rabin says: "Don't make decisions because you think you're on the brink of war. We're not going to take more territory. Permanent peace will be anti-Soviet."

President: When you come down to it, a peace that he (Rabin) negotiates with any of these wobbly governments, isn't a peace either with revolutionary movements there.

"I can see the symbolism there; they want recognition." But unless they have some outside recognition.

Rogers: Israelis know they need guarantees.

Sisco: Four-power proposal has to be handled delicately. As proposed, it gives preference to Soviet plan and downplays Jarring. We see Jarring and UN as central. Sovs and French disagree. UK wavers but waiting to see what we'll do.

Response will be one of your Administration's first moves. Jarring wants step by parties or anything four powers can. We're boxed in.

¹⁰ Following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Allon proposed that Israel relinquish political control of the West Bank to Jordan in exchange for military control of a strip of land along the eastern side of the Jordan River as a means of securing the border between them.

Propose: informal, individual consultations but they will quickly become more formal. Might nudge Israelis, who are thinking of putting forward ideas through secret channel toward Jordan.

President: What's timing?

Rogers: I have a draft reply for you to consider quickly.

Kissinger: Review Group has not seen proposal. Maybe 2-power approach better. This just one sub-choice in one of three options.

President: I want to tie this into announcement of NPT. Get points with de Gaulle.

UN thinks this a good move?

Yost: Yes, Arabs prefer.

Rogers: Pressure on both sides.

President: Could Jarring make a significant contribution?

Yost: Not going get to first base by himself.

Yost: Hard keep Jarring and four-powers going same time—but possible.

President: Four-powers with Jarring?

Yost: Jarring wants to stay independent.

President: Don't like idea of saying "me too." Propose variant method of implementation.

Kissinger: Choice may be between 2-power and 4-power not 4-power and nothing. May be Soviet talks be more fruitful.

President: Does 4-power rule out 2-power?

Rogers: No. Make it clear 4-power in framework of Jarring.

Yost: Maintain two-power element in four-power.

President: The real powers are the US and USSR.

Rogers: How do we say that.

President: Different—what we say and what we do.

Sisco: USSR has made clear US-USSR dialogue the prime one despite its acceptance of French proposal. Could have four sets of talks going on at same time. Four-powers could do some marginal work.

President: "Trying to be devil's advocate," another element that appeals: reassure our NATO allies. You feel we should go on all four lines?

Sisco: Yes.

Laird: Must move soon. High expectancy of a US move because press aware that NSC discussing the issue.

President: We'll make a move.

Lincoln: What about Israelis?

President: Leave that to Secretary of State! (Laughter)

Yost: Israelis underestimate Fedayeen movement.

Kissinger: Have to distinguish between Israeli statements and what their situation is.

Israelis say they won't settle for less than a real peace, but they must know that isn't possible. They must really be saying that they find it hard to see how legal arrangement could increase their security. They must know that most wars start between countries who recognize each other and are at peace. The only peace arrangements that work are settlements that (1) increase will of the parties to peace, or (2) decrease ability to make war.

We haven't systematically discussed options. Must know what we want if we're going to try to get.

President: Our ability to deliver Israelis gets down to what we will do.

Richardson: Not only what we'll do but what we can do in de-escalating.

President: What will we do vis-à-vis the Russians? That's the heart.

Yost: Italians go along with Four-Power if in UN framework.

Lincoln: Have we gone into guarantees?

Rogers: That's down the road.

President: Have to get to that.

Kissinger: Why can't we go till Wednesday to review systematically?

President: Move Council up to Tuesday at 10:00 A.M.¹¹

What we have in mind:

—Respond affirmatively.

Kissinger: Distribute draft reply to French note before Tuesday and meeting.¹²

¹¹ February 4.

¹² Telegram 19022 to Amman, February 6, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

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

Washington, February 10, 1969.

SUBJECT

Long-range Programs for Mid-East Water Development

Knowing your interest in weaving water development into our Mid-East strategy, I suggest that we schedule an NSC paper to help you come to grips with this complex issue.

I do not wish to bother you with the intricacies of this subject now, but you should know of work in progress along two tracks:

1. *Large-scale desalting.* In response to the Senate's December 1967 passage of the "Baker Resolution" supporting the Eisenhower–Strauss plan, the Johnson Administration ordered the Oak Ridge National Laboratory to study the applicability of large-scale desalting to the Middle East. The Eisenhower–Strauss plan grew out of an earlier Oak Ridge study describing how large desalting-agricultural-industrial complexes might work in theory.² Oak Ridge was then asked how that theoretical model might actually work in the Middle East and what costs might be. That study should be done later this year. Technicians have visited the area (including the UAR) to gather data.

2. *Israeli desalter.* President Johnson early in January sent legislation to Congress proposing authorization of US participation up to \$40 million in the construction of a middle-sized development desalter in Israel. This was the result of four years of joint US-Israeli study. George Woods personally framed the final proposal, and Prime

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30. Secret; Exdis. Printed from an uninitialed copy.

² The Baker Resolution (S Res 155), introduced by Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. (R-TN) and sponsored by 52 Senators, passed unanimously in December 1967. It called upon the President to pursue the "prompt design, construction and operation of nuclear desalting plants" to provide fresh water for Arab and Israeli territories. (*Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, vol. XXIII, 1967, p. 962) Former President Eisenhower and former Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Lewis Strauss proposed in 1967 that an international corporation be established to construct three nuclear-fueled desalting plants in the Middle East. They would be operated by the AEC and would provide ample water supplies for the arid regions through international cooperation, thus easing political tensions. (*Ibid.*) The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held hearings October 19–20, 1967, which resulted in Senate Resolution 155. Documentation on the Johnson administration's policies on Water for Peace is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, volume XXXIV, Energy Diplomacy and Global Issues, Documents 130–174.

Minister Eshkol said it was acceptable to Israel.³ We can probably delay active consideration of this legislation for a couple of months until you have a chance to review the whole water picture and relate it to your political strategy.

It is only fair to state that these are both controversial issues. On the technological-economic side, the state of the desalting art is still in the research and development stage and is yet short of being a strictly commercial proposition. Experts are divided on the best use of our money at this stage, since it is possible to argue that more water per dollar can be bought today by other methods. On the political side, some experts feel that water development could provide a political vehicle for bringing Arabs and Israelis together while others are highly skeptical that it could by itself ever overcome intense Arab-Israeli hostility, though they acknowledge that it might help reinforce political arrangements once made. But these are the issues we would try to clarify for you.

I would, of course, work hand-in-hand with Lee DuBridges on this. He is aware of this memo.

Recommendation: That we issue the attached NSSM to start a systematic review of this whole issue.⁴

³ In a January 17, 1969, letter to Eshkol, President Johnson stated that, as one of his last official acts, he had recommended to Congress a maximum of \$40 million for U.S. participation in the construction of a desalting plant in Israel that would produce 40 million gallons of desalted water per day. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30) Eshkol replied that same day that this decision, along with that of sending Phantoms to Israel, was crucial for the prevention of war and the advancement of Israel's economic progress. (Ibid.)

⁴ Draft attached; the signed NSSM is printed as Document 5.

5. National Security Study Memorandum 30¹

Washington, March 19, 1969.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Secretary of the Interior
The Secretary of Agriculture
The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Administrator, Agency for International Development

SUBJECT

Water Development and Middle East Policy

The President has requested a paper covering the economic and technological aspects of the following:

- the pros and cons in current thinking about the applicability of large-scale desalting in the Middle East;
- the pros and cons of proceeding with a 40-million-gallon-per-day desalting plant in Israel;
- the alternative approaches to water development in the Middle East.

This paper should identify ways in which the U.S. private sector is involved in programs now dealing with these matters.

In addition to the above report on the economic and technological aspects, a paper should present alternative strategies for relating the technological track to our political strategy in the area.

The President has directed that the study be prepared by the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Near East and that the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Administrator of AID each designate a representative to sit on the Group for this purpose.

These papers should be forwarded to the NSC Review Group by May 23.

Henry A. Kissinger

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30. Secret; Exdis. Copies were sent to Mayo and DuBridge.

6. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 27, 1969.

PARTICIPANTS

Iran:

General Bahram Ariana, Chief of the
Supreme Commanders Staff,
Imperial Iranian Armed Forces
Colonel Vali Allah Dana, Military,
Naval and Air Attaché

Turkey:

General Cemal Tural, Chief of the
Turkish General Staff

UK:

Marshal of the Royal Air Force
Sir Charles Elworthy, Chief of
the Defense Staff
Air Marshal Sir Frederick Rosier,
Permanent Military Deputy
to CENTO

Pakistan:

Lieutenant General Akhtar Hussain
Malik, Permanent Military
Deputy to CENTO

US:

General Theodore J. Conway,
Commander-in-Chief, U.S.
Strike Command, U.S.
Representative
General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman,
Joint Chiefs of Staff
Henry A. Kissinger, Special Assistant
to the President for National
Security Affairs
Harold H. Saunders, Senior Staff
Member, National Security
Council

USPMD:

Lieutenant General Stanley J. Donovan,
Permanent Military Deputy to
CENTO

The President greeted the group in the Cabinet Room where the Generals were lined up by the French doors in order of rank. After being introduced by General Wheeler and shaking hands with each one, the President invited the group into the Oval Office where he said it would be less formal. The group ranged itself on the sofas and chairs around the burning fire with the President sitting at one end of the sofa by the fireplace.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1234, Saunders Files, CENTO 1/20/69–12/31/69. Confidential. Drafted by Saunders on April 11. According to the President's Daily Diary, the meeting lasted from 10:51 to 11:15 a.m. (Ibid., White House Central Files) On March 17, Kissinger had recommended to Nixon that he meet with CENTO officials because "Our real policy toward CENTO is to keep it going until these countries are ready for something to replace it. The patterns of co-operation built up within CENTO have blossomed modestly into broader relationships in the field of communication, politics and investigation of complementary economic projects. Everyone knows CENTO itself is not a vital organization, but everyone also recognizes that Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms, Jordan and even Israel clandestinely are groping for some new relationship in the region which would be meaningful for them in the face of British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf, increased Soviet activity and radicalization of some Arab governments." (Ibid., Box 212, Agency Files, CENTO)

After a brief session for the photographers, the President opened the conversation by saying that the international situation had changed a great deal since CENTO was formed, but that “the threat was still there.” He noted that in the year since the formation of CENTO we have become much more conscious of the relationship between economic progress and security. He felt that the military had played an important role in this progress by maintaining a framework of stability within which it could take place.

The President conceded that each nation had its political difficulties from time to time, including our own. He specifically expressed his concern over the political trouble in Pakistan and pointed out that President Ayub Khan and his military colleagues had played an important role there in bringing stability to Pakistan in the past.

General Wheeler and the other Generals agreed on the importance of this military role. The President returned to his thoughts of the Soviet threat. He noted that the atmosphere within all of the alliances had changed in recent years—even in NATO. However, he had been impressed during his recent tour of NATO capitals² of the need for a strong alliance, not only for military purposes, but also so that the members of the alliance could negotiate credibly from a position of strength. He said he accepted changes in these relationships as normal evolution, but he remained convinced of the importance of keeping the relationship strong, even in a changing context.

The President noted that he had visited each of the countries of the Generals present. In the course of the conversation, he found an occasion to mention each country by name—Iran, in connection with impressive economic progress; Pakistan, in connection with the combination of a firm military and economic progress; Turkey, in its connection as a NATO member; and Great Britain in connection with his European trip.

The President concluded by saying that he had just wished to express a few of his views but would welcome the opportunity to hear from his guests.

General Ariana of Iran, the only one of the guests to speak through an interpreter, commented very briefly that he was honored to meet the President and concurred in the President’s views that the important role of the military is to provide a stable atmosphere within which development and progress can take place.

Air Marshal Sir Charles Elworthy spoke of how deeply he and his colleagues had been impressed with the President’s NATO trip. He

² Between February 23 and March 2, Nixon traveled to Belgium, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and Vatican City.

said that he had stressed to his colleagues after the President's European trip the importance of the contribution of the European governments to the alliance. He felt that the President has spoken truly when he pointed out that the Europeans could not expect Americans to do more if Europe did less. The President agreed, saying he had pressed this point on Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau.

Harold H. Saunders³

³ Printed from a copy that bears Saunders's typed signature.

7. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya¹

Washington, April 23, 1969, 0008Z.

62432. Subject: Arab Governments Financial Support for Fedayeen.

1. Department remains very concerned about continued Arab financial support for fedayeen organizations, notably Fatah, sanctioned by Arab governments, particularly Kuwait, Libya and Saudi Arabia.² We aware of numerous arguments put forth by these governments disclaiming that they contribute directly as governments to fedayeen and of allegedly non-official devices for contributions. It is clear, however, that funds flowing to fedayeen are at least officially sanctioned through withholdings from salaries and similar "voluntary" arrangements.

2. Department and concerned posts have repeatedly cautioned Arab governments that financial support to fedayeen who have failed to observe cease-fire and have consistently opposed Security Council Resolution 242³ makes more difficult attainment of peaceful settlement

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 629, Country Files, Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Vol. I. Secret. Drafted by Robert P. Paganelli (NEA/ARN); cleared in NEA/ARN, AF/N, and NEA/ARP; and approved by Sisco. It was repeated to Algiers, Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Jerusalem, London, Rabat, Tel Aviv, Tunis, and USUN.

² In telegram 3078 from Jidda, August 10, the Embassy detailed Saudi assistance to the fedayeen. (Ibid., Vol. II) According to a December 7, 1970, CIA memorandum to Wrampelmeier, Saudi Arabian aid to the fedayeen was \$3 million in 1969–1970 and projected to be the same for 1970–1971. (Central Intelligence Agency, ORR Files, Job 80–T01315A, Box 22)

³ See footnote 6, Document 3.

of Middle East crisis, goal endorsed by Arab Summit at Khartoum.⁴ Equally important, we have made point that fedayeen pose serious threat to internal stability of moderate Arab regimes. Jordan and increasingly Lebanon are prime examples of deleterious effect of fedayeen activities on internal security. Counter argument that Fatah in particular is apolitical and not interested in interfering in internal affairs of Arab countries is becoming increasingly thin in light of recent PLO–Fatah merger.

3. We expect that efforts to achieve peaceful Middle East settlement will be entering critical phase over next few months. US–Soviet talks and Four Power discussions are proceeding and, although there have as yet been no major breakthroughs, we do see modicum of progress. We view fedayeen as clear obstacle to peace in the area. Arab argument that there is no alternative to fedayeen struggle in Arab–Israel conflict can be rebutted with argument that an acceptable peace settlement, which would of course include withdrawal which Arabs seek, is a viable alternative to which US has committed its full efforts. As evidence of US active commitment to peace, continuing US–USSR talks, Four Power discussions and Hussein visit⁵ can be cited.

4. During recent Hussein visit to US Jordanians acknowledged that a confrontation with fedayeen in Jordan is inevitable and indicated that GOJ is preparing for it. In Jordan context, we are faced with absurd situation of Kuwaitis, Saudis and Libyans giving financial support to both sides of a potential GOJ–fedayeen confrontation. It can hardly be in net interest of conservative Arabs if moderate Jordanian regime under Hussein seriously weakened and conceivably overthrown by intensifying fedayeen machinations.

6. Department is very much aware of sensitivity of Saudi, Kuwaiti and Libyan authorities when USG representatives continue remind them of counter productive aspects of their support for fedayeen—their counter arguments are familiar to us. We also recognize that addressees previous representations to host governments on this question have fallen on deaf ears. Nevertheless, as fedayeen threat to Government of Jordan and Lebanon mounts, matter assumes increasing urgency. Accordingly, Embassies Jidda, Kuwait and Tripoli are requested to take

⁴ The Khartoum Conference occurred August 29 to September 1, 1968. At the Conference, Nasser and Faisal resolved their differences over Yemen, and subsidies from the oil producing states for Egypt and Jordan were approved. The Arab heads of state also agreed to take “any necessary steps” to consolidate Arab strength against any possible aggression, and to eliminate “all foreign military bases within Arab territory.” They also decided to enforce the “principles of non-recognition and non-negotiation, and to make no peace with Israel for the sake of the rights of the Palestinian people in their homeland.” (*Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, vol. XVI, 1967–1968, pp. 22275–22276)

⁵ King Hussein met with Nixon and Rogers on April 8. (President’s Daily Diary; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files)

an early opportunity to express the Department's concern over host governments continuing support for the fedayeen in light of the circumstances outlined above, emphasizing that such effort seems increasingly to run counter to best interests of our moderate Arab friends.

Rogers

8. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Pakistan¹

Washington, April 23, 1969, 2100Z.

62792. Subject: CENTO and Military Supply Policy. Ref: Rawalpindi 3982 (Notal) and 4048.²

1. In past several weeks we here have done considerable soul searching over future of CENTO, including helpful discussions with you last month based in part on NEA's "Contingency Study on Pakistan and the Alliances,"³ copy of which had previously been pouched to you.

2. At CENTO Ministerial meeting in Tehran we envisage our principal objective as signifying our continuing deep interest in future of our relations with regional countries (and particularly Turkey and Iran). Foresee collateral objective as "holding action" on CENTO itself while we reassess its future. We would hope get clearer idea of value that regional members and UK attach to CENTO and what changes (including possibly dismantling) they might desire or be prepared to accept. (Copy of our "Objectives" paper for Tehran meeting, as

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 4 CENTO. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Stein, Sidney Sober (NEA/RA), and James W. Spain (NEA/PAF); cleared by Brown (S/S); and approved by Sisco. It was repeated to Ankara, London, and Tehran.

² In telegram 3982 from Rawalpindi, April 21, the Embassy argued that the United States should allow Pakistan to leave CENTO and carefully limit supplies to Pakistan for its own defense. (Ibid.) In telegram 4048 from Rawalpindi, April 22, the Embassy concluded that U.S. interests in Pakistan would be well served by early moves "toward graceful dissolution of CENTO structure, perhaps maintaining CENTO treaty." (Ibid.) Other Embassies had reached a similar conclusion. (Telegram 1090 from Tehran, March 28; and telegram 2023 from Ankara, March 27; *ibid.*) In telegram 1416 from Moscow, April 4, the Embassy noted that although the Soviets already discounted CENTO's military significance, they would not see its dissolution as a sign of opportunity for increased aggression given their desire for normal relations with Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. (Ibid.)

³ Not found.

approved by Secretary, being airpouched all addressees.) We do not wish our interest to be misinterpreted and wish avoid any action in interim which might prejudice Secretary's private discussions with other Council members at Tehran.⁴

3. Your views on need to reassess CENTO's future (reftels and as expressed during your recent consultation here) are not inconsistent with Dept's current thinking. We have no illusions about Pakistanis dim view of CENTO. Basic fact is that decision whether they stay in or get out is up to them. We have not lifted a finger to oppose Pakistan's withdrawal from military exercises, its decision not to be represented by a Minister at annual Council meeting and other actions to downgrade its membership in Pact. We intend no pressure on Pakistan to maintain even its minimal participation in CENTO.

4. Agree with you that any decision on modifying CENTO will have to be weighed in close consultation with our friends. Views of Turkey and Iran, as well as UK, will have to be taken into careful account.

5. Seems to us question of Pakistan's continuing membership in CENTO need not be decisive in terms military sales policy for South Asia. As you know, military sales policy now under review on its own merits in broad context our interest South Asia.⁵ We appreciate your views on it as expressed Rawalpindi 3842.⁶

Rogers

⁴ The Ministerial Meeting occurred May 26–27 in Tehran. The Objectives Paper was not found. Documentation on the Tehran meeting is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 212, Agency Files, CENTO, and *ibid.*, Box 1234, Saunders Files, CENTO, 1/20/69–12/31/69.

⁵ A reference to NSSM 26, "Military Supply Policy in South Asia," February 21; see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969–1972, Document 10.

⁶ In telegram 3842 from Rawalpindi, April 16, Ambassador Benjamin H. Oehlert, Jr., provided a lengthy analysis of the deteriorating Pakistani role in regional alliances, its difficulties with India, and its growing ties to the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. He argued that a strong Soviet presence in Pakistan would add to the pressures the United States was experiencing throughout the Middle East and Indian Ocean. He urged a liberalization of U.S. military supply policy to Pakistan as the best and perhaps only means of maintaining strong bilateral ties and Pakistani ties with the West. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, DEF 4 CENTO)

9. Minutes of a Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, September 23, 1969, 2:10–3:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Middle East Water

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State—William I. Cargo

—Rodger Davies

—Donald McHenry

Defense—G. Warren Nutter

CIA—Edward Proctor

JCS—LTG F. T. Unger

OEP—Haakon Lindjord

USIA—Frank Shakespeare

BOB—James Schlesinger

OST—Warren A. Hall

NSC Staff—Harold H. Saunders

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

—Mr. Saunders, in consultation with Mr. Cargo and others, will draft a memorandum for the President setting forth the four options:

—proceed with the 40 MGD plant;

—proceed with the 100 MGD plant;

—cooperate in building a 15–20 MGD plant (both the 20 and 40 MGD plants would require construction of a small \$5 million test module either in Israel or in the U.S. to test the new VTE technology);

—do nothing.

The paper will discuss the pros and cons of each option and will reflect the Review Group discussion.²

Mr. Kissinger opened the meeting, commenting that the paper³ on this subject had grown from a Presidential request related to the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-111, Senior Review Group, SRG Minutes Originals 1969. Secret; Exdis. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes were reviewed and approved by Kissinger. (Memorandum from Davis to Kissinger, September 25; *ibid.*) Prior to the Review Group meeting, Saunders prepared Talking Points and a Draft Issues Paper for Kissinger to send to Nixon. Saunders then recommended the Basic Paper, "Desalting in the Middle East," to Kissinger. (Memorandum from Saunders to Kissinger, September 17; *ibid.*, Box H-039, Review Group Mid-East Water 9/23/69)

² Printed as Document 12.

³ A reference to "Desalting in the Middle East," undated, referred to as the Basic Paper. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-039, Review Group Mid-East Water 9/23/69) It was a summary of two longer papers: "Proposed 40 Million Gallon Per Day Desalting Plant in Israel" and "The Potential for Large Scale Desalting in the Middle East." (*Ibid.*) Sisco, as acting Chairman of the Interdepartmental Group, sent it to Kissinger on September 9 (*ibid.*) and it was transmitted to members of the SRG from Davis under a September 12 covering memorandum. (*Ibid.*, Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30)

Eisenhower–Strauss plan of 1967. However, we now faced an immediate operational problem in the necessity to take an Administration position on legislation now being marked up in the House Foreign Affairs Committee which would authorize up to \$40 million in U.S. funds to build a 40 million gallon per day (MGD) desalting plant in Israel.⁴ As an operational problem, it might have been more appropriate for consideration by the Under Secretaries Committee rather than the Review Group, but he and Under Secretary Richardson had agreed to use the RG since they had already been convened for this meeting and because of related preparations for the U.S. visit of Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir. Mr. Cargo, who was present at the meeting, could represent the State Department's interests from the point of view of the Under Secretaries Committee.

Mr. Kissinger outlined the four options:

- (1) proceed with the 40 MGD plant now before the HFAC;
- (2) proceed with a larger (100 MGD) desalting plant studied in 1965–68;
- (3) offer to cooperate in building a 15–20 MGD desalting prototype plant in Israel using new technology (both the 40 MGD and 20 MGD plants would require first testing a small module using new technology at a cost of approximately \$5 million);
- (4) do nothing.

He asked if it were agreed that we could eliminate the fourth alternative and discuss which of the three plans we should consider.

Mr. Nutter and General Unger demurred at eliminating the fourth alternative.

Mr. Schlesinger commented that the economics of the situation would not justify any of the plans and the research and development gains would be the only asset.

