

**FOREIGN
RELATIONS
OF THE
UNITED
STATES**

1977–1980

VOLUME XVIII

**MIDDLE EAST
REGION; ARABIAN
PENINSULA**



**DEPARTMENT
OF
STATE**

Washington



**Foreign Relations of the
United States, 1977–1980**

Volume XVIII

**Middle East
Region;
Arabian Peninsula**

Editor Kelly M. McFarland
General Editor Adam M. Howard

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About the Series

The *Foreign Relations of the United States* series presents the official documentary historical record of major foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity of the U.S. Government. The Historian of the Department of State is charged with the responsibility for the preparation of the *Foreign Relations* series. The staff of the Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, under the direction of the General Editor of the *Foreign Relations* series, plans, researches, compiles, and edits the volumes in the series. Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg first promulgated official regulations codifying specific standards for the selection and editing of documents for the series on March 26, 1925. These regulations, with minor modifications, guided the series through 1991.

Public Law 102-138, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, established a new statutory charter for the preparation of the series which was signed by President George H.W. Bush on October 28, 1991. Section 198 of P.L. 102-138 added a new Title IV to the Department of State's Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 4351, et seq.).

The statute requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be a thorough, accurate, and reliable record of major U.S. foreign policy decisions and significant U.S. diplomatic activity. The volumes of the series should include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation of major foreign policy decisions and actions of the U.S. Government. The statute also confirms the editing principles established by Secretary Kellogg: the *Foreign Relations* series is guided by the principles of historical objectivity and accuracy; records should not be altered or deletions made without indicating in the published text that a deletion has been made; the published record should omit no facts that were of major importance in reaching a decision; and nothing should be omitted for the purposes of concealing a defect in policy. The statute also requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be published not more than 30 years after the events recorded. The editors are convinced that this volume meets all regulatory, statutory, and scholarly standards of selection and editing.

Sources for the Foreign Relations Series

The *Foreign Relations* statute requires that the published record in the *Foreign Relations* series include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation of major U.S. foreign policy decisions and significant U.S. diplomatic activity. It further requires that government agencies, departments, and other entities of the U.S. Government en-

gaged in foreign policy formulation, execution, or support cooperate with the Department of State historians by providing full and complete access to records pertinent to foreign policy decisions and actions and by providing copies of selected records. Most of the sources consulted in the preparation of this volume have been declassified and are available for review at the National Archives and Records Administration (Archives II) in College Park, Maryland.

The editors of the *Foreign Relations* series have complete access to all the retired records and papers of the Department of State: the central files of the Department; the special decentralized files ("lot files") of the Department at the bureau, office, and division levels; the files of the Department's Executive Secretariat, which contain the records of international conferences and high-level official visits, correspondence with foreign leaders by the President and Secretary of State, and the memoranda of conversations between the President and the Secretary of State and foreign officials; and the files of overseas diplomatic posts. All of the Department's central files for 1977–1981 are available in electronic or microfilm formats at Archives II, and may be accessed using the Access to Archival Databases (AAD) tool. Almost all of the Department's decentralized office files covering this period, which the National Archives deems worthy of permanent retention, have been transferred to or are in the process of being transferred from the Department's custody to Archives II.

Research for *Foreign Relations* volumes is undertaken through special access to restricted documents at the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and other agencies. While all the material printed in this volume has been declassified, some of it is extracted from still-classified documents. The staff of the Carter Library is processing and declassifying many of the documents used in this volume, but they may not be available in their entirety at the time of publication. Presidential papers maintained and preserved at the Carter Library include some of the most significant foreign-affairs related documentation from White House offices, the Department of State, and other federal agencies including the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Some of the research for volumes in this subseries was done in Carter Library record collections scanned for the Remote Archive Capture (RAC) project. This project, which is administered by the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of Presidential Libraries, was designed to coordinate the declassification of still-classified records held in various presidential libraries. As a result of the way in which records were scanned for the RAC, the editors of the *Foreign Relations* series were not always able to determine whether attachments to a given document were in fact attached to the paper copy of the docu-

ment in the Carter Library file. In such cases, some editors of the *Foreign Relations* series have indicated this ambiguity by stating that the attachments were “Not found attached.”

Editorial Methodology

Documents in this volume are presented chronologically according to time in Washington, DC. Memoranda of conversation are placed according to the time and date of conversation, rather than the date the memorandum was drafted.

Editorial treatment of the documents published in the *Foreign Relations* series follows Office style guidelines, supplemented by guidance from the General Editor and the Chief of the Editing and Publishing Division. The original document is reproduced as exactly as possible, including marginalia or other notations, which are described in the footnotes. Texts are transcribed and printed according to accepted conventions for the publication of historical documents within the limitations of modern typography. A heading has been supplied by the editors for each document included in the volume. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are retained as found in the original text, except that obvious typographical errors are silently corrected. Other mistakes and omissions in the documents are corrected by bracketed insertions: a correction is set in italic type; an addition in roman type. Words or phrases underlined in the original document are printed in italics. Abbreviations and contractions are preserved as found in the original text, and a list of abbreviations and terms is included in the front matter of each volume. In telegrams, the telegram number (including special designators such as Secto) is printed at the start of the text of the telegram.

Bracketed insertions are also used to indicate omitted text that deals with an unrelated subject (in roman type) or that remains classified after declassification review (in italic type). The amount and, where possible, the nature of the material not declassified has been noted by indicating the number of lines or pages of text that were omitted. Entire documents withheld after declassification review have been accounted for and are listed in their chronological place with headings, source notes, and the number of pages not declassified.

All brackets that appear in the original document are so identified in the footnotes. All ellipses are in the original documents.

The first footnote to each document indicates the sources of the document and its original classification, distribution, and drafting information. This note also provides the background of important documents and policies and indicates whether the President or his major policy advisers read the document.

Editorial notes and additional annotation summarize pertinent material not printed in the volume, indicate the location of additional documentary sources, provide references to important related documents printed in other volumes, describe key events, and provide summaries of and citations to public statements that supplement and elucidate the printed documents. Information derived from memoirs and other first-hand accounts has been used when appropriate to supplement or explicate the official record.

The numbers in the index refer to document numbers rather than to page numbers.

Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation

The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, established under the *Foreign Relations* statute, monitors the overall compilation and editorial process of the series and advises on all aspects of the preparation of the series and declassification of records. The Advisory Committee does not necessarily review the contents of individual volumes in the series, but it makes recommendations on issues that come to its attention and reviews volumes as it deems necessary to fulfill its advisory and statutory obligations.

Declassification Review

The Office of Information Programs and Services, Bureau of Administration, conducted the declassification review for the Department of State of the documents published in this volume. The review was conducted in accordance with the standards set forth in Executive Order 13526 on Classified National Security Information and applicable laws.

The principle guiding declassification review is to release all information, subject only to the current requirements of national security as embodied in law and regulation. Declassification decisions entailed concurrence of the appropriate geographic and functional bureaus in the Department of State, other concerned agencies of the U.S. Government, and the appropriate foreign governments regarding specific documents of those governments. The declassification review of this volume, which began in 2012 and was completed in 2014, resulted in the decision to withhold 3 documents in full, excise a paragraph or more in 17 documents, and make minor excisions of less than a paragraph in 36 documents.

The Office of the Historian is confident, on the basis of the research conducted in preparing this volume and as a result of the declassification review process described above, that the documentation and editorial notes presented here provide a thorough, accurate, and reliable

record of the Carter administration's policy toward the Middle East region.

Adam M. Howard, Ph.D.
General Editor

Stephen P. Randolph, Ph.D.
The Historian

Bureau of Public Affairs
August 2015

Preface

Structure and Scope of the Foreign Relations Series

This volume documents the Carter administration's formation of U.S. policy toward the Middle East region, with particular attention paid to strategic interests in the Gulf, the Indian Ocean region, Arabian Peninsula states, and Iraq. The volume is best read in conjunction with other volumes in the subseries, in order to understand the breadth and scope of U.S. relations throughout the Middle East region. The most important of these volumes include: *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978; *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980; *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. X, Iran: Revolution, January 1977–November 1979; and *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XI, Iran: Hostage Crisis, November 1979–January 1981. Documentation on oil and energy issues is in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980. For U.S. bilateral relations with Iraq in the last 6 months of 1980, see *Foreign Relations, 1981–1988*, vol. XX, Iran; Iraq, April 1980–January 1985.

Focus of Research and Principles of Selection for Foreign Relations, 1977–1980, Volume XVIII

This volume represents the range of diplomatic and political issues that affected the Carter administration's policies toward the Middle East and Indian Ocean region as well as bilateral relations with the Arabian Peninsula states and Iraq. Additionally, the challenges to U.S. interests created by the shifting strategic balance in Southwest Asia provide a common thread that runs through all of the compilations in the volume.

To a significant extent, Carter and his advisers viewed their situation in the Middle East through a Cold War lens. From the outset, the administration focused its essential policy toward the region on strengthening relations with U.S. partners like Saudi Arabia, cultivating new relationships with the recently independent Gulf states, and reestablishing relations with states like the Yemen Arab Republic and Iraq. At the same time, the administration sought to manage and mitigate Soviet influence in the region both diplomatically in the case of the 1977–1978 Indian Ocean arms control talks and militarily in support of the Yemen Arab Republic and Saudi Arabia against perceived threats from Soviet-backed states like the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

In 1979, however, two events prompted the administration to dramatically raise its strategic engagement in the region. The end of the Shah of Iran's rule in February and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December pushed U.S. policymakers to seek a new security framework centered on the Gulf. Although some officials, like Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Zbigniew Brzezinski, had long pushed for the creation of a Rapid Deployment Force in the Gulf region, the events of 1979 highlighted the need for a more robust U.S. military capacity to meet the challenges of the new security environment as well as future threats across Southwest Asia and the northern arc of the Indian Ocean. Carter articulated this new imperative in his January 1980 State of the Union Address, in which he held that the United States would use military force to protect its interests in the Middle East. This position became known popularly as the "Carter Doctrine."

The new regional challenges which emerged led the administration to abandon some earlier goals and refocus its energies on others. In the Indian Ocean, the United States abandoned its demilitarization dialogue with the Soviet Union. With the loss of its military proxy in Iran and with Soviet forces on the ground in Afghanistan, Carter and his foreign policy advisers began to view the Indian Ocean as a vital staging area for U.S. regional deterrence efforts. In the same vein, the drive to increase U.S. military presence in Southwest Asia, which after March 1980 took form as the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, prompted Washington to seek access and basing rights across the region.

