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## ARAB - ISRAELI CONFLICT

### MOSCOW EVASIVE ON IMMEDIATE ISSUES, NOTES DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY

In a period of intense diplomatic activity on the Middle East involving the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Arab and Israeli parties to the conflict, Moscow continues to display reticence with respect to the immediate issues. The problems of POW exchange and controversy over the UN Emergency Force have been touched on obliquely in reportage on developments in the Middle East and at the Security Council, but these issues have been largely passed over in limited comment. Panelists on Moscow radio's weekly observers' roundtable on the 4th declined to predict the possible course of current and future negotiations in view of the "complexity and difficulty" of the talks.

Moscow continues to back up Egyptian insistence on observance of Security Council Resolutions 339 and 340 calling for the return of forces to the positions they held at the time of the 22 October cease-fire. Thus Kirilenko, in his October Revolution anniversary speech on the 6th, called Israeli withdrawal to the 22 October positions the "very first and necessary step" toward a political settlement of the crisis. TASS dismissed Mrs. Meir's counter-proposal, in a 1 November Washington news conference, for a "so-called 'mutual alinement'" of the cease-fire. Moscow had taken no note of what Israel has described as another pressing problem, the Arab blockade of the Bab el Mandeb strait at the mouth of the Red Sea, until TASS acknowledged the blockade in a 5 November dispatch from Paris on an Israeli fuel shortage. TASS said that since the Arab countries had set up a blockade of Bab el Mandeb no oil tanker had reached Israel from the Indian Ocean. Seemingly in an effort to obscure the issue of a Bab el Mandeb blockade, Moscow's domestic service on the 7th claimed that the arrival of a GDR merchant vessel in the Jordanian port of Aqaba refuted Israeli charges of an Egyptian blockade of "the Gulf of Aqaba."

Soviet media have reported, with virtually no comment, the separate talks held in Washington beginning last week by Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmi and Israeli Prime Minister Meir with President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger and the latter's meeting with Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Isma'il "at American initiative." TASS reported the itinerary for Kissinger's trip to the Middle and Far East beginning on the 5th, but had no

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comment other than to cite "local observers" in Washington for the view that recent U.S. diplomacy was due to the American desire to repair relations with the Arab countries and consolidate its deteriorating Middle East position. Soviet media also briefly noted Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov's meeting with as-Sadat in Cairo on the 2d and his 3-6 November visit to Damascus, as well as reporting the current round of inter-Arab contacts and Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban's arrival in Romania on the 5th for an official visit.

**KIRILENKO SPEECH** In his October Revolution anniversary speech on the 6th Kirilenko went further than other Soviet leaders have in the present crisis when he said that the Soviet Union has been rendering and "will continue to render the necessary aid and support" to the Arab states. While such statements have been made by Soviet leaders since the 1967 war,\* elite pledges of support since the October fighting have been confined to expressions of sympathy with the "victims of aggression" (Brezhnev on 8 October) and of continued strengthening of solidarity with the Arabs (Kosygin on 15 October).

Kirilenko also made the first Soviet elite reference to direct Egyptian-Israeli contacts in Egypt in noting that these countries' representatives were meeting in the presence of UN representatives to discuss "questions of restoring the situation that existed on 22 October." Soviet media have noted these meetings in routine reportage on Mideast developments. Underlining the importance of an Israeli return to the 22 October positions, Kirilenko twice called this the first step toward settlement of the conflict as a whole. In this context he accused Israel of "gross and treacherous" violations of Resolution 338 calling for a cease-fire and declared that for this alone Israel deserved "the most stringent sanctions,

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\* Kirilenko himself said in April 1970 that the USSR had rendered and would render the Vietnamese and Arab people "such aid as is required"; in June 1970 Podgorny pledged to continue rendering the "necessary assistance" to the Arab countries; Ponomarev and Mazurov similarly pledged "comprehensive assistance" and "all-round aid" in speeches in July and August that year, and Kosygin promised "all necessary support" in a February 1971 speech.

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foreseen in such cases by the UN Charter." In only one other instance is a Soviet leader known to have called for Security Council sanctions against Israel--Shelepin in an October 1969 speech at a WFTU congress in Budapest--although Soviet delegates have from time to time raised the question during UN debates on the Middle East.

Kirilenko's remarks on the Middle East were otherwise routine: He reiterated the standard position that a stable peace in the Middle East must be based on liberation of "all" Israeli-occupied territories and on guaranteeing the Palestinians' "lawful rights." Without mentioning the United States, Kirilenko went on to say that it should be understood by the Israeli leaders and "those who support them" that a real solution to the Mideast problem could only be found in this way. And like Brezhnev in his 26 October speech, Kirilenko referred to Soviet contacts with the Arab states in declaring that the USSR had taken an active part in diplomatic actions aimed at terminating the war and settling the conflict. Kirilenko acknowledged the "full complexity" of the Middle East situation, but concluded on a positive note by stating that "there are now more favorable conditions" than ever for a stable and just normalization of the crisis in this region.