Mr. Cargo commented that State preferred the third alternative, although the foreign policy advantages are minimal since Israel puts a low priority on the desalting plant in relation to other projects. He and Mr. Davies thought any negative domestic reaction could be contained in view of this lower priority.

Mr. Kissinger asked if the 15–20 MGD option did not exist at the time the 40 MGD plant was chosen. He was told that was the case.

Mr. Schlesinger said the 40 MGD option is scaled down from the 100 MGD, Mr. Hall noted that the 15–20 MGD plant would use new technology, and Mr. Davies added that the 15–20 MGD plant would start with the small test module.

⁴ The issue was raised in a memorandum from Hannah to Kissinger, September 18. (Ibid.)

Mr. Kissinger asked why we could not get money for the 40 MGD plant when we could get it for the 15–20 MGD plant.

Messrs. Hall and Schlesinger pointed out that in fact we had no money for either project.

Mr. Saunders noted that the 40 MGD plant would be built from older technology and that the 15–20 MGD plant, which would begin with the test module, would be built around new technology with some R&D advantages.

Mr. Kissinger asked if Congress would be more willing to fund for R&D and why.

Mr. Schlesinger thought they would, since R&D had more pizzazz.

Mr. Kissinger asked which plant would be more useful.

Mr. Cargo thought that there would be a quicker R&D return from the smaller plant.

Mr. Saunders noted that we were dealing with semi-proved technology in the larger plant versus new technology in the smaller (15–20 MGD) plant.

Mr. Hall commented that the new technology was probably better technology.

Mr. Kissinger asked if that is what the Israelis want.

Mr. Saunders replied that Eshkol had agreed to the 40 MGD proposal.

Mr. Schlesinger said if it was a gift, Israel would take it. He noted two forces at work which had produced the 40 MGD plan: the Water for Peace program under President Johnson and the Eisenhower–Strauss plan, which President Nixon had supported during his campaign.

Mr. Kissinger asked what the urgency is.

Mr. Saunders replied that Israel faces a serious water problem and they are interested in desalting per se.

Mr. Shakespeare noted that the two items stressed in the exchange of letters between Johnson and Eshkol in January 1969 were desalting and provision of Phantom aircraft.⁵

Mr. Nutter and General Unger said Defense would prefer to defer any construction of any desalting facility for Israel until the Oak Ridge and the joint AID/Interior studies are completed, expected in late 1969.

Mr. Saunders noted that these studies will not contribute to an Israeli desalting activity. They are designed to consider how, if peace

⁵ See footnote 3, Document 4.

came to the Middle East, one could design a water system for the area which could contribute to area development. The only relationship between that and an Israeli facility would be if it were possible to make a large Israeli plant a stepping stone toward a broader area system.

Mr. Kissinger asked how much of a commitment exists.

Mr. Davies referred to the Johnson–Eshkol letters, in which President Johnson explicitly stated that he could not commit a successor Administration, and to the legislation submitted to the Congress embodying the 40 MGD proposal, and the proposed Rosenthal amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act which would authorize a \$40 million contribution for building the 40 MGD plant.

Mr. Saunders noted that there had been oral exchanges between the U.S. and Israel prior to the exchange of letters.

Mr. Davies commented that we could explain any delay in the project on the basis of other Israeli priorities.

Mr. Kissinger asked if there was a consensus that *if* we agree to go ahead we should emphasize the smaller plant, and that any decision should consider three elements: improvement of technology; foreign policy reasons; and the nature of our commitment.

Mr. Saunders noted that technological development will proceed separately from the Middle East question.

Mr. Schlesinger suggested another alternative: that the Interior Department be given \$5 million to build the test module in the U.S. He thought Interior would prefer this course but that the funds had not been included in the FY 70 budget.

Mr. Hall noted that this step could be used as a basis for deferral of construction in Israel, with the argument that when the Israeli project is implemented, it should be on the basis of the best technology.

Mr. Kissinger asked how many years this would take.

Mr. Hall thought if the test module were funded in FY 71, we should know in two or three years whether we could do it or not, with emphasis on the new vertical tube evaporator (VTE) technique.

Mr. Shakespeare said that if it was agreed that desalinization was important and we could learn something from building at least the \$5 million test module, was it not well worth the relatively minor sum of \$5 million?

Mr. Hall said that if we considered this solely in its U.S. context—as a problem to be solved for the U.S.—we should relate the timing of the construction and testing of facilities, hence, the provision of funds, to the expected time of need in the U.S.

Mr. Kissinger noted that the same relation existed if the funds were spent in Israel.

Mr. Hall agreed that if we build the facility in Israel we will certainly get some technical advantage from it. The question was whether it would be worth it in U.S. terms. Was it necessary to proceed now in budgetary terms? He thought it would take three years from the time funds are appropriated to completion of the test module.

He was looking ahead ten years to the areas in which the U.S. might need water produced by desalinization. He could not see such a requirement in ten years at the present time, but he acknowledged that the situation could change rapidly.

Mr. Saunders pointed out that Israel has such a requirement now.

Mr. Schlesinger noted that Israel was unwilling to divert water from agricultural purposes, where the cost of the water as compared to the agricultural yield was in terms of a factor of 4. He said that Israel needed reallocation of its water to urban and industrial purposes.

Mr. Davies asked if Israel could then be expected to obtain its vegetables and other agricultural products from its Arab neighbors.

Mr. Proctor asked if we went ahead with construction of the 20 MGD plant would we be likely to end with a white elephant on our hands?⁶

Mr. Hall noted that with the expenditure of \$5 million for testing of the new VTE technique, it might be possible eventually to obtain a 25% or even 50% improvement in the price of desalted water. He briefly traced the development of the new concept of water provision since 1964, compared the use of distilled water to water produced by the reverse osmosis technique, and commented that the relationship of water cost to yield in Israel might be reduced to a factor of 2 or 3. He pointed out that desalted water was an entirely different product from any agricultural water now in use. In general, he agreed with the Budget Bureau on the present situation.

Mr. Kissinger noted that it appeared completion of the big study would not add to solution of the Israeli problem.

Mr. Nutter again raised the question of where the plant should be located, noting Israel's attacks on the East Ghor Canal. He questioned the symbolic significance of our helping Israel with its water problem while Israel attacks water facilities of its neighbors.

⁶ According to a September 18 memorandum, the CIA regarded it as "inconceivable [that] the Arabs and Israelis would cooperate on any desalting projects in the Near East for some time to come." The CIA therefore thought it was premature to consider large-scale desalting projects in the Eisenhower–Strauss context, but thought it worthwhile to proceed unilaterally with desalting projects for Israel. (Central Intelligence Agency, ORR Files, Job 80–T01315A, Box 19)

Mr. Kissinger asked if the Israelis are likely to raise the issue of the desalting plant during the Golda Meir visit.⁷

Mr. Saunders replied we didn't know; that Mrs. Meir has many other things on her mind.

Mr. Davies noted that the emphasis had been on economic questions, including extension of credits, etc.

Mr. Kissinger asked how much pressure is behind the legislation.

Mr. Davies replied that the U.S. was committed in the eyes of many members of the Congress.

Mr. Shakespeare asked where Senator Baker stood on this issue.

Mr. Davies replied that Senator Baker backs the regional approach and opposes the Israeli plant because it is not demonstrably and directly linked to the regional approach.⁸

Mr. Kissinger thought that we should look at the problem on a regional basis and from the point of view of U.S. evenhandedness in the Arab-Israel situation.

Mr. Saunders commented that the proposed plant would meet considerably less than Israel's requirement, and that the purpose of the larger study was to develop a regional scheme and provide evidence of an evenhanded U.S. policy.

Mr. Davies noted that this could be tied to refugee resettlement, for example.

General Unger asked if the smaller plant would be nuclear.

Mr. Hall replied no, that it would not be economically feasible.

Mr. Kissinger asked if the 15–20 MGD plant would be nuclear.

Mr. Hall replied no, adding that the source of power has nothing to do with when or where the plant is built.

Mr. Kissinger asked if Israel would be aided in solving its problem by completion of the regional study.

Mr. Nutter replied that they would.

General Unger asked if Israel could opt for a nuclear power source.

Mr. Hall replied that they could theoretically, since the source of power was left to the Israelis to decide.

Mr. Schlesinger pointed out, however, that the U.S. would have to finance any nuclear power installation.

⁷ Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir made a two-day official visit to Washington September 25 and 26, during which time she met privately with Nixon. The issue of desalination did not come up in conversations between Rabin with either Rogers or Kissinger, nor in Meir's conversation with Rogers. The September 26 memorandum of conversation and telegram 163837 to Tel Aviv, September 26, are scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

⁸ See footnote 2, Document 4.

Mr. Cargo commented that State would be prepared to go ahead with construction of the 15–20 MGD plant, preceded by the test module. He noted an AID memorandum which opposes the proposed Rosenthal amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act to provide the \$40 million grant to Israel to build the 40 MGD plant, and favors authorizing Interior to build the small experimental plant in the U.S., with the collaboration of Israeli and other foreign scientists, and to promise to help Israel in installing the ultimately improved technology there. He thought AID would join State in their willingness to go ahead with the test module in Israel if their concerns about the source of the financing could be met.

Mr. Kissinger summarized the pro arguments for the 40 MGD plant as: (1) the commitment in the Johnson letter; (2) the relationship to other political objectives (which Mr. Cargo commented would be minimal); and (3) improved technology, which could be achieved even more efficiently through construction of the \$5 million test module.

Mr. Hall noted that it would still be better if the experimental plant were built in the U.S.

Mr. Kissinger asked what would happen if we should decide to do nothing.

Mr. Saunders replied that we would tell the Israelis that we want to defer further action on this project and would persuade interested Congressmen not to push the proposed legislation.

Mr. Davies noted it would not be too difficult to turn Congress around in view of the relatively low priority which Israel placed on this installation.

Mr. Kissinger thought we should wait and see what Golda Meir says and see how we might relate this issue to a settlement in the Middle East.

Mr. Shakespeare agreed that this should only be done as part of a general settlement, but noted that water had become a highly emotional issue and one that had a good deal of public sex appeal.

Mr. Davies pointed out that the Interior Department considered the water problem of great concern to the U.S.

Mr. Hall noted, however, that Interior had a very restricted budget for water problems and he doubted if they would be willing to take the \$5 million required for the test module out of their present budget.

Mr. Hall reviewed the time table: from the time when we perceive the need in the U.S., it will take five years to develop the capability, plus three years on the test module to see whether the new technique will work. The question to be answered is whether we have any spots in the U.S. where we will need to apply such a capability in the next ten years. The alternative would be to push ahead with our research and to try to develop an even better technology.

Mr. Saunders again noted that the need exists in Israel now, and that the proposed activity would advance our research.

Mr. Kissinger asked Mr. Saunders, in consultation with Mr. Cargo and others, to prepare a paper for the President reflecting this discussion. He saw no need to await the results of the general study, since the President would decide how urgent the matter is on the basis of this paper. The paper should discuss the pros and cons of the plan, taking into account the nature of our commitment, the technological assets we would gain, and the things we may ask Israel to do.

Mr. Cargo expressed his view that we should go ahead as fast as possible in advancing our water technology for basic U.S. foreign policy purposes. He cited conditions in Pakistan and elsewhere with hundreds of miles of coast line but with very little or no fresh water.

Mr. Kissinger commented that water technology was likely to be pushed faster in Israel than anywhere else to which Mr. Cargo agreed.

Mr. Schlesinger commented that almost any R&D which would bring down the cost of water would be an advance.

Mr. Proctor compared a five-year program at \$5 million to a more expensive program which would take 10–15 years.

Mr. Hall noted the relationship between funds and ideas. He said ideas develop sequentially—one idea suggests the next one. In this context, a large program would be repetitive and might well exceed the threshold of economic feasibility.

Mr. Kissinger closed the meeting with the comment that we needed a U.S. national policy on desalting.

10. Intelligence Note From the Deputy Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (Denny) to Acting Secretary of State Richardson¹

693

Washington, September 29, 1969.

SUBJECT

Islamic Summit Produces Moderate Consensus and the Makings of a Moslem Bloc

The Rabat meeting of 25 Moslem nations survived postponement attempts and internal conflicts to become the first Islamic Summit Conference. Its concluding declaration and resolutions represented a moderate consensus and may have laid the groundwork for a Moslem bloc.

A Major Achievement: Holding the Conference. King Hassan of Morocco, host of the September 22–25 meeting and one of the original promoters of the Summit, called holding of the conference a “miracle of God” and a success in itself. We agree that bringing together government leaders (including 9 heads of state) representing about 300 million Moslems was a major achievement. It took considerable skill on the part of Hassan and co-initiator King Faisal of Saudi Arabia² to gain rapid agreement for early scheduling of a summit and to persuade suspicious non-Arab Moslems to participate in an Arab-dominated assembly. Less than a week before opening day, President Nasser launched a counteroffensive seeking to postpone the summit indefinitely. In the end, his bluff was called and a UAR delegation was dispatched to Rabat. Only Iraq and Syria of the “progressive” Arab group failed to appear. A final crisis occurred in mid-summit, when a belated invitation to India provoked a stormy Pakistani response and India’s ouster. Even this turbulent event, which might have broken up any other conference, only prolonged the meeting an extra day.

A Moderate Consensus. Out of the conference came a moderate consensus, despite radical Arab and Palestinian lobbying (the Palestinian

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 13–6. Confidential; No Foreign Dissem; Controlled Dissem.

² King Hussein had initially called for an Arab Summit in the aftermath of the al-Aqsa fire, but Faisal had insisted on an Islamic Summit, stating “I issued a call to the Islamic world to declare holy war to liberate Jerusalem from the hands of the oppressors and tyrants who keep no promise.” (Airgram A-254 from Jidda, August 27; *ibid.*, POL 27 ARAB–ISR) Faisal’s emotional response to the fire, his determination to be an active rather than passive participant in the effort to recover Jerusalem, his earnest pursuit of jihad, and his desire for a stronger United States role in the Middle East are articulated in telegram 2947 from Jidda, August 26. (*Ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 629, Country Files, Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Vol. I)

Liberation Organization—PLO—was given observer status at the meeting). The official conference declaration, taking the al-Aqsa mosque incident³ as point of departure, called for restoration of Jerusalem's pre-June 1967 status and speedy withdrawal of Israeli military forces from all territories occupied as a result of the 1967 war; it appealed to the US, UK, USSR, and France to secure compliance with the 1967 Security Council resolution. On Palestine, a solitary sentence affirmed "full support to the Palestinian people for the restitution of their rights" and in their "struggle for national liberation."

The moderate Arab organizers can claim full credit for the language—a compromise that reiterated basic Arab positions without offending non-Arab participants, five of whom have diplomatic relations with Israel. The radical Arabs may regret what might have been added, but can raise no serious objections to the statements in the final declaration.

The Makings of a Moslem Bloc? The moderates undoubtedly hope that they have strengthened the Arab cause in a potentially permanent fashion. The conference declaration spoke of regular consultation and "close cooperation and mutual assistance" among Moslem states. In addition, the principal resolution set a meeting of Islamic foreign ministers for March 1970 at Jidda to review common action undertaken after the summit and to establish an Islamic permanent secretariat. In sum, the moderates can claim to have created a Moslem bloc to be formally organized next March.

Arab moderates will use the success of the Islamic Summit to strengthen their inter-Arab position and to argue against holding an Arab Summit, to which Faisal is adamantly opposed. He fears it would be controlled by radical states, who would call for increased financial contributions from the oil-producers and would push through extreme resolutions. If Faisal also hopes that the projected Moslem bloc will provide an effective counter balance to radical domination of the Arab League, he will probably be disappointed.

A consequence of the moderates' success was the absence of attack on the US or "imperialism" in the final statements. However, it is virtually certain that the radical Arab states will continue to agitate for a more extreme political posture in the Islamic forum; unless Hassan and Faisal can sustain their achievement the resulting dispute could cause a short life—or even stillbirth—for the Moslem bloc.

³ The al-Aqsa Mosque, considered the third holiest Islamic site, was partially burned on August 21. Australian Denis Michael Rohan, a self-styled Christian fundamentalist, was formally charged on September 1 with having set fire to the Mosque. He was found guilty by the Jerusalem District Court on December 30 and was committed to a mental hospital as a paranoid schizophrenic.

11. **Telegram From the Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Departments of State and Defense¹**

Brussels, October 2, 1969, 1925Z.

4449. Subj: Soviet Presence in the Mediterranean.

1. During my recent trip through the NATO southern region, which included extensive conversations with CINCSOUTH, COMSTRIKEFORSOUTH, COMLANDSOUTHEAST plus our Embassies, MAAG staffs and local officials in Ankara and Athens, I gained the strong impression that we need to take a much closer look at the significance of the improved Soviet force posture in the Mediterranean. As Washington is aware, the present NATO assessment, dating from June 1968, is that Soviet objectives in the Med are primarily political and psychological. While this may still be true, I believe we need to have another look at the politico-military implications for the Mediterranean area, which to my mind are disturbing.

2. While it is true that Soviet naval units in the Med lack air support and do not constitute a balanced force, the recent addition of helo carriers, more submarines and the nucleus of an amphibious capability add up to a naval force of important dimensions. The Sixth Fleet would have to deal with this force initially in the event of hostilities and this would clearly distract from its primary mission of supporting the land war on the Mediterranean littoral. The delay might well be critical, given the lack of operating terrain on the southern flank, particularly Greek and Turkish Thrace. And the imperative need for timely [omission in the original].

3. Moreover, while the Soviets have not yet sought to develop an air support capability in the Med, this is not necessarily precluded for the future. Also, given political trends in Egypt, Algeria and Libya, it is not impossible to imagine the Soviets being given turn-around or recovery base rights in those countries which would permit land based air strikes from Bulgaria or the southwestern USSR against NATO forces in the Med.

4. Secondly not since 1944 have US naval forces had to operate in a situation like the one presently prevailing in the Med where its units must operate alongside a potentially hostile naval force of some size. Among other things, this constitutes an inhibition on the Sixth Fleet's capacity to intervene in situations where it may be in our interest to

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 275, Agency Files, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Vol. II. Secret; Limdis; Noforn. It was repeated to USDOCOSOUTH, USNMR SHAPE, CINCEUR, Ankara, Athens, Rome, Paris, London, the White House, COMSIXTHFLT for Vice Admiral Richardson, and USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST for General Harrel.

intervene. Conversely, greater Soviet capability would enable them to intervene if a situation arose in which they regarded it as safe and expedient to do so. Moreover, while the Soviets might have been able to adduce lack of military wherewithal as a reason for inaction during the 1967 War, they could not do so as credibly now and would therefore lose considerable political mileage with dissatisfied local clients.

5. In sum, it seems to me that the Mediterranean constitutes the area of greatest relative change in recent years in the NATO–Warsaw Pact military balance. This is certainly where the current action is as far as the Soviets are concerned, and I believe some shift of our attention from the relatively more stable center region of ACE would be desirable. The problem of Italian-Greek-Turkish relations as it affects NATO strength in this key area needs particular attention in Washington.

6. Our immediate objective should be to focus attention of NATO delegations on this general problem and fortunately the Libyan coup² has already generated considerable local interest. I intend to explore the matter with Brosio and individually with PermReps from the countries most directly concerned, i.e. Italy, France, UK, Greece, Turkey. I would brief them on my impressions, suggest that they themselves visit NATO commands in the area, utilizing roughly the same sources I talked to and solicit their opinions on what NATO might do in response to the whole spectrum of changing military and political factors in the Mediterranean.

7. I think it essential that these countries themselves take the lead in addressing the problem, hopefully looking toward a reassessment we could support either at Ministerial or PermRep level.

8. Where NATO might go after such a reassessment is of course an open question and one the USG should address before proceeding as in para 7. USNATO has various options under consideration, both political and military, open to NATO countries, which may be useful in a possible next round of measures to cope with the Mediterranean situation. In the meantime, we would welcome any addressee comments on this telegram and suggestions for any measures that might be taken.

Ellsworth

² The Free Officers Movement overthrew Libyan King Idris on September 1. As a result, Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi became Commander-in-Chief of the Libyan Armed Forces and de facto head of state.

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

Washington, October 6, 1969.

SUBJECT

Decisions on Desalting in the Near East

Following your instructions,² I have launched a comprehensive study of possibilities for desalting in the Near East.

The overall study is being done at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory where the concept underlying the Eisenhower–Strauss plan was worked out. It will not be done until the end of the year.

However, decision on a narrower issue is needed sooner. A number of pro-Israeli Congressmen are pressing a rider to the Foreign Assistance Act authorizing \$40 million for a desalting plant in Israel. The Administration should take a position on this legislation since it does not fall within Administration priorities.

I held an NSC Review Group meeting to discuss this aspect of the problem.³ What follows is a brief synopsis of that meeting and represents the consensus. What follows is a brief synopsis.

The legislation now before Congress grows out of a late Johnson Administration proposal. After four years of joint US-Israeli study of the feasibility of a large desalting plant in Israel, President Johnson asked George Woods, who had just stepped down as World Bank president, to review the studies and give him a personal recommendation. This procedure was followed because the bureaucracy was deeply divided and just could not put forward an unbiased analysis. Mr. Woods recommended a smaller plant than the joint studies contemplated and suggested that new technology be considered.⁴

The present options are these:

1. A plant that desalts *100 million gallons per day* and produces 200 megawatts of electricity. Everyone but AEC believes this is too big a technological jump (the largest plant now produces 7 million gallons)

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30. Confidential; Exdis. Sent for action. A handwritten notation on the memorandum indicates the President approved it and a stamped notation indicates it was returned on October 23.

² See Document 5.

³ See Document 9.

⁴ See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, volume XXXIV, Energy Diplomacy and Global Issues, Documents 171–173.

to take all at once even though this plant would use older technology. This would cost \$60–70 million in US grants.

2. A 40 million-gallon-per-day plant. This was Woods' proposal. It is a more logical technological step from where we are now, although there is still one necessary intermediate step—a 5 million gallon test module to check out a new method that would increase output substantially. The cost for the water plant (it would be hooked to a power plant which would provide steam) would be \$54–58 million, and Woods felt the US could justify up to \$40 million on research and development grounds. This is essentially the proposal before Congress.

3. A 15–20 million-gallon plant. When Interior did not get money in the FY 1970 budget to build its 5 million gallon test module in the US, it proposed that the module be built in Israel as the core of a small operational plant. But Interior would prefer to build the test module in the US and recognizes that the 40 million gallon plant would come closer to meeting Israel's real water needs.

The *Review Group consensus* expressed in the attached memo⁵ is that it does not make sense to go ahead with a \$40 million Israeli plant in this tight budget year but that it might make sense to give Interior \$5 million to build in the US the test module that would have to be built in any case before a larger plant could be built.

Recommendation: Since the latter judgment is a scientific-technical one outside the competence of the Review Group, I recommend the following:

1. That you authorize us to tell the Israelis that we cannot justify a plant in Israel now in the light of our own tight budget and in the light of Israel's other requests for substantial help with economic and military sales credits.⁶

2. That we ask them to tell their Congressional friends that they occur in deferral with the hope that their technicians can participate at some point in any experimental work done in the US that might be a prelude to a later Israeli project.

⁵ Memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon, undated; not attached. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-039, SRG Meeting Files, Review Group Mid-East Water 9/23/69)

⁶ Attached is an October 16 memorandum from Bryce Harlow, Counselor to the President, stating that he agreed with Kissinger's recommendation against investing in a "large expenditure in Israel." He also noted that during his campaign President Nixon had "strongly favored" the Eisenhower–Strauss Plan, that the issue was seen as a "Republican initiative" with strong support in both Houses, and that the location in the United States of a smaller test facility could be seen as a reward for "a good Congressional friend." (Ibid., Box H-212, National Security Decision Memoranda, NSDM 32) In a November 21 memorandum of conversation, Saunders told General Ben Artzi, Representative of Israeli Prime Minister on the Desalting Project, of the U.S. decision. (Ibid., Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30)

3. That the Administration then take the following position on the legislation before Congress: The Administration intends to press ahead with research in desalting technology but does not believe it possible within present budgetary constraints to proceed with the Israeli project this year. It believes that intermediate experience with a test module to check new technology will be necessary before any larger plant can be built anywhere and believes there are advantages in doing this work in the US, leaving open the possibility of whether to build a plant in Israel once the technology is tested here.