Acknowledgements

The editor wishes to acknowledge the assistance of officials at the Carter Library, Atlanta, Georgia, especially Ceri McCarron and James Yancey. Special thanks are due to the Historical Staff of the Central Intelligence Agency, who were extremely helpful in arranging full access to the files of the Central Intelligence Agency. The editor would like to also thank Sandy Meagher, for her valuable assistance in expediting the use of Department of Defense files.

Kelly M. McFarland, Richard Moss, and Craig Daigle collected documentation for this volume and Kelly M. McFarland selected and edited it, under the supervision of Adam Howard, then Chief of the Middle East and Africa Division, and the direction of Susan C. Weetman, the former General Editor of the series. Adam Howard and Kristin Ahlberg reviewed the volume. Chris Tudda coordinated the declassification review, under the supervision of Carl Ashley, Chief of the Declassification Division. Stephanie Eckroth and Rita Baker did the copy and technical editing. Do Mi Stauber Indexing Service prepared the index.

Kelly M. McFarland
Historian

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Sources

Sources for Foreign Relations, 1977–1980, Volume XVIII

In the preparation of this volume, the editors used extensively the Presidential papers and other White House records in the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta, Georgia. These records were essential for documenting the roles of President Jimmy Carter, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Zbigniew Brzezinski, and other members of the National Security Council Staff in developing and implementing U.S. policy toward the Middle East region. The National Security Affairs files in this collection are divided into two subseries: Brzezinski Material and Staff Material. In the Brzezinski Material subseries, the Country File, the Country Chron portion of the Brzezinski Office File, and the Subject File proved the richest source on the range of bilateral and regional issues. The General Odom File, however, is particularly useful for documentation relating to the development of the Persian Gulf Security Framework and the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force between 1979 and 1980. The Staff Material subseries is also an important resource for its ability to reveal the development of U.S. Middle East policy at the working level of the National Security Council. Documentation in the Middle East and Defense Security Files was particularly useful for this volume.

Separate from the National Security Affairs collection is the National Security Council Institutional Files, which focus primarily on the records of meetings of the National Security Council and subgroups the Policy Review Committee and the Special Coordination Committee. It also includes supporting documentation provided to the Department of State, Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and others for the meetings. These records are particularly useful for documenting the central role the Special Coordination Committee played in the Carter administration's deliberations on the future of the U.S. defensive posture in the region. The National Security Council Institutional Files also serve as a central repository for documentation on Presidential Review Memoranda and Presidential Determinations produced by the Carter administration.

Two additional Carter Library collections supplement documentation from the National Security Affairs and National Security Council Institutional Files: Brzezinski Donated Material and the Plains File, a body of documents assembled to aid President Carter in writing his memoirs *Keeping the Faith*. Each collection contains significant documentation on the policymaking process toward the Middle East region,

including meeting minutes, memoranda, and Presidential correspondence with Middle East leaders.

To document the Department of State's participation in the formulation of U.S. policy in the Middle East region, the Central Foreign Policy File and the special decentralized files of the Department of State ("lot files") organized at the bureau, office, and division levels were crucial. For this volume, the Central Foreign Policy File provided a central repository of the Department of State's telegram communications with posts in the Arabian Peninsula, including accounts of meetings with Middle Eastern leaders for which no memoranda of conversation were kept. It also contains important cabled correspondence between Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and their counterparts in the region. Several lot files were particularly useful including the records of Secretary Vance (Lot 84D241), the General Program Country files of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Lot 86D371), the Saudi Arabia Historical files in the Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs (Lot 91D410), and the files of the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Lot 91D491).

Finally, this volume's account of the Carter administration's efforts to construct a new Persian Gulf Security Framework would have been incomplete without Department of Defense Records. Within the files of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, FRC 330-80-0017 provided key documentation on the administration's dialogue with the Soviet Union on the Indian Ocean and relations with Saudi Arabia. FRC 330-82-0205 contains a useful collection of documents on Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's communication with U.S. and Middle East officials, as well as Department of Defense memoranda on regional defense planning.

In addition to the paper files cited below, a growing number of documents are available on the internet. The Office of the Historian maintains a list of these on its website and encourages readers to consult that site on a regular basis.

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Staff Material

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Global Issues

Middle East

Office

National Security Council

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Plains File

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Abbreviations and Terms

ACDA, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
ACE, Allied Command Europe
AF, Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State
AF/I, Office of Inter-African Affairs, Bureau of African Affairs, Department of State
AFLC, Air Force Logistics Command
AID, Agency for International Development, Department of State
AIPAC, American Israel Public Affairs Committee
Amb, Ambassador
AMCONSUL, American Consulate
ANZUS, Australia, New Zealand, United States Alliance
APC, armored personnel carrier
ARAMCO, Arabian American Oil Company
ARG, amphibious ready group
ARP, Arabian Peninsula
ASAP, as soon as possible
ASW, anti-submarine warfare
AWACS, Airborne Warning and Control System

BBC, British Broadcasting Company
b/d, barrels per day
BIB, Board for International Broadcasting
BIOT, British Indian Ocean territory
Blumto, series indicator for telegrams from W. Michael Blumenthal
BQ, Bill Quandt

C, confidential
C³I, Command, Control, Communications, Intelligence
CBU, cluster bomb unit
CDA, Camp David Accords
CDR, Commander
CENTO, Central Treaty Organization
CHUSEOPE, Chief, U.S. European Command Operational Planning Element
CHUSMTM, Chief, U.S. Military Training Mission, Saudi Arabia
CIA, Central Intelligence Agency
CIEC, Conference on International Economic Cooperation
CINC, Commander-in-Chief
CINCEUR, Commander-in-Chief, European Command
CINCLANT, Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Command
CINCPAC, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command
CINCPACFLT, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet
CINCRED, Commander-in-Chief, Readiness Command
CINCUSNAVEUR, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Navy, Europe
CJCS, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
CNO, Chief of Naval Operations; Chief Naval Officer
Codel, congressional delegation
COE, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army
COMIDEASTFOR, Commander, Middle East Force

COMSEVENTHFLT, Commander, U.S. Navy Seventh Fleet

CONUS, contiguous United States

CPI, Consumer Price Index

CPX, command post exercise

CRAF, Civil Reserve Air Fleet

CSCE, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

CTF, Commander Task Force

CVBG, carrier battle group

CY, calendar year

D, Deputy Secretary of State

DA, David Aaron; Defense Attaché

DALO, Department of the Army Logistics Office

DAMA, Department of the Army Materiel Annex

DAMO, Department of the Army Military Operations

DARCOM, Department of the Army Materiel Development and Readiness Command

DAS, Deputy Assistant Secretary

DASD (NEASA), Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

DASS, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

DATT, Defense Attaché

DCI, Director of Central Intelligence

DCM, Deputy Chief of Mission

DCR, Deputy Chief, United States Military Training Mission

DepSecDef, Deputy Secretary of Defense

DI, Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency

DIA, Defense Intelligence Agency

DIVENGER, Division Engineer

DM, Deutsch Mark

DO, Directorate of Operations, Central Intelligence Agency

DOD, Department of Defense

DOD/DSAA, Defense Security Assistance Agency, Department of Defense

DOD/ISA, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

DOD/ISA/FMRA, Office of Foreign Military Relations, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

DOD/ISA/NESA, Office of Near East and South Asian Affairs, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

DOD/ISA/SA, Office of Security Assistance, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

dols, dollars

DPC, Defense Planning Committee (NATO)

DSAA, Defense Security Assistance Agency

E, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs

EB, Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, Department of State

Emb, Embassy

EOPE, see USEOPE

ESF, Exchange Stabilization Fund, Department of the Treasury

EUCOM, European Command

EUR, Bureau of European Affairs, Department of State

EUR/SE, Office of Southern European Affairs, Bureau of European Affairs, Department of State

EUR/SOV, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, Bureau of European Affairs, Department of State

Exdis, exclusive distribution, indicating extremely limited distribution or dissemination
EXIM, Export-Import Bank of the United States

F-5, U.S.-designed light jet fighter aircraft
F-16, U.S.-designed multirole jet fighter aircraft
FBIS, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FCO, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (United Kingdom)
FMS, Foreign Military Sales
FonMin, Foreign Minister, Foreign Ministry
ForMin, Foreign Minister
FRC, Federal Records Center
FRG, Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)
FY, fiscal year
FYDP, five-year defense program
FYI, for your information

G-7, Group of 7: Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States
GAO, Government Accounting Office
GDR, German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
GOB, Government of Bahrain
GOI, Government of Iran, Israel, Iraq, or India
GS, Gary Sick
GSRs, general support rocket system

H, Bureau of Congressional Relations, Department of State
HA, Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Department of State
HAWK, surface-to-air missile system
HM, His/Her Majesty
HMG, His/Her Majesty's Government
HNS, host-nation support
HQ, headquarters

IBRD, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICA, International Communications Agency (formerly United States Information Agency)
IDA, International Development Association
IEA, International Energy Agency
IG, interdepartmental group
IMET, International Military Education and Training, Department of Defense
IMF, International Monetary Fund
INR, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
INR/DDC/OIL, Office of Intelligence Liaison, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
INR/RNA, Office of Research and Analysis for Near East and South Asia, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
IO, Indian Ocean; or, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State
IraqInt, Iraqi Interests Section
IRS, Internal Revenue Service
ISA, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

J, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
JC, Jimmy Carter
JCS, Joint Chiefs of Staff

XX Abbreviations and Terms

JCS/J-5, Plans Section, Joint Plans and Policy Office, Joint Chiefs of Staff
JCSM, Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum
JMC, Joint Military Commission
JTF, joint task force

KT, kiloton

L, Legal Adviser, Department of State
L/PM, Assistant Legal Adviser for Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State
LDC, less developed country
LGB, laser-guided bomb
Limdis, limited distribution
LOA, letter of approval
LOC, lines of communication
LST, landing ship, tank
LTC, Lieutenant Colonel
LTG, Lieutenant General

MAAG, Military Assistance Advisory Group
MAC, Military Assistance Command
MAGTF, Marine Air Ground Task Force
MAP, Military Assistance Program
MARAD, Maritime Administration, U.S. Merchant Marine
MAU, Marine Amphibious Unit
MBD, million barrels per day
MBFR, Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions
MED, Mediterranean
MemCon, memorandum of conversation
MER, multiple ejection bomb rack
MFA, Minister or Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MG, Major General
M/Gen, Major General
MIDEASTFOR, Middle East Force
MiG, Mikoyan-Gurevich jet fighter (Soviet Union)
MilCon, Military Construction
MinDef, Minister of Defense
MinInt, Minister of the Interior (Iraq)
MOD, Minister or Ministry of Defense
MODA, Minister or Ministry of Defense and Aviation (Saudi Arabia)
MTM, Military Training Mission
MTT, military training team

