

S E C R E T/SENSITIVE 072358Z MAY 74

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MAY 7, 1974

HAKTO 55

TO: GENERAL SCOWCROFT

State Dept. review completed

FROM: SECRETARY KISSINGER

PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING TO PRESIDENT: BEGIN TEXT:

I SPENT THREE HOURS WITH GROMYKO TODAY (TUESDAY) IN NICOSIA, ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY DEALING WITH THE MIDDLE EAST.

GROMYKO REITERATED THE STANDARD SOVIET POSITION THAT DISENGAGEMENT WILL LEAVE THE AREA IN A STATE OF TENSION UNLESS IT IS CLEARLY LINKED TO ACHIEVEMENT OF A FINAL SETTLEMENT. HE STRESSED SOVIET SUPPORT FOR SYRIA'S DEMANDS. HOWEVER, HIS PRESENTATION CONFIRMED OUR OWN JUDGMENT THAT THE PRINCIPAL ISSUE FOR THE SYRIANS IS KUNEITRA AND THAT IF THEY GET IT, THE NEGOTIATION WITH SYRIA HAS A CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING. I MADE THE POINT FIRMLY TO HIM SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE US AND USSR WOULD INFLAME THE SITUATION IF WE TRIED TO COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER IN BACKING THE MAXIMUM DEMANDS OF THE TWO SIDES. HE ASSURED ME THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT WANT THE AREA IN A STATE OF TENSION.

IN SHORT, WHILE I BELIEVE WE PROBABLY CANNOT EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL ON THE SYRIAN NEGOTIATIONS, I DO NOT SEE SERIOUS SIGNS THAT THEY ARE DETERMINED -- OR ABLE -- TO DISRUPT THE NEGOTIATIONS AT THIS POINT. THERE WAS NOT A SINGLE COMPLAINT THIS TIME ABOUT US UNILATERALISM AND EXCLUSION OF THE SOVIET UNION

HE SEEMED EAGER TO TRY TO FIND OUT FROM ME THE DETAILED SPECIFICS AND HE WANTS TO ASSURE THE SOVIETS PARTICIPATE IN THE "FINALIZATION" OF THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AT GENEVA. MY OWN ASSESSMENT IS THAT WE WILL HAVE A MURDEROUS TIME IN SYRIA AND THAT WE MAY WELL FAIL.

ON OTHER SUBJECTS, WE REVIEWED THE STATUS OF A NUMBER OF BILATERAL US-SOVIET AGREEMENTS FOR THE SUMMIT -- INCLUDING ARMS CONTROL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION MATTERS. WE AGREED THEY WERE ON COURSE. ON SALT, I WOULD TALK TO DOBRYNIN ONCE I GOT BACK FROM MY TRIP. I REITERATED WHAT OUR CONCERNS WERE.

WE SKETCHED OUT A ROUGH SCENARIO FOR MOVING AHEAD WITH THE EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE. THE SOVIETS ARE WILLING TO AGREE TO SOME BEEFED-UP LANGUAGE IN THE SECTION OF THE FINAL DECLARATION REGARDING HUMAN CONTACTS; THIS WOULD GO FAR TO SATISFYING THE WEST EUROPEANS. GROMYKO AND I AGREED THAT A THIRD COUNTRY (SUCH AS FINLAND) SHOULD BE INVITED TO SUBMIT SOME PRE-AGREED LANGUAGE TO THE CONFERENCE. END TEXT

WARM REGARDS.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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IMMEDIATE

HAKTO SS

TO: GENERAL SCOWCROFT
FROM: SECRETARY KISSINGER

Please pass following to President: BEGIN TEXT:

I spent three hours with Gromyko today (Tuesday) in Nicosia, almost exclusively dealing with the Middle East.

Gromyko reiterated the standard Soviet position that disengagement will leave the area in a state of tension unless it is clearly linked to achievement of a final settlement. He stressed Soviet support for Syria's demands. However, his presentation confirmed our own judgment that the principal issue for the Syrians is Kuneitra and that if they get it, the negotiation with Syria has a chance of succeeding. I made the point firmly to him several times that the US and USSR would inflame the situation if we tried to compete with each other in backing the maximum demands of the two sides. He assured me the Soviet Union did not want the area in a state of tension.

In short, while I believe we probably cannot expect the Soviets to be particularly helpful on the Syrian negotiations, I do not see serious

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signs that they are determined -- or able -- to disrupt the negotiations at this point. There was not a single complaint this time about US unilateralism and exclusion of the Soviet Union. He seemed eager to try to find out from me the detailed specifics and he wants to assure the Soviets participate in the "finalization" of the disengagement agreement at Geneva. My own assessment is that we will have a murderous time in Syria and that we may well fail.

On other subjects, we reviewed the status of a number of bilateral US-Soviet agreements for the Summit -- including arms control and technical cooperation matters. We agreed they were on course. On SALT, I would talk to Dobrynin once I got back from my trip. I reiterated what our concerns were.

We sketched out a rough scenario for moving ahead with the European Security Conference. The Soviets are willing to agree to some beefed-up language in the Section of the final declaration regarding human contacts; this would go far to satisfying the West Europeans. Gromyko and I agreed that a third country (such as Finland) should be invited to submit some pre-agreed language to the Conference. END TEXT

Warm regards.