4. That you ask Lee DuBridges and Bob Mayo for a recommendation on whether Interior should be authorized \$5 million to proceed with the test module in the US.⁷

There is one other issue. George Woods also served as a point of contact with the Israelis on this subject. Prime Minister Eshkol named a high-ranking individual as the contact on his side. The reason for this arrangement was to have one person on each side who could draw together a governmental position on a complex issue where bureaucracies split. The question is whether you would like to keep Woods in the picture.

The arguments for doing so are that it is useful to have one person carrying the ball on this issue. It is also useful to have a person of special stature to deal with the Congress on it if special persuasion is required there.

The arguments against include how you may feel about Woods as a personal adviser on this subject. Also, there will probably not be much active discussion with the Israelis if you approve the recommended course.

Recommendation: That I inform Woods what we are doing as a matter of courtesy, says that there will not be much activity with the Israelis in the near future and leave the door open on whether we reinvolve him at a later stage.⁸

⁷ The President checked the approval option.

⁸ Of the approval, disapproval, and other options, Nixon initialed on the approval line. Saunders received authorization from Kissinger on November 6 to go ahead with the suggested course of action. (Memorandum from Saunders to Kissinger, October 31; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-141, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 30) See Document 35.

13. Letter From the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Johnson) to the Deputy Secretary of Defense (Packard)¹

Washington, November 4, 1969.

Dear Dave:

Attached is a slightly expanded version of the paper that I showed you last Wednesday. It is an effort to reduce to writing some of the more critical foreign policy assumptions that, in my view, should govern military planning in the next several years. We have not tried to be comprehensive, but rather to pick out points which we think are particularly relevant for military planning. We do not intend that this paper substitute for other policy guidance which has emerged from completed NSC studies, such as the FIDP, or to preempt guidance that may flow from future studies. I understand that your staff is working on strategic guidance for the FY-72 budget. This paper should be of some use to them.

I hope that the question of foreign policy assumptions for Defense planning could be pursued by Ron Spiers and Warren Nutter and their staffs as we discussed last week. In particular, I want them to discuss how such guidance might be improved in the future and how State and Defense can jointly develop the strategic guidance that will form the basis for future defense budgets. It seems to me this should be a continuing process so that when Defense feels the need of guidance or assessment in a specific area of foreign policy, it can be provided promptly.

I am sending a copy of this letter and the attachment to Henry Kissinger.

Sincerely,

Alex

Attachment

MIDDLE EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN

A. Despite the absence of formal security treaties with non-NATO powers in the Mediterranean Basin, four US administrations have made clear that the US has a special interest in the security of Israel.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1251, Saunders Files, Basic Policy—Middle East 1/1/70–12/31/70. Secret. A copy was sent to Kissinger.

B. In the Persian Gulf, current American oil and other activities which return some \$1.5 billion annually to the US balance of payments, are likely to expand.

C. The requirement for US forces for this area has never been well defined, but air and naval forces appear to be considerably more important, at least from a political standpoint, than ground forces.

D. Restrictions on US base use (e.g., Greece, Turkey, Spain) if not outright denial (we must regard Wheelus as lost now) will continue to be a significant factor in any contingency involving the Arabs and Israelis. Soviet involvement in such a contingency may relax these restrictions somewhat, but it should not be assumed that they will remove them. Ways to reduce dependence on these bases should be examined.

E. Reopening of the Suez Canal cannot be counted upon for the next two years, or even longer. Therefore, the importance of Diego Garcia and COMIDEASTFOR increases.

F. Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean will not diminish and may expand further. There is a good possibility that the Soviets will gain access to air bases in the Mediterranean area.

G. With the British departure from Aden and the Persian Gulf, the Soviets will continue to manifest increasing naval and other activity in the Arabian Sea region.

H. Any major changes in the Sixth fleet will have important political implications in the Mediterranean Basin and would have to be preceded by careful political-military consultations with allied and friendly governments.

I. While we have no intention of replacing the British in the Persian Gulf area after their withdrawal in 1971, we have no plans to terminate our naval presence there and believe we can maintain our home porting arrangements on Bahrain over the next few years.

[Omitted here are sections on Europe, East Asia, Weapons System, and MAP.]

14. National Security Decision Memorandum 32¹

Washington, November 6, 1969.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Secretary of The Interior
The Secretary of Agriculture
The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Administrator, Agency for International Development

SUBJECT

Water Development and Middle East Policy

With reference to the memorandum of September 9, 1969, from the Chairman of NSCIG/NEA to the Chairman of the NSC Review Group entitled "Desalting in the Near East—NSSM 30,"² the President has made the following decisions:

1. He has agreed that decisions on broader policy for overall water development in the Near East should be deferred until early next year.

2. He has approved the following Administration position on the Israeli desalting plant to be used with the Government of Israel and with appropriate Congressional Committees:

a. Budgetary constraints make it impossible for the Administration to proceed now with plans to build a desalting plant in Israel.

b. Budgetary considerations apart, the Administration believes that intermediate experimentation with new technology is necessary before a large operating plant can be built anywhere. The Administration believes that there are compelling advantages in doing this work in the U.S.

c. The Administration is keeping open the possibility of later cooperation in the Israeli project.

d. The Administration intends to press ahead with research in desalting technology and will insure close cooperation with Israeli technicians.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-212, National Security Decision Memoranda, NSDM 32. Confidential; Exdis. Copies were sent to Mayo and DuBridge.

² See footnote 3, Document 9.

3. He has asked that the Director, Bureau of the Budget in cooperation with the Science Advisor to the President coordinate a recommendation on whether a module to test the new technology should now be built in the U.S.

The Secretary of State will coordinate appropriate actions to inform the Government of Israel and the Congressional Committees concerned.

Henry A. Kissinger

15. Editorial Note

On December 9, 1969, Secretary of State William Rogers delivered a major speech titled “A Lasting Peace in the Middle East: An American View” at the 1969 Galaxy Conference on Adult Education in Washington. During this talk, Rogers stated that one of the first decisions of the new administration had been to play a direct role in solving the Arab-Israeli crisis. This included U.S. discussions not just with the United Nations, U.S. allies, and regional states, but with the Soviet Union as well. These talks brought “a measure of understanding,” but had highlighted the main roadblocks to useful regional negotiations. In his concluding statements Rogers reiterated the need for a balanced U.S. policy, for good diplomatic relations with all nations in the region, and for U.S. commitment to achieve a just and lasting peace. (Department of State *Bulletin*, January 5, 1970, pages 7–11)

Commenting on his draft of the speech, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph J. Sisco wrote that he had constructed the section of the speech on Soviet involvement “with great care”:

“My concern is that there is a general feeling in the Arab world that our preoccupation with Vietnam and the atmosphere which exists in this country preclude a positive United States role in the area. There is, of course, a good deal of truth to this, and our efforts in trying to achieve a settlement are aimed at preventing a situation from developing which could confront us with the most critical decision of intervening or not intervening militarily. I recognize also that words are two-edged: by saying too much we can stimulate undue expectations about American power in the area, and by saying too little we can contribute to the tendency to write us off.”

In his comments, Sisco wrote that he had tried to convey the point in his draft that “our preoccupation elsewhere does not mean that we are going to let this area go by default.” He concluded:

"I am personally convinced that, if the rubric 'no more Vietnams' leads the world to believe the United States will close its eyes whenever aggression occurs, then we are in serious trouble all over the world, and in particular, in the Middle East. I believe the Middle East will be over the next five years the principal testing point between ourselves and the Soviet Union. The Soviet probes and brinkmanship will go as far as they think they can, short of direct confrontation with us, which I believe they wish to avoid as much as we do. I realize that the strategy being pursued by the Soviets is primarily political, not military, but I am convinced that our strategy in order to be effective politically must have sufficient teeth militarily to make it credible. It must also have political credibility, however, and this will inevitably require some degree of confrontation between ourselves and the Israelis." (Memorandum from Sisco to Rogers and Johnson, November 19; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 1 NEAR E-US)

16. Airgram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

CA-6701

Washington, December 17, 1969, 7:05 p.m.

SUBJECT

Soviet Policy Toward Middle East

No Fundamental Shift As Yet

The apparent recent upsurge of Soviet maneuvering relating to the Middle East reflected in reporting from Embassy Moscow and other posts raises a question as to whether Soviet policy in the area is evolving toward greater militancy. In the interest of promoting the current dialogue with posts on this subject, the Department offers the following thoughts.² We are inclined toward the assessment that Soviet policy has undergone no recent basic shift, vital Soviet interests continue

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL NEAR E-USSR. Secret; Limdis. Drafted by G. Norman Anderson (EUR/SOV); cleared in EUR, EUR/SOV, NEA/IAI, NEA/ARN, NEA/ARP, NEA/UAR, INR/RNA, INR/RSE, and by Sisco; and approved by Adolph Dubs (EUR/SOV). It was repeated to Algiers, Amman, Beirut, Kuwait, Paris, Cairo, Khartoum, London, Jidda, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Tripoli, USUN, and the Mission to NATO.

² See also INR Memorandum RSE-94 of November 17, 1969—"USSR-Middle East: Dilemma of Involvement—USSR Maneuvers an Uncertain Course." [Footnote is in the original. This memorandum was not found.]

to dictate a large measure of caution for Moscow and, despite recent intensified propaganda over Middle East developments, the Soviets still prefer to avoid peaks of tension in the area. In a broader context, the Kremlin dislikes unpredictability in the Middle East, as in Eastern Europe, at a time when Communist China promises to remain a major headache for the Soviet Union for the foreseeable future.

Immediate Soviet Considerations

While Soviet Middle East policy is motivated by a wide range of factors, two immediate Soviet considerations emerge as overriding: (a) perpetuation of friendly radical Arab regimes, above all the Nasser regime in the UAR, and (b) avoidance of a confrontation with the United States. These considerations require Soviet caution and in particular arouse an aversion to the outbreak of another round of Arab-Israeli hostilities, which would entail a mortal threat to client Arab regimes and increase the chances of a U.S.–Soviet confrontation.

The Fedayeen Dilemma

In line with these considerations, the Soviets have thus far carefully limited their support for the fedayeen, who pose a serious dilemma for the Kremlin. Growing fedayeen popular appeal and influence on the Arab governments cannot be ignored by Moscow. On the other hand, the fedayeen are potential competitors for power with Nasser and the radical Arab regimes, in whom the USSR has invested heavily. They are beyond any significant degree of Soviet control and cannot be trusted by Moscow to take into account Soviet interest in avoiding a confrontation with the U.S. They also oppose such other Soviet policies as public endorsement of the November 22 Security Council resolution³ and recognition of the legitimacy of the state of Israel. As in the past, Soviet support is therefore likely to continue to be largely in the form of inexpensive, although perhaps intensified, propaganda favoring the “national liberation struggle” to regain Israeli-occupied Arab territories. Token material assistance may be channelled through front organizations, but Moscow will, for the most part, probably continue to prefer indirect arms deliveries via friendly Arab regimes. A policy shift toward major direct arms deliveries to the fedayeen would tend to antagonize and encounter opposition from client Arab regimes and raise Arab-Israeli tension, without, however, necessarily giving Moscow much additional leverage over fedayeen policies. (See State 192205 for a fuller discussion of Soviet support for the fedayeen.)⁴

³ A reference to UN Resolution 242. See footnote 6, Document 3.

⁴ Telegram 192205 to USUN, November 14, reported that Soviet policy toward the fedayeen remained the same albeit with tactical variations. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967–69, POL 13–10 ARAB)

Risks in the Arms Supply Game

Furthermore, once having rapidly replaced Arab arms losses suffered in the June 1967 war, an action followed by the U.S. decision to supply Phantom aircraft to Israel,⁵ the Soviets have refrained from adding to Arab military capabilities to an extent which might be construed as upsetting the Arab-Israeli military balance, with the result that the Arabs will hesitate for some time to come to court a full-scale war against Israel. Limited Arab absorptive capacity is no doubt a factor in the Soviets' thinking. They are also certainly aware that a further escalation of the Middle East arms race would be costly and dangerous, yet without assured new benefits for the USSR.

The Kremlin would also have little to gain from becoming more actively involved in Arab war efforts, such as through providing combat pilots to the UAR, except perhaps for such a restricted purpose as defending the Aswan Dam if the latter should be directly threatened by Israel. Not only would U.S. reaction to a more active Soviet role be a deterrent to the Kremlin, but Soviet flexibility in general would be seriously jeopardized, and the Soviets would in addition bear a greater onus for any further Arab failures against Israel.

The West, the Mediterranean Squadron, and the "Progressives"

Among longer-term Soviet aims is, of course, the elimination of Western influence in the area and the increase of Soviet influence. Moscow has unquestionably benefited from being alert to every target of opportunity, for example by becoming the major arms supplier to the radical Arab states when the U.S. was unwilling to enter such competition. The USSR has, however, exploited rather than created indigenous trends. It has been acquiring in fact a position of influence to which it could realistically aspire not only because of its willingness to embrace the Arab cause but also because of its growing power and its geographic position. The USSR may still hope to gain even more influence, but it already has a substantial vested interest which can be a factor for conservatism in Soviet policy.

The build-up of the Soviet Mediterranean squadron is tangible evidence of another related long-term Soviet goal: strengthening of the Soviet strategic and military position vis-à-vis the U.S. and its NATO allies. This squadron has both a political impact on the Arabs and a deterrent value against NATO. Nonetheless, it will probably remain inferior militarily to the Sixth Fleet for the predictable future and this inferiority imposes due limitations on its use by the Kremlin.

⁵ The first Phantoms arrived in Israel September 6. Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969-1972.

The “spread of socialism” is still another long-term goal. Moscow continues to emphasize pragmatism over ideology, however, subordinating the fate of the Arab Communist parties to the requirements of government-to-government relations. The Soviets encourage “progressive” political movements such as Nasser’s Arab Socialist Union and the Syrian Baath, as well as the “socialist path” in economic development, so that future Soviet-Arab relations will become more institutionalized and less dependent on individual Arab leaders. Concrete results here have thus far clearly been limited from the Soviet point of view, however. The USSR hardly expects, nor would it necessarily even welcome, the emergence of an Arab communist regime at this stage, a development which could bring serious entanglements and burdens for Moscow. Recent increased Soviet urging of the Arabs to work on developing their internal political and economic structure is undoubtedly intended to encourage stability in the UAR and other radical Arab states, as well as being in effect an effort to deflect them from excessive zeal against Israel.

Peking Competition

Another concern for the Kremlin is Chinese Communist activity in the Middle East. The Chinese have, of course, extended minor aid to Arab extremist groups. They also have had well-advertised government-to-government contacts with Syria, among others. These contacts could hardly fail to irritate the Soviets and probably have not induced them to be more forthcoming vis-à-vis the Syrians. While the Chinese can do little in the region at the moment, Moscow may tend to exaggerate both current and potential Chinese capabilities. Along with other observers, Moscow probably believes Communist China stands to gain from continuing chaos in the area, and this could be a factor inclining the Soviets toward wanting stability there.

“Controlled Tension” or Settlement?

The theory is sometimes advanced that the Soviets prefer “controlled tension” to a genuine peace settlement. The Soviets undoubtedly see their choices as lying between the extremes of continuing military engagement and genuine peace. The experience of 1967 no doubt convinced Soviet leaders, however, that tension in the Arab world is not always subject to adequate control and that, while still falling short of genuine peace, a more effective accommodation than in 1949 and 1957 is needed.

A political settlement is the only alternative to war whereby the Soviets can help the Arabs get back Israeli-occupied territories, and lack of a settlement implies an eventual new round of hostilities. Moscow, in the major power talks, has stressed that any settlement should be comprehensive. It is unlikely that the Soviets harbor secret

hopes for a partial settlement limited mainly to Israeli withdrawal because they realize that Israeli agreement to such an arrangement is not in the cards. They also know that if either the Arabs or the Israelis, after agreeing to a comprehensive settlement, sought only partial or selective implementation, a new war would probably ensue.

If a settlement is in fact viewed favorably by the Soviets, why then have they thus far considered it a matter of no urgency to exert the pressure on the UAR and others obviously needed for progress toward a settlement? The answer may lie in part in differing Soviet and U.S. perceptions of what is achievable. The Soviets may feel that UAR acceptance of the November resolution itself represents a major concession, implying as it does UAR willingness to accept for the first time the partition of Palestine and the sovereign existence of Israel in that part of Palestine it has held since 1949. The Soviet settlement plan given the U.S. on June 17, 1969, supplemented by Soviet agreement to Rhodes-type negotiations,⁶ falls short in many basic respects of U.S. desiderata for a viable settlement. It does, however, represent a distinct advance over the UAR position toward Israel previous to June 5, 1967, and the Soviets have said it is acceptable to the UAR, whereas we have given no comparable assurance that Israel will accept the position set forth in our July 15, 1969, document as modified by our reformulations of Sept.–Oct., 1969.⁷

A Soviet assessment that large-scale Arab-Israeli hostilities are unlikely in the near future could also underlie the Soviet attitude. The Soviets can be expected to continue to press for concessions from Israel and the US and will not wish to expend leverage over the Arabs prematurely. Furthermore, the large Soviet investment in the UAR, coupled with the experience of having lost similar investments in Indonesia and Ghana,⁸ presents the USSR with the dilemma of not wanting to antagonize Nasser while at the same time wanting to save him. Moscow also seems to defer to Nasser's view of what is required of him politically to shore up his weakened position at home and in the Arab world, tolerating but not encouraging periodic heating up of the situation along the Suez Canal, "fire-and-blood" speeches, etc.

Whether or not the Kremlin evaluates a settlement as a real possibility, we would expect the USSR to continue to be interested in

⁶ The Rhodes formula refers to the negotiating mechanism used at the January–March 1949 armistice talks held in Rhodes, Greece. This formula required separate meetings led by UN mediator Ralph Bunche with each delegation discussing substantive items until they reached the stage where informal meetings could be held.

⁷ Documentation on these U.S. proposals is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

⁸ Reference is to the successful 1966 coups against President Sukarno of Indonesia and President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana.

pursuing major-power talks. If the talks permit Moscow to curry favor with the Arabs and increase pressures on the US and Israel, they also serve the important purpose for the Kremlin of helping to dampen tensions, although their effectiveness in this regard will diminish in the absence of demonstrable progress. Even without such progress, however, the Soviets will think twice about breaking them off for fear of creating a crisis atmosphere in the area.

Soviet Policy Toward the Moderate Arabs

An example of Soviet priorities in practice can probably be seen in Soviet policy toward the moderate Arab regimes. The USSR appears for the present to favor preservation of the Lebanese and Jordanian governments. The Soviets presumably recognize that radicalization of these regimes would be at the cost in Lebanon of internal Christian-Muslim chaos, with possible intervention by Israel and Syria, and an ultimate risk of US-Soviet confrontation. In Jordan, the cost could be a fedayeen takeover, with an attendant undesirable higher-risk policy toward Israel and, again, a likelihood of firm Israeli reaction.

While Soviet propaganda in the recent Lebanese crisis⁹ was unfriendly to the U.S. and designed to enhance Soviet prestige as a friend of the Arabs at the expense of the U.S., it at the same time welcomed and perhaps even encouraged a negotiated settlement between the Lebanese government and the fedayeen through UAR mediation. As in other cases, the Kremlin did not originate propaganda themes but echoed the radical Arabs, especially Cairo, although in less strident tones than those used by UAR spokesmen. Also, Soviet diplomacy apparently tried to curb the Syrians and sought to identify the USSR with the relatively moderate, pro-UAR Lebanese Sunni leader Rashid Karami. Moscow has, of course, gradually built up a substantial presence in Lebanon, which provides it with a uniquely free atmosphere among Arab countries, in the form of a large embassy and extensive commercial and banking representation. It has also shown a persistent desire since the 1967 war to increase cooperation with the Jordanian government in economic, cultural and military fields.

Polarization Along US-Soviet Lines?

Moscow probably recognizes that a complete US-Israel versus Soviet-Arab polarization could entail a dangerous rise in tension in the area, inflate Arab expectations of the USSR, and increase the burden on the USSR of supporting the Arabs materially. The Soviets might not necessarily be hostile, for example, to some increase in US or other

⁹ A reference to ongoing domestic disturbances in Lebanon and the USSR's October response warning against any outside intervention.

Western ties with the radical Arab states, should such a possibility evolve. Any resulting US economic aid to these states could relieve some of the burden on the USSR (as do current contributions to the UAR from Libya, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia), while leaving the arms monopoly in Soviet hands. US-Arab ties would therefore not infringe significantly on Soviet influence, particularly as they would not involve any greater US willingness to support the Arab radicals politically.

In sum, we believe there has been considerable consistency in Soviet policy toward the Middle East over the years. However, we do not discount the growing possibility that this policy might take new directions under altered circumstances which could arise unexpectedly. The Department will, of course, continue to welcome contributions on this subject.

Rogers

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

Washington, December 23, 1969.

SUBJECT

Actions to Bolster Moderates Before Arab Summit

You asked at the last NSC meeting on the Mid-East² about actions that could be taken before the Arab summit (December 20) to bolster the moderate leaders.

A number of steps have been taken, some of which are familiar to you:³

—The first shipment of internal defense equipment (3,000 M-14 rifles and other material totaling \$1.5 million) has been airlifted to *Jordan*. King Hussein has also been informed of our readiness to consider

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 644, Country Files, Middle East, General, Vol. II. Secret. Sent for information. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates that the President saw it.

² The NSC meeting occurred December 10. Minutes of the meeting are scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969-1972.

³ A more detailed account of U.S. actions is included in a December 16 memorandum from Eliot to Kissinger. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 644, Country Files, Middle East, General, Vol. II)

his anti-aircraft and medium artillery needs. Assistant Secretary Sisco briefed his personal representative on our diplomatic position.

—For *Lebanon*, we have completed the sale of equipment necessary to improve the army's capability to control the fedayeen, and have offered to help re-equip the Army with M-14 rifles. We are negotiating credit assistance via the Commodity Credit Corporation.

—State and our ambassadors have briefed *each government* on our position on an Arab-Israeli settlement in an effort to blunt distortions. The Secretary's speech was designed to clear the record further.⁴

—For better or worse, the Four Powers are talking in New York.

The closer time has come to the summit, the more our reporting seems to indicate that the moderate participants will try to avoid closing any doors. But the dynamics of an Arab meeting can change prior intentions unpredictably.

⁴ See Document 15.

18. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Secretary of State Rogers¹

Washington, January 6, 1970.

SUBJECT

Assessment of Rabat Arab Conference—*Information Memorandum*

The Rabat Arab Summit conference ended December 23 with the Arab leaders in clear disarray. Participants confirm that no decisions were taken on the central issue of whether the Arabs should renounce the continued search for a political settlement. In fact, this potentially explosive issue was apparently not even discussed by the conferees. UAR General Fawzi's estimate that it would require at least three years and enormous cost for the Arab armies to reach the point where the

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 7 ARAB. Secret; Exdis. Sent for information. Drafted by Wrampelmeier and cleared in NEA, NEA/ARP, NEA/IAI, NEA/ARN, NEA/UAR, AF/N, and EUR/SOV. It was transmitted to Kissinger with a January 7 covering memorandum from Eliot.