NAM, Non-Aligned Movement
NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEA, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
NEA/ARN, Office of Lebanese, Jordanian, Syrian, and Iraqi Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
NEA/ARP, Office of Arabian Peninsular Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
NEA/INS, Office of Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
NEA/IRN, Office of Iranian Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

NEA/PAB, Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

NEA/POL-MIL, Office of Political-Military Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

NEA/RA, Office of Regional Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

Niact, night action

NIO, National Intelligence Officer

Nocontract, no contractor distribution

Nodis, no distribution other than to persons indicated

NoForn, no foreign dissemination

NORAD, North American Aerospace Defense Command

Total, not received by all addressees

NSAM, National Security Action Memorandum

NSC, National Security Council

OASD/ISA/NESA, Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs

ODC, Office of Defense Coordination

OECD, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OJCS, Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

OMB, Office of Management and Budget

O&M, operation and maintenance

OPEC, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

OPIC, Overseas Private Investment Corporation

ORPA/ME, Middle East Division, Office of Regional and Political Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency

OSD, Office of the Secretary of Defense

P, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

P&D, production & deployment

PACOM, Pacific Command

para, paragraph

PD, Presidential Determination

PDRY, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen)

PermRep, Permanent Representative

PG/IO, Persian Gulf/ Indian Ocean

PLO, Palestine Liberation Organization

PM, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

PM/ISO, Office of International Security Operations, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

PM/ISP, Office of International Security Policy, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

PM SANG, U.S. Army Project Manager, Saudi Arabian National Guard Modernization Program

PM/SAS, Office of Security Assistance and Sales, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

PO, Political Officer

POL, petroleum, oil, and lubricants

POMCUS, prepositioning of materiel configured in unit sets

PRC, Presidential Review Committee; Policy Review Committee; People's Republic of China

PRM, Presidential Review Memorandum

R&D, research and development
RADM, Real Admiral
RAF, Royal Air Force (United Kingdom)
RCC, Revolutionary Command Council (Iraq)
RDF, Rapid Deployment Force
RDJTF, Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force
REDCOM, Readiness Command
REDEYE, shoulder-launched surface-to-air missile system
reftel; ref, reference telegram
Reps, representatives
RG, Record Group
Roland, Franco-German-designed mobile surface-to-air missile system
RO/RO, roll on/roll off
Rpt, repeat
RSAF, Royal Saudi Air Force

S, Secretary of State; Secret
SACEUR, Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SAG, Saudi Arabian Government
SALT, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SAM, surface-to-air missile
SAMA, Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency
SANG, National Guard, Saudi Arabia
SCC, Special Coordination Committee
SCTG, surface combatant task group
SEATO, Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SecDef, Secretary of Defense
Secto, series indicator for telegrams sent from the Secretary of State while on travel
SLOC, sea line of communication
SNEP, Saudi Naval Expansion Program
SOCP, Saudi Army Ordnance Corps Program
S/P, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State
Specat, special category
SPR, Strategic Petroleum Reserve
S/S, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Department of State
S/S-O, Operations Center, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Department of State
SSBN, ballistic missile submarine
Stinger, portable infrared-homing surface-to-air missile
SWA, Southwest Asia
SYG, Secretary General (United Nations)

T, Office of the Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance; after August 22, 1977,
Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science, and Technology
TACAIR, tactical aircraft
Tosec, series indicator for telegrams sent to the Secretary of State while on travel
TOW, tube-launched, optically-tracked, wire-guided anti-tank missile system

U, Office of the Under Secretary of State; Unclassified
UAE, United Arab Emirates
UCP, Unified Command Plan
UK, United Kingdom
UN, United Nations
UNCTAD, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNGA, United Nations General Assembly

UNHCR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRRA, United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
U.S., United States
USA, United States Army
USAF, United States Air Force
USCINCEUR, United States Commander-in-Chief, Europe
USDAO, United States Defense Attaché Office
USEOPE, Operational Planning Element, United States European Command
USG, United States Government
USINT, United States Interests Section
USLO, United States Liaison Office
USMC, United States Marine Corps
USMTM, United States Military Training Mission
USN, United States Navy
USNATO, United States Mission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
USSR, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USUN, United States Mission to the United Nations

V-B-B, Vance-Brown-Brzezinski meeting
VOA, Voice of America

WASHDC, Washington, D.C.

XM1, early designation for the U.S. main battle tank eventually known as the M1 Abrams

YAR, Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen)
YARG, Government of the Yemen Arab Republic

Z, Zulu Time Zone (Greenwich Mean Time)
ZB, Zbigniew Brzezinski
ZBB, zero-based budgeting

Persons

Aaron, David L., Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Abalkhail, Muhammad, Saudi Minister of Finance and National Economy
Abdullah bin Aziz al-Saud, Saudi Second Deputy Prime Minister
Abzug, Bella, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-New York) from January 3, 1973, until January 3, 1977
Adham, Kamal, Director of the Saudi General Intelligence Directorate
al-Ahmar, Abdullah ibn Husayn, Yemen Arab Republic tribal leader and politician
Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud, Saudi Prince and Deputy Minister of Interior
Ali, Salim Rubayyi, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen from June 22, 1969, until June 26, 1978
Alim, Abdallah Abdal, Former Paratroop Commander, Yemen Arab Republic Army
Alireza, Ali Abdullah, Saudi Ambassador to the United States from 1975 until 1979
Allon, Yigal, Israeli Foreign Minister from June 3, 1974, until June 19, 1977
Alston, Philip H., U.S. Ambassador to Australia from April 29, 1977
Arafat, Yassir, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization
al-Arashi, Abdul Karim Abdullah, President of the Yemen Arab Republic from June 24, 1978, until July 18, 1978
Aref, Abdul Salam, President of Iraq from February 8, 1963, until April 13, 1966
Arietti, Michael R., Foreign Affairs Officer, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
Armocost, Michael A., member, National Security Council Staff for East Asian/Chinese Affairs until July 1979
al-Asad (Assad) Hafez, President of Syria
Ashtal, Abdullah Saleh, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from May 29, 1973
al-Asnaj, Abdullah, Yemen Arab Republic Foreign Minister from 1975 until 1979; Advisor to Yemen Arab Republic President
Atherton, Alfred L. (Roy), Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs from April 25, 1974, until April 13, 1978; Ambassador at Large from April 7, 1978, until May 22, 1979; U.S. Ambassador to Egypt from July 2, 1979
al-Ayni (Aini), Muhsin, Yemen Arab Republic Permanent Representative to the United Nations
Aziz, Tariq, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq from 1979
Azzawi, Fadhil, Head of the Iraqi Interests Section in Washington from 1979 until 1980

Baker, Howard, Senator (R-Tennessee)
al-Bakr, Ahmed Hassan, President of Iraq from July 17, 1968, until July 16, 1979; Prime Minister of Iraq from July 31, 1968, until July 16, 1979
Barre, Siad, President of Somalia
Bartholomew, Reginald, member, National Security Council Staff until April 1979; Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State, from July 1, 1979
Begin, Menachem, Prime Minister of Israel from June 21, 1977
Benson, Lucy W.P., Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science, and Technology until January 5, 1980
Biden, Joseph Robinette, Jr., Senator (D-Delaware)
Blumenthal, W. Michael, Secretary of the Treasury from January 23, 1977, until August 4, 1979

Bodine, Barbara, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

Bowie, Robert, Director, National Foreign Affairs Center, Central Intelligence Agency

Bremer, L. Paul, Deputy Executive Secretary, Department of State, after 1979

Brezhnev, Leonid, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Brown, George S., General, USAF; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff until June 20, 1978

Brown, Harold, Secretary of Defense

Brzezinski, Zbigniew K., Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Byrd, Robert, Senator (D-West Virginia); Senate Majority Leader

Carlucci, Frank C., Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Carrington, Lord (Peter Alexander Carrington), Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom from May 1979

Carswell, Robert, Deputy Secretary of the Treasury

Carter, James Earl (Jimmy), President of the United States

Carter, William Hodding, III, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs from March 25, 1977, until June 30, 1980; Department of State Spokesman

Case, Clifford P. Jr., Senator (R-New Jersey)

Castro, Fidel, President of Cuba

Cathey, Charles H., Jr., Major General, USA; Head of U.S. Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia from July 1977 until July 1979

Cecil, Charles O., Foreign Affairs Officer, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

Chapin, Frederic L., U.S. Ambassador to Ethiopia from 1978 until 1980

Christopher, Warren M., Deputy Secretary of State

Church, Frank F., Senator (D-Idaho); Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

Clayton, W. Graham, Jr., Deputy Secretary of Defense from August 24, 1979, until January 16, 1981

Clements, William Perry, Jr., Deputy Secretary of Defense from 1971 until 1977

Clift, A. Denis, Assistant to the Vice President for National Security Affairs

Cluverius, Wat T., IV, U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain until August 2, 1978

Constable, Peter D., Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs; member of Iran Working Group, Department of State

Cooper, Richard N., Under Secretary of State for Economic and Agricultural Affairs,

Countryman, John R., Deputy Director, Office of Regional Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State; Office Director, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State

Crawford, William R., Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

Cutler, Lloyd, White House Counsel from October 1, 1979, until November 30, 1980

Dayan, Moshe, Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs until October 21, 1979

Dean, John Gunther, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon

Denend, Leslie G., member, National Security Council Staff; Special Assistant to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs from January 1980 until January 1981

Dickman, François M., U.S. Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates until August 4, 1979; U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait from October 24, 1979

Dinitz, Simcha, Israeli Ambassador to the United States

Dobrynin, Anatoli F., Soviet Ambassador to the United States

Dodson, Christine, Deputy Staff Secretary, National Security Council, from January 1977 until May 1977; Staff Secretary, National Security Council, from May 1977

Draper, Morris, Director, Office of Lebanon, Jordan, Syrian Arab Republic, and Iraq Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State
Duncan, Charles W., Jr., Deputy Secretary of Defense

Earle, Ralph, II, Head of the U.S. Delegation to the SALT talks; Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency from January 3, 1980, until January 15, 1981
Eilts, Hermann F., U.S. Ambassador to Egypt until May 20, 1979
Eisenhower, Dwight D., President of the United States from 1953 until 1961
Eizenstat, Stuart E., Executive Director, White House Domestic Policy Staff and Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs and Policy
Ermarth, Fritz, member, National Security Council Staff for Defense Coordination from September 1978 until November 1980
Evron, Ephraim, Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry

Fahd bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia
Fahmy, Ismail, Deputy Prime Minister of Egypt from 1975 until 1977; Foreign Minister from 1973 until 1977
Fish, Hamilton, member, U.S. House of Representatives (R-New York)
Fish, Howard M., Lieutenant General, USAF; Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency, until March 1, 1978
Ford, Gerald R., President of the United States from 1974 until 1977
François-Poncet, Jean, French Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1978 until 1981
Fraser, John Malcolm, Prime Minister of Australia
Fukuda, Takeo, Prime Minister of Japan from December 24, 1976, until December 7, 1978
Funk, Gerald P., member, National Security Council Staff

