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24 February 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
 FROM : Arnold Horelick, NIO/USSR
 SUBJECT : Worldwide Overview: Items "Checked" for
 further elaboration [REDACTED]

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In case we don't get a chance to discuss the three points you checked on your worldwide briefing talking points, the following comments are provided for your background:

A. More Assertive Soviet Foreign Policy

1. Point is not that Soviet for. pol. was passive before mid-70s and then suddenly became assertive. Rather a broadly assertive policy entered a new, more insistent and somewhat more venturesome phase around 1975 when faced with mix of challenge and opportunity in Angola.

Angola drew Soviets into African military intervention with use of Cuban military manpower, Soviet hardware and logistics.

Ethiopia saw Soviets acting more decisively and massively and more heavily involved themselves (advisers, generals).

Finally, Afghanistan--direct large-scale use of their own forces for first time outside Bloc (except immediate post-war involvement in Iran). [REDACTED]

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2. Background, predating mid-70s was globalization of Soviet foreign policy interests and involvements. Khrushchev began transition, moving regional to global actor, but lacking efficient military capabilities and network of clients to follow through. Under Brezhev regime especially since mid-70s, assertive, global Soviet foreign policy has come of age. Involves more than 3rd world but that most fluid area in which dynamism finds receptive environment. [REDACTED]

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B. Soviet Afghan Options

1. There may be strong Committee interest in pursuing with you the issue of Afghan "neutralization" and other forms of possible political solutions. While responses to direct queries should of course be left to Secretary Vance, your discussion of Soviet options in briefing may invite followup. [REDACTED]

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2. As background, if that happens, what follows are some paragraphs I dictated Friday for use in preparing your briefing book for the SCC. (I believe you saw only a talking points version of these thoughts.)

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a. At the present time the Soviets are doing so poorly in Afghanistan that they could not afford to accept a face-saving "political solution" that involved Soviet military disengagement and substantial, much less total, withdrawal at the present time would almost certainly lead to collapse of whatever Soviet installed regime was in power and the Soviets are surely aware that no fig leaf "compromise" solution could obscure the universal perception of a massive and humiliating Soviet defeat.

b. Nevertheless, the Soviets will continue to indicate, as they have from the very beginning, that they are prepared to withdraw their forces when the "causes" that lead them to intervene have been removed. This is tantamount to the Soviets saying that they will withdraw when Soviet forces are no longer needed to preserve a regime in Afghanistan acceptable to them. However, the Soviets will reject any "compromise" neutralization proposals that imply condemnation of past Soviet behavior.

c. While the Soviets are not in a position in any case to respond now to any formula that required their immediate disengagement and withdrawal, they will undoubtedly welcome signs that the US, the allies, and those neutrals which currently condemn the Soviet Union, have begun to engage in a process of negotiating among themselves deals which might be offered to the Soviets to encourage their military withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Soviets will expect such a process in the West at this stage to be divisive and likely to slow down the momentum of the Western punitive response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviets at the present time are likely to interpret such intra-Western negotiations as debate over the terms under which the West would be prepared to relent in exerting punitive measures against the Soviet Union.

d. Serious dialogue with the Soviets on a "political solution" in Afghanistan is not likely to be feasible until such time as the Soviets are persuaded that they could politically survive a compromise solution that would entail their military disengagement from Afghanistan. In short, they will have to be doing well enough to be able to afford to consider withdrawal, but not so well as to be confident that a military solution at acceptable political cost is at hand.

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C. Soviet Succession

1. Brezhnev's most likely successors are almost certain to be transitional leaders.

- Stalin ruled 1/4 century
- Khrushchev was #1 for over a decade
- Brezhnev has been top man for 15 years

Kirilenko, still most probable General Secretary successor, is 73; even Chernenko is 68.

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2. In time, because the entire senior echelon of leadership is so old, there will be a generational turnover which could have more far-reaching consequences than a gradual attrition of old leaders and the co-optation of other oldsters to fill in (e.g., recent full Politburo elevation of Tikhonov, age 74). [REDACTED]

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3. Question for the next few years: Will there be a retail or a wholesale leadership turnover? Cannot predict, because in the first instance it depends on the turn of an actuarial roulette wheel. [REDACTED]

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