Israelis are today apparently had a sobering effect on the Arab leaders. As a result, their assessment of the military situation was realistic and the advocates of an early military solution were largely by-passed. The door to a peaceful settlement was therefore tacitly left open. In particular, the UAR emerged with greater freedom of action—if Nasser chooses to exercise it.

Reactions to the outcome of the Summit can be summarized as follows:

1. *Eastern Arab Moderates* (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon)—The moderates were relieved a decision for war was not taken. More importantly, perhaps, the oil-rich states were also able to avoid making substantial new financial commitments to the front-line Arabs. Saudi sources assert that Faisal made no new commitments to the UAR, Jordan, or the fedayeen. The Kuwaitis have announced a one-time payment of \$28 million to the UAR in addition to their regular Khartoum subsidy payment and have promised an unspecified contribution to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

2. *Jordan*—The Jordanians are pleased that the more bellicose Arabs were neutralized at Rabat. They feel that Jordan and the UAR now have greater freedom of action to search for a peace settlement and Ambassador Sharaf expressed to me the view that the efforts of the Summit will therefore be beneficial. Jordanian leaders have expressed some disappointment that the conference ended without positive decisions taken and without firm pledges of additional financial or military aid to Jordan. Some further assistance may yet be forthcoming, however, from the Saudis. Jordan will be consulting shortly with the UAR and other so-called “confrontation” states to assess future courses of action.

3. *The Militants* (Syria, Iraq, Southern Yemen)—These states found no support for their calls for renunciation of the search for political settlement, for adoption of an Arab plan for “total liberation” of Palestine, and for creation of a fund from which the “confrontation” states could meet their arms purchase needs. These three, together with Libya and Sudan, publicly blame Arab conservative leaders for the indecisive outcome of the conference.

4. *The Maghreb*—The Moroccans and Tunisians share with the Eastern moderates a sense of relief that the confrontation with the militants at Rabat did not end with a victory for the latter. Both Tunisia and Morocco avoided definite commitments to the Arab front-line countries, although Morocco has agreed to levy a special tax for the benefit of the PLO. A significant development at the conference was the alignment of Algeria with its moderate neighbors, as well as Saudi Arabia. President Boumediene is clearly concerned about UAR influence on the new Libyan revolutionary regime, and some tension

between him and Libya's Qadhaafi was reported. Libya promised additional aid (\$48 million) to the UAR plus some unspecified assistance to the PLO.

5. *Fedayeen*—There is general agreement that the principal beneficiary of the conference was the PLO. PLO/Fatah leader Arafat emerged from the meeting with enhanced prestige. Details of reported financial pledges of \$36 million plus some arms, however, remain to be negotiated on a country-by-country basis. The belief that any settlement by the Arab states must also have Palestinian concurrence seems to have gained ground, particularly among the North Africans and Kuwait. The Lebanese and Jordanians anticipate increased difficulties with the fedayeen whom they fear will now be encouraged to assert even greater independence in those two countries.

6. *UAR*—Nasser clearly lost his bid to rally the Arabs behind his leadership. He did, however, emerge from the conference with his basic options still open to continue the search for a political settlement, as well as the promise of a modest increase in cash support from the Libyans and Kuwaitis. There are those, in fact, who suspect that Nasser wanted General Fawzi's military plan to be rejected in order that he might be left free to seek additional military and economic aid while remaining open to possibilities for a political settlement. In any event, if Nasser is preparing the ground for an Egyptian-first policy it may be a while before clear evidences of it appear. For the present, he has carefully avoided labelling the conference a failure or blaming the conservatives directly, while at the same time encouraging formation of close Cairo-Tripoli-Khartoum ties. His intentions to continue the search for a political settlement may become clearer following the proposed meeting in Cairo later this month of the "confrontation" states (UAR, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, plus probably Libya and Sudan). The militant radicals will, however, be in the majority at that meeting and Nasser may not want, or feel that for tactical reasons he cannot appear actively to seek, a political solution.

7. *The Soviets*—The Soviets appear relieved that the conference ended without a decision for war. However, the evident disunity in the Arab ranks and the resulting diminution of Nasser's prestige and his claim to Arab leadership must have been disappointing to Moscow. The Soviets may wish to defer further progress in either the Two-Power or Four-Power contexts until Nasser makes up his mind where he wishes to go from here.

8. *Israel*—Despite some initial gloating in the Israeli press at the evidence of Nasser's inability to unite the Arabs behind him, the outcome of the Summit Conference is not necessarily seen in Tel Aviv as beneficial to Israel. The fedayeen have obviously emerged with new prestige and at least some new Arab support. In particular, however,

the Israelis are likely to view with dismay the probability that the USG will be encouraged by the apparently favorable effect its recent Middle East initiatives have had on the Arab moderates to continue pressing its proposals despite strong, adverse Israeli reaction.

Implications for the US—The US came out as well as possible at the Summit. Proposals by the radicals to take further measures against US interests in the Arab world did not materialize. Not only was Nasser's bid to rally the moderate as well as the radical Arabs behind his leadership a failure, but the moderates were able to resist, for the most part, demands for substantial further financial contributions to the Arab military effort. Above all, our Arab moderate friends appear generally pleased by your December 9 speech and by our October 28 and December 18 proposals.² Although these were not formally discussed at the Summit, they apparently strengthened the hands of the moderates and thus helped to keep the door to a political settlement open. While most of the Arabs continue to have strong reservations about the details of our proposals on both the UAR and the Jordanian aspects of a settlement, the assessment of most of our Arab posts—as well as the Jordanians—is that the US should continue to stand on these proposals as a balanced basis for a peace settlement which we should continue to encourage.

² For Rogers's December 9 speech, see Document 15. Documentation on the October 28 and December 18 U.S. proposals is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

19. National Security Study Memorandum 90¹

Washington, February 26, 1970.

TO

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

US Interests in and Policy Toward the Mediterranean Area

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-170, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 90. Secret; Nodis. A copy was sent to the Chairman of the JCS. The date is handwritten at the top of the first page.

The President wishes to expand NSC consideration of Mediterranean problems beyond those issues cited in NSSM 87 (North Africa) and in NSSM 88 (Northern Mediterranean).²

Accordingly, he directs that the NSSMs 87 and 88 studies be placed in the context of political developments in the Mediterranean basin as a whole, including the Eastern Mediterranean. Particular emphasis should be given to how US interests in this area will be affected over the next several years.

The study should include considerations of Soviet objectives, policies and prospects and how they affect our interests, and French objectives, policies and prospects and how they affect our interests.

The President wishes to discuss the feasibility of developing policy options with respect to our interests in the area as a whole or in appropriate segments of it. He wishes to examine ways of improving the interrelationship of our programs and policies in individual countries in the Mediterranean area. Policy options should take account of political, economic and military considerations.

The President has directed that this study be prepared by an ad hoc group chaired by a representative of the Secretary of State and including representatives of the addressees of this memorandum and the NSC staff. Work already completed or underway in response to NSSM 88 may be incorporated in the study requested by the present NSSM.

The completed study should be submitted to the NSC Review Group by Monday, March 16, 1970.

Henry A. Kissinger

² NSSM 87, January 22, asked for a review of trends and U.S. options in North Africa. It is published in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume E–5, Part 2, Documents on North Africa, 1969–1972, Document 5. NSSM 88, February 12, asking for a study on U.S. policy toward Italy and the Northern Mediterranean, is scheduled for publication *ibid.*, volume XLI, Western Europe; NATO, 1969–1972.

20. National Intelligence Estimate¹

NIE 11-6-70

Washington, March 5, 1970.

**SOVIET POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST
AND MEDITERRANEAN AREA**

[Omitted here are a cover sheet, table of contents, and map.]

Summary

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

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

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

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-044, Senior Review Group Meetings, Review Group NSSM 90 5/21/70. Secret. The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, and NSA participated in the preparation of this estimate. The Director of the CIA submitted this estimate with the concurrence of all members of the USIB with the exception of the representatives of the AEC and FBI who abstained on the grounds that it was outside their jurisdiction. This NIE is partially based on the undated paper, "DIA Assessment of the Soviet Threat in the Mediterranean." (Ibid., Box H-170, National Security Study Memoranda, NSSM 90)

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

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

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

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

Discussion

I. The Strategic Setting: Broad Soviet Considerations and Objectives

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

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

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

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

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

[Omitted here are Sections II–V, on Instruments of Soviet Power in the Area, Policies in the Middle East, Policies in the Western Mediterranean, and Soviet Capabilities and Intentions in Certain Contingencies, respectively.]

VI. Long Term Prospects

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

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

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

21. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 14, 1970, 3-4:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting of CENTO Ministers with the President

PARTICIPANTS

The President
The Secretary of State, William Rogers
Assistant to the President, Henry A. Kissinger
Assistant Secretary of State, Joseph J. Sisco
NSC Staff Member, Harold H. Saunders
Multilateral Organization Advisor, William Helseth
Foreign Minister Michael Stewart (UK)
Ambassador (to Washington) John Freeman (UK)
Foreign Minister Ihsan Sabri Caglayangil (Turkey)
Ambassador (to Washington) Melhi Esenbel (Turkey)
Foreign Minister Ardeshir Zahedi (Iran)

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, CENTO 3 US (WA). Secret. The meeting occurred in the White House Cabinet Room. Background information on the meeting, biographical information, lists of attendees, and Talking Points are in a May 13 memorandum from Rogers to Nixon (*ibid.*), and in a May 14 memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon. (*ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 212, Agency Files, CENTO)

Ambassador (to Washington) Aslan Afshar (Iran)
Ambassador (to Washington) Agha Hilaly (Pakistan)
Ambassador (to Turkey) Iftikar Ali (Pakistan)
Secretary-General, CENTO, Turgut Menemencioglu

After a brief picture taking session, Secretary Rogers told the President that the group had dealt in its morning session with CENTO organizational issues. He was happy to report that there are no major problems. Bilateral discussions among members of the group would begin after the meeting with the President, and the group would review the general international situation in its formal session the following morning as well as continuing bilateral meetings later in the day.

The President spoke briefly on three issues—the Middle East, Vietnam and U.S.-Soviet relations.

On the Middle East, he noted that the Soviets are now there in a deeper and more potentially dangerous role. They have their own interests to pursue, and the U.S. is watching them with some concern. The U.S. continues its dedication to trying to help the nations on the ground find the way to peace. As he had said on previous occasions, the U.S. is “neither pro-Arab nor pro-Israel but pro-peace.” Unfortunately, he could not report his hope for an early breakthrough.

In Southeast Asia, the U.S. is attempting to find a stability for the situation there. In some senses, the U.S. purpose there is the same as it is in the area of the CENTO nations—stabilizing a dangerous situation so that all the nations of that region can find security and an opportunity to move ahead with their own development.

On U.S.-Soviet relations, the President began by commenting that the U.S. is “very far” from the Soviet Union on Vietnam. The U.S. can understand the reasons for the Soviet position since the USSR must, in the context of the world communist movement, compete with the Communist Chinese. We understand, though we do not welcome, the Soviet position. In the Middle East, the Soviet Union has its own interests to pursue. There is a tendency among many people to see the entire Middle East situation as a confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The President said he hoped that this was a belief that would never become widely held. However, he could unhappily see no change soon in the Soviet position there. He turned then to what he said he regarded as perhaps the overriding issue between the U.S. and the USSR—the strategic arms limitation talks in Vienna. He said that while he could be described as pessimistic about the situations in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, he could be described as optimistic—for somewhat negative and pessimistic reasons—about the negotiations in Vienna. Whereas on the first two issues the U.S. and USSR have their very different interests to pursue, on the strategic arms question both sides have their own very strong reasons for wanting an

agreement. Each has enough weapons to blow up each other and a good bit of the world besides, and the weapons are a major financial drain.

The President said, however, that he did want to assure his friends as he had our NATO allies that the U.S. does not intend to take a position that would weaken it vis-à-vis the USSR. This is not just a question of national prestige or the United States wanting to be the first power in the world. He thought it crucial that the leading power who wants nothing more than to defend its friends and its own interests should not be in a weak position in relation to that leading world power which for reasons of its own ideology has as its objective the expansion of its own influence.

The President said that he was aware that a lot of critics feel that this U.S. Administration has over-used the word "consultation." But he takes "consultation" very seriously. What he means by it is that there will be no effort by the U.S. to achieve a "cynical condominium" whereby the U.S. and the Soviet Union attempt to reach accords for their own sakes without reference to the interests of their friends. The President, in completing his comments on the Vienna talks, noted as evidence of the Soviet interest in an agreement the fact that Chairman Kosygin had in denouncing U.S. action in Cambodia not broken off the Vienna talks. We expected that the Soviet Union would criticize us for Cambodia just as the U.S. had criticized the USSR for its action in Czechoslovakia.

The President concluded by saying that he would like to hear the views of his visitors.

Secretary Rogers said in passing that there were of course differences between the situation in Czechoslovakia and in Cambodia. The U.S. in Southeast Asia would welcome the attention of an international body to go and see what is going on there, whereas the Soviet Union had rejected that sort of effort in Czechoslovakia. The Secretary then asked the Secretary General if he had a few comments to make.

Ambassador Menemencioglu noted that CENTO is very "loose" in its status, not like NATO. The association is based on a series of separate agreements and some bilateral arrangements which the U.S. has with each of its members. The strength of the organization has not been in its legal framework but has rather been in the common interests which the members share.

The Ambassador concluded his remarks by saying that he appreciated the recognition by the President of the importance of the Middle East. The Soviet fleet has become just the latest evidence of a strong Soviet play for influence in this area.

The President interjected to agree that the real contest is not over Israel but for Soviet influence in the Mediterranean, in Africa and in the seas beyond the Suez Canal.

Foreign Minister Zahedi noted that the situation in the Middle East had become worse over the past year. He particularly noted the deterioration of the situation in Jordan where the extremist elements had become more powerful. He felt that the members of CENTO could help nations like Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia if they themselves were strong. The Foreign Minister then noted the dangerous situation in the Persian Gulf where the Soviets backed the Iraqis and were potentially a source of trouble. He said that the CENTO members wanted to do what they could themselves to preserve the stability of this area. He noted the importance of the oil which transits this area not only for the economic progress of the nations on the Gulf but also for the financial position of the UK and the oil supply of Western Europe. In this connection, he noted that the Iranian Government had just reached a satisfactory agreement with the oil consortium.

There was a brief jocular exchange alluding to the fact that Iranian bargainers are never satisfied, and then the Secretary of State asked the Turkish Foreign Minister whether he had any general comments to make.

Foreign Minister Caglayangil said he agreed with the general point of view expressed by Foreign Minister Zahedi. He felt that the central question as far as the Arab-Israeli conflict is concerned is whether there will simply be a solution to the war of 1967 or whether there will be a solution to the Palestine problem. He felt that international organs—the Four Power talks or the UN Security Council—were not likely to find a solution. Meanwhile, the conflict is turning into a war of national liberation and therefore becoming much more difficult to solve. He felt that the situation in a country like Jordan could not go on much longer as it is, and that a drastic change in the balance of forces within Jordan could not help but have an effect in Saudi Arabia and other parts of the area. He felt that it was important at this time to come to the assistance of such countries as Jordan.

In the Persian Gulf, he continued, perhaps the best forum for dealing with those problems there is CENTO.

The President interjected to ask whether he was referring to a military agreement among the CENTO partners for this purpose, and the Foreign Minister of Turkey replied that he would think in terms of consultation.

The President asked how such a consultative group would deal with revolutionary forces and a revolutionary situation in the Gulf. Foreign Minister Zahedi, picking up the tenor of his earlier remarks, said that the advantage of having the nations on the ground strong enough to deal with the situation was that they could move quickly and deal with the situation before outside powers such as the Soviet Union became involved and the problem was escalated to the Great Power level. In response to a direct question from the President, Zahedi said Iran

could and would “gladly” act in this manner if it possessed the requisite military strength.

In respect to the President’s request for his comments, Ambassador Hilaly said that he shared the concern of his colleagues about the Middle East. On the one hand, military power rests on one side, but on the other hand 100 million Arabs will not forever stand aside for that power. Israel’s present policy will not be in its best interest because Israel can only survive by reaching an accommodation with its neighbors. For the moment, however, he felt that the situation could only worsen.

Ambassador Hilaly continued that the nations of the area—each of them in its own way—must be helped to be strong. Pakistan, which has its own problem with the arms balance being upset in India’s favor in the subcontinent, cannot do its share in the Alliance because it is weak and badly in need of arms supply. For the sake of stability, Pakistan should not feel weak. All Pakistan asks is that its Allies help it with military aid so that Pakistan can be a loyal and strong ally in return.

The President interjected that the arms question has been a terribly difficult one for us. We recall the days—“they were good days”—when the U.S. had a close relationship with Pakistan in the 1950s, and “we are trying to work our way back to a similarly close relationship. We have been looking very closely at the arms situation.”

The President continued by saying that he wanted the group to know that the U.S. had also been considering very carefully what it can do to help Jordan. The question is whether or not Jordan can survive. Foreign Minister Zahedi said he thought it could.

The President said that he had asked about how to deal with the problem of revolutionary forces in the Persian Gulf but he wondered about revolutionary forces in each of the countries. For instance, he asked Foreign Minister Caglayangil what he could say about revolutionary forces in Turkey. “Are they ready to blow?”

Foreign Minister Caglayangil said that of course leftist forces in Turkey have freedom of expression in the press and politically. They therefore appear to be stronger than they are. He felt, however, that the leftist forces had reached a high point and would now decline in influence. In any case, Turkey was prepared to cope with them.

Foreign Minister Zahedi said that Iran felt that the only answer was to stay one step ahead of the revolutionary forces in thinking of the things they were pressing for before they themselves started pressing. He noted smilingly that the situation in Iran was not like that in the United States; people there did not yet have everything they needed.

In closing, the President asked Ambassador Hilaly how things were in East Pakistan. The Ambassador replied that they had become a little better. The President thanked him for the good reception that our astronauts had had in Dacca.

The meeting closed with the President jokingly saying that he did not have any very formal gifts for the group such as he had often received on his travels abroad. He did recall, however, that there had been a bill signing in the Cabinet Room that morning and that it was his custom at such occasions to hand out pens with his signature on them. He gave each of the visitors one of these pens saying that it was “a little something that they could take home to their children.”

Harold H. Saunders²

² Printed from a copy with this typed signature.

22. Minutes of a Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, May 21, 1970, 2:35–3:40 p.m.

SUBJECT

U.S. Policy Toward the Mediterranean Area (NSSM 90)

PARTICIPATION

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State—

William I. Cargo

Donald McHenry

Thomas Thornton

Defense—

Richard A. Ware

Robert Pranger

CIA—R. Jack Smith

JCS—MG Albert J. Bowley

OEP—Haakon Lindjord

USIA—Frank Shakespeare

NSC Staff—

Harold H. Saunders

Helmut Sonnenfeldt

Richard Kennedy

Jeanne W. Davis

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

It was agreed that:

1. The Joint Staff would prepare an analysis of the nature of the Soviet threat and our comparative capabilities in time for the NSC meeting on the Middle East tentatively scheduled for June 3;²

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-111, Senior Review Group, SRG Minutes Originals 1970. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

² See Document 26.

2. The Working Group would revise the Cargo paper³ along the lines of the restatement of the approaches done by the NSC staff;

3. The response to NSSM 88 on Italy would be reviewed and a paper on Greece would be prepared as the basis for a brief discussion of the two countries at an NSC meeting on the Mediterranean.

Mr. Kissinger referred to the comprehensive paper for the meeting and mentioned two problems: (1) how to discuss the substance of the paper and (2) how we could meet the President's desire to talk about Greece and Italy in an NSC meeting on the Mediterranean. With regard to the paper, he asked if it made any sense to talk about the Mediterranean as an area or if it would be better to break it up into component parts.

Mr. Cargo said that geographic influences do exist but that political issues can probably be broken out into separate areas with one exception—that of the US strategic position and force levels. He referred to an INR study which had concluded that the features of disunity and the lack of commonality in the area were more distinctive than the unifying features.⁴ He thought, however, there was some educational and orientational value in looking at the Mediterranean as a whole.

Mr. Kissinger said there appeared to be a number of related but separable issues: e.g., Italy was not particularly influenced by Arab-Israeli developments except insofar as Italy might feel isolated by increasing Soviet influence in the area.

Mr. Ware commented that the question of the Soviet military and political role in the Mediterranean is a unifying factor.

Mr. Kissinger agreed that the Soviet strategic role should be discussed.

Mr. Cargo commented that the area appeared more separable than not. He noted the Arab-Israeli question was being considered in a separate group; Greece was being discussed by the Under Secretaries Committee; Italy and North Africa were the subjects of separate NSSMs.

Mr. Kissinger suggested we consider this paper as a general introduction to a specific examination of issues as was done in the case

³ The Cargo paper refers to the March 23 "U.S. Interests in and Policy Toward the Mediterranean," prepared in response to NSSM 90 by an ad hoc group chaired by William I. Cargo. (Ibid., Box H-044, Senior Review Group Meetings, Review Group NSSM 90) It was to be discussed at the April 24 meeting, which did not take place. The Analytical Summary of the paper, prepared for the June 17 NSC meeting, is Document 24. NSSM 90 is Document 19.

⁴ "The Mediterranean Basin: A Poor Prospect for Regionalism," January 30. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-044, Senior Review Group Meetings, Review Group NSSM 90)

of Latin America. We might first take a general conceptual approach which would be followed by a more politically oriented approach.

Mr. Lindjord commented that we might make the case that the Mediterranean had not had any strategic unity since 1945 when British influence was removed.

General Bowley said it was necessary to establish an overall policy for the Mediterranean before one can study the specific issues. He argued that the Joint Staff had not had an opportunity to insert their views into the Cargo paper.

Mr. Cargo replied there had been as much exchange as possible with Defense and JCS within the brief time allowed for the production of the paper.

Mr. Ware said that Defense had not seen the issues and options chapter before the paper came to the NSC staff and that they had serious problems with the paper. He believed that, if this paper were to become an introduction for consideration of specific problems, it would be necessary to take a second look at its basic concepts. He added that the paper recently produced by the NATO group also raised serious issues.

Mr. Shakespeare asked the nature of the fundamental disagreement between Defense and State.

Mr. Ware replied it related to the reason for the decline of the US role in the Mediterranean. Was it based on the success of our policy, as the Cargo paper implied, or have we reversed our policy of working with at least the moderate Arab states? He thought we should pay more attention to the political/military aspects of the area, and that the USSR was very successful in weaving together its political and military roles. He considered that the problem of the Soviet threat and of force structures had not been covered adequately in the Cargo paper. He agreed that the JCS had not had a chance to make their views known in the short time period allotted.

Mr. Kissinger said he saw no sense in discussing the Arab-Israeli question in this group since it was already under consideration in another group and would then move to the NSC.

Mr. Pranger referred to the NATO paper, saying that the issue of the Soviet threat was being discussed in the North Atlantic Council if not in Washington.

Mr. Cargo agreed there was no reason to go into the Arab-Israeli question in this group. With regard to force levels, he agreed that the paper did not discuss them in any detail. He referred, however, to the section on the long-range US role in the area (page 64) and the three options discussed, with their implications of different force levels. With regard to strategic comparability in the area, he believed there was a fairly thorough-going statement of Soviet and US objectives (page 11, page 16 and following).

Mr. Shakespeare asked if the JCS had not participated in the drafting of the paper.

General Bowley said JCS had been a member of the Working Group but had merely read the paper, did not like it, but had no opportunity to change it. He recommended, therefore, that the paper not go forward, and distributed a specific recommendation for a new study to “look at the Mediterranean properly.”

Mr. Kissinger, referring to the JCS recommendation, asked if they were suggesting that the present paper took an “undisciplined and unsystematic approach” to the paper.