Gamasy (Jamasi), Mohammed Abdel Ghani, Lieutenant General, Egyptian Minister of Defense until September 1978
Gandhi, Indira, Prime Minister of India from 1966 until 1977 and 1980 until 1984
Gates, Robert, Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from April 1979 until December 1979; National Intelligence Officer for the Soviet Union, Central Intelligence Agency, from January 1980
Gelb, Leslie H., Assistant Secretary of State for Politico-Military Affairs from February 23, 1977, until June 30, 1979
Gerlach, Frederick, U.S. Liaison Office, Riyadh, from 1978 until 1982
al-Ghashmi, Ahmed bin Hussein, President of the Yemen Arab Republic from October 11, 1977, until June 24, 1978
Giscard d'Estaing, Valéry, President of France
Gnehm, Edward William, Jr., Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Sana, Yemen Arab Republic, from 1978 until 1981
Gromyko, Andrei A., Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs

Habib, Phillip C., Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from June 16, 1976, until April 1, 1978
al-Hajri, Abdullah, Prime Minister of the Yemen Arab Republic from December 30, 1972, until April 10, 1974
al-Hamdi, Ibrahim, President of the Yemen Arab Republic from June 13, 1974, until October 11, 1977
Hammadi, Sa'dun, Iraqi Foreign Minister from 1974
Hassan II, King of Morocco
Henze, Paul B., member, National Security Council Staff for Intelligence Coordination
Holbrooke, Richard, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs from March 31, 1977, until January 13, 1981
Hudayan, Salih, Saudi Military Attaché, Yemen Arab Republic

Humphrey, Hubert H., Senator (D-Minnesota)

Hussein bin Talal, King of Jordan from 1952

Hussein al-Tikriti, Saddam, Vice Chairman of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council and Assistant Secretary-General of the Ba'ath Party

Inderfurth, Karl F. (Rick), Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs until April 1979

Ismail, Abd al-Fattah, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen from December 21, 1978, until April 21, 1980

Jackson, Henry M. (Scoop), Senator (D-Washington)

Janka, Leslie A., Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

Javits, Jacob K., Senator (R-New York)

Jones, David C., General, USAF; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, from June 21, 1978

Jordan, Hamilton, White House Chief of Staff from 1979 until 1980

Jughman, Yahya, Special Representative of the Yemen Arab Republic President

Kennedy, Edward (Ted), Senator (D-Massachusetts)

Khaddam, Abdul Halim, Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs

Khairollah, Adnan, Iraqi Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Minister of Defense

Khalid bin Abdul Aziz, King of Saudi Arabia

al-Khateeb, Mouhyi, Head of Iraqi Interests Section in Washington from 1977 until 1979

Kirbo, Charles, friend of President Carter

Kissinger, Henry, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from January 1969 until November 1975; Secretary of State from September 1973 until January 1977

Komer, Robert W., Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Kosygin, Aleksey, Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers

Kreisberg, Paul H. staff member, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State

Lake, W. Anthony, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State

Lance, Bert, Director of the Office of Management and Budget from January 23, 1977, until September 21, 1977

Lane, George M., U.S. Ambassador to the Yemen Arab Republic from October 5, 1978, until July 4, 1981

Lawrence, Richard D., Major General, USA; Chief, United States European Command Operational Planning Element

Linowitz, Sol M. Special Representative of the President to the Middle East peace negotiations from December 4, 1979

Maestroni, Frank E., U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait

Maynes, Charles W., Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs from April 14, 1977, until April 9, 1980

McGiffert, David E., Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Assistance

McIntyre, James T., Director, Office of Management and Budget from September 24, 1977

Mengistu, Mariam Haile, President of Ethiopia

Miller, G. William, Secretary of the Treasury from August 6, 1979, until January 31, 1981

Moi, Daniel arap, President of Kenya from 1978

Mondale, Walter F., Vice-President of the United States

Moore, Frank, Assistant to the President for Congressional Liaison

Muhammad, Ali Nasser, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen from June 26, 1978, until December 27, 1978, and from April 1980

Muhammad bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud, Saudi Prince, full-brother of King Khalid
Murphy, Daniel, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
Murray, Robert J., Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Near Eastern, African, and South Asian Affairs
Muskie, Edmund S., Secretary of State from May 8, 1980, until January 18, 1981

Nasser, Gamal Abdel, President of Egypt from June 23, 1956, until September 28, 1970
Newhouse, John, Assistant Director, International Security Programs Bureau, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
Newsom, David D., Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs from April 13, 1978
Nimetz, Matthew, Counselor, Department of State, until March 19, 1980; Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs from February 19, 1980, until December 5, 1980
Nixon, Richard M., President of the United States from 1969 until 1974

Owen, David, British Foreign Secretary from February 21, 1977, until May 4, 1979
Owen, Henry D., Special Representative for Economic Summits from March 1977; member, National Security Council Staff for International Economics from October 1977; Ambassador at Large from October 1978

Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza, Shah of Iran from September 16, 1941, until February 11, 1979
Parker, Richard B., U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon from February 10, 1977
Peacock, Andrew, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs
Peck, Edward, Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Bagdad
Peres, Shimon, Acting Prime Minister of Israel from April 22, 1977, until June 21, 1977
Porter, William James, U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia from February 21, 1976, until May 27, 1977
Powell, Joseph (Jody), White House Press Secretary
Pustay, John, Lieutenant General, USAF; Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Qaboos bin Said al Said, Sultan of Oman
Quandt, William B., member, National Security Council Staff for Middle East and North African Affairs from January 1977 until August 1979

Ransom, David M., Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy in Sana, until September 27, 1978; Deputy Director, Near East and South Asia Region, Office of the Secretary of Defense
Reagan, Ronald W., Governor of California; Republican nominee for President; President of the United States from 1981
Renouf, Alan P., Australian Ambassador to the United States from 1977 until 1979
Ribicoff, Abraham A., Senator (D-Connecticut)
Rosenthal, Benjamin Stanley, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-New York)

Sabbagh, Isa K., Special Counselor, U.S. Embassy in Jidda
al-Sadat, Anwar, President of Egypt
Said, Ahmad Abdu, Yemen Arab Republic
Salih, Ali Abdullah, President of Yemen Arab Republic from July 18, 1978; Vice President of Yemen Arab Republic from June 24, 1978, until July 18, 1978
Salman bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud, Saudi Prince and Governor of Riyadh
Sarkis, Elias, President of Lebanon
Saud bin Faisal al-Saud, Saudi Deputy Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources; Minister of Foreign Affairs

- Saunders, Harold**, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research from December 1, 1975, until April 10, 1978; Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs from April 11, 1978, until January 16, 1981
- Schlesinger, James R.**, Assistant to the President from 1977 until 1978; Secretary of Energy from August 5, 1977
- Scotes, Thomas J.**, U.S. Ambassador to Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) from January 21, 1975, until April 24, 1978
- Seignious, George M., II**, Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, from December 4, 1978, until January 3, 1980
- Shahi, Agha**, Pakhistani Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1967 until 1972
- Shayba, Ali**, Yemen Arab Republic Chief of Staff
- Sick, Gary**, member, National Security Council Staff for Middle East and North African Affairs
- Sober, Sidney**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
- Solarz, Stephen Joshua**, member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-New York)
- Solomon, Anthony M.**, Under Secretary of the Treasury for Monetary Affairs from March 1977 until March 1980; New York Federal Reserve Bank President from April 1980
- Spiers, Ronald I.**, U.S. Ambassador to Turkey from May 26, 1977, until January 11, 1980; Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, from January 28, 1980
- Sterner, Michael**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
- Stevens, Theodore Fulton (Ted)**, Senator (R-Alaska)
- Stone, Richard**, Senator (D-Florida)
- Strauss, Robert S.**, Special Representative of the President to the Middle East peace negotiations from April 24, 1979, until November 6, 1979
- Suleiman, Sadek J.**, Omani Ambassador to the United States from 1979
- Sultan bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud**, Saudi Minister of Defense
- Tarnoff, Peter R.**, Executive Secretary of the Department of State and Special Assistant to Secretary Vance
- Thatcher, Margaret**, British Prime Minister from May 4, 1979
- Thornton, Thomas**, member, National Security Council Staff for South Asian and United Nations Affairs
- Toon, Malcolm**, U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union until October 16, 1979
- Turki al-Faisal**, Director of the Saudi General Intelligence Directorate
- Turner, Stansfield**, Admiral, USN; Director of Central Intelligence
- Twinam, Joseph W.**, Director, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Department of State; Deputy Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
- Vance, Cyrus R.**, Secretary of State from January 23, 1977, until April 28, 1980
- Veliotos, Nicolas A.**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs from 1977 until 1978
- Waldheim, Kurt**, United Nations Secretary General
- Warnke, Paul C.**, Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, from March 14, 1977, until October 31, 1978
- West, John C.**, U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia from June 8, 1977
- White, John**, Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget
- Wiley, Marshall W.**, U.S. Ambassador to Oman from November 7, 1978

Wisner, Frank G., III, Deputy Executive Secretary, Department of State

Yamani, Ahmed Zaki, Saudi Minister of Oil

Young, Andrew J., U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations from January 27, 1977, until September 23, 1979

Zablocki, Clement J., member, U.S. House of Representatives (D-Wisconsin)

al-Zawawi, Qais bin Abdul Munim, Omani Minister of Foreign Affairs

Zia al-Haq, Mohammed, General, President and military ruler of Pakistan from July 1977

Zorinsky, Edward, Senator (D-Nebraska)

Note on U.S. Covert Actions

In compliance with the *Foreign Relations of the United States* statute that requires inclusion in the *Foreign Relations* series of comprehensive documentation on major foreign policy decisions and actions, the editors have identified key documents regarding major covert actions and intelligence activities. The following note will provide readers with some organizational context on how covert actions and special intelligence operations in support of U.S. foreign policy were planned and approved within the U.S. Government. It describes, on the basis of declassified documents, the changing and developing procedures during the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter Presidencies.

Management of Covert Actions in the Truman Presidency

The Truman administration's concern over Soviet "psychological warfare" prompted the new National Security Council to authorize, in NSC 4-A of December 1947, the launching of peacetime covert action operations. NSC 4-A made the Director of Central Intelligence responsible for psychological warfare, establishing at the same time the principle that covert action was an exclusively Executive Branch function. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) certainly was a natural choice but it was assigned this function at least in part because the Agency controlled unvouchered funds, by which operations could be funded with minimal risk of exposure in Washington.¹

The CIA's early use of its new covert action mandate dissatisfied officials at the Departments of State and Defense. The Department of State, believing this role too important to be left to the CIA alone and concerned that the military might create a new rival covert action office in the Pentagon, pressed to reopen the issue of where responsibility for covert action activities should reside. Consequently, on June 18, 1948, a new NSC directive, NSC 10/2, superseded NSC 4-A.