UNEF, UN OBSERVERS,  
22 OCTOBER POSITIONS

Soviet reportage has not spelled out the nature of the difficulties arising over composition, financing, and Security Council control over the UN Emergency Force. Moscow did indicate some of the problems in noting that Secretary General Waldheim's second report on the establishment of the UNEF was submitted without consultation with Security Council members and that the principle of "just geographical representation" in the formation of the UNEF had not been duly complied with. TASS on the 3d reported the 2 November council consensus--without identifying it--which accepted Poland to balance Canada, giving the two countries responsibility for logistic support. There has been no Soviet stress on Polish participation, TASS merely reporting on the 4th the Polish decision to comply with the Security Council request.

A TASS report in RED STAR on the 4th suggested that the representation issue had still not been resolved to Soviet satisfaction: Soviet UN delegate Malik was reported to have called the council decision a step forward in that "artificial restrictions" on the participation of socialist and nonaligned

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states in the UNEF had been removed. But Malik added that the council would have an opportunity in the future to examine application of the principle of fair geographical distribution "for the purpose of further improving" the composition of the UNEF.

Moscow has underscored the point that the UNEF has the duty to obtain the return of forces to the 22 October cease-fire line. Soviet media have cited Malik as stating that the UN forces must take "appropriate measures" to insure that troops participating in the conflict are withdrawn to their 22 October positions. And Moscow has reported statements by UN spokesmen in New York and Cairo that the United Nations has had no response from Israel to queries about withdrawal. TASS, in reporting Mrs. Meir's Washington news conference on 1 November, noted her "cynical refusal" to comply with the Security Council decisions on a pullback to the 22 October positions, adding that she "alleged it was 'not known' where the cease-fire line was on 22 October." Moscow has apparently not yet reported the Egyptian military spokesman's statements on the 5th and 6th claiming that the 22 October positions could be determined by referring to Israeli officials' statements made on 22 October and an Egyptian military communique issued on the 24th defining Egyptian positions.

The matter of U.S. and Soviet "observers" in the Middle East has been broached in only a few instances since Brezhnev announced in his 26 October speech that the USSR had sent "representatives" to Cairo in response to as-Sadat's 24 October request for U.S. and Soviet troops and President Nixon said in his 26 October press conference that the United States would send observers if this was requested by the UN secretary general. Since then Moscow has twice indicated that American as well as Soviet observers have already been sent to the Middle East--possibly alluding to the fact, not spelled out, that eight Americans have been serving with the UN Truce Supervision Organization. Thus a Mikhaylov article in IZVESTIYA on 30 October asserted that at as-Sadat's request the USSR, "and, subsequently, the United States, sent their representatives" to supervise implementation of the Security Council decisions. And a panelist in Moscow radio's weekly observers' roundtable on the 4th made the same claim, "reminding" listeners that "there are UN observers and also Soviet and American representatives in the former area of hostilities."

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POW ISSUE            Moscow has suggested Israeli concern over the POW problem only by indirection, TASS on the 2d reporting that an emergency session of the Knesset had been held to discuss the question. However, TASS focused on an Israeli Communist Party statement calling for an Israeli withdrawal to the 22 October positions to speed a solution to the POW question. Moscow has generally touched on the problem of the POW's only in the course of media roundups of various Mideast developments. Egypt and Syria have been depicted as willing to comply with international conventions concerning treatment of civilians and prisoners of war, and Moscow has reported Arab countercharges of Israeli maltreatment of POW's and civilians under their control. Thus, Soviet media on the 4th reported Egyptian spokesmen as stating that Egypt had agreed through the International Committee of the Red Cross on an exchange of wounded POW's "which the Egyptian side has started to fulfill," but that Israel was "sabotaging" this agreement. And TASS on the 1st reported Syrian readiness to hand over lists of Israeli prisoners to the ICRC and "give a possibility" for visits if Israel also agreed to "follow generally accepted norms."

SITUATION IN            Soviet media in the past few days have EGYPT, SYRIA            reported dispatches from their Cairo and Damascus correspondents noting continued tension, with intermittent firing on the cease-fire lines, but portraying Egypt and Syria as already engaged in plans for reconstruction. However, Moscow radio correspondents on the 4th said that in view of Israeli calls for military preparedness, Egypt was maintaining vigilance and tightening defenses at industrial establishments. A TASS dispatch on the 1st noted that along with plans to reopen the Suez Canal and rehabilitate cities in the canal zone, Egypt also had to "strengthen the country's defense potential," requiring considerable efforts from the national economy. That explained, TASS said, rationing of some foodstuffs and measures to economize on water, electric power and fuel.