General Bowley said yes—that the JCS had found the paper generalized and unspecific. He thought we would have to get into the various regions in order to be specific. The paper lacked a comparative analysis of our interests with those of others. It contained no range of threats with matching strategies and did not adequately discuss the increasing Soviet threat in relation to the decreasing US capability. The paper contained four issues: (1) what is the threat; (2) should the Europeans do more; (3) the relation of the Arab states; (4) the relation of the North African states. He thought the last three questions could not be answered without an answer to the first question, and an answer to the first question would automatically provide answers to the other three. He thought the paper did not meet the requirements of the NSSM and that we needed a new start.

Mr. Cargo did not agree with General Bowley. The paper raised the essential questions, and the Soviet interest and threat was the central issue. He thought the JCS suggestions were additive and would provide more detail but he did not consider them essentially a substitute for the existing paper.

Mr. Kissinger asked if we could not add the military analysis and a comparative analysis to the section in the existing paper on the Soviet threat. He asked if we had not done a study of the Soviet threat in the Mediterranean in an earlier WSAG exercise.⁵

Mr. Saunders agreed that such a study had been done but was not as thorough as that now envisaged by the JCS.

Mr. Cargo agreed that we should have an analysis of the Soviet threat but commented that he was reluctant to lose the broader context of the existing paper.

Mr. Kissinger agreed with JCS that, whatever stance we take, we need a clearer idea of what we are taking a stance toward. He asked if

⁵ Presumably a reference to NSSM 33, March 21, 1969, and subsequent studies. Scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XXIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1969–1972.

we could not try to incorporate a military and strategic analysis of the nature of the threat and our comparative capabilities.

Mr. Pranger questioned the tone of the paper, saying that it implies a fresh approach in viewing the Mediterranean in terms of “the interaction of outside forces on the one hand and subregional problems on the other.” He believed the area had always been viewed in that way and that the existing paper does not add much that is new.

Mr. Kissinger commented that we could distinguish between what is historically true and what has been historically done in the bureaucracy.

Mr. Cargo agreed that we have not looked at the Mediterranean as a whole.

Mr. Shakespeare asked if the JCS wished to analyze various likely Soviet objectives and interests.

General Bowley replied that they wished to examine the nature of the threat in the Mediterranean.

Mr. Kissinger commented that we could agree on the threat without agreeing on what to do about it. He thought we could have an analysis of the threat. However, deciding whether to confront the Soviet Union, let national forces play it out, or a combination of the two—is a political judgment. We need the analysis first. He noted that heretofore he had considered the Mediterranean as an American logistics area, but that he had learned in a WSAG exercise that we probably could not physically move our forces today as we had at the time of the Lebanon exercise.

Mr. Ware said we should not look at the threat as only a military one since the Soviets had integrated the military, political and economic aspects quite well.

General Bowley thought we must make some assumptions as to what the Soviets will do and then consider our options in terms of these various assumptions.

Mr. Shakespeare reminded Mr. Kissinger of the comment by Admiral Moorer at an earlier meeting that next year’s budget would involve substantial reductions in US forces in the Mediterranean and that Mr. Kissinger had thought that unacceptable.

Mr. Kissinger asked what sort of comparative projection we would need.

Mr. Ware asked about the timing of the exercise.

Mr. Kissinger replied that the Arab-Israeli situation would probably be discussed in the NSC in about two weeks.⁶ He thought the threat

⁶ Presumably a reference to the June 17 NSC meeting; see Document 26.

portion of the Mediterranean paper should be ready by then. He thought we had a little more time on the rest of the paper but noted that the President was anxious to discuss Greece and Italy. Since the Italian elections were so close, he suggested we might delay this NSC discussion until after those elections.

Mr. Ware said the Working Group had not been able to function because of the deadlines imposed and suggested that we let the Working Group revise the basic paper.

Mr. Kissinger agreed, except for the threat study which would be useful for the NSC discussion of the Middle East.

Mr. Saunders agreed that the threat study would be useful background and asked how elaborate it would be. He assumed that work had already been done on the Soviet threat in the area and that someone could collect existing material and summarize it in usable form.

General Bowley said the study could be completed in two weeks.

Mr. Smith asked how we could separate the Soviet threat in the Mediterranean from the Arab-Israeli problem. He thought it would be extremely difficult to define except in those terms.

Mr. Kissinger asked if he meant that you could not separate the SA-3's and Soviet aircraft in Egypt from the Soviet threat in a larger area. He asked what would be the effect if Soviet aircraft in Egypt were used against the Sixth Fleet.

Mr. Saunders said there were two questions: the Soviet naval threat and what would a Soviet air system operated out of Egypt do.

General Bowley commented that it was larger than this, noting possible extension to Wheelus. He said we were watching Soviet influence build and should ask where it is leading.

Mr. Kissinger asked why it would be so difficult to estimate the importance of Soviet air bases on US Mediterranean operations.

Mr. Ware referred to the implications in a Soviet use of Malta.

Mr. Smith explained that he meant a study of the threat must *include* Egypt.

Mr. Cargo saw no problem in expanding this discussion. He noted, however, that the existing paper was interlarded with references to Soviet power in the Mediterranean, citing pages 20 and 23.

Mr. Shakespeare agreed, however, that the paper does not lay out clear estimates of probable Soviet moves and how we should be prepared to meet them.

Mr. Smith agreed. He noted, however, that just as we have difficulty in treating the Mediterranean as an area, the Soviets have also found it difficult. He referred in this connection to their Syrian fiasco. He repeated that we would find it hard to agree on the nature of the threat.

Mr. Cargo cited the estimate of Soviet objectives in the area (page 24) which concluded that the Soviet threat to the littoral states is now mainly psychological and political. However, the security of Europe would be seriously threatened if the North African coast and the Mediterranean Sea should come under hostile domination.

Mr. Kissinger remarked that one of the JCS concerns had been with hardware, but that the extent of Soviet political influence was more difficult to measure. He said the paper raised the issue of whether we should deal with the area in terms of a US-Soviet confrontation or to what extent we should rely on regional forces. He asked if this was a real issue—must it be one or the other? Does anyone want a straight military confrontation with the USSR? Does anyone think a military confrontation plays no role? He thought the issue must be a mixture and was, in fact, a question of emphasis. He wondered if it was possible to decide in the abstract where the emphasis should be placed at any given moment in any given situation. He asked to what extent the countries concerned have an interest in reducing Soviet influence in the area.

Mr. Cargo agreed the sense of nationalism is a positive element insofar as the US is concerned, but that it was one factor and must be related to other factors.

Mr. Kissinger commented that, by putting it in the “either/or” context, it was not a live option. He thought an attempt to expel the Soviets by military power alone was simply not in the cards and that there must be a political component. He wondered if we would be more likely to reduce Soviet influence by relying on national forces or by creating a balance of power so that those who want to resist the Soviets will know that they have a friend.

General Bowley agreed this was very important, particularly with regard to Turkey and Greece.

Mr. Cargo said they had tried to get at this question in discussion of the long-range US role in the area. He referred to the options (pages 66–68), saying that Option A was weighted on the military side; Option B saw a shifting of the balance to the Europeans without severing our ties; and C envisaged retrenchment.

Mr. Ware cited the US withdrawal of 1600 troops from Leghorn, ostensibly for budgetary reasons. He said the Italians simply did not believe that a nation such as the US would withdraw 1600 troops for budgetary reasons alone. They assumed other reasons. Then, when they saw the Soviets moving more and more ships into the Mediterranean they would feel they had to decide which way to turn. This would have an impact on the US posture.

Mr. Shakespeare suggested that the novelty of Soviet influence in the Mediterranean has focused attention on Soviet power as opposed

to the acceptance of the established Western presence in the Mediterranean. He thought any unexpected development now, such as the downfall of Hussein in Jordan or a strong leftist election victory in Italy, could have serious psychological effects. It would add to the momentum, would make people in the area exceedingly nervous, and would affect our ability to maneuver. They favored enhancing a NATO capability in the Mediterranean as a counter to Soviet power.

Mr. Kissinger referred to the discussion of the long-range US role in the Mediterranean and a possible division between the US and the Europeans. We can say we should not take a forward role, but this might have different meanings in different areas. We might look to the French in the Maghreb, but in the Arab-Israeli dispute no other European country was able or willing to play a role comparable to that of the US. We could use this paper to state general propositions and outline a basic stance. He commended Mr. Cargo on an "amazing performance" in producing the paper, given the nature of the assignment and the time allowed in which to complete it.

Mr. Cargo commented that the basic difficulty in producing the paper lay in the fact that the common elements in the area are not all that many.

Mr. Kissinger said that we should look at the balance of US and European interests. With regard to the long-range US role in the Mediterranean, no one would consider increasing our military posture, as such, as a solution. It would be consistent with the Nixon doctrine that wherever possible we should rely on national forces. They may not be enough in some parts of the Mediterranean and we may have to reach conscious decisions to go in or go out. We could state the general propositions and try to relate them to specifics. He referred to the restatement of the Cargo options done by the NSC staff (pages 7-8 of HAK's talking points)⁷ which were not mutually exclusive. He thought we might go through a period of containment to reach equilibrium. He thought this restatement of the propositions might provide an approach to a general stance.

⁷ These pages summarized alternative strategies for dealing with an enhanced Soviet role, the balance of U.S. and European interests and responsibilities, and assessment of long-range U.S. interests in the Arab countries and Mediterranean. According to the Talking Points, the alternative strategies were not presented in the Cargo paper, and were broad rather than tactical. The alternative strategies were to offset Soviet military power through establishing a regional balance of power, competition with the Soviets coupled with disarmament, limitation of Soviet influence through regional nationalisms, a lowered U.S. profile without disengagement, and alignment with "progressive" forces in the area. (Talking Points, undated; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-044, Senior Review Group Meetings, Review Group NSSM 90)

General Bowley, Mr. Smith and Mr. Thornton all agreed with Saunders' approach.

Mr. Ware asked if the Working Group could meet on the paper rather than merely comment on a paper circulated for comment.

Mr. Cargo agreed.

Mr. Shakespeare noted French construction of a radio transmitter on Cyprus which would provide a much stronger signal in the Mediterranean than that of the Voice. He saw this as evidence that the French must care a great deal about talking to the Arabs.

Mr. Kissinger asked how we can best handle Italy and Greece. He thought the President's major concern was to get a feel for the impact of the domestic situations in these countries on their foreign policy and the possible impact of the US on their domestic situations.

Mr. Cargo noted that the Greek situation had been discussed in the arms supply context and said he would talk to the Department to see what type of paper might be useful on Greece. With regard to Italy, he noted that they had already prepared a response to NSSM 88.

Mr. Kissinger asked that the Italian paper be reviewed and that a paper on Greece be considered, with a view to a 15 minute discussion in the NSC on these two countries.

Mr. Smith suggested we might throw in Turkey and consider the three countries with relation to NATO.

Mr. Kissinger agreed that this might be helpful but said the President had not asked for this approach. He was primarily concerned about the domestic policies in Greece and Italy, the problems of the Alliance, their future orientation, and the degree to which these could be influenced by the US.

23. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 5, 1970.

President's Meeting with his Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board

PARTICIPANTS

The President	
Admiral George Anderson	Dr. William Baker
Mr. Gordon Gray	Mr. Franklin Murphy
Mr. Robert Murphy	Governor Nelson Rockefeller
Mr. J. Patrick Coyne	Mr. Henry A. Kissinger
	Brigadier General A.M. Haig, Jr.

The President convened the meeting at 12:05. He introduced the meeting by pointing out that he was to have a National Security Council meeting sometime in the following week.² He made the following points to the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board:

—Escalation by the Soviets has put the heat on the United States and the recent action by 73 Senators outlining support for the President in this crisis underlines the importance of the event.³

—The President pointed out that the Board should be aware that Arab moderates could be inclined to lean in the direction of the United States due to the Soviet aggressiveness.

—The Arab moderates obviously do not want the balance of power to shift them.

—It is difficult to maintain a balance in the Middle East with the introduction of Soviet combat personnel into Egypt. The President pointed out that some maintained position that we should do nothing. But if we do nothing the Israelis may be forced to act. Also, it is apparent that there will be no settlement without U.S. and Soviet agreement. This may be possible sooner or later. If we wait for later, then the President visualizes some flash point with great dangers which might then ultimately result in agreement. The Soviets on the other hand probably are delighted with a status quo since they are exploiting it with greatly increased influence.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 276, Agency Files, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Vol. IV. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Cabinet Room.

² See Document 26.

³ A copy of the Senators' May 26 letter to Rogers is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1251, Saunders Files, Basic Policy—Middle East 1/1/70–12/31/70. The letter stated that the appearance of Soviet pilots flying missions over Egypt in April was "a significant change and a challenge to American strategic interests and a growing threat to world peace. Recent Soviet moves have encouraged Arab belligerence, and are creating a growing military imbalance in favor of the Arab states." The Senators urged Nixon to provide additional jet aircraft to Israel in response to this Soviet "escalation."

The President also pointed out that the Soviets fear the fedayeen just as does Nasser. However, on balance, to the degree that we line up solidly with Israel, the Soviets acquire support from the other elements by default. Finally, the President emphasized that the main danger today is that Israel may move militarily and that we will be looking down the barrels with the Soviet Union again. On balance, the President believes that if there is to be a settlement, it must be imposed. It would be a settlement which would be not to the liking of either Israel or the Arabs. It is really a question of the degree of dissatisfaction shared by both. For this reason, the U.S. and the Soviets must talk, but at a time and under circumstances in which the Soviets feel it is in their interest to do so. They do not feel this way at present. So we must keep them worried about the Middle East. The President emphasized that he had no domestic political problem on this issue and it would be influenced only by the national interests. At present, he feels that it is necessary that we put Israel in a position that they can be a serious worry to the Soviets. The President added that the U.S. has no illusions about Four Power or Israeli/Nasser talks. The only solution would be one imposed by both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Franklin Murphy stated that the Arabs feel that the loss of oil is a deterrent to the United States and its actions with respect to Israel. He wondered whether or not we were studying the implications of what it would mean to lose Middle East oil. The President replied that this would be a serious turn of events, especially from Europe's point. On the other hand, the President pointed out the Arab oil producers cannot drink their oil and must have a market. This was the issue in Iran some years ago.

Franklin Murphy then added: Isn't there a wheel within a wheel. Without the benefits and revenues from the oil in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the fedayeen movement would collapse. Dr. Kissinger added that the fedayeen movement was fundamentally subsidized by the moderate Arabs, as well as some Soviet support.

Robert Murphy stated if we examine the Middle East issue in depth, I feel that what you have said will be largely verified. The President replied: Yes, this indicates that the oil problem is not quite so bad as frequently depicted, and that in any event the Arabs must sell their oil.

Admiral Anderson stated that it is also important that we, the United States, do not get isolated on this issue and that we keep our moderate Arab friends with us. The President agreed that this is necessary on the surface at any rate.

Governor Rockefeller stated that as we look down the road, we can see the Soviets behind all the problems in the Middle East and he wondered whether or not they could absorb all of the Middle East's oil.

Franklin Murphy stated that while these are the realities of the Middle East situation, the evidence is that the Soviets' role in the Middle East is not understood in the Moslem world and they view it as strictly an anti-Israeli problem. Dr. Kissinger stated that the Moslems worry about the Soviet Union on entirely different grounds. Robert Murphy stated that he believed that on balance the Soviets do not enjoy that much prestige in the Middle East among the Arab nations. The President interrupted, nevertheless the wheels continue to turn. He wants to consider this issue on the 16th of June⁴ with the view of deciding where we go from here.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Middle East.]

⁴ See Document 25.

24. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff¹

Washington, June 12, 1970.

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

A U.S. APPROACH TO THE GREATER MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Note: This is not a decision paper. It is an exercise to find a broader conceptual approach to policy in this area. Policy formulation is now handled in more than half a dozen bureaucratic compartments, and real issues are often obscured.

I. The Area Under Study

A. Definition. Some would say that the states bordering the Mediterranean are too diverse to be thought of as a coherent region. The forces and relationships that play across this area, however, are

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1248, Saunders Files, NSSM 90—Mediterranean Policy. Secret. This paper is an analytical summary of the response to NSSM 90, Document 19. The response to NSSM 90, originally dated March 23 and referred to as the Cargo paper, was discussed at the May 21 SRG meeting. See Document 22 and footnote 3 thereto.

significant enough to suggest that a slightly *broader definition would identify an area of serious policy concerns*. For instance:

—The arena of increased *Soviet activity* defines an area including Iran, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Algeria, perhaps Libya, UAR, Somalia, Sudan, South Yemen, Yemen, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, potentially the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea itself.

—As a platform for *NATO–U.S. strategic response*, the area has contracted from one including SAC, transit, missile or training bases in the NATO countries, Morocco, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Spain, to one involving only the NATO members, Spain, and the Sea itself. Even on the Sea, the strategic role of the Sixth Fleet has changed somewhat with the threat of Soviet air or naval bases on the southern or eastern shore.

—The area *defined economically* would start with the *Common Market nucleus* and first reach out to include those nations associating with the Market or having a special relationship with one of its members—Greece, Turkey, Israel, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Spain, with more to come. This area might also be broadened to include the *principal suppliers of oil to Western Europe*—Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Libya—because the oil is a major factor in the area's strategic as well as its economic importance.

—Areas of *special U.S. interest* include, in addition to the NATO countries, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, Israel.

—Definition of the area should also take into account the *principal relationships of nations within the area* in addition to those above:

France–Arab nations
France–Spain–Morocco–Tunisia–Algeria–Libya
Maghreb
Arab nations
Israel–Turkey–Iran (recognized common interests and cooperation)
Libya–UAR–Sudan (new association)
UAR–Iraq–Jordan–Syria–Lebanon (confrontation states)
Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, UK (guarantor powers, Cyprus)
Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Libya, UAR, Jordan (Khartoum Fund economic assistance)

Conclusion: These interrelationships seem to define a geographical area of intensified activity which includes the states bordering on the Mediterranean plus the mainly Western European, Arab and Persian Gulf states behind them. Beyond that area the criss-cross of interrelationships falls off sharply, though Pakistan and to a lesser extent India as well as the Indian Ocean play a role on one side and sub-Saharan African associations on the other.

B. *Advantages from this kind of treatment.* While it would be artificial to try to formulate detailed policy for an area as diverse as this,

there are advantages in looking at the area's major problems in relationship to each other. For instance:

—*Arab-Israel*. The more narrowly this problem is viewed, the fewer the U.S. options seems to be. Viewed in the context of the broader area, there is greater choice since the U.S.-Soviet contest appears as but one of the forces at work; the dangers of working via proxies become more apparent because the limits on outsiders are seen as a more general phenomenon; ways of strengthening our position elsewhere in the area while riding out the absence of an Arab-Israeli settlement become more apparent.

—*Greece and Spain*. There is substantial pressure to keep each at arms length because of their present non-democratic forms of government. It is only when these countries are seen in light of the fact that they are two of the few points the U.S. can count on for staging into other parts of the Mediterranean that the counter-argument becomes compelling. Also, their influence could add to the number of constructive forces at work in the area.

—*Trade policy* worldwide dictates that the U.S. oppose preferential trade agreements, and preferential arrangements between the Common Market and the Mediterranean countries are not necessarily components of closer relations between them. However, the U.S. may have a strong political interest in evolution of closer economic relationships between the countries of this region and preferential arrangements would speed that process.

—The *Sixth Fleet* was established principally to fulfill a general war mission in connection with NATO forces. Increasingly the contingencies the Fleet is most likely to be called on to deal with are less general war contingencies and more contingencies within the region itself.

—The *Persian Gulf* is sufficiently remote and yet dependent on Western European petroleum markets that the U.S. is tempted to stand back and let the stronger powers around it organize its security and stability. It is only when it is related to broader forces at work in the area as a whole—Arab radicalism, Soviet naval interest, Arab-Iranian rivalry, the drive for modernization—that one becomes less easy about leaving it to its own devices.

II. Analytical Bases for Policy and the Issues

Disagreement over policies in this area often grows out of different judgments over what really are the significant developments there. The annex to this paper² discusses in detail the major actors, their interrelations, and the operational issues flowing therefrom.

² Attached but not printed.

There are two broad views of the dynamics of the area:

—*One view* is that the main factor is that this area has become *the major new arena in the global U.S.–Soviet contest*. This approach emphasizes that, with a stand-off long established on the NATO central front, the East-West conflict has now spilled over to the south of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. This bases U.S. policy on the judgment that this is *the main* thing going on in the area.

—*A second view* does not dismiss the fact that this is the major new area for Soviet–U.S. competition, but tends to place this more in the context of other new forces at work there. It asks whether there is advantage in thinking of the area this way: This area is in a period of adjustment to a new configuration of international influences. After years when major powers provided the dominant external influence, now no single external influence is likely to dominate. In the future, a collection of external and internal influences will seek a balance.

The fundamental question for the policy-maker is what blend of the above attitudes to adopt as a touchstone for policy judgments:

—What degree of direct U.S. control and involvement are necessary to counter expansion of Soviet influence throughout the area or to encourage indigenous forces that will?

—Conversely, to what extent can the U.S. take a secondary role, relying on indigenous forces to deny Soviet control?

Whichever view of the area one holds, limiting Soviet influence is a major U.S. interest. The question for argument, in short, is: What is the best way to limit that influence, given the forces now at work in the area?

The answer depends initially on the answers to questions like these:

—How important are our interests in the greater Mediterranean and how much direct U.S. support do they require?

—How great is the Soviet military and political threat and what are its goals?

—What capabilities do the regional states have for preserving the security and independence of the region?

But the basic issue is:

With what combination should the U.S. contest the extension of Soviet influence: mainly by means of military containment—either directly or through proxies like Israel—or mainly by trying to subordinate military containment to a pluralistic strategy based on indigenous political containment?

—Some argue that a strong military posture is the only position that Moscow understands and will respect. The Soviets apparently see a large enough interest in the UAR to accept the risks of operating

weapons systems to counter Israeli attacks. The U.S. risks appearing to have backed down in the face of Soviet pressure if it does not seem prepared to respond directly to protect its friends.

—These would argue that the U.S. has no choice but to bolster the position of its effective friends and allies—NATO members, Israel, Iran—to withstand encroachment by Soviet forces and proxies. If strengthening our friends has the effect of looking like a challenge to the USSR, that may be beneficial. Since U.S. friends tend to be more effective than Soviet proxies, the lesson might be learned that it pays to deal with the U.S.

—Others contend the U.S. has no interest in a direct confrontation with the USSR over the area unless that confrontation becomes an adjunct to a larger confrontation over Europe. If the U.S. does not wish to go to war over any part of this area for its own sake, the U.S. should avoid wherever possible escalating this contest into a direct U.S.-Soviet confrontation.

—The contest is primarily a long-term one for political influence, not mainly for current military position. Neither U.S. nor probable Soviet strategy requires military control over specific territory in the area. Military forces and position will be used mainly to enhance political influence, not vice versa.

—A policy of military containment and confrontation will not be supported by interested European states in the area.

There are two related questions:

1. *To what extent is Soviet-U.S. interaction likely to influence the political complexion of this area over the next decade?*

—Some believe that, however much the U.S. and USSR may wish to limit their involvement, their interests are such that their rivalry will be a significant influence on the area. This rivalry cannot help but shape political developments. If, for instance, the USSR forces the U.S. more and more into Israel's corner, this will increase the political pressure from the radical side on moderate regimes in the area. Thus the posture of the Great Powers—and their global relationship—will at least indirectly affect the turn of political events in the area. They contend that the U.S. cannot afford to underrate the capacity of the USSR to exploit radical movements to enhance its own position.

