

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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Reviews Completed.

October 29, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS  
APPLY

FROM: The Situation Room

MORI PER  
C03361332

SUBJECT: Evening Notes

Middle East Situation: Both the Egyptian and Syrian fronts are generally calm, although UN observers reported explosions and small arms fire in the vicinity of Suez City late this morning. According to the chief Israeli liaison officer, Egyptian forces attempted to put a bridge across the canal during the night from the east to west bank north of Suez City. He said the bridge was broken by the water current before Israeli forces could destroy it. The Israeli liaison officer also claimed that Egyptian forces fired three rockets from Port Tawfiq early today to the southwest but caused no damage. The Syrian front remains quiet as Iraq continues the withdrawal of its forces from Syria. Radio Baghdad reported today that Iraqi units would be withdrawn from the two fronts and returned home. Baghdad said the units no longer have a "pan-Arab combat duty to fulfill" and the presence of its armed forces raises "delicate and serious military and security matters."

The Soviet airlift remains at about one half the level observed over the last three days. Further substantial reductions are not expected at least for the next two days, as 13 AN-12 flights to the Middle East are already scheduled.

Recent arrivals and departures have brought the total size of the Soviet Mediterranean force to 89. The estimated composition of the force is now as follows: Surface Warships -- 36, comprising 25 major combatants (cruisers, frigates, destroyers, escorts), seven amphibious ships, and four mine-sweepers; submarines -- 21, including four nuclear-powered cruise missile units, two diesel-powered cruise missile units, and 15 diesel-powered torpedo attack units; support ships -- 32.

The General Assembly is beginning work today on funding the United Nations' Emergency Force. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a 12-member standing committee, is meeting this afternoon to receive Secretary-General Waldheim's cost estimates and consider financing proposals. The Committee's report must eventually be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly.

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Cairo Voice of Palestine Coded Message: The Cairo Voice of Palestine carried the following coded message yesterday, "The time has ripened, move." Similar messages were noted being passed just prior to the Khartoum tragedy last March.

State Department posts have been cautioned to take all reasonable precautions to forestall any possible terrorist action.

25X3

25X1

Chinese Expand Laotian Road: Aerial photography  has revealed the existence of a new Chinese road extending east from Muong Sai to Nom Bac in northcentral Laos. The work apparently began in January 1972 when the Chinese first inserted surveyors in Laos and subsequently brought in infantry units to protect the early activity.

25X3

Washington Star-News: C.L. Sulzberger reports from Peking that Chou En-lai has stated that relationships between the U.S. and China have in no way been affected by the Watengate affair. (A-1)

Senator Mark Hatfield plans to introduce a bill to prohibit the use of U.S. combat troops in the Middle East. (A-7)

Fred Hoffman quotes U.S. intelligence sources as saying Indonesia may offer the U.S. greater access to its oil in return for financing help. (A-8)

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Administration officials are reportedly taking a "hard look" at possible troop and arms cutbacks overseas, due to lack of cooperation by European allies during the Middle East crisis. (A-9)

A Star editorial writes that the imposition of a cease-fire in the Middle East leaves the United States, and the West in general, groping for policies to deal with a suddenly worsened energy crisis that has been developing for years. (A-12)

Theodore Shabad writes that the Soviet Union, in an evident move to reduce dependence on American wheat, has begun construction of a major irrigation canal that is intended to divert water from Siberian rivers to dry grain-growing lands to the south. (A-18)

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