NSC 10/2 directed the CIA to conduct "covert" rather than merely "psychological" operations, defining them as all activities "which are conducted or sponsored by this Government against hostile foreign states or groups or in support of friendly foreign states or groups but which are so planned and executed that any US Government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if un-

¹ NSC 4-A, December 17, 1947, is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, Document 257.

covered the US Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them.”

The type of clandestine activities enumerated under the new directive included: “propaganda; economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberations [*sic*] groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world. Such operations should not include armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage, counter-espionage, and cover and deception for military operations.”²

The Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), newly established in the CIA on September 1, 1948, in accordance with NSC 10/2, assumed responsibility for organizing and managing covert actions. The OPC, which was to take its guidance from the Department of State in peacetime and from the military in wartime, initially had direct access to the State Department and to the military without having to proceed through the CIA’s administrative hierarchy, provided the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) was informed of all important projects and decisions.³ In 1950 this arrangement was modified to ensure that policy guidance came to the OPC through the DCI.

During the Korean conflict the OPC grew quickly. Wartime commitments and other missions soon made covert action the most expensive and bureaucratically prominent of the CIA’s activities. Concerned about this situation, DCI Walter Bedell Smith in early 1951 asked the NSC for enhanced policy guidance and a ruling on the proper “scope and magnitude” of CIA operations. The White House responded with two initiatives. In April 1951 President Truman created the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB) under the NSC to coordinate government-wide psychological warfare strategy. NSC 10/5, issued in October 1951, reaffirmed the covert action mandate given in NSC 10/2 and expanded the CIA’s authority over guerrilla warfare.⁴ The PSB was soon abolished by the incoming Eisenhower administration, but the expansion of the CIA’s covert action writ in NSC 10/5 helped ensure that covert action would remain a major function of the Agency.

As the Truman administration ended, the CIA was near the peak of its independence and authority in the field of covert action. Although the CIA continued to seek and receive advice on specific proj-

² NSC 10/2, June 18, 1948, is printed *ibid.*, Document 292.

³ Memorandum of conversation by Frank G. Wisner, “Implementation of NSC-10/2,” August 12, 1948, is printed *ibid.*, Document 298.

⁴ NSC 10/5, “Scope and Pace of Covert Operations,” October 23, 1951, is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1950–1955, The Intelligence Community*, Document 90.

ects from the NSC, the PSB, and the departmental representatives originally delegated to advise the OPC, no group or officer outside of the DCI and the President himself had authority to order, approve, manage, or curtail operations.

NSC 5412 Special Group; 5412/2 Special Group; 303 Committee

The Eisenhower administration began narrowing the CIA's latitude in 1954. In accordance with a series of National Security Council directives, the responsibility of the Director of Central Intelligence for the conduct of covert operations was further clarified. President Eisenhower approved NSC 5412 on March 15, 1954, reaffirming the Central Intelligence Agency's responsibility for conducting covert actions abroad. A definition of covert actions was set forth; the DCI was made responsible for coordinating with designated representatives of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to ensure that covert operations were planned and conducted in a manner consistent with U.S. foreign and military policies; and the Operations Coordinating Board was designated the normal channel for coordinating support for covert operations among State, Defense, and the CIA. Representatives of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the President were to be advised in advance of major covert action programs initiated by the CIA under this policy and were to give policy approval for such programs and secure coordination of support among the Departments of State and Defense and the CIA.⁵

A year later, on March 12, 1955, NSC 5412/1 was issued, identical to NSC 5412 except for designating the Planning Coordination Group as the body responsible for coordinating covert operations. NSC 5412/2 of December 28, 1955, assigned to representatives (of the rank of assistant secretary) of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the President responsibility for coordinating covert actions. By the end of the Eisenhower administration, this group, which became known as the "NSC 5412/2 Special Group" or simply "Special Group," emerged as the executive body to review and approve covert action programs initiated by the CIA.⁶ The membership of the Special Group varied depending upon the situation faced. Meetings were infrequent until 1959 when weekly meetings began to be held. Neither the CIA nor the Special Group adopted fixed criteria for bringing projects before the

⁵ William M. Leary, editor, *The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents* (The University of Alabama Press, 1984), p. 63; for text of NSC 5412, see *Foreign Relations, 1950–1955, The Intelligence Community*, Document 171.

⁶ Leary, *The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents*, pp. 63, 147–148; *Final Report of the Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate*, Book I, *Foreign and Military Intelligence* (1976), pp. 50–51. For texts of NSC 5412/1 and NSC 5412/2, see *Foreign Relations, 1950–1955, The Intelligence Community*, Documents 212 and 250.

group; initiative remained with the CIA, as members representing other agencies frequently were unable to judge the feasibility of particular projects.⁷

After the Bay of Pigs failure in April 1961, General Maxwell Taylor reviewed U.S. paramilitary capabilities at President Kennedy's request and submitted a report in June that recommended strengthening high-level direction of covert operations. As a result of the Taylor Report, the Special Group, chaired by the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy, and including Deputy Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson, Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric, Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Lyman Lemnitzer, assumed greater responsibility for planning and reviewing covert operations. Until 1963 the DCI determined whether a CIA-originated project was submitted to the Special Group. In 1963 the Special Group developed general but informal criteria, including risk, possibility of success, potential for exposure, political sensitivity, and cost (a threshold of \$25,000 was adopted by the CIA), for determining whether covert action projects were submitted to the Special Group.⁸

From November 1961 to October 1962 a Special Group (Augmented), whose membership was the same as the Special Group plus Attorney General Robert Kennedy and General Taylor (as Chairman), exercised responsibility for Operation Mongoose, a major covert action program aimed at overthrowing the Castro regime in Cuba. When President Kennedy authorized the program in November, he designated Brigadier General Edward G. Lansdale, Assistant for Special Operations to the Secretary of Defense, to act as chief of operations, and Lansdale coordinated the Mongoose activities among the CIA and the Departments of State and Defense. The CIA units in Washington and Miami had primary responsibility for implementing Mongoose operations, which included military, sabotage, and political propaganda programs.⁹

President Kennedy also established a Special Group (Counter-Insurgency) on January 18, 1962, when he signed NSAM No. 124. The Special Group (CI), set up to coordinate counter-insurgency activities separate from the mechanism for implementing NSC 5412/2, was to confine itself to establishing broad policies aimed at preventing and resisting subversive insurgency and other forms of indirect aggression in friendly countries. In early 1966, in NSAM No. 341, President Johnson

⁷ Leary, *The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents*, p. 63.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁹ See *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, volume X, Cuba, 1961–1962, Documents 270 and 278.

assigned responsibility for the direction and coordination of counter-insurgency activities overseas to the Secretary of State, who established a Senior Interdepartmental Group to assist in discharging these responsibilities.¹⁰

NSAM No. 303, June 2, 1964, from Bundy to the Secretaries of State and Defense and the DCI, changed the name of "Special Group 5412" to "303 Committee" but did not alter its composition, functions, or responsibility. Bundy was the chairman of the 303 Committee.¹¹

The Special Group and the 303 Committee approved 163 covert actions during the Kennedy administration and 142 during the Johnson administration through February 1967. The 1976 Final Report of the Church Committee, however, estimated that of the several thousand projects undertaken by the CIA since 1961, only 14 percent were considered on a case-by-case basis by the 303 Committee and its predecessors (and successors). Those not reviewed by the 303 Committee were low-risk and low-cost operations. The Final Report also cited a February 1967 CIA memorandum that included a description of the mode of policy arbitration of decisions on covert actions within the 303 Committee system. The CIA presentations were questioned, amended, and even on occasion denied, despite protests from the DCI. Department of State objections modified or nullified proposed operations, and the 303 Committee sometimes decided that some agency other than the CIA should undertake an operation or that CIA actions requested by Ambassadors on the scene should be rejected.¹²

The effectiveness of covert action has always been difficult for any administration to gauge, given concerns about security and the difficulty of judging the impact of U.S. initiatives on events. In October 1969 the new Nixon administration required annual 303 Committee reviews for all covert actions that the Committee had approved and automatic termination of any operation not reviewed after 12 months. On February 17, 1970, President Nixon signed National Security Decision Memorandum 40,¹³ which superseded NSC 5412/2 and changed the name of the covert action approval group to the 40 Committee, in part because the 303 Committee had been named in the media. The Attorney General was also added to the membership of the Committee. NSDM 40

¹⁰ For text of NSAM No. 124, see *ibid.*, volume VIII, National Security Policy, Document 68. NSAM No. 341, March 2, 1966, is printed *ibid.*, 1964–1968, volume XXXIII, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy; United Nations, Document 56.

¹¹ For text of NSAM No. 303, see *ibid.*, Document 204.

¹² *Final Report of the Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate, Book I, Foreign and Military Intelligence*, pp. 56–57.

¹³ For text of NSDM 40, see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume II, Organization and Management of U.S. Foreign Policy, 1969–1972, Document 203.

reaffirmed the DCI's responsibility for the coordination, control, and conduct of covert operations and directed him to obtain policy approval from the 40 Committee for all major and "politically sensitive" covert operations. He was also made responsible for ensuring an annual review by the 40 Committee of all approved covert operations.

The 40 Committee met regularly early in the Nixon administration, but over time the number of formal meetings declined and business came to be conducted via couriers and telephone votes. The Committee actually met only for major new proposals. As required, the DCI submitted annual status reports to the 40 Committee for each approved operation. According to the 1976 Church Committee Final Report, the 40 Committee considered only about 25 percent of the CIA's individual covert action projects, concentrating on major projects that provided broad policy guidelines for all covert actions. Congress received briefings on only a few proposed projects. Not all major operations, moreover, were brought before the 40 Committee: President Nixon in 1970 instructed the DCI to promote a coup d'etat against Chilean President Salvador Allende without Committee coordination or approval.¹⁴

Presidential Findings Since 1974 and the Operations Advisory Group

The Hughes-Ryan amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974 brought about a major change in the way the U.S. Government approved covert actions, requiring explicit approval by the President for each action and expanding Congressional oversight and control of the CIA. The CIA was authorized to spend appropriated funds on covert actions only after the President had signed a "finding" and informed Congress that the proposed operation was important to national security.¹⁵

Executive Order 11905, issued by President Ford on February 18, 1976, in the wake of major Congressional investigations of CIA activities by the Church and Pike Committees, replaced the 40 Committee with the Operations Advisory Group, composed of the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the DCI, who retained responsibility for the planning and implementation of covert operations. The OAG was required to hold formal meetings to develop recommendations for the President regarding a covert action and to conduct periodic reviews of previously-approved operations. EO 11905 also banned all U.S. Government employees from involvement in polit-

¹⁴ *Final Report of the Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities*, United States Senate, Book I, Foreign and Military Intelligence, pp. 54-55, 57.