—Others argue that the day is over when outside powers will set the direction of events in this area. Local forces are now strong enough not only to limit the involvement of outside powers but to influence their posture. Local forces have brought an end to British and French predominance and, outside NATO and Europe, to U.S. military bases. These forces have shown wariness of too close a relationship, outside

NATO, with both the U.S. and the USSR. They have demonstrated, especially in the Arab-Israeli area, that the major outside powers do not have the capability to prevent the outbreak of war or make peace.

—They believe that to assume that the great powers can play out their contest while minimizing the role of local forces is to base policy on an erroneous appraisal of the strength of these forces. There is no question that these local forces will try to exploit the great powers' rivalry and will in turn be exploited by them to some degree. But the balance is fine enough so that either of the great powers risks being drawn into local conflict against its will if it banks too heavily on its ability to shape the future by manipulating local forces.

2. *To what extent are regional forces likely to work in favor of the U.S. or in favor of the Soviet Union?*

—Some contend that the more prominent political forces are those that work against Western interests: Arab radical movements are directed at traditional governments and Western oil interests; they also create an atmosphere in which it is difficult for the Western approach to economic development to operate. The Palestinian movements will have the effect first of keeping the Middle Eastern pot boiling; even if the Arab-Israeli issue were defused, they would seem likely to turn against established pro-Western regimes.

—Certainly as long as there is no Arab-Israeli settlement, the U.S. cannot hope to improve its position in the Arab parts of this area. Whether or not the radical forces turned loose work in Moscow's favor, the fact that they work against the U.S. is a step in the right direction as far as Moscow is concerned.

—Even some of the Europeans will pursue interests which diverge from the U.S. In this way they tend to operate as a separate force in the area, and the Soviets will be able to exploit these divergencies.

—Others argue that the Soviets have shown themselves wary of close alignment with the more militant movements such as the Palestinian movement. Moscow has kept the door open to them, but Moscow has felt it more prudent to deal primarily with established governments. The more radical movements may attack the foundation of Western interests but they do not necessarily offer a commensurate gain to the USSR. At worst, the USSR has to be concerned that such movements in its own backyard will eventually assume more a pro-Chinese than a pro-Soviet complexion.

—In any case the Europeans involved may decide to concert their approach, independent of the U.S.

—Finally, events outside the area may influence Europeans such as the French to oppose any policy directed openly against the USSR.

—One cannot dismiss the strength of constructive forces in the area. There are extensive wealth-producing resources and a large group of people and institutions who could be engaged in the process of turning that wealth into economic progress. The elites and technocrats of the area know well that it is Western technology and development doctrine that will produce these results and not Soviet. This understanding is certainly apparent in Turkey, Iran, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon and the Persian Gulf, but it is also prevalent even in a place like the UAR.

—Even leaders like Nasser would prefer to balance the great powers off against each other rather than to be beholden to one. On the whole the Europeans offer an alternative to Great Power alignment and thus help to defuse tensions.

III. Possible U.S. Strategies

A. Introduction

For the sake of discussion, it is useful to start by posing two different views toward this area. Neither by itself would represent a viable strategy, but they isolate the elements that must be married in a workable strategy.

1. The first is the view that U.S. interests and the situation in the Mediterranean require a large measure of U.S. *control* in the region. The Soviet thrust requires a forceful military and political response; only the U.S. has the power and the concern to protect Western interests. The U.S. must, therefore, preserve an independent position in the area and sufficient capacity to influence events so that it is a power to be reckoned with.

2. The second is the view that local nationalism and other indigenous forces are now strong enough to *deny* Soviet predominance and that denial is sufficient to create a pluralistic framework in which U.S. interests can be pursued. This does not mean that the U.S. can back off entirely but that the U.S. has the freedom of maneuver to take a few losses.

3. The issue is not to choose between these two views but to draw a line on range of intermediate positions between them. The question is: *What strategy provides the degree of influence the U.S. needs in a situation it cannot control?*

B. *One way of posing possible strategies.* The strategies outlined below are distinguished from each other mainly to identify general differences of approach and emphasis. Elements of several may actually be woven together in working out a realistic course of action toward any given problem. In this conceptual framework there are five basic strategies:

1. Direct containment of Soviet influence.
2. Agreed limitation of U.S.–Soviet involvement.

3. Long-run reliance on an equilibrium of a number of forces in the area.
4. Passing prime responsibility to the Europeans.
5. Aligning ourselves more closely with the “Progressive” forces in the area.

Following the discussion of these strategies below, their application to specific problems is illustrated in the next section of this analytical summary.

[Omitted here are sections outlining individual strategies for dealing with the Soviet threat and the application of those strategies.]

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

Washington, June 15, 1970.

SUBJECT

Your Meeting with Messrs. Lincoln, Anderson and Murphy (Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board)—11 a.m., Tuesday, June 16

Background: You will recall last fall having requested that Messrs. Franklin Lincoln, George Anderson and Robert Murphy visit selected countries from Morocco to Iran for the purpose of providing you with some extra-bureaucratic insights on the role of the United States in this area in conjunction with your thinking about a possible “Mediterranean policy.”² They are meeting with you today to report their findings personally. Each gentleman can be expected to describe his impression of the particular area visited. From preliminary reports from two, you can expect the following:

*Franklin Lincoln [Reports at Tab B]:*³ Mr. Lincoln travelled to the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia (he saw King Faisal) and Beirut (he saw President Helou). Overall impressions include:

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 276, Agency Files, President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Vol. IV. Secret; Exdis. Sent for information. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. A handwritten notation at the end of the memorandum says: “No press photo.” According to Nixon’s Daily Diary for June 16, he met with members of PFIAB from 11:20 a.m. to 12:06 p.m. (Ibid., White House Central Files) No other record of the meeting has been found.

² Documentation on the trips of PFIAB members is in *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 275, Agency Files, President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Vols. II and III.

³ Tab B, March 10, is attached but not printed. All brackets are in the original.

—U.S. policy is pro-Israel and anti-Arab.

—The Soviet threat is real; close U.S. identification with Israel deprives the moderates of an alternative.

—Further sale of Phantoms to Israel would be disastrous.

—The Gulf States are alarmed at the lack of U.S. appreciation of its own national interest—\$3.5 billion investment and \$2 billion in oil and trade revenues.

—The U.S. must begin a dialogue with the Palestinians.

—The U.S. could compel Israel to a settlement in the Arab view.

—The U.S., in the Arab view, has a role to play in settling the Arab-Israeli dispute which would bring peace and nullify Russian attempts to dominate.

—Lebanon needs U.S. arms to keep the loyalty of its citizenry (especially in Southern Lebanon where fedayeen subversion is strong). Lebanon facing increasing difficulty in avowing its traditional close ties with the U.S.

*Admiral Anderson [Report at Tab A]:*⁴ George Anderson visited Italy, Spain, Malta, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. General impressions include:

—A general trend in all of those countries to be more friendly to the Arabs.

—The reality of the increasing Soviet naval presence as a threat to NATO's southern flank and our Sixth Fleet. (We should resume military aid to Greece and enhance the Fleet.)

—The plausibility of greater U.S. reliance on European familiarity with North Africa to uphold the free world position there. (Our clandestine work is especially weak.) [He may elaborate on his private knowledge of a possible Morocco–Spain–Portugal defensive arrangement which Morocco is suggesting.]

—Evidence that the "lid" is being kept on Cyprus due to greater cooperation by the Greeks and the possibility of greater Greek, Turk, U.S. and UK efforts to move Cyprus toward a Western-oriented rather than just neutral position.

—Evidence of good intentions on the part of the Greeks to be a friendly NATO member. As they feel secure, they will move toward parliamentary government; we can resume military aid while observing their performance.

—Indications that the left-wing anti-NATO opposition in Malta may come to power in 1971. Greater U.S. cooperation with the British (they have the economic foothold there) would stem this, thus protecting our NATO command presence.

⁴ Tab A, January 15, is attached but not printed.

—The need for more U.S. clandestine work in the Italian situation where the communists pose a threat—not as winners but—as a strong opposition force working to improve ties with the Soviet bloc.

Robert Murphy went to North Africa and to Italy, arranging his own schedule, and will report to you personally today.

Discussion Points: As you know, Wednesday's NSC discussion⁵ will concentrate on the Mediterranean, Greece and Italy—a first effort in looking at the possibility of a U.S. policy for the broader Mediterranean. It has long been thought that the many states surrounding the Mediterranean were so diverse as to preclude any broad conceptual approach to this area. However, an examination of the various local and international forces that play across the area suggest now the plausibility of a less compartmentalized policy than in the past.

These three trips were conceived with that idea of providing you with some extra insights into this possibility of a broader Mediterranean policy. In this context, you may wish to:

1. Ask each of these gentlemen to report on his personal reflections.
2. Then ask what thoughts they have about a broad U.S. approach to the entire area:

—What do they feel is the main U.S. policy problem across this area?

—What are the possibilities for an increased U.S. presence in the area outside the context of the Arab-Israeli dispute?

⁵ See Document 26.

26. Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, June 17, 1970, 3 p.m.

MEDITERRANEAN, GREECE, ITALY: NSSM 90

President: The Mediterranean is a subject that has been under consideration for some time.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-109, NSC Meeting Minutes, NSC Minutes Originals 1970. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Cabinet Room.

Let's start with a briefing from Director Helms. Dick?

Mr. Helms: I propose to focus on the significance of the area as a whole. The American security interest is recent. For 30 years we have maintained a strong presence there. Our interests are: the southern flank of Southern Europe; the security of Israel; and the security of oil shipments for Europe from the Middle East.

We have seen a fundamental change in the strategic situation. After the Second World War the Soviet Union soon established itself. In the mid-1950's it began its arms aid to the radical Arab states. By the mid-60's it had established a Mediterranean squadron. They have always viewed the Mediterranean in geo-political terms, as a strategic military zone that protects the Southwestern border of the USSR and provides a path for projecting southward into Africa. The Soviets' naval objective is principally political and psychological. Militarily, they shadow the Sixth Fleet. It is clear they plan to stay in the Mediterranean area.

Recently they have made striking gains:

—Their role and presence in providing the air defense in Egypt represents a major upping of their stakes and risks in the area.

—In Italy they have been steady. The Communists did not make gains in the elections—they dropped marginally—but the Party is 1.5 million strong. It is definitely not autonomous; the Soviets have used pressure, for example, backing the old guard faction. The elections have given Rumor a boost.

—In Greece and Turkey—Turkey is firmly committed to its NATO ties and is almost certain to remain in NATO. But while they will exert more vigorous influence in the Alliance, they will probably continue to expand their relations with the USSR, particularly in the economic field.

Moscow has played up to both sides in the Cyprus situation.

President: Thank you, Dick. Henry?

Kissinger: We made an intensive examination of American policy toward the whole area, but we also made several special studies of our policy toward specific areas. The discussion today on the operational side will be confined primarily to Greece and Italy.

We have tried to develop conceptual approaches.

There have been substantial changes in recent years.

President: All bad.

Kissinger: There is the increased Soviet military presence (which has its effects in the Israel/Arab context), the fleet, and NATO. There is political unrest in Greece and Italy. There is the relation with NATO—at a time when for Greece the only point of access is the United States. In Italy there is political uncertainty.

The countries of the area can be divided into four types: the NATO countries; friendly countries like Spain and Israel; moderate littoral countries like Morocco and Tunisia; and radical governments like Algeria and Syria.

There are three types of struggles going on: the Arab-Israel conflict; parallel groups of outsiders; and the great power confrontation of the U.S. and the USSR.

Several policies could be conducted, and are being conducted:

—In the NATO area, the policy is still basically containment of Soviet power.

—There are efforts for peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

—There is an attempt to let the local balances of forces work themselves out.

—There is a future possibility of a greater influence and role for the Europeans.

Generalizations about the area are difficult. It is clearly a tricky area for U.S. policy.

The questions we face are the following:

—To the extent that we continue to seek containment of Soviet power, can we afford not to have firm relations with Greece and not to look at it from the security point of view?

—To what extent must the Soviet military presence on the southern flank of NATO be contained? If we decide to contain it, how do we do it? It is related to the whole question of NATO force levels.

—Can we afford to reduce the Sixth Fleet?

—What is the role of the Fleet in the new situation?

—What is the relationship of the Arab-Israel dispute to and what is the role of Spain and others in the containment policy?

—To what extent should we try to line up the moderate states? What is the U.S. interest to shore up the moderates?

—To what extent can the U.S. rely on Western Europe to play a role in the area? What kind of role can or should Europe play?

President: I expected this would take several meetings. The question of the usefulness of the Sixth Fleet has been directly raised. Let me ask, what kind of military force does Spain have?

Moorer: A good one. It has a problem in technical back-up, but it will be more influential in the future.

Rogers: There are not many encouraging things there, but the Spanish Government at lower levels is good; they're oriented to closer ties with NATO. With Algeria and Tunisia our relations are closer. Our relations with Algeria are improving. They should have some concern about Libya.

President: There are no Soviets in Libya.

Helms: No.

Rogers: Probably there will be later, but not yet. We seem to have neglected the area. We should strengthen our position there.

President: How could this fall down? Many things are not controllable, but how could we let it go? Both we and NATO need to take a stronger view.

Rogers: But they haven't helped on Malta.

Moorer: Spain could be helpful in the Western Mediterranean.

President: I've been in Spain twice before 1968. The younger people are good, and the military too.

Moorer: Yes.

Rogers: The new Spanish Ambassador is very capable. The Foreign Minister may take Franco's place.

[Omitted here is discussion of NATO and possible Greek withdrawal.]

President: We've got to take a hard look at our military posture. Let us suppose late in the summer we get a request from Lebanon or Jordan for assistance, or something happens in Lebanon. What can we do?

Kissinger: We could put a division—10,000 marines and forces from Europe. The problem is what would the Soviets do if we do it.

President: It's different from 1958. The issue is the fedayeen now. We must have ready a plan. There comes a time when the U.S. is going to be tested as to its credibility in the area. The real questions will be, will we act? Our action has to be considered in that light. We must be ready.

Rogers: If our friends in Lebanon asked for U.S. troops—if the Syrians move in—what do we do?

Sisco: I lean toward an affirmative decision.

President: Is the question really a military one or is it our credibility as a power in the area? Congress seems to care only about Israel. Many in the Mediterranean area don't think this is right.

Sisco: I would rather say to the NATO allies: "Would you be prepared to move in multilaterally?" But the NATO allies won't do it. We then hold back.

President: What about the French?

Tasca: If the French thought we would go in, they'd stay out.

[Omitted here is discussion of Greece.]

27. **Telegram From the Embassy in Kuwait to the Department of State**¹

Kuwait, September 18, 1970, 1045Z.

835. For Asst Secretary Sisco.

1. As you are aware, we expect PFLP spectaculars here. We are in close liaison with the government and the oil companies and are endeavoring to tighten security posture to optimum degree. We have no illusions, however, about vulnerability of industrial units and Embassy in face of determined and skillful enemies. PLO has called for general strike tomorrow and students will attempt to drum up mass meeting with possible objective of march on Jordanians or US. Police should be able to control them. PFLP, however, may prove different proposition.

2. We simply recognize life as it is, and we anticipate it will get tougher. Our best bet, in my opinion, is the continuation of your effort to get the Arabs and Israelis talking under Jarring's umbrella.² I speak very clearly to the Arabs about their feckless stupidity and viciousness in respect to the missiles and the hijacking.³ They agree, but they are, weakly, what they are. This does not mean, however, that the Israelis are innocent lambs in respect to the present mess or that we should be caught up in their inhibitions and objectives. I urge that we stay very true to our own objectives, which happen to be a legitimate peace. The enormous emotional gains in the Arab world resulting from our peace initiative are beginning to wash away as we respond to Israeli requests and emotionalism which are being given quite a free run as a result of Arab stupidity and chicanery. I believe that we should keep the Arabs focused on their own mess and not permit them to slip it off on the emotional basis that we are in the Israeli camp. In every way we can we should keep their nose in what they have done and, if physically possible, their eye on what they so desperately need—peace. If we say, or do, much more which can be construed in this region as pro-Israeli, we are going to pay some bitter prices.

Walsh

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 23 KUW. Secret; Priority; Nodis.

² For information on the Jarring Mission, see footnote 9, Document 3.

³ For documentation on the hijackings, see Documents 199 ff.

28. **Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Turkey, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, and Iran¹**

Washington, October 30, 1970, 0407Z.

178786. Subject: US-UK Talks on CENTO.

1. *Summary:* US/UK discussions on CENTO revealed close similarity of views. Both agreed should continue present support of CENTO even though CENTO has only limited value. UK hopes continue present level CENTO economic support but urges US increase its declining (due completion capital projects) CENTO financial support either via increased CENTO labelling or as actual increase. US noted (a) relatively high level of US aid if both bilateral assistance and CENTO assistance considered; (b) lack evidence Regionals want increased CENTO labelling and (c) failure Regionals suggest capital projects which meet our criteria. UK proposed creation CENTO Multilateral Industrial Fund to assist in industrial development. We agreed consider carefully. Both agreed we should not approach RCD but should be prepared consider RCD request for assistance. Since Pakistani intentions re CENTO uncertain now, both agreed take look later. If Pakistan opts out, UK supports idea of truncated CENTO primarily because UK has no other treaty arrangement with Iran. We reserved our position stating that we would wish consider all options at time. (*End Summary*)

2. Talks with UK on CENTO held Washington October 27. British side consisted of Minister Millard, First Secretary Melhuish and Overseas Development Authority representative McKenzie-Johnson. US represented by DepAsstSec Van Hollen, Schiff, Helseth and Wampler (AID).²

3. UK stated its review stimulated by very gloomy report on CENTO submitted early 1970 by former UK Ambassador in Ankara Allen, who inter alia suggested converting CENTO into ANZUS-type organization without permanent staff. On basis FCO review, UK however had concluded that CENTO: (a) puts USSR on notice against adventures in ME; (b) provides framework for UK alliance with Iran (which UK values) and amongst three Regionals; (c) gives Shah entree into Western councils; and (d) serves useful function in coordinating

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 4 CENTO. Confidential. Drafted by William A. Helseth (NEA/RA) on October 29; cleared in NEA/RA, AID/NESA, NEA/IRN, NEA/PAF, NEA/TUR, and EUR/BMI; and approved by Van Hollen.

² Stanley D. Schiff, Director of Regional Affairs, NEA; William A. Helseth, Multilateral Organizations Adviser, Directorate of Regional Affairs, NEA; and Mary Wampler, AID.

Regionals' interests. UK believes economic program is of most importance and is, in fact key to CENTO's future. Demise of CENTO would be to disadvantage of West, especially in view UK withdrawal from Persian Gulf and USSR expansion there. UK had considered its role in CENTO in this light. Various possibilities had been examined including possible shift to observer status; however, UK has decided its main interest is "to soldier on" and continue its current role.

4. US stated our reviews of 1969 and 1970 had raised essentially same questions and had reached same conclusion: CENTO, even if only of limited value, serves useful purpose at small cost. We therefore intend stay on course and gratified UK anticipates no diminution its role.

5. UK hopes maintain its role at roughly present level including economic assistance of about \$2.4 million per year. UK believes CENTO could be plausible cover for increased naval presence in Persian Gulf (visits and joint maneuvers, not a semi-permanent presence) but care must be exercised not to make Shah think we expanding CENTO military activity. UK noted no decision yet taken so that it remains an option dependent upon number of events, especially stability in Gulf. We said our views not yet crystallized, and we would give UK considered reaction.

6. Brits urged US provide more aid through CENTO either via increased CENTO labelling or as actual increase. Brits argued capital projects spending nearing end, and US support of CENTO would register drop to one half million dollars annually. Brits urged we seek maintain our total CENTO support at roughly \$5 million annually. Discussion revealed Brits prompted mainly by internal UK presentation problems with some within HMG contrasting British CENTO contribution of about \$2.4 million unfavorably with US contribution of about one-half million. We gave no ground on this suggestion. We noted a) no felt need or desire on part Regionals for increased CENTO labelling; b) US had indicated willingness consider support for projects meeting our criteria but Regionals have not presented additional projects for consideration in recent years; and c) US FY 70 aid of all types to CENTO countries totals over \$300 million even if only one-half million dollars slugged "CENTO." Of this, \$11.7 million is Technical Assistance to CENTO countries.

7. UK floated suggestion for establishment of a CENTO Multilateral Industrial Fund (CMIF) with an initial capital of \$250,000 to be contributed by members on basis CENTO cost sharing formula and to be replenished on an as needed basis. Objective would be further development of industrial projects having multinational value, training of industrial managers and provision of consultants. Might also undertake feasibility studies for those projects which meet criteria. Brits pointed out this idea, which not yet cleared with their own Treasury

people, might be useful in heading off regional proposals of more grandiose nature. They are openminded on terms of reference for fund. Brits suggested US and UK might make joint proposal to January Economic Experts meeting, but agreed prior report from Industrial Development Advisor might be helpful in reaching decision. We agreed study proposal and consider carefully both substance of idea and timing of unveiling to others, if we come out affirmatively.

8. Both we and Brits agreed Secretariat could be made more effective and efficient but also agreed inadvisable to push for major changes now. Brits stated no intention reduce their current level of personnel assigned to CENTO. We noted it might be desirable to take hard look at structure of organization, possibly next year, if Pakistan continues its membership.

9. UK proposed switch of Special Assistant and DSYG/Economic positions between US and UK in 1971. We undertook to give them prompt reaction since they need to know soon for assignment purposes.

10. Brits presentation on relationship CENTO and RCD closely corresponded our own views. Consensus was that we should not approach RCD now but should be prepared consider request for assistance by RCD. UK indicated that RCD had approached Hungarians and UNIDO for assistance. We asked for more information re reported approach to Hungary, of which we unaware. We noted question Pakistan remaining in CENTO highly uncertain and suggested we take further look after formation new Pakistani Government. We expressed hope that recent US decision on one-time military sale to Pakistan would help encourage Pakistan to take more positive attitude toward CENTO as well as strengthen regional ties by slowing Pakistani drift toward Chicoms. Brits agreed complete reassessment CENTO necessary if Pakistan opts out. Partly because only formal tie UK has with Iran is via CENTO, Brits urged that CENTO be maintained even without Pakistan; but stated UK might then have to reduce its economic aid to CENTO. If any Regional withdrew from CENTO, UK believes that rapid action including public statement on part remaining members necessary in effort limit danger. UK apparently has in mind example of 1958 London declaration.³

12. We stated US bilateral agreement with Regionals would not automatically expire with CENTO demise. We also expressed belief

³ Reference is to the communiqué issued July 28, 1958, after the Baghdad Pact Ministerial meeting in London, which welcomed the U.S. agreement to cooperate with member states (Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, United Kingdom) for their security and defense. The Foreign Ministers agreed to maintain collective security and to strengthen their ability to resist direct or indirect aggression and to strengthen their united defense posture. The meeting followed a coup in member state Iraq and the deployment of U.S. troops to Lebanon.

Turkey and Iran unlikely withdraw from CENTO in foreseeable future. We not sure Pakistanis prepared make final decision by next Ministerial meeting and suggested UK and US keep in close touch and possibly confer with Turkey and Iran, when new Pakistani Government expresses its intentions toward CENTO. In response specific questions, US stated could foresee continuation of some type truncated CENTO in event Pakistan opts out, but that we would wish take careful look at that time and study all options.

13. Would appreciate addressee comments, especially on British proposals paras 6, 7 and 9.⁴

14. Addressees should not discuss with regional representatives.

Irwin

⁴ The Embassy in Ankara responded in telegram 7348, November 20, that the United States should not wait for a Pakistani withdrawal but explore a transformation of CENTO, although not a truncated version. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 4 CENTO) The Embassy in London responded in telegram 9452, November 16, noting the intense pressure Treasury placed on the British Government to cut expenditures, such as those associated with CENTO, and the possible defense against this pressure provided by U.S. confirmation of support. (Ibid.) The Embassy in London again responded in telegram 9664, November 20, which noted that the British regarded their CENTO review to be complete following the bilateral talks, and the only major question left was how the British CENTO policy would mesh with their policy in the Persian Gulf. (Ibid.) The Embassy in Tehran responded in telegram 4883, November 9, that no real political gains could be accrued from increased usage of CENTO labeling. (Ibid.) The Embassy in Rawalpindi responded in telegram 8611, November 5, that the U.S. attitude expressed in the bilateral talks closely paralleled those held in the Embassy. (Ibid.)