PRAVDA correspondents reported on the 3d and 4th the Syrian people's determination during the war and their current concern to restore damaged enterprises. While applauding the solidarity of Syria's population around the Progressive National Front, PRAVDA at the same time cautioned against the "internal enemy" opposing the country's socialist orientation. PRAVDA's correspondents made Moscow's only known reference to the evacuation of Soviet citizens from the Middle East in observing that at the Euphrates hydropower site, about 1,000 "of our specialists (women and children were evacuated)" and over 12,000 Syrian engineers and workers remained after the beginning of military operations.

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## EAST-WEST RELATIONS

## SOVIET CONTROVERSY OVER DETENTE-DEFENSE ISSUE CONTINUES

The apparently ongoing controversy in the Soviet leadership over the political uses of military strength has again surfaced in the Soviet central press in the wake of the Middle East confrontation.\* In editorials on the just-concluded World Peace Congress in Moscow, PRAVDA and RED STAR diverged sharply over the principal reasons for the general improvement in East-West relations in recent years. Where PRAVDA emphasized the decisive role of Soviet diplomatic initiatives in bringing about the change in the international climate, RED STAR stressed the growth of Soviet military and economic might as the principal causal factor. The latter line was also evident in Politburo member Kirilenko's 6 November keynote address on the October Revolution anniversary and Defense Minister Grechko's traditional Red Square speech the following day.

The differences between the PRAVDA and RED STAR editorials were characteristically expressed in esoteric terms, but they were clearly defined. PRAVDA asserted that the "radical turn from 'cold war' to detente and collaboration became possible thanks to the general change in the correlation of forces in the world in favor of the forces of peace and progress." The editorial went on to emphasize that "these positive changes are connected primarily with the principled and consistent peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist states." This was the same view forcefully expressed by USA Institute director Georgiy Arbatov in PRAVDA last July, as well as by other Soviet commentators on foreign affairs.

By contrast, the RED STAR editorial reiterated the hardline argument advanced in that paper last August by its propaganda department head Col. I. Sidelnikov. Rephrasing the first part of the PRAVDA statement, the editorial

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\* The earlier signs of this dispute were analyzed in the TRENDS SUPPLEMENT of 23 August 1973, "Soviet Debate Over Role of Military Power During Detente," and in the TRENDS of 26 September 1973, pages 3-4.

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asserted that "the radical turn now occurring from 'cold war' to detente is primarily the result of the changed balance of forces in the international arena in favor of socialism." It then went on to emphasize the role of military power as an instrument of Soviet detente diplomacy, saying: "The might and authority of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist commonwealth are steadily strengthening and at the same time their influence on the development of world events is growing."

A similar hardline position on the role of military power in international affairs was asserted in Kirilenko's address commemorating the 56th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Paraphrasing a formula used by Sidelnikov, Kirilenko declared: "The stronger and more cohesive the commonwealth of socialist states, the greater its economic and defense potential, the more powerful its influence on the progress of world development, the more successful the people's liberation struggle, and the more reliable the great cause of peace for which all progressive mankind is fighting." Consistent with this view, Kirilenko also called for strengthening the Soviet armed forces and the maintenance of Soviet defenses "at the necessary level" as a means of countering Western "enemies of peace." Not surprisingly, Defense Minister Grechko likewise urged a "high degree of vigilance" and the strengthening of Soviet economic and military might, as he had in last year's Red Square speech.

#### MOSCOW PUBLICITY ON NATO RIFT AVOIDS DETENTE LINKAGE

Moscow has continued to give moderate publicity to the rift in NATO ranks exposed by the exchanges of criticism between the United States and its European allies over the Middle Eastern crisis and the U.S. military alert. Basing its coverage mainly on West European press criticism of the U.S. actions, Moscow has focused on the intra-alliance implications of the affair, suggesting that relations between the United States and its NATO partners have been badly strained. While thus presenting U.S. actions in an unfavorable light, it has avoided any suggestion that the overall context of U.S.-Soviet relations has been damaged. Indeed, it has suggested that the actions of the European countries in opposing U.S. policy in the crisis testify to the vitality of the forces favoring a relaxation of international tensions.

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This mixture of criticism and optimism was typified by Moscow radio's observers' roundtable on 4 November. Criticizing U.S. media for "dramatizing the crisis and U.S. officials for making "rather ambiguous statements" about its causes, the commentators expressed optimism both about U.S. public opinion and about the prospects for detente. "We see," said one of the speakers, "how gradually the policy of peaceful coexistence, the course toward international collaboration and detente are gradually gaining the upper hand." An article in IZVESTIYA on the preceding day struck much the same tone. Referring favorably to European resistance to U.S. policy, it said that this showed Europe had become aware of the benefits of the "transition from confrontation to cooperation" and would not sacrifice it for the sake of "so-called Atlantic solidarity."