¹⁵ Public Law 93-559.

ical assassinations, a prohibition that was retained in succeeding executive orders, and prohibited involvement in domestic intelligence activities.¹⁶

Approval and oversight requirements for covert action continued to be governed by the Hughes-Ryan amendment well into the Carter administration, even as the new administration made alterations to the executive branch's organizational structure for covert action.

President Carter retained the NSC as the highest executive branch organization to review and guide U.S. foreign intelligence activities. As part of a broader NSC reorganization at the outset of his administration, President Carter replaced the Operations Advisory Group (OAG) with the NSC's Special Coordination Committee (SCC), which explicitly continued the same operating procedures as the former OAG.¹⁷ Membership of the SCC, when meeting for the purpose of reviewing and making recommendations on covert actions (as well as sensitive surveillance activities), replicated that of the former OAG—namely: the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; the Secretaries of State and Defense; the Director of Central Intelligence; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Attorney General and Director of the Office of Management and Budget (the latter two as observers). The designated chairman of all SCC meetings was the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Carter formalized the SCC's replacement of the OAG in EO 11985 of May 13, 1977, which amended President Ford's EO 11905 on "United States Foreign Intelligence activities."¹⁸ In practice, the SCC for covert action and sensitive surveillance activities came to be known as the SCC (Intelligence) or the SCC-I, to distinguish it from other versions of the SCC.

The SCC's replacement of the OAG was reaffirmed in E.O. 12036 of January 24, 1978, which replaced E.O. 11905 and its amendments. E.O. 12036 also reaffirmed the same membership for the SCC-I, but identified the Attorney General and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as full members of the Committee, rather than merely observers.

¹⁶ Executive Order 11905, "United States Foreign Intelligence Activities," *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Vol. 12, No. 8, February 23, 1976.

¹⁷ The broader NSC reorganization sought to reduce the number of NSC committees to two: the Policy Review Committee (PRC) and the Special Coordination Committee (SCC). The SCC's jurisdiction included all intelligence policy issues other than annual budget and priorities reviews; the SCC also had jurisdiction over other, nonintelligence matters. Presidential Directive 2, "The National Security Council System," January 20, 1977, Carter Library, Vertical File, Presidential Directives. See also Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor 1977–1981* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1983), pp. 59–62.

¹⁸ Executive Order 11985, "United States Foreign Intelligence Activities," May 13, 1977, *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Vol. 13, No. 20 (May 16, 1977), pp. 719–720.

Also in the first days of the Carter administration, the SCC-I established a lower-level working group to study and review proposals for covert action and other sensitive intelligence matters and report to the SCC-I. This interagency working group was chaired by the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (David Aaron), or in his absence, the NSC Director for Intelligence Coordination. The working group was named the Special Activities Working Group (SAWG). The SAWG was active in early Carter administration reviews of ongoing covert action, and remained active through at least 1978. NSC officials in mid-1978 sought to downgrade or abolish the SAWG and replace it as needed with ad hoc working groups. Internal NSC reviews at the end of the Carter administration state that the SAWG gradually fell out of use. By late 1979, the means for debating, developing, and guiding certain covert actions was an interagency working group chaired by Aaron at the NSC. This group was referred to by several names during the late Carter administration, including the Deputy's (or Deputies) group, the Aaron group, the interagency group, the Black Chamber, and the Black Room.

The Carter administration made use of a new category of presidential findings for "world-wide" or "general" (or "generic") covert operations. This continued a practice initiated late in the Ford administration in response to the Hughes-Ryan requirement for presidential findings. The worldwide category covered lower-risk operations that were directed at broad policy goals implemented on a worldwide basis as assets allowed. These operations utilized existing assets as well as existing liaison contacts with foreign intelligence or security services, and in some cases also consisted of routine training or procurement undertaken to assist foreign intelligence partners or other agencies of the USG. A new type of document—known as "Perspectives"—provided more specific tasking guidance for these general, worldwide covert activities. Perspectives detailed the themes to be stressed in furtherance of a particular policy goal. Riskier operations required their own presidential finding or Memorandum of Notification (see below). Perspectives were drafted by the CIA and cleared by the Department of State, so that the CIA could vet the operational feasibility and risks of the program while State could assess the diplomatic risks and verify that the program was consistent with overall foreign policy goals. At least initially, Perspectives did not require further coordination with the OAG, SCC, or the President. Once an agreed-upon Perspectives document was finalized by CIA and the Department of State, it was transmitted to the field, and posts were required to make periodic reports on any achievements under the Perspectives guidelines. Beginning in 1978, actions in this worldwide category were authorized by the President as specific line-item additions to a previously existing "world-wide" finding, though Perspectives were still used to provide additional details.

Another new document used during the Carter administration was the “Memorandum of Notification” (MON). MONs were initially used to introduce higher-risk, significantly higher-cost, or more geographically-specific operations under a previously-approved worldwide or general objective outlined¹⁹ in a Perspectives document. Like Perspectives, MONs had to be coordinated between the CIA and the Department of State, but they also required broader interagency coordination within the SAWG or SCC. MONs subsequently came to be used for significant changes to any type of finding, not just worldwide ones. Entirely new covert actions continued to require new presidential findings. The Hughes-Ryan amendment stipulated that Congress be notified of new findings “in a timely fashion,” but did not specify how much time that meant. During the Carter administration, the CIA typically notified Congress of new covert initiatives within 48 hours, including those outlined in Perspectives or MONs.

In October 1980, the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1981—also known as the Intelligence Oversight Act of 1980—scaled back the Hughes-Ryan amendment’s provisions for congressional oversight of covert action. While the requirement to notify Congress about presidential findings remained in place, the new Act limited the committees of Congress that had to be briefed to the two intelligence committees, and also explicitly clarified that this requirement to keep the committees “fully and currently informed” did not constitute a requirement for congressional approval of covert action or other intelligence activities. Moreover, the new Act stipulated that if the President determined it was “essential to limit prior notice to meet extraordinary circumstances affecting vital interests of the United States,” the President could limit prior notice to the chairmen and ranking minority members of the two intelligence committees, the Speaker and minority leader of the House, and the majority and minority leaders of the Senate—a group that came to be known as the “Gang of Eight.” If prior notice of a covert action was withheld, the President was required to inform the two intelligence committees “in a timely fashion” and provide a statement of the reasons for not giving prior notice.²⁰

¹⁹ Executive Order 12036, “United States Foreign Intelligence Activities,” January 24, 1978, *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (January 30, 1978), pp. 194–214. Since E.O. 12036 governed foreign intelligence activities, all references in the E.O. to the “SCC” were effectively references to what was known in practice as the SCC (Intelligence), or SCC-I.

²⁰ PL 96–450, Sec. 407 (October 14, 1980). See also the description of the Hughes-Ryan amendment and its replacement by PL 96–450 in: Richard A. Best, Jr., “Covert Action: Legislative Background and Possible Policy Questions,” Congressional Research Service, RL33715, December 27, 2011, pp.1-2; and L. Britt Snider, *The Agency and the Hill: CIA’S Relationship with Congress, 1946-2004*, Washington: Center for the Study of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 2008, pp.280–81.

Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula

Middle East Region and the Gulf

1. **Memorandum From William Quandt and Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)**¹

Washington, February 2, 1977

SUBJECT

Four-Year Goals in the Middle East

In the Middle East region, there are three broad areas in which to consider our foreign policy objectives. Most critical is the Arab-Israeli conflict, which will affect virtually all of the others in some fashion. But also important are the development of cooperative relations with key Middle East countries and a number of issues in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean area.

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Peace in the Middle East is a goal to which the United States is deeply committed. Our interests and our friendships require it. But a conflict which has remained unresolved for over fifty years cannot be brought to a sudden end. Our objective, therefore, over the next several years, should be to begin the process of seeking a peaceful settlement.

By the end of this year, we expect that a framework for negotiations will exist. We could then urge the parties to develop a set of principles that would outline the shape of a final peace agreement. For example, all parties to the negotiations might be asked to agree that:

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Chron File, Box 130, Quandt: 2/1-2/77. Secret. Sent for information. Brackets are in the original.

—The purpose of the negotiations underway is to achieve a peace agreement that will guarantee the sovereignty of all the states in the area. To this end, the parties commit themselves to work toward a termination of all hostile actions and to the eventual normalization of their relations.

—Peace must be based on mutual recognition and the establishment of agreed and secure borders which do not constitute a source of future conflicts.

—The parties are committed to work for a peace agreement that will meet the legitimate concerns of the Palestinian people.

—The parties agree that a peace agreement should be implemented in stages and that during the transition to full peace special security measures for all sides will be essential.

The next step in negotiations, presumably during 1977, would be to work on specific tradeoffs such as the end of belligerency for partial Israeli withdrawal in Sinai and the Golan Heights. Next one might turn to the Palestinian issue, perhaps seeking a solution within a confederal Jordanian-Palestinian context.

As Israel is asked to make concessions on territory and on the Palestinians as part of the negotiating process, the United States will want to maintain a continuing and close dialogue on security issues, on arms transfers, and on U.S. guarantees of the various parts of the peace agreement. We will probably have to accept the reality that very high levels of arms transfers to Israel will be required throughout this phase. Only at a considerably later point in the peacemaking process can we anticipate the possibility of reductions.

To the degree possible, we will want to keep the Soviet Union out of the substantive part of the negotiations. The one area in which the Soviets could be tested as to their intentions would be in trying to induce the Palestinians to moderate their position on Israel's existence. We should make it clear that we expect the Soviets to use their influence with the PLO to bring about acceptance of the essential points of UN Resolutions 242 and 338.

Middle East Development Prospects

Much of the Arab world is on the threshold of rapid socio-economic change. Everywhere independence has been achieved, but only rarely has serious attention been devoted to development. In the last part of this decade, however, we can expect a more serious concentration on domestic issues. The United States will therefore have an unusual opportunity to assist in the development of an important part of the world. Since Arab capital is abundant, the US contribution will be primarily through technological assistance, our private sector activities, and some ideas that will promote regional cooperation. To a large degree, the same is true for Iran.

More specifically, the US should try at an early date to revitalize our ongoing bilateral economic relations with key countries. Joint com-

missions that already exist in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iran should be made to work more effectively. Particularly in the case of Egypt, our efforts need a higher degree of coordination for maximum political and economic impact.