29. Editorial Note

Between December 1970 and May 1971, as Pakistan's ongoing constitutional and electoral crisis devolved into civil war, its ability to maintain its membership in CENTO emerged as a critical issue in the considerations of the alliance. On December 16, 1970, CENTO Secretary General Turgut Menemencioglu informed the United Kingdom's Embassy in Ankara that a potential Pakistani withdrawal in 1971 would mean the end of CENTO. The British responded that, given the recent success of bilateral meetings between Iran and Turkey, perhaps those countries could convince Pakistan to stay. If Pakistan's withdrawal was imminent, it should be encouraged to leave "gracefully," and CENTO could make the appropriate structural adjustments to continue without it. (Telegram 207252 to Ankara, London, Islamabad, and Tehran, December 21; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, CENTO 6–2 PAK)

The Department of State, anxious that Britain not push too rapidly in this regard, presented four alternatives for CENTO's future premised on Pakistan's withdrawal. (Telegram 828 to Ankara, January 5, 1971; *ibid.*) Alternative A continued CENTO in its present form without Pakistan; Alternative B eliminated CENTO, abolishing the civilian secretariat and the Combined Military Planning Staff; Alternative C maintained CENTO, but abolished the Secretariat and Military Staff, making it more closely resemble the ANZUS arrangement; Alternative D maintained the treaty but streamlined the Secretariat and Military Staff. The Department rejected Alternatives A and B, and stated its preference for C. (Telegram 18946 to Ankara and Tehran, February 3; *ibid.*, DEF 4 CENTO)

In a February 12 memorandum, however, Stanley Schiff, Director of Regional Affairs, NEA, wrote Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph J. Sisco that opinions within the Department had shifted in favor of Alternative D, given the opposition of Turkey, Iran, and the Department of Defense. (Telegram 638 from Tehran, February 3; *ibid.*, CENTO 3; and telegram 863 from Ankara, February 8; *ibid.*, DEF 4 CENTO). The JCS, particularly, had "strong reservations about dismantling the military side of CENTO." (Memorandum from Schiff to Sisco, February 12; *ibid.*, CENTO 3) Subsequent talks with the British in February 1971 brought the United States and Britain to a general agreement on Alternative D, and on the necessity of Iran and Turkey bearing the responsibility of talking to Pakistan. These talks revealed that the United States was less inclined than Britain to predict Pakistani withdrawal or to take an activist stance toward reordering CENTO before conditions inside Pakistan became clearer. (Telegram 32549 to Ankara, Islamabad, London, and Tehran, February 25; *ibid.*, DEF 4 CENTO)

Menemencioglu visited Washington March 1-5, having recently visited Pakistan, and relayed the information that Pakistani withdrawal was not imminent and that no changes to CENTO should be undertaken until the situation clarified. He also urged the United States to help Pakistan "psychologically and materially" and to maintain a "spirit of cooperation" with the United Kingdom, Iran, and Turkey should Pakistan eventually determine to leave. Department officials reiterated the positions taken at the bilateral meetings with Britain. (Telegram 38929 to Ankara, Islamabad, London, and Tehran, March 5; *ibid.*) During his conversation with President Nixon, Menemencioglu said that "CENTO's value lay not in its military commitments or the various meetings but rather in the atmosphere of close association and the umbrella effect which developed within CENTO." For example, the Shah had told Menemencioglu that he "considered CENTO useful in the context of the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf. After the British go, it would be possible to continue multi-national naval exercises in the Gulf under

a CENTO label.” The President confirmed his personal support for and commitment to outgoing Secretary General Menemencioglu. (Memorandum of conversation, March 2; *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 212, Agency Files, CENTO)

As part of a longer tour of the Middle East (April 29–May 8), Secretary of State William Rogers attended the CENTO Council of Ministers meeting in Ankara at which he reiterated the need to adapt to the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf and to maintain CENTO in view of the larger Soviet threat, as evidenced in the recent domestic insurgency in Ceylon. Rogers reported to President Nixon that the decisions to maintain MIDEASTFOR and to establish a U.S. presence in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean had been sound. Moreover, CENTO maintained communication and development programs among the member states and provided a necessary military umbrella. (Telegram Secto 65/3073 from Ankara, May 1; *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, ORG 7 S)

30. Memorandum From the Vice Director of the Joint Staff (Freeman) to Secretary of Defense Laird¹

JCSM–206–71

Washington, May 1, 1971.

SUBJECT

The Suez Canal (U)

1. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff have conducted a review of the strategic, economic, and political implications of a reopened Suez Canal.

2. (S) Strategically, a reopened canal, operating as an international waterway, would provide the naval forces of all nations with a short, direct line of communications between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea/Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf.

a. The Soviet Union has demonstrated interest in the Indian Ocean area since 1967, when a Soviet Pacific Fleet naval task force made its first deployment to the area. The continuous presence of a Soviet naval force, averaging three to four naval combatants, in the Indian Ocean, coupled with the fact that this force periodically visits various ports on the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf littoral, indicates that the area is of

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, OSD Files: FRC 330–76–0197, Box 70, Middle East. Secret.

strategic interest to the USSR. With the Suez Canal open, the Indian Ocean would be more readily accessible to the Soviets. Soviet Pacific coast ports, from which most of the Soviet naval deployments to the Indian Ocean originate, are handicapped severely by fog in spring and fall and by ice in winter. Furthermore, the south coast of Arabia is over 6,100 nm from the nearest Soviet Pacific port. From Soviet ports in the more favorable Black Sea environment, the same destination is nearly 11,500 nm via Gibraltar and around the southern tip of Africa. However, if the Suez Canal were open, Soviet ships sailing from the Black Sea would steam only 3,200 nm to reach the same point. This shorter line of communication would facilitate Soviet economic and military activities in the Indian Ocean area.

b. The principal strategic impact of a reopened canal would be to make possible more rapid increases in Soviet military presence throughout the Red Sea/Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf area and to reduce the cost of Soviet resupply, repair, and military/economic aid actions. These factors could combine to enhance Soviet influence in the littoral countries and might encourage the USSR to undertake greater political and military risks.

c. Access to the Suez Canal would also permit more rapid reinforcement of US naval forces stationed in the Persian Gulf and could enhance US political influence in the littoral countries of the area. However, the strategic value of the Suez Canal to the United States is reduced by the constraints on operation of NATO-committed forces outside the NATO area and the fact that the larger aircraft carriers cannot transit it. On balance, the strategic value of a reopened canal favors the USSR.

3. (S) In view of the interests and strategic advantages to the Soviets of a reopened canal and the fact that the Soviets have established a considerable military presence in the United Arab Republic (UAR), it appears prudent for the United States to explore the possibility of using US support for the reopening of the Suez Canal as a lever in seeking UAR agreement to reduce the Soviet presence in the UAR. This course may also offer potential for easing Israeli reluctance for movement on this intermediate step toward peace.

4. (S) The primary significance of the Suez Canal, at present, is its importance as an essential element in ongoing efforts to reduce regional tensions and create movement toward a viable Middle East peace agreement. With the continued, substantial Soviet presence in the UAR and the US commitment to the survival of Israel, the danger of great power confrontation in the Middle East is clear. It is equally clear that this threat to world peace requires that the United States continue to pursue initiatives which could lead to a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. An interim agreement to reopen the Suez Canal could demonstrate good faith and facilitate further negotiations to achieve a

final settlement. However, there is the possibility that reopening the Suez Canal without resolution of other substantive issues might reduce pressures for continued meaningful negotiations and, with a continued extensive Soviet presence in the UAR, could serve to perpetuate Middle East tensions and instability.

5. (S) Economically, a reopened Suez Canal probably would benefit US NATO Allies, Japan, and countries which produce primary products along the Indian Ocean littoral. This economic impact could be beneficial to the United States. For the Soviets, a reopened canal would provide some economic benefit, but its principal consequence would be strategic.

6. (C) The US Government has traditionally held that international waterways should be open to all international shipping. Therefore, any contrary position regarding the reopening of the Suez Canal would be at odds with the traditional US position and could hinder US initiatives to obtain international agreement regarding territorial seas and fishing areas.

7. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff conclude that:

a. A reopened Suez Canal offers a greater strategic advantage to the Soviets than to the United States.

b. On balance, the relative disadvantage of an open canal should be accepted in the interest of promoting peace and regional stability. If, as a part of reopening the canal, Soviet presence in the UAR were reduced, this relative disadvantage to the United States would tend to be offset.

c. The US Government should support a diplomatic initiative which might seek an understanding for a significant reduction of Soviet military presence within the UAR in return for US support for a canal reopening.

d. The primary significance of the canal, at present, is its importance as an element in Middle East peace initiatives.

e. The reopening of the Suez Canal, as part of a viable agreement between the UAR and Israel providing for equal access to the Suez Canal by all nations, would be in the best interest of the United States.

8. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff will introduce background information used in the development of the above conclusions to the National Security Council Interdepartmental Group, Near East and South Asia, for review.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Mason Freeman
Rear Admiral, USN

31. Memorandum From Richard Kennedy of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, August 28, 1971.

SUBJECT

CIA Analysis of Soviet Covert Activity in Mideast

Two weeks ago Al Haig sent CIA some questions (Tab A)² about possible Soviet covert involvement in recent events in various parts of the Middle East—such as the upheavals in Morocco and the Sudan, Libya's efforts to buy off Malta, Soviet pressure on Ethiopia via threats of increased aid to Somalia and the Sudan, and the Cyprus situation. Our staff seemed skeptical about the degree of Soviet involvement, and Al wanted an independent judgment. He also wanted to know if the Russians have stepped up their covert action program lately.

CIA has come back with its answers (Tab B),³ which boil down to the following:

—Soviet covert operations increased in the first year after the 1967 war. But events since Nasser's death "are all manifestations of trends in the Arab world that are not only *not* stimulated by Moscow but in general add up to a set-back for the Soviet covert action capacity" in the area.

—Specifically, CIA sees the Moroccan and Sudanese upheavals and Libyan actions as internally generated, with no evidence of Soviet collusion.⁴ "There is no evidence" that Soviet military aid to Sudan and

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 647, Country Files, Middle East, Middle East General, Vol. VIII. Secret. Sent for information. Drafted by Rodman. Printed from an uninitialed copy.

² Attached but not printed at Tab A is an August 12 memorandum from Tom Latimer, White House Staff, to Cord Meyer, Acting Deputy Director for Plans, CIA.

³ Attached but not printed at Tab B is an August 19 memorandum from Meyer to Latimer, which enclosed an August 18 report. An attached note reads, "File—White House side of street only."

⁴ References are to a failed coup in Morocco and a successful mid-July coup in Sudan. The August 18 CIA report enclosed at Tab B concluded that the Soviets may have had insight and been supportive of the coups but were not involved. There was no evidence that Libya and the USSR were working "hand-in-glove in the Mediterranean." The report also noted that Qadhafi's offer to Malta of \$10 million annually for 10 years, and an offer to import skilled Maltese labor and technicians in return for eliminating British military bases on Malta was consistent with Qadhafi's stated intentions to eliminate all foreign military bases from the Mediterranean. This ran counter to Soviet rejection of the idea that both the United States and the USSR leave the Mediterranean.

Somalia is “designed to intimidate Haile Selassie,” although it does “serve to put pressures on him” (a subtle distinction!). And Moscow has been cautious on Cyprus, for fear of upsetting the Greeks and particularly the Turks.

—CIA believes that “in the past year the Soviets have, for the first time in more than a decade, been forced by events into a defensive covert action posture.” The Soviets sustained an offensive over the previous decade that was generally successful, but their capability has now suffered serious setbacks—Sadat’s move in May against the pro-Moscow elite in Cairo; extensive damage to the influence of the pro-Soviet WFTU in the Egyptian and Sudanese labor movements. In general, “the political tide is running against the USSR” in Egypt, Libya, and Sudan, and the Soviets are encountering “other problems” (unspecified) in the Persian Gulf and Arabian peninsula.

—In conclusion, CIA believes that the situation in the Mediterranean and Mideast is, “from a U.S. viewpoint, now more favorable for covert action as a means of achieving limited U.S. objectives than it has been for some years.”

32. Memorandum for the President’s Files by the President’s Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig)¹

Washington, March 14, 1972, 11:45 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting with His Excellency Nassir Assar, Secretary-General of CENTO, on March 14, 1972 at 11:45 a.m., The Oval Office

PARTICIPANTS

President Nixon
His Excellency Nassir Assar, Secretary-General of CENTO
Ambassador Mosbacher
Major General A. M. Haig, Jr.

Following press photographs, President Nixon welcomed Secretary-General Nassir Assar to Washington noting that while he was cognizant

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 998, Alexander M. Haig Chronological Files, Haig MemCons, Jan–Dec 1972. Secret. Drafted on March 18.

of the Secretary-General's international hat, he also wished to express to the Secretary-General his warm regards to the Shah of Iran on whose staff the Secretary-General was previously assigned.

Secretary-General Assar expressed his deepest appreciations to President Nixon for his willingness to receive him and to thereby manifest his support for the CENTO Organization. Secretary-General Assar noted that he had long admired President Nixon's leadership but that as a result of recent events, he had now concluded that President Nixon was indeed the inspirational and intellectual leader of the Western world. He commented that the recent successful trip to Peking and all that it represented for mankind constituted one of the most significant achievements in modern times and that this accomplishment was proof positive of President Nixon's role as a world leader.

President Nixon thanked the Secretary-General for his comments and pointed out that he had long supported the CENTO concept recognizing that many of its original military objectives had changed and that its cooperative effort in functional areas such as trade, communications, etc. had become more important aspects of the role CENTO would play in the future. The President pointed out that in the months ahead the CENTO membership should give particular attention to strengthening the spirit and morale of Pakistan which had suffered grievously in a real and psychological sense in recent months.

The Secretary-General stated that he agreed completely with President Nixon's comments and noted that he would strive to assist the Government of Pakistan through cooperative efforts by the CENTO membership. He also noted that it would be very important in the months ahead for the United States to continue to provide assistance to the CENTO membership and President Nixon agreed that the United States would make every effort to do so.

As the meeting concluded, President Nixon informed Secretary-General Assar that he would be visiting Iran in conjunction with the forthcoming visit to the Soviet Union cautioning him that this information had not yet been made public.²

Secretary-General Assar stated that he had now realized three major accomplishments as a result of his visit to Washington. First, he had had an opportunity to visit personally with the greatest leader of the Western world. Secondly, that leader had promised continuing support for the CENTO Organization and thirdly, as an Iranian, he was moved and pleased beyond expectations as a result of his knowledge that the President would soon be visiting his homeland.

² Nixon visited Iran May 30-31, as he returned from a European trip that included the Summit in Moscow May 22-30.

33. **Action Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Sisco) to Acting Secretary of State Irwin¹**

Washington, May 4, 1972.

Proposed Reply to Admiral Moorer re CENTO Political Guidance

There is attached at Tab B Admiral Moorer's letter of April 18² to the Secretary alerting us to new efforts on the part of the CENTO regional members (Iran, Pakistan and Turkey) to revise the political guidance for military planning to permit planning for regional contingencies. At present, the guidance limits planning to countering aggression by Communist nations in the context of a global nuclear war.

For years, we and the British have resisted periodic attempts at this type of revision of the standing guidance, both to avoid involvement in regional squabbles and to avoid accusations of assisting in planning military action against such "friendly" countries as India and certain Arab nations. Surprisingly, we are told that in this latest renewal of the effort (relatively dormant since 1969), the United Kingdom military delegate is siding with the regional states and will recommend change in the UK position to the Foreign Secretary.³

A proposed reply to Admiral Moorer is at Tab A.⁴

Recommendation:

That you sign the attached letter to Admiral Moorer.⁵

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, CENTO 3. Confidential. Drafted by Robert W. Chase (NEA/RA) on May 2 and cleared in NEA, EUR/BMI, and PM/ISP and by Van Hollen.

² Attached but not printed.

³ The issue arose at the June 1–2 CENTO Ministerial meeting held in London. Pakistan, backed by Iran, Turkey, and Secretary General Assar, pushed for a revision of the political guidance. Rogers convinced the members to drop their demands and settle for a reassessment of the threat to CENTO. (Telegram 5306 from London, June 8; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, CENTO 3) The threat assessment is printed as Document 36.

⁴ Attached but not printed at Tab A is the proposed letter in which Irwin assured Moorer that Sisco and his staff would consult with the JCS before the June CENTO meeting.

⁵ Irwin signed the attached letter.

34. Airgram From the Embassy in the United Arab Emirates to the Department of State¹

A-31

Abu Dhabi, October 26, 1972.

SUBJECT

Bank of Credit and Commerce International S.A. Comes to Town

T. Marvin Hancock, an employee of the Bank of America who arrived in Abu Dhabi recently to participate in the establishment of the Bank of Credit and Commerce (BCC), has provided the Embassy with the following information about the bank, its background and plans.

Background: Approximately ten months ago, the Bank of America was approached by Mr. Agha Hassain Abedi, President of the United Bank Ltd. Mr. Abedi, who is favorably known to the Bank of America, explained that the United Bank, now the largest bank in Pakistan, had lost more than one hundred branches as a result of the formation of Bangladesh and found itself with a surfeit of trained officers and employees. According to Mr. Abedi, there is also a strong likelihood that private banks in Pakistan will be nationalized and a significant percentage of United Bank personnel have become interested in promoting an international banking institution into which they could transfer. The Bank of America agreed to participate in the proposed venture. Mr. Abedi had reportedly made a similar proposition to American Express, but the effort did not work out.

Nature of the BCC: The Bank of Credit and Commerce International S.A. was incorporated in Luxembourg about one month ago and premises have been selected in that city for an office. Luxembourg was chosen because it offered advantages in incorporation and taxes while at the same time being recognized as maintaining high standards of supervision over financial ventures, a qualification on which Mr. Abedi reportedly insisted. The head office of the Bank will be located nominally in Luxembourg, but the actual operations will be run by the General Manager, Gulf Region who will be based in Abu Dhabi. This position will be filled by Mr. Naqvi, who resigned from the United Bank at the time of the BCC incorporation and is now setting up the Abu Dhabi operation. Mr. Hancock will serve as his deputy in Abu Dhabi.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL6 UAE. Confidential. Drafted on October 10 by W. Nathaniel Howell, Jr., Economic and Commercial Officer, and approved by Philip J. Griffin, Chargé. Passed to Commerce and Treasury. It was repeated to London, Luxembourg, Kuwait, Manama, Muscat, Tehran, Beirut, Karachi, Islamabad, and Dacca.

The BCC is capitalized at \$5 million, of which one half is paid in. It is expected that this ratio will be maintained as the capitalization rises to an anticipated \$10 million in the next five years. The venture is fully subscribed with Bank of America holding a 25 per cent interest and the remaining 75 per cent being controlled by local investors. Mr. Hancock promised to provide a complete list of the approximately 20 investors but gave the following tentative breakdown: Shaikh Zayid, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, \$1 million; Shaikh Rasid, Vice President of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, \$300,000; and Shaikh Hamdan of the Abu Dhabi ruling family and an unnamed Dubai merchant an undisclosed amount. He added that some private Egyptian money is involved. At present, there is no Pakistani participation, but senior Pakistani officials of the BCC will have options to take over at least a portion of the Abu Dhabi share.

Mr. Abedi plans to leave his position as President of the United Bank in about two months to become President of the BCC. He is a financial and investment advisor to Shaikh Zayid and possesses good local contacts. It is felt that Shaikh Zayid and perhaps other Gulf investors have taken shares to accommodate Mr. Abedi who will become a major shareholder of the bank. Other officials and staff of the United Bank will likewise shift to the BCC, once it is a going concern.

Present Plans: The Regional Office is scheduled to open in Abu Dhabi on or about October 30, 1972. Branches will also be opened in the market place, on one of the main commercial streets (across from the FNCB branch), and at Al Ain in the interior of the Emirate. A branch is under construction in Dubai and should be completed within 30 days, and small, three-man facilities are projected for Sharjah and Umm Al-Qaiwain in the immediate future and for all the Emirates of the UAE within the next year.

Outside of the UAE, negotiations are underway for the opening of branches in Bahrain and Qatar. The BCC plans to function in Muscat but faces some organizational difficulties which are now being worked out. Operations in the Sultanate must be in the hands of a subsidiary which will be capitalized at about \$1 million. This subsidiary will be owned 30% by BCC, 20% by Bank of America, and 50% by a local firm, Towel. The Bank of America will decide in the next ten days whether or not to pick up the 20% offered as its share.

The BCC intends to offer a full range of commercial banking services at the outset. Eventually, trust services will be added. Bank of America, through the BCC, is taking extreme care that the new venture not raid the accounts currently held by the United Bank. Mr. Hancock emphasized that when the United Bank personnel change over to the BCC, they will scrupulously avoid bringing accounts with them. In this connection, the Bank of America's concern is that its association

with former United Bank personnel in this new venture might work to the detriment of Bank of America branches in Pakistan. Rather, the new bank will concentrate on garnering the accounts of the Muslim merchants in the Gulf. One exception to the policy vis-à-vis United Bank, however, is that some of the services which that institution has traditionally provided to Shaikh Zayid will be transferred to BCC. For example, a United Bank representative always travels in Shaikh Zayid's entourage when he leaves the country. This representative serves as banking advisor and carries the party's bankroll in the form of traveller's checks. BCC will now provide this service.

Comment: While it has been publicly announced that BCC will be opening in the near future and it is no secret that Mr. Hancock is in town, he provided much of the information contained in this airgram in confidence. In particular, the BCC does not want details of its plans widely known until it can officially inform the shareholders of its opening. Apprised by the Embassy of some interest in the venture expressed by the Pakistani Ambassador to the UAE, Hancock said for the protection of the Pakistani citizens involved, it was thought best not to mention anything about the new bank to Pakistani officials, here, although apparently Mr. Abedi has informed President Bhutto of his plans.

Stoltzfus

35. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Eliot) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, December 6, 1972.

SUBJECT

Proposal for a Joint US/Israeli Desalination Development Program

Summary

At National Security Council direction a study was undertaken in 1969 on the desirability of U.S. participation in a large-scale desalting plant in Israel. The study concluded that further research was needed and, therefore, the U.S. should not participate in the project. This recommendation was endorsed by the President and in turn conveyed to the Government of Israel. Since then, Israel has made progress in desalting technology and its overall program has reached a stage where a joint development program including construction of a large-scale desalting facility could be mutually beneficial. This memorandum recommends that such a joint program be undertaken to be funded from the appropriation provided for this purpose under Section 219 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended.

Background

National Security Study Memorandum 30 of March 19, 1969,² requested a study of the economic and technological aspects of large-scale desalting in the Middle East and of proceeding with the construction of a 40 million gallon per day (mgd) desalting plant in Israel. This proposal involved the application of then existing technology to a much larger scale facility than had ever been built before. The response to NSSM 30³ pointed out the risks in such a significant scale-up, the unlikelihood that such a project would lead to a significant reduction in the cost of water, and that new technology being developed

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-212, National Security Decision Memoranda, NSDM 32. No classification marking. Attachments not printed. In an October 6 telephone conversation, Kissinger told Morton that a \$10 million project was “symbolically of great interest” to the Israelis and that he should meet with Rabin. (Ibid., Kissinger Telephone Conversations, Box 16, Chronological Files) On October 18, Morton notified Kissinger that he had met with Rabin regarding Israeli plans for desalination and their request for a U.S. commitment of \$10 million in support of this program. He included a timeline of significant decisions regarding desalination in Israel. (Ibid.)