Moscow has also obviously been concerned not to stress NATO disarray to the point of suggesting the military threat from the West is no longer a source of danger. This concern was stated explicitly in the roundtable discussion. "It would be wrong," said one of the commentators, "to exaggerate the cracks appearing in the Atlantic bloc," since its "aggressive essence" and its "aggressive machinery" continue to function. The same concern probably accounts for the fact that RED STAR has been remarkably taciturn about the U.S.-NATO rift. After reporting President Nixon's press conference and giving a brief roundup of European press reactions on 28 October, it has not commented on the issue through its first three November issues.

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## U. S. - SOVIET RELATIONS

### MOSCOW INDICATES THAT WASHINGTON SHOULD PROVE GOOD FAITH

In the wake of recent U.S. actions in the Middle East crisis and on bilateral trade, Moscow has assumed a more cautious stance regarding relations with the United States. Moscow has continued to express optimism about the process of detente as a whole and restated its desire to continue on a course of normalizing relations with the United States. But it has in recent days treated U.S. intentions toward the USSR in a much more conditional tone, suggesting that it is now up to the United States to prove its good faith and its intention to continue pursuing an improvement of U.S.-Soviet relations.

Politburo member Kirilenko, in his 6 November speech on the occasion of the October Revolution anniversary, was correct but distinctly cooler in his assessment of relations with the United States than other recent official statements, including that by Brezhnev on 26 October in his speech to the World Peace Congress in Moscow. Kirilenko noted that Soviet-U.S. relations had "begun to develop in the direction of detente." He reaffirmed Soviet intentions to adhere to recently concluded U.S.-Soviet agreements, but was cautious in his characterization of U.S. intentions: "We proceed from the supposition that the American side too will act in the same manner in accordance with the spirit and letter of the agreements concluded." He did not refer directly or indirectly to the U.S. military alert ordered in connection with the recent Middle East fighting.

The more conditional assessment of official U.S. attitudes toward U.S.-Soviet relations was also reflected in Moscow's belated response to the Administration's decision to delay requesting most-favored-nation status for the USSR. Although the media reported Administration claims that it was maintaining its commitment to Moscow on the issue, IZVESTIYA's political observer Vikentiy Matveyev on 3 November implied that Moscow was reserving judgment on the validity of those reassurances. "The American press offers various suggestions regarding the motives behind this decision by official Washington. The near future will show how things stand in this respect."

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**WATERGATE** Moscow's handling of the Watergate affair has also reflected a more cautious assessment of Washington's intentions. The linkage of Watergate with the U.S. military alert marks an abrupt change from Moscow's previous practice of downplaying the affair. The weekly foreign affairs journal NEW TIMES in its 2 November issue carried a brief, unattributed report which for the first time in Soviet media discussed the issue of impeachment. The NEW TIMES report, however, contained no direct criticism of the President and, in pointing to the partisan Democratic party factor in the Congressional proceedings, implied, as Moscow has consistently, that the Watergate revelations are heavily influenced by party politics and thus not necessarily evidence that the President is guilty of anything atypical of U.S. political practice. For this reason, the NEW TIMES report, as yet the only item of its kind in Soviet media, may have been intended as a precautionary move alerting the Soviet public to the possibility of sensational developments in the U.S. domestic political situation, rather than as a display of pique over the Middle East.

**U.S. ALERT** While Moscow has clearly shown distress over recent U.S. actions, it has continued to avoid any suggestion that events surrounding the U.S. military alert amounted to a full-blown crisis. Its linkage of the alert with Watergate has implied that the alert was more a domestic than a foreign policy decision.

Furthermore, Moscow has continued to convey the impression that the outcome of the Middle East war was a vindication of detente rather than an indictment. The weekly domestic radio roundtable on international affairs on 4 November, for example, told listeners somewhat defensively that "if detente were as shaky and illusory an affair as Peking continues to portray it, it would hardly have withstood such a test" as the Middle East war. Radio-TV observer Mikhail Mikhaylov went on to deny explicitly that there were any grounds for comparing recent events to previous U.S.-Soviet confrontations, such as the Cuban missile crisis. Mikhaylov argued that before the onset of detente there had been "more than one such local crisis in the postwar history of mankind which quickly grew into a most serious international crisis threatening world peace . . . . Any local crisis or military conflict had a tendency to grow almost instantaneously into a dangerous confrontation between our country and the United States. Peace hung by a thread. This did not happen this time."