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## ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

## USSR WELCOMES ARAB SUMMIT, MARKS TIME ON DEVELOPMENTS

Moscow continues its reportage on developments connected with the cease-fire agreement and convocation of an Arab-Israeli peace conference, but there has been little comment of substance. The Soviet posture was typified in a message from Podgorny and Kosygin welcoming the Arab summit conference, convened in Algiers on 26 November. The message stressed the need for further Arab coordination as the Middle East conflict enters "a stage of practical steps," and it again called for Israeli withdrawal from "all" Arab territories.

While continuing to complain of Israeli tactics of "sabotage and procrastination," Moscow has briefly noted Israel's 25 November agreement in principle to take part in a peace conference with the "stipulation" that the Israeli Government cannot make any important decision before the parliamentary elections at the end of December. And Soviet media reported without comment Secretary Kissinger's assessment, in his 21 November news conference, of sufficient progress in the Egyptian-Israeli situation so that a negotiating process could begin in December.

KISSINGER NEWS CONFERENCE      Short reports of Secretary Kissinger's 21 November news conference by TASS, Moscow radio and PRAVDA, while varying somewhat, all focused on his opening statement on the Middle East and paraphrased some of his remarks on detente.

+ U.S. objectives, peace conference: Kissinger was cited as explaining the U.S. objective in the Middle East as solidifying the cease-fire "so that we could move forward together with other interested parties" toward peace negotiations. TASS and PRAVDA noted his belief that sufficient progress had been made in the "complex situation" on the Egyptian-Israeli front so that "we can look forward with some confidence" to the beginning of peace negotiations. Kissinger was also reported as saying that "our effort will be to create the appropriate auspices called for in Resolution 338 and under the auspices of the United Nations" to begin a negotiating process hopefully during December. The Soviet reports did not mention Kissinger's remark that the peace conference should be under the auspices of Moscow and Washington with UN "blessing," and Moscow has never defined the

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"appropriate auspices," going no further than observations by PRAVDA's Zhukov that the negotiations should be held under "suitable aegis," involving the assistance and participation "of the United Nations or that of various states." Thus Soviet media have ignored Cairo and Amman reports on the 27th that the U.S. and Soviet envoys had been jointly received by Egyptian Vice President Fawzi and King Husayn respectively; Amman radio explained that the ambassadors had extended an invitation to Jordan to attend the peace conference to be held in Geneva on 18 December.

+ Detente: The Soviet accounts of Kissinger's press conference all cited the Secretary as noting the "great significance" of detente in Soviet-American relations for the settlement of the Middle East conflict. According to PRAVDA and Moscow's domestic service, Kissinger said that from time to time "existing differences cause tension" in U.S.-Soviet relations and it was important at such moments to have sufficient trust between them to relax this tension. (Kissinger in fact said that, as happened during the Middle East crisis, "long-standing commitments--ideological pressures--produce actions that bring these two sides into confrontation." At that point, he added, "it is important that enough confidence exist so that the confrontation is mitigated.")

+ Guarantees: Moscow's reports of the news conference did not mention Kissinger's observation that the final accord would have to include "an element of security arrangements" between the Arabs and Israelis and "may have to have an element of outside guarantees." But TASS on the 24th did note his remark on outside guarantees in promptly reporting Israeli Defense Minister Dayan as turning down "the American proposal for guarantees of Israel's borders and security." TASS cited Dayan as declaring that "the Americans 'tell us that we can and must rely on security guarantees. But why do we need such guarantees in view of the fact that Israeli borders will then be worth nothing?'" TASS assessed Dayan's statement as demonstrating that Israel's real concern was not the security of its borders nor even the establishment of peace, but rather a continued policy of territorial expansion. The same point was expressed in a Mayevskiy article in PRAVDA on the 23d which scoffed that the Israeli "theory of the 'need for reliable borders'" was simply a justification for the seizure of Arab land. Similarly, Kudryavtsev in an IZVESTIYA article on 10 October had dismissed Israel's insistence on secure frontiers as being only a cover for its "expansionist" policy. Kudryavtsev had reiterated his thesis that Israel's frontiers would become

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genuinely secure only when it maintained "good-neighborly relations" with the Arab states. And in a 23 November IZVESTIYA article Kudryavtsev declared that genuine security for Israel could be insured only by guaranteeing the security of all countries and peoples of the region.

+ Energy crisis: The Moscow radio and PRAVDA versions said the Secretary noted the seriousness of the energy crisis in the United States as a result of the Arab oil embargo and stated that economic pressure would not change U.S. policy in the Middle East. But Moscow did not pick up his remark that if "pressures" continued unreasonably and indefinitely, the United States would have to consider what countermeasures it might have to take. TASS on the 24th acknowledged this remark by indirection in reporting from Dacca on indignation in Bangladesh over "Kissinger's announcement of U.S. intentions" to resort to "repressive economic measures" against Arab states which were seeking to liberate their lands. TASS also noted that a Congressional committee had conceded that a retaliatory U.S. embargo on grain and food exports would be ineffective. An Arabic-language broadcast the same day, citing Algerian and Lebanese press comment, said Arab public opinion condemned the "U.S. threat" to ban the export of grain and goods to Arab countries as a countermeasure against the reduction of oil exports. A KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA article by Agaryshev on 24 November, discussing the U.S. oil supply situation, claimed that this "partly explains" American diplomatic activity in the Middle East.

ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE      Moscow comment in Arabic on the Algiers summit conference has cited the consolidation of Arab solidarity in political, military and economic cooperation as the focus of the discussions, which would deal among other things with future oil policy and the "Palestinian question." A Moscow domestic service broadcast on the 26th additionally noted two other agenda issues, a Middle East peace conference and the status of Jerusalem. As in the case of the last Arab summit conference, in Rabat in December 1969, Podgorny and Kosygin sent a greetings message to the participants.\* Along the lines of Kirilenko's October Revolution anniversary

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\* The Podgorny-Kosygin message and Soviet treatment of the 1969 summit are discussed in the TRENDS of 24 December 1969, pages 17-20, and of 31 December 1969, pages 19-20.

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speech, the message pledged that the USSR would continue giving "comprehensive assistance and support" to the Arab countries, and again expressed Soviet readiness to contribute to the creation of conditions for the establishment of peace. Kosygin and Podgorny repeated the standard Soviet call for Israeli withdrawal from "all" Arab territories and adhered to the usual formulation in supporting the Palestinians' "legitimate rights."

In reporting the opening of the conference, TASS on the 26th mentioned without comment that Iraq and Libya had not sent delegations. Libya's absence was dismissed as of no consequence by former PRAVDA Middle East expert Belyayev in the weekly Moscow radio observers' roundtable on the 25th. He remarked that there was nothing new in al-Qadhafi's stand, since he had disapproved of Egyptian and Syrian strategy and tactics in connection with the October fighting and "remained, as it were, outside the framework of Arab unity" since then.

The panelists' failure to mention Iraq undoubtedly stems from Soviet annoyance over Iraq's rejection of the Security Council cease-fire resolutions. Thus the Iraqi foreign minister, asked in an interview reported by Baghdad radio on 17 November about Soviet efforts to persuade Iraq to accept the cease-fire, replied that "the Soviets have their viewpoint and we have ours on war and peace." He added that "we regard them as friends who give every possible means of support," but do not consider them "as an alternative to the Arabs with regard to Arab issues."

Perhaps not coincidentally, Moscow and Baghdad on the 27th announced the arrival in Iraq of a Soviet party-government delegation led by CPSU Central Committee Secretary Ponomarev.\* The visit would seem to be connected both with Iraq's stance on a cease-fire and with Iraqi internal dissensions. Baghdad radio reported that at the delegation's first talks, with Ba'th Party Deputy Secretary Saddam Husayn, the sides discussed, "in an atmosphere of frankness and amity," bilateral relations and the situation in the Middle East on which they "exchanged views." On the internal front, the visit may deal with recent reported clashes between the Iraqi Communist Party and the Kurdish Democratic Party; both ICP and KDP delegations have had talks in Moscow this month with Ponomarev, the communists having

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\* At the same time, Cairo and Moscow announced the arrival in Egypt on the 27th of a CPSU delegation headed by CPSU Central Committee candidate member Kirichenko.

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also been received by Brezhnev. A TASS report on the talks with the Kurds indicated that the USSR was still pressing for Kurdish participation in the Iraqi national front established by the ruling Ba'th Party and the communists in July.

PALESTINIAN ISSUES      Moscow continues its reticence in matters pertaining to the Palestinians. The visit of a Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) delegation to Moscow was not acknowledged until the release by TASS of a "communique for the press" on 26 November, two days after the visit ended. The communique indicated that the talks were again held under the umbrella of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee although, as in the case of PLO Chairman 'Arafat's August visit this year, talks were also held with "other USSR public organizations." The communique referred to the Palestinians' legitimate "national" rights, as did the Soviet-Yugoslav communique on Tito's recent talks with Brezhnev in Kiev, but Moscow comment otherwise has generally avoided including the word "national."

Moscow followed up the visit on the 27th by broadcasting in Arabic an interview with delegation leader 'Arafat, a practice also observed in at least his last two visits. 'Arafat called the talks positive and constructive and praised Soviet support for the Arabs whether by "passing along its experience or giving arms," and he particularly expressed gratitude to Brezhnev for "insisting on mentioning" the Palestinians' "legitimate rights" in the Soviet-U.S. communique on Brezhnev's June visit to the United States.

Moscow has again conveyed in typical fashion its disapproval of the latest Palestinian hijacking. A broadcast to Great Britain on the 26th called attention to a PLO disclaimer of involvement in the hijacking of a KLM Boeing 747 out of Beirut on the 25th.

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