² Document 5.

³ See footnote 3, Document 9.

by the Department of the Interior, Office of Saline Water (OSW) could lead to a significant reduction in the cost of desalting water.

National Security Decision Memorandum 32 of November 6, 1969,⁴ advised that the President had decided that: "Budgetary considerations apart, the Administration believes that intermediate experimentation with new technology is necessary before a large operating plant can be built anywhere. The Administration believes that there are compelling advantages to doing this work in the U.S." However, "The Administration is keeping open the possibility of later cooperation in the Israeli project."

Concurrent with this Administration action, the Congress added Section 219 to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended (Attachment A) and pursuant thereto authorized and appropriated \$20 million to finance U.S. participation in an Israeli desalting project. The funds were provided "for the purpose of improving existing and developing and advancing new, technology and experience in the design, construction, and operation of large-scale desalting plants of advanced concepts which will contribute materially to low-cost desalination in all countries . . ." and, if it is determined to be feasible, to participate in the development of a large-scale desalting prototype plant to be constructed in Israel. The legislation contained safeguards to insure the full availability to the U.S. of any research and development findings. Congress also stipulated that no part of the appropriated funds could be used for construction until the proposed project had been reviewed by the appropriate Congressional committees.

In accordance with NSDM 32, the Government of Israel and the appropriate Congressional committees were advised that the Administration did not intend to go ahead with an Israeli project at that time. Nevertheless, Israeli and Congressional interest remained high and each year Section 219 has been carried forward and the funds reappropriated.⁵

Discussion

In February 1971, the Government of Israel presented to A.I.D. a proposal to establish a partnership venture between the U.S. and Israel to construct a prototype dual-purpose power generating and desalting plant at Ashdod, Israel, with a capacity of 11 mgd. The plant was to employ a horizontal tube, multiple effect process (HTME) technology being developed by Israel Desalination Engineering, Limited,

⁴ Document 14.

⁵ The funds have been carried forward through FY 72. However, they are not included in the current modified Continuing Resolution under which A.I.D. now operates. With passage of a regular FY 1973 A.I.D. appropriation, it is expected that funds will again be reappropriated. No obligation for the proposed project can be made until this occurs. [Footnote is in the original.]

a wholly-owned government corporation. It is a well-known and tested process and by itself not a significant technological advancement. However, Israel proposed using aluminum tubing in the plant, and the application of this low-cost material did hold promise of significantly reducing the cost of desalted water.

A.I.D., utilizing the expertise of OSW, has reviewed the Israeli proposal. A team of A.I.D. and OSW engineers went to Israel in July 1972 to examine the Israeli facilities and its research program in detail, and further technical discussions were held in Washington during late October 1972. The understanding reached by the technical staffs which participated in these discussions is attached (B).

In summary: The Israelis sought U.S. financing for the one mgd pilot plant at Elat now under construction. If operating results from this point are satisfactory, the Government of Israel proposed to proceed directly to design and construction of the 11 mgd prototype plant. An advance commitment to this plant was also sought. OSW representatives have been concerned with the limited amount of operating experience in aluminum tubing and also maintained that, due to the large scaling-up involved in going from a 1 mgd to an 11 mgd plant, there should be an intermediate testing phase. Agreement was finally reached at the recent Washington meetings by staff representatives that there would be an intermediate stage involving the construction of a two-effect test module at the OSW test facility in San Diego, California. OSW considers that, with an expansion of the Israeli program to include module construction at San Diego, sufficient data would become available on scale-up to confirm design assumptions for an 11 mgd plant and, thus, allow its construction without major risks. Furthermore, as many of the ancillary facilities are already present at San Diego, it is expected that construction of the module there will involve cost-savings over construction in Israel.

Israeli engineers tentatively estimate the total cost of the full program at \$32 million (including the test module in San Diego). The U.S. share would be approximately \$15 million. Of this, we estimate that approximately \$2 million would be expended during USFY 1973 and USFY 1974.

The program provisionally agreed to by the U.S. and Israel technical representatives generally complements work being undertaken by OSW. OSW has done some work with aluminum tubing, but the emphasis in the OSW program has been on the vertical tube evaporation/multi-stage flash (VTE/MSF) process, which is believed to represent a significant advance in process technology over the Israeli process.⁶

⁶ At this stage, the OSW VTE/MSF program is ahead of the Israeli program as a four-effect module of a 12.5 mgd plant is scheduled to begin operations in mid-CY 1973, which

OSW does not, however, use aluminum tubing, but more costly copper-nickel due to its corrosion resistance. The Israeli development program has taken a different approach. It has refined existing horizontal tube technology within established limits of temperatures, pressures and other design parameters and concentrated its efforts on the development of a design suitable for the use of cheaper aluminum tubing.

Participation in the joint program would provide the U.S., and through it, U.S. industry which would be involved in module construction, with access to the Israeli technology and operating experience in the design and use of aluminum tubing, the development of an alternative competitive desalting technology, and, most importantly, through the two-effect module program at San Diego, an opportunity to test Israeli equipment extensively over a wide range of conditions and, thereby, explore the possible blending of Israeli materials developments with U.S. process advancements.

Based on the experience gained in the past three years by the Israelis with their process and desalting technology development in the U.S., we believe that it is in our interest to embark with the GOI on the cooperative research and development program proposed by the GOI. We believe that with the inclusion of the intermediate testing phase at San Diego the design technology will be sufficiently developed to justify participation. Through this joint effort we expect to obtain technical and operating experience which complements current U.S. programs and which could significantly advance the realization of a process for the production of low-cost desalted water. We would be acting in accord with the expressed intent of the Congress as set forth in Section 219 of the Foreign Assistance Act. We would be keeping faith with our repeated pledge to Israel to work closely with it in this field.

Therefore, we, together with A.I.D. and the Department of the Interior, recommend approval of our proceeding to conclude a formal agreement with the Government of Israel and, subject to Congressional consultations, to commit funds under Section 219 of the Foreign Assistance Act to finance the U.S. share of the joint development program outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding signed November 3, 1972.

RH Miller⁷

is at least 18 months sooner than the two-effect module proposed in the joint program. [Footnote is in the original.]

⁷ R.H. Miller signed above Eliot's typed signature.

36. Airgram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Turkey, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, and Iran¹

A-12456

Washington, December 28, 1972, 1:32 p.m.

SUBJECT

Assessment of the Situation in the CENTO Area

Enclosed are copies of papers prepared in response to the decision of the CENTO Council of Ministers in London last June for an “assessment of the situation” in the CENTO area.²

Embassy Ankara may submit the paper to the CENTO Secretariat as the United States’ contribution to the proposed study.

Johnson

Attachment³

Assessment of the Situation in the CENTO Area

[Omitted here are sections dealing with Syria and Iraq.]

The Persian Gulf

Saudi Arabia is committed to an ambitious program of modernizing its defense and internal security forces although it will remain heavily dependent upon outside military advice and technical assistance for some years. To block further Soviet encroachment into the Peninsula the Saudis are providing economic and some military aid to Yemen and have under consideration requests for similar aid to Oman. The Saudis have also continued to provide arms and money to the National Unity Front and to Southern Yemeni tribal dissidents in their bid to topple the extreme leftist regime in Aden. The Saudi leadership is also aware of the need for closer cooperation with Iran and with the Lower Gulf states if stability in the Gulf is to be preserved. Closer re-

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, DEF 4 CENTO. Limited Official Use. Drafted by Chase (NEA/RA); cleared in NEA/IRN, NEA/PAB, NEA/TUR, EUR/NE; and approved in NEA/RA.

² See footnote 3, Document 33. In a December 9 memorandum to Moorer, Colonel J. Angus MacDonald, member of the JCS Staff Group, wrote that “judging from the quality of the drafts, I suspect that the UK version will be more acceptable as the matrix for the final report than would the U.S. version. That, however, will be a matter for the SYG to decide.” (National Archives, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Records of Admiral Thomas Moorer, Box 125, Misc. File, CENTO Minutes, April 1972)

³ CENTO; Secret.

lations with the UAE will have to await, however, resolution of the lingering Saudi territorial dispute with Abu Dhabi.

The overall stability in the area has not been greatly affected since the nine formerly British-protected shaykhdoms of the Lower Gulf gained independence in 1971. The immediate effect of the British relinquishment of their treaty obligations to manage the defense and foreign relations of the shaykhdoms has been small, aside from the withdrawal of British troops from their former bases in Sharjah and Bahrain. Many British officers, on contract or secondment, have remained behind to assist the new states, particularly in defense and internal security matters. Except for occasional visits by Soviet naval units to Iraq and Iran and the special relationship they have established with Iraq, Soviet presence in the Gulf remains restricted. The Soviets (as do other communist countries including China) have an embassy in Kuwait. Following an approach to the UAE early in 1972, they have an agreement in principle to open an embassy in Abu Dhabi but this has not to date been implemented. Similar approaches to Oman, Qatar and Bahrain have been turned down.

Kuwait

Kuwait's relative calm belies the many external and internal destabilizing forces in the country. Internally, more than half the population is non-Kuwaiti and is in the country on sufferance—its continued presence is predicated upon periodic renewal of residence and working permits. Many in this group are Palestinian white collar workers, who, in their deep-rooted opposition to Israel, would like to see Kuwait more firmly committed to the anti-Western camp of radical Arab nationalism. Externally, Kuwait faces the hostility of Iraq, which from time to time has pressed its claim that Kuwait, formerly a part of the Ottoman Sanjak of Basrah, is Iraqi Territory. So far, at least, Kuwait has been able to counter these pressures by liberal wages for its workers (at least by regional standards) and by including potential opponents among the Arab states which receive generous Kuwaiti development loans and subsidies. As a result, many of these states—including Iraq—have too great a stake in the continued largesse of Kuwait to initiate or countenance moves against it.

Bahrain

Of the nine Lower Gulf shaykhdoms, Bahrain has the largest, most sophisticated population and also the greatest potential for dissidence. About a half dozen dissident groups have been organized in Bahrain, including the Marxist National Liberation Front-Bahrain (NLF-B), the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), Ba'thi groups of both the Syrian and Iraqi brands, and elements of the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). In addition, various Palestinian fedayeen

groups are also active in Bahrain. Further growth of its small (by Gulf standards) oil industry is not to be expected, making the need for economic diversification more pressing in Bahrain than in the other oil exporting states of the area. Over the longer run, if employment opportunities decrease there may be considerable unrest. However, in spite of a rash of labor protest demonstrations in March 1972, Bahraini security forces currently appear to have internal security reasonably well in hand.

Qatar

Although there has already been a coup since independence last year, the political stability of Qatar does not seem to have been adversely affected. In February 1972, Shaykh Khalifa bin Hamid al-Thani ousted his cousin Shaykh Ahmad bin Ali al-Thani and took over as Head of State. The coup was a family affair; however, most residents of Qatar consider the enlightened Khalifa to be a much more competent ruler than his predecessor. The coup has thus increased the popularity of the ruling family in Qatar which like Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, has a large alien population. The growing oil wealth of the country is a stabilizing factor, and an efficient police security force remains alert to counter any subversive activities, particularly any which might be undertaken by the former ruler or his supporters.

The UAE

The seven shaykhdoms of the UAE appear to be relatively stable for the short term. A long-standing border dispute between Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia remains unresolved and continues to becloud relations between Saudi Arabia and the UAE. However, the Central Government under UAE President Shaykh Zayid has recently moved to establish diplomatic relations with Iran. In the poorer shaykhdoms, population is too limited and political awareness still too restricted to pose a threat. In the two oil-rich shaykhdoms, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, comparatively good wages and competent security forces appear adequate for the present to maintain stability. The failure of a coup attempt in Sharjah in January 1972, which cost the life of the Ruler, can be viewed as an example of the stabilizing forces at work within the UAE. Shaykh Zayid immediately dispatched troops from his Abu Dhabi Defense Force who, in cooperation with the Union Defense Force (formerly the Trucial Oman Scouts), quickly put down the coup. This suggests that the various UAE member states can cooperate if the need arises.

Over the long run, the Lower Gulf shaykhdoms will have to be able to maintain their own security without British or other major power assistance. Like Kuwait, they face serious problems—fluctuating relations with much larger neighbors, a large alien population, including numerous Palestinians, and radical Arab groups supported from the outside.

Saudi Arabia has a major interest in maintaining Gulf stability, as well as in finding a solution to its territorial dispute with Abu Dhabi. The latter also involves the question of accessibility to the Lower Gulf of Saudi oil discovered in the Empty Quarter. On balance, however, Saudi Arabia has been slow to show the concern with Gulf affairs that its interests would seem to indicate; it is more preoccupied with its opposition to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY).

The interest of outside powers in the Gulf is derived largely from its position as the world's major petroleum exporting region. While Gulf oil is of great strategic interest to the West, and will probably become increasingly important to the Soviets, there does not presently appear to be any significant external military threat to the area states. The greatest present challenge to Gulf stability is from dissident and subversive activities generated in the Gulf states themselves and from their increased exposure to the political and nationalist cross-currents of the Arab world which independence has brought them.

The main political objective of the Soviets in the area is to increase their influence at the expense of the West. It is extremely doubtful that, in the pursuit of this objective, they would intervene overtly in the politics of the area, whether through military action or through support of a military adventure by an Arab radical regime. The political costs of such tactics would be very high in terms of the adverse reaction of the other regional states with which the Soviets are trying to increase their influence. The use of force by the USSR, for example, in support of Iraq or a radical group trying to seize power in a lower Gulf state, would probably so frighten local leaders that they would move closer to the West for support.

In the regional context, Iraq's ambitions to play a leading role in the Gulf are opposed by the conservative Arab littoral states and by Iran.

Oman

All indications are that Sultan Qaboos is succeeding in curbing the rebellion in his Western province of Dhofar, which is supported by South Yemen with some Chinese assistance. The Sultan's armed forces are stretched thin but are effective in interdicting rebel supply lines from neighboring South Yemen. Rebel defections continue. However, the war remains a costly burden, especially since the Sultan has embarked on an ambitious development program for his country, which only recently opened its doors to the outside world. Although unfulfilled Omani expectations have led to some criticism, Sultan Qaboos appears to have widespread support and to be firmly in control.

The Yemens

In September–October 1972, the two Yemens came as close to full-scale war as they had at any time since the People's Democratic

Republic of the Yemen (PDRY) became independent in 1967, but they quickly did an about-face and announced plans for unifying the PDRY and the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). In fact, neither effective unity nor all-out war seems very likely at present. Unity has always been the avowed aim of both Yemens, but the obstacles are great. The ruling group in each country sees in union a means of extending its sway over the other rather than establishing a true collaboration. Also, the present leadership of the YAR has become cooler toward the Soviet Union and leans slightly toward the West. The PDRY regime, by contrast, has its antecedents in the radical Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), is militantly Marxist and relies on close cooperation with the USSR.

Despite their basic mutual hostility, however, both sides probably realize that a prolonged war would strengthen the always potentially dissident tribal elements in both countries and greatly overtax their threadbare economies.

The unity talks thus provide a welcome respite for both sides and have served to defuse the border situation. However, Saudi Arabia, deeply worried about the radical orientation of the PDRY regime, has continued to support PDRY exile groups which are based in the YAR. These groups, collectively called the National Unity Front (NUF), sparked the recent fighting through border incursions during September, and they may again be instrumental in provoking armed conflict. For the time being, at least, both sides will probably try to keep border incidents from escalating, but the situation in the southwest part of the Arabian Peninsula remains far from stable.

The Soviets and Arab radical groups will probably rely on political subversion in the lower Persian Gulf rather than on direct intervention. Even so, the Soviets are likely to be cautious in the manner in which they participate in subversive activities and in their support of subversive groups, in an effort to avoid an anti-Soviet reaction among the local leaders.

Attachment⁴

SITUATION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE

The Soviet Naval Presence

Over the past five years the Soviets have developed a virtually continuous naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Soviet naval auxiliaries

⁴ CENTO; Secret.

and specially equipped merchant vessels began operating in the Indian Ocean on a more or less continuous basis in August 1967 in connection with the Soviet space program. Soviet combatants, a cruiser and two destroyers, appeared for the first time in the spring of 1968. The combatants were in the Indian Ocean almost four months although they spent about half their time visiting ports in India, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, the UAR, Yemen and Ceylon. Submarines were added to the next deployment of surface combatants in November 1968. Since then, except for one week in the spring of 1968, there has always been at least one Soviet combatant in the Indian Ocean.

Soviet naval presence increased slowly from 1968 through 1970. There was an upsurge during the Indo-Pakistani war in December 1971 but the current Soviet naval presence appears to be approximately at the pre-December 1971 level if Soviet ships engaged in harbor-clearing operations in Chittagong, Bangladesh, are excluded from calculations.

While Soviet naval deployment varies from time to time a typical group at present could include some or all of the following:

- 2 surface combatants, 1 of which might be missile armed
- 1 amphibious ship
- 1 diesel powered attack submarine
- 1-2 repair ships
- 2 or 3 oilers
- 1 ocean rescue tug or salvage rescue vessel
- 1 small refrigerator cargo vessel
- 3 space vehicle recovery ships and 1 oceanographic research vessel

In addition the Soviets have about 10 ships presently engaged in the Chittagong operation including a varying number of minesweepers.

The combatant presence is augmented by the large Soviet fishing and merchant fleet operating in the Ocean which can provide emergency support and supply to Soviet naval vessels and perform intelligence functions.

Airpower: Soviet airpower in the Indian Ocean is limited by the absence of shore-base or aircraft carrier capability but the Soviets have flown naval TU-95 reconnaissance aircraft over the Arabian Sea from bases in southern USSR since August 1968 in support of space vehicle recovery operations.

Logistics: The Soviet naval presence is designed to be self-sustaining. Necessary minor repairs and supply operations are conducted primarily in international water at anchorages established near Socotra; Cargados Carajos, about 200 nautical miles north/northeast of Mauritius; Fortune Bank and in the area of the northeast Seychelles. The Soviets also make port calls which are not essential for logistic purposes but do lighten the burden. They have access to a number of ports in which supply and repair operations could be conducted and apparently have made limited logistic use of some of these, for example, in

Somalia, Mauritius and Singapore. Despite reports of Soviet interest in acquiring port facilities in various countries of the area there is no evidence that Moscow has acquired or pressed for formal base rights.

Current Soviet Naval Operations

Soviet development of a naval presence in the Indian Ocean is related to both Soviet global naval policy and to Soviet political interest in the region. The Soviets desire a naval capability in all oceans as an appropriate element of great power status, seeking parity with western naval power. Great power strategic naval competition is not present in the Indian Ocean and the Soviets have not seen it necessary to develop a major strategic force. Nevertheless, they apparently take the view that because they are a great power, and a prominent maritime power in the Indian Ocean with large shipping and fishing interests, a naval force to protect their sea lanes is required. The naval force also performs space program support functions. At the same time the Indian Ocean operations offer an opportunity to enhance on-going Soviet naval capability in the area by providing oceanographic and other scientific research data, intelligence collection, training and familiarization benefits for Soviet ships and crews and opportunities to "show the flag."

The Soviets have played their naval presence in low-key to the regional powers. Port visits have remained at roughly the same level since 1969 despite the gradual increase in Soviet naval operations in the Ocean. The Soviets have avoided implying any potential regional interventionist mission for the Indian Ocean force. This stance can be explained merely as good politics but it also is consistent with an evolving status quo Soviet policy in Asia, a desire to avoid creating anti-Soviet fears among littorals which might be exploited by the Chinese and a fear that any image of gun-boat diplomacy would erode rather than enhance Soviet influence. On two occasions the Soviets did go beyond the mere "presence" function. A Soviet naval visit to Somalia coinciding with the April 1970 threatened coup was extended apparently as a gesture of solidarity with the incumbent regime. There is no evidence, however, that the Soviets considered naval intervention. During the Indo-Pakistan war of December 1971 the Soviets temporarily built up their Indian Ocean force but some elements appeared primarily assigned to track the movements of US ships.

Prospects for Expansion of Soviet Naval Strength

A major expansion of the Soviet naval presence is limited in the first instance by the logistical problems inherent in operations far from home ports. Assuming that the Soviets continue to expand their overall logistical strength they could sustain a steadily increasing combatant presence if their priorities dictate. Reopening the Suez Canal would

reduce logistical problems and allow for expanded self-sustained operations, but the Soviets do not seem to assign a high priority to this.

Beyond logistic restraints on major Soviet naval expansion there are political constraints. Rapid expansion of Soviet naval power would risk reaction among regional countries against potential Soviet imperialism, a theme which the Chinese have already delighted in playing. Littoral sensitivity to Great Power naval presence is real. For example, the Indian Chief of Naval Staff on July 24, 1972 cited the Soviet ship presence along with that of the Japanese, Americans and Chinese as an object of concern for the Indians. Littoral powers, particularly Sri Lanka who are pressing for an Indian Ocean zone of peace would vocally oppose a Soviet (or western) buildup.

Furthermore, the Soviets may calculate that a rapid Soviet buildup would lead to a naval arms race with western powers in the region and there is no present indication that they would want to take this risk. In this regard, twice in the past 18 months the question of avoiding military competition in the Indian Ocean has been briefly touched upon in US/Soviet talks, but not seriously pursued. The last occasion was in July 1971 and the subject has not since been raised by either country.⁵

Although a major expansion of the Soviet naval presence is not likely under present circumstances, the limited Soviet fleet could serve as a nucleus for a larger strategic force, should the USSR consider an expanded presence desirable because of a perceived threat to Soviet interests in the region or possibly if the Soviets were presented with an unusual opportunity to advance their interests.

The Soviets have built assets for such a contingency. They have gained experience in Indian Ocean operations, established a visible presence and have cultivated friendly access to a number of ports in the region. This has permitted their personnel to familiarize themselves with port facilities in a region which for a long time was barely visited by Russian men-of-war. In addition, the Soviets have provided assistance in building or expanding port facilities at Berbera, Somalia; Hodeyda, Yemen Arab Republic; Umm Qasr, Iraq; and Vizakhapatnam, India. They are helping to clear war debris from Chittagong, and the port of Aden has a Soviet harbor master among several foreigners so employed. These activities not only help the familiarization process, but also build up good will and get the population used to at least intermittent presence of Soviet ships and/or naval personnel.

⁵ For documentation on these talks, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971.

Impact on Free World Interests

Soviet naval influence on Free World interests in the Indian Ocean appears to be potential rather than a clear and present danger whether viewed in terms of Soviet forces in being or of Soviet priorities. Soviet appreciation of regional sensitivity to gun-boat diplomacy makes Soviet naval intervention in the region a likely contingency only in the case of developments which the Soviets would consider as a threat to their vital interests or possibly if they were presented with an unusual opportunity to expand their influence. Under present circumstances the Soviets are likely to continue to rely primarily on economic and military assistance and diplomacy to advance their interests in the area.

Soviet successes in expanding their political influence in the region will, however, serve to enhance their naval capability by allowing greater and more useful access to regional ports. Soviet access to littoral airfields for reconnaissance operations likewise would enhance their naval capability.

Furthermore, the Soviet naval presence offers psychological if not tangible support to various littoral powers and may encourage them to increase efforts to undermine neighboring regimes.

In conclusion, it appears prudent to maintain a careful watch on Soviet naval facilities in the Indian Ocean to assure that the current limited use of this force remains limited. Special attention must be paid to any indications that Soviet policy has begun to focus on developing naval-oriented assets in the Indian Ocean as a primary rather than ancillary goal of Soviet activities in the region.⁶

⁶ Another attached paper dealing with India is not printed.