In the initial stages of our effort to promote development, we may have to take initiatives and provide leadership. Our goal, however, should be to encourage the countries of the area to assess their own needs and to do their own planning. We should then try to improve our ability to be responsive to their needs.

US Governmental efforts should appropriately be directed at Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. The private sector will remain active in Iran and Saudi Arabia, and increasingly in Algeria and Iraq as well. By 1980, we should be able to count on a very high volume of trade with the Middle East, relatively modest transfers of US aid, with the exceptions of Israel and perhaps Egypt, a very large private sector involvement in development activities, and ongoing government-to-government consultations on economic issues.

[This general issue should be raised during the staffing process with State, Treasury and Commerce for suggestions on specific instrumentalities and courses of action, which extend beyond our technical expertise.]

Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf

US interests in this area revolve almost entirely around questions of oil production, price and supply, together with protection and encouragement of the considerable US commercial investments in the region. From these interests, we derive an immediate stake in the security and stability of the Persian Gulf region, both in terms of the regional balance and in terms of our strategic relationship with the USSR. Our present situation in the area, with the exception of oil prices, is basically favorable, and realistically we would have no grounds to be dissatisfied if our position four years from now was essentially the same. However, fundamental trends at work in the area may tend to erode that position. By the mid-1980's, these trends could create a much more difficult situation for US policy as Iraq begins to replace Iran as the second largest oil producer in the Gulf, as Soviet requirements for outside sources of oil possibly become more acute, and as Soviet capability to project military influence into remote areas comes to rival our own. Therefore, our policies over the next four years must be designed to preserve our present advantages while establishing policies designed to cope with foreseeable problems just over the horizon.

We should attempt to expand the favorable climate for commercial exchange with Iraq into other areas, with the objective of reestablishing diplomatic relations at some point within the next four years. Barring

major political disturbances, Iraq will emerge as a major regional power in the Gulf area over the next 5–10 years, and it is in our interests to be in a position to encourage them to adopt more moderate positions and reduce their dependence on the Soviet Union. Our success will depend heavily on internal developments in Iraq and on the progress toward a settlement of the Arab-Israel dispute, which is the single greatest impediment to improved US-Iraqi relations. We should, however, be alert and responsive to even incremental shifts, demonstrating our willingness to meet them at least half way. A realistic objective over the next four years would be to establish a relationship with Iraq comparable to that which we now have with Algeria or Syria.

We should encourage the development of closer cooperation and coordination among the nations of the Gulf on political, economic and security matters. Although such initiatives must originate in the region, we can stress our support for such an evolution in our normal diplomatic contacts and visits and by offering preferential treatment to economic, technical and security assistance requests which have a regional or multilateral dimension.

We should begin to explore with the USSR the possibility of establishing mutually acceptable limitations on military presence in the Indian Ocean area. At the present time, neither superpower has a major military capability in the area, but the basic support structure for a larger permanent presence is being established. It is in our long-term interests to develop meaningful limitations on US-Soviet military presence, whether by formal agreement or by the development of unwritten norms of behavior, which will serve to inhibit a sizeable Soviet buildup. Otherwise, the Soviet interest in protecting its sea lanes through the area, its determination to establish itself as a global military power, and the momentum of its rivalry with China for influence in the Third World may lead to a continuing upward spiral of Soviet military presence which will directly affect the security of our own oil supply and which would be difficult and expensive for us to counter effectively.

In terms of oil pricing and supply, our most direct and powerful influence lies in our own domestic energy policy and our diplomatic influence with other energy consumers. The more we can help to flatten the world demand curve for oil and the more we can demonstrate our determination to explore vigorously alternative energy technologies, the more weight will be given to our arguments in favor of adequate production at manageable prices.

2. Action Memorandum From the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Gelb) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Atherton) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Habib)¹

Washington, March 7, 1977

Future of Middle East Force

Issue for Decision:

Whether, as next step in obtaining a policy decision on pursuing the Middle East Force negotiations, we should define for DOD what we believe would be the best arrangement we will be likely to obtain for future support of Middle East Force, seeking DOD's view as to whether this arrangement would be feasible from an operational standpoint.

Background/Analysis:

The Indian Ocean posts have now responded with assessments of the prospects for their host countries providing additional support to Middle East Force to alleviate the pressure Bahrain feels from hosting it alone.² A summary of their generally similar views is at Attachment 2.³ On the basis of their assessments and recent additional comments by the Bahraini Foreign Minister, we see a possibility of negotiating to keep Middle East Force in operation on the following basis: (a) terminating the deployment agreement with Bahrain and putting the Middle East Force Command to sea; (b) seeking a minimum of six months in-port time for the Middle East Force flagship at a number of Gulf/Indian Ocean ports, including Bahrain, with the understanding

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Program Files for Oman, 1974–1989; UAE, 1989; Political Relations, 1969–1989, Lot 91D491, Box 6, Def-15—MidEastfor 1977. Confidential. Drafted by Twinam and John E. Burgess (PM/ISO) on March 1; cleared by William Lewis (AF/I) and in substance by Granville S. Austin (S/P). Also cleared by Peter Lande (NEA/PAB), Charles Naas (NEA/IRN), Albert Thibault (NEA/INS), Richard Hobbs (NEA/RA), and Sober. Burgess initialed the memorandum for Gelb.

² In telegram 30235 to multiple Middle Eastern posts, February 10, the Department responded to a meeting among Bahraini officials and Ambassador Cluverius in which the Bahrainis were seeking a larger “burden sharing” role by regional nations, by asking diplomatic posts in the region how their host governments would respond to such a request. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770047–0592) In telegram 244 from Manama, January 29, Cluverius described the initial conversation between himself and Bahraini officials. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770033–0245)

³ Attached but not printed is the “Summary of Embassy Comments on an ‘Alternative Formula’ for Middle East Force.”

that all of the port calls would be simply visits and would not imply that Middle East Force maintained anything resembling a headquarters ashore; and (c) negotiating with Bahrain to keep a small DOD administrative logistical contingent there having minimal specific identification with the Middle East Force Command.

We are not certain whether DOD would find such an arrangement feasible. We are convinced, however, that nothing more in the way of support from Bahrain or other countries in the region for Middle East Force will be obtainable, and sustainable over time under conditions consistent with our broader interests in the area. We think it important to define this maximum obtainable arrangement for DOD rather than to await a DOD proposal for a negotiating position. We suggest that you do so by approving the letter at Attachment 1 to Deputy Secretary of Defense Duncan.⁴ In so doing, we would not be committing the Secretary or the Administration to a policy decision on whether Middle East Force should be maintained under the conditions posed by the area's political realities.

Arms Control Aspects:

In view of the Secretary's intention to explore Soviet attitudes toward Indian Ocean arms control discussions, there may, at some point, be a need to reassess the role and composition of Middle East Force. Whether US-Soviet discussions will ultimately take place, whether discussions will apply to the Persian Gulf, and whether ship deployments and port access will be touched on, however, are still unclear. We believe that the current situation counsels against major alterations to Middle East Force's present composition and mission. We specifically wish to avoid any actions which would lead toward an "Indian Ocean Squadron" orientation.

Recommendation:

That you sign the letter at Attachment 1.

⁴ Attached but not printed. A handwritten notation on the first page of the memorandum notes that Habib signed the letter to Duncan and that it was sent on March 11.

3. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Bahrain¹

Washington, March 19, 1977, 0343Z

61525. Exdis for the Amb—military addrees handle as Specat Exclusive. Subject: Middle East Force Discussions. Reference: State 30235.²

1. To pursue further possibility of retaining some sort of facilities in Bahrain in support of U.S. Middle East Force operations, you should approach appropriate GOB officials along following lines indicating you are speaking under instructions.

(A) USG has reviewed question of continued U.S. Navy presence in Gulf/Indian Ocean and has determined that such presence will continue to serve broad interests in stability of area.

(B) USG is deeply appreciative of hospitality which Bahrain has extended over many years to Middle East Force Command and of contribution Bahrain has thus made to facilitate maintenance of U.S. Naval Command in area.

(C) USG, as you know, would be pleased to have the present arrangements in Bahrain continue somewhat longer. (FYI: If at any point in your discussions you feel it tactically advisable, you are authorized to suggest to GOB that efforts to work out a new formula for U.S. Navy presence in region in orderly fashion would be measurably assisted if GOB would extend present Middle East Force arrangements six months to a year. End FYI).

(D) At the same time USG understands GOB's desire to work out new arrangements which would permit U.S. Navy to continue to operate in area without Bahrain appearing to be the sole point of regional support for such operations. USG is prepared to consider GOB's ideas on how such new arrangements might be worked out.

2. Begin FYI: After careful review with DOD and taking into account recent assessments of certain Embassies in area on likelihood of host governments accepting Middle East Force visits, we believe Middle East Force could continue to operate effectively on following basis if necessary:

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770094-0476. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Twinam; cleared by Sober, Janka, George Churchill (PM/ISO), Richard Hobbs (NEA/RA), Peter Lande (NEA/PAB), Charles Naas (NEA/IRN), William Lewis (AF/I), and Leo Reddy (S/S); approved by Atherton. Sent for information Immediate to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dhahran, Jidda, Karachi, Kuwait, Islamabad, Muscat, Nairobi, Port Louis, Tehran, Victoria, the Department of Defense, JCS, CNO, CINCEUR, CINCUSNAVEUR, COMIDEASTFOR, CINCPAC, and CINCPACFLT.

² See footnote 2, Document 2.

(A) Stationing agreement with Bahrain would be allowed to terminate upon assurance that Bahrain would continue to permit Middle East Force ships to visit and that status of forces provisions of current agreement would be retained to cover DOD personnel stationed in or visiting Bahrain in official capacity.

(B) Flagship and Middle East Force Command would cease to use Bahrain as a homeport and Command would operate at sea from flagship. There would be no ostensible Middle East Force Command presence onshore in Bahrain.

(C) Middle East Force ships, including flagship, would be permitted to visit Bahrain in approximately same manner they visit other selected ports in area. For flagship we would need assurances that each such visit could be up to one month in duration in Bahrain, two weeks duration elsewhere. We would seek minimum of six such visits elsewhere, and prefer four months total flagship time in Bahrain, providing a total of seven months in port. If, as negotiations proceed, GOB proves unwilling to accept this proportion of inport time, we would be prepared if necessary to scale down progressively number of visits to Bahrain, and increase visits elsewhere, to the point that inport time for flagship in Bahrain totals two months a year—we would make every effort to restrict our requests to other littoral states for increased inport time to frequency and duration cited reftel.

