~~SECRET~~ REPORT II

"FOUR EYES ONLY" CONVERSATION BETWEEN G. & P. PRECEEDING MEETING OF 24 MARCH

G. said that he had given thought to yesterday's meeting and had reached the conclusion that the gap between the two parties on the Middle Eastern matter was deep and wide. His suggestion therefore was that, as is the rule in such cases, that the two parties now recognize the facts for what they were and proceeded to identify those areas where progress was possible. In this case it meant the area covering bilateral relations.

P. replied that the chasm was indeed very deep on Mid-Eastern affairs, so much so that maybe it was unbridgeable. However, the Israeli approach was unrealistic if based on that they were now telling the Soviet Union to disappear from the scene and to let Israel reach an agreement with the Arabs through the Americans only. His superiors will not understand this approach and will be critical about it. In order to solve the conflict and bridge the gap detailed negotiations are needed. The Soviet Union has helped to solve various conflicts such as, Vietnam, India-Pakistan and Germany. Assuming that Israel rejected their 1969 proposal why did not Israel approach the Soviet Union and make counter proposals or put forward amendments. In this manner talks would start until a solution would be found. P. said that he understood from yesterday's meeting that we proposed that they do one thing only: try and influence the Arabs to negotiate with Israel. This is not acceptable by them, such things have to be well prepared and take a lot of time. The German question was discussed over a five-year period. The Germans could also have said that the problem did not

concern anyone but themselves as we now say concerning our problems. However, the Soviet Union played an active role in settling that question and this is what she would want to do in the Middle East. When they hear us saying that we rely on the U.S. only in this matter, it irritates them, and this in the light of the basic Soviet policy which embraces Israel's existence and independence. He suggests that we seriously use the present contacts since they are authoritative and can be useful in clarifying positions. They should not be wasted on argumentation.

G. said that he doubted very much that Jerusalem would agree to such a Soviet role because the Soviet position was totally opposed to ours regarding practically all the components of the conflict. For example, they were advocating a total withdrawal and were not encouraging direct negotiations. P. had not come to announce that they had changed their basic position. Therefore all we could do was to leave the gap as it was and proceed to explore areas where progress was possible, i.e., bilateral matters. Also as G. had pointed out yesterday, Israel would negotiate in detail only with the Arab country in question. The character and composition of the present meeting were not of a type that would remotely justify a change in Israel's position.

P. said again that they would suggest that we entered into detailed clarifications. We would find them open to any suggestions and ready to listen to all we had to say even though we disagreed.

~~SECRET~~ REPORT III

SECOND MEETING, 24 March

Same participants.

The meeting was preceded by a 'four eyes only' talk between G. and P. at G.'s suggestion. One detail, omitted in the special report of that conversation (see Report II), will be mentioned here.
P. said he knows that Israel is very much interested in the improvement of her relations with the Soviet Union. Such a goal is realistic if only Israel agrees to enter into meaningful negotiations on a Middle East settlement reserving a role to the Soviet Union in this connection. The impression he tried to convey was that we had before us two matters of equal importance: improvement in relations as against an Israeli agreement to let the Soviets be active in efforts to bring about a settlement (probably on the basis of the Arab-Soviet positions). G. said to P. that these two matters were not after all of equal importance. We did not underestimate the importance of improved relations with the Soviet Union. But this was much less important than basic matters connected with Israel's future - true peace with defensible borders different from the 1967 lines.

The rest of the conversation was devoted to the question of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. P. complained that Israel was escalating its demands all the time. After all Jews were being given special consideration. They were permitted to go while other national minorities were not. About 3,000 people were leaving monthly. He insisted adamently that no application had been refused other than for reasons connected with the security of the Soviet state.

G. expressed the view that the fact that tens of thousands of Jews had come to Israel in the last eighteen months was a positive development greatly appreciated by the Israeli government. However, G. felt that he had to raise problems connected with administrative

harrassment of the Jews applying for visas. P. was impatient when G. elaborated this. He denied vehemently that there was any harrassment and declared that all Jews applying were permitted to go and that no problem existed.

Regarding the diploma tax (the famous ransom), P. stated that it was for all practical purposes inoperative and the Jews who in any case had effectively been exempted would continue to be exempt to the point that the whole problem could be considered as settled.

P. claimed that only 12-13% of emigrating Jews from the Soviet Union with higher education had paid the tax. G. countered this by quoting the Israeli figure of 70%. P. refused to accept from G. a list of Jewish prisoners in the Soviet Union claiming that all imprisoned persons had been sentenced under the penal code and that the allegation that their arrest had anything to do with their wish to leave the Soviet Union was without foundation.