(D) We would then negotiate with GOB to retain as much as possible of the present administrative and logistical support facilities Middle East Force presently enjoys in Bahrain, including arrangements for flag aircraft. If necessary, DOD personnel permanently stationed ashore in Bahrain (with possible exception of flag aircrew) would be within an organizational structure having no direct ostensible link with Middle East Force Command. Hence, support which DOD contingent provided to visiting Middle East Force ships and personnel would, in appearance, be no different from support it might provide to other DOD activities including DOD participation in Bahrain school. Obviously, present \$4 million per year rent which DOD pays to GOB would have to be reviewed and reduced in light of the facilities Bahrain continues to make available. End FYI.

3. You are requested to seek clearest and most definitive possible GOB view of what support it might continue to provide Middle East Force. You should report conversations fully, without indicating acceptance of any formula at this stage without further instructions. As discussions with GOB proceed, you can be guided by the consideration presented para 2 above in seeking to mold GOB thinking, but should not repeat nor indicate firm agreement to any of these conditions without specific instructions. We would appreciate your assessment whether basic operating conditions provided FYI above are negotiable and

indeed might be made more flexible from our standpoint, e.g., would Bahrain be willing to authorize more than four months of flagship visits annually with understanding that additional time would not necessarily be utilized.

Vance

4. Telegram From the Embassy in Bahrain to the Department of State¹

Manama, March 22, 1977, 1340Z

676. Subject: Principle of New Format for MIDEASTFOR Acceptable to GOB. Ref: Manama 649.²

1. Summary. Foreign Minister summoned me March 22 to inform me that Amir and Prime Minister have accepted concept of new format along lines which FonMin and I had discussed (reftel). Decision will be presented to full Cabinet March 27; FonMin expects Cabinet will readily put its seal of approval on Amir's decision. FonMin sought clarification on number of points. End summary.

2. FonMin summoned me March 22 to inform me of results March 21 meeting reported Manama 659³ (Notal). Based on ideas FonMin and I have discussed, particularly those described reftel, FonMin said he, Amir, and Prime Minister had considered three options during their March 21 meeting: Keep Navy as it is, have it withdraw completely, or accept new arrangement along lines he and I had developed over recent months. FonMin said they had little trouble choosing new arrangement. Bahrain values its ties with USG, and is strongly supportive of US role in region, and is pleased that way can be found to maintain those ties, and support area interests, and at same time relieve Bahrain of "imperialist base" image. He said decision would be put

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770098-0182. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dhahran, Jidda, Karachi, Islamabad, Muscat, Nairobi, Port Louis, Tehran, Victoria, and Kuwait.

² In telegram 649 from Manama, March 20, Cluverius described the conversation he had with the Bahraini Foreign Minister concerning the contents of telegram 61525 to Manama, March 19 (see Document 3), describing options for a new format for the Middle East Force. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770094-0476)

³ In telegram 659 from Manama, March 21, Cluverius commented on press reports and "local rumors and other indicators to effect that Navy will stay in one form or another." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770096-0625)

before full Cabinet at regular session March 27; he said he expected Cabinet would have no trouble giving its approval to decision made by Amir and Prime Minister.

3. FonMin said there will be many details for him and me to work out over coming weeks—and he recalled that ideas we had discussed remain subject to USG approval—but he wanted to get some items cleared up as soon as possible:

(A) Seventy-five personnel, with families, to remain after de-homeporting. Was FonMin correct in telling Amir that this figure does not include school staff? I confirmed that they are additional to school staff. FonMin said fine, he just wanted to be sure he had not misinformed Amir.

(B) Does Navy wish to keep its aircraft here after de-homeporting? I said it did because location is relatively central to operating area and services are good. FonMin made note but did not otherwise respond.

(C) Legal situation. FonMin said he hated thought of getting deeply involved with GOB legal adviser (an expert hairsplitter) on ways to cover new arrangement. He wanted to know ASAP if exchange of notes we had discussed (para 5 reftel) would be acceptable to USG as way of handling all elements of new arrangement. Would USG need to tell Congress, or seek its approval for new arrangement? I said I would seek answers to these questions on urgent basis.

(D) Duration. FonMin said he felt a short period was not worth it, just as it is not worth it to have DOD run school only for year or so. He suggested open-ended arrangement subject to review every two years. I said I would report his view.

(E) Rent. FonMin stressed that question of rent is minor, of no interest to him, but even minor questions must be answered. I agreed and said that while I had not given it much thought either, I supposed USG would want to reduce it in line with reduced presence. FonMin agreed that this was likely and that he and I could work it out later.

(F) Port time. FonMin said Navy access four months a year was agreeable. I said I felt Navy would not need more than that but, as I had said earlier, it would like to have more assured access time “just in case”. He said we could talk about it later when we get more deeply into details.

(G) Auspices. FonMin expressed considerable concern over nature and image of Navy presence here after de-homeporting. As he explained his concern he reached point described para 2(D) of State 061525:⁴ “no ostensible link with MIDEASTFOR Command”. He said he would prefer post de-homeporting arrangements to be tied as closely as possible to DOD school. I said I was not sure school could provide full rationale (having in mind budgetary and other presentations to Congress) but that I felt something could be worked out. In this regard, Dept might wish to explore with DOD possibility of putting residual presence here under, say, USMTM auspices.

(H) Communications. FonMin asked if Navy wanted to keep antenna field at Jufair. I said it did not since Navy really did not need

⁴ See Document 3.

it to maintain its communications. Navy has not needed this field for some time and it is, in any case, destined to be covered by reclamation project.

4. After decision in favor of new format, meeting with FonMin was most notable for what was not discussed. FonMin again made no mention of quid pro quo in security assistance or any other area. Nor did he ask what others might do for Navy. He did not mention any reduction whatever in Navy use of Jufair compound. Beyond curiosity about antenna field he did not mention Navy communications, which previously had been a somewhat touchy point (Manama 244⁵—Notal). It is possible that FonMin did not raise communications question in more detail simply because he does not understand it. While it may well be that we will be able to keep present communications set-up totally in place, I feel it would be prudent to keep moving, as DOD is doing, on alternative facilities for CHUSMTM.

5. Our basic approach to GOB, worked out over past few months, has worked and task now is to nail down the details, some of which, such as the "legal situation" and "auspices" described above, are major and could still derail us. FonMin clearly wants to make much of the de-homeporting aspect, including, he said, some kind of ceremony in June, and to handle the post de-homeporting arrangement in as low-key and invisible manner as possible. In his mind the school is important not only for itself but as cover for our continuing military presence here. While I appreciate problem school has given DOD, I would hope we can now accept that DOD should run entire school for at least first two years of new MIDEASTFOR format.

6. Next steps. FonMin said he and I should begin to work out details soon after March 27 Cabinet meeting. I have asked Admiral Crowe to return to Bahrain from Jordan to be on hand as we work out these details. Formal USG acceptance of concept, and of as many details as possible, should be forthcoming as soon as possible, as should answers to FonMin's questions posed above. Question of de facto extension of at least some of present arrangements is one I will, first, work out with Admiral Crowe and then, with Dept approval, raise with FonMin.

7. Public posture. As noted Manama 659 (Notal) rumor that Navy will stay is common here and, following March 27 Cabinet meeting at latest, decision to this effect will be widely known. It is important that we consider urgently our public posture on this. Since a credible de-homeporting has been key to GOB acceptance of new format, it is necessary that our, and GOB's, public statements fit this image. Request

⁵ See footnote 2, Document 2.

Dept. consider approach I outlined most recently in para 4 Manama 577⁶ (Notal) in which GOB and USG would jointly announce termination of stationing agreement and establishment of MIDEASTFOR as afloat command. While such announcement should be delayed as long as possible, ideally until June, we will probably have to use it sooner. In any case we will need interim guidance which, if Dept. agrees, could be simply present guidance that discussions are continuing.

8. I will present further thoughts to Dept over next few days on details of new arrangement.

9. Dept. please pass to military addressees included State 061525.

Cluverius

⁶ In telegram 577 from Manama, March 13, Cluverius outlined his thoughts as to new approaches to the Middle East Force. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770086–0663)

5. Action Memorandum From the Acting Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Bartholomew) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Atherton) to Secretary of State Vance¹

Washington, May 2, 1977

Circular 175 Procedure:—Request for Authority to Negotiate and Conclude an Executive Agreement with the Government of Bahrain regarding the Termination of the Homeporting Arrangement for Middle East Force, and the Retention of Administrative and Logistic Facilities to Support the Middle East Force Command Afloat

Summary

In 1975, the Government of Bahrain gave us notice that it wished to have the U.S. Navy's Middle East Force withdraw from Bahrain by

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Program Files for Oman, 1974–1989; UAE, 1989; Political Relations, 1969–1989, Lot 91D491, Box 6, Def-15—MidEastfor 1977. Secret. Sent through Habib. Drafted by George Churchill (PM/ISO) and Twinam on April 28; cleared in DOD/ISA/FMRA and by James Rohwer (L/PM), William Lewis (AF/I), and Robert Flaten (H). Churchill initialed for all clearing officials. A handwritten notation in the upper right-hand margin of the first page reads: "Approved by P—'not necessary to go to S' 5/4/77."

June 30, 1977.² Recently the Bahraini Government formally decided that it would consider an arrangement with the following features: a) the current stationing agreement would be terminated; b) homeporting in Bahrain for the Middle East Force Command and flagship would cease; c) Middle East Force Command would have no ostensible connection with Bahrain other than as a periodic visitor; d) Bahrain would permit Commander Middle East Force and his flagship to visit Bahrain for at least 4 months per year (in-port time); and e) the US would be permitted to retain logistic support facilities in Bahrain manned by Department of Defense personnel.

Department of Defense has indicated that an arrangement along these lines would be feasible, provided in-port time for the flagship in Bahrain and other Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean countries could total at least 6 months, per year with a requisite number of two-week visits for maintenance purposes. Queries to Embassies in the area indicate that this criterion could probably be met through regular ship visits to other ports.

The Government of Bahrain's desires regarding compensation are unclear and are likely to remain so until negotiations begin. We now pay \$4 million in annual rent, which we hope to reduce. The Bahrainis have in the past suggested concessional arms assistance; we intend to keep arms supply questions separate from these negotiations and to hold the line at non-concessional sales within our limited Persian Gulf arms transfer guidelines.

Background

The U.S. Navy's Middle East Force has for over a quarter century operated in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean and used support facilities at Bahrain, originally under informal arrangements with the UK, and since Bahrain's independence in 1971 under an Executive Agreement.³ The agreement provides the US Navy access to Bahrain and incorporates customary status of forces privileges and rights for US Department of Defense personnel. At present, the Command consists of a Rear Admiral, with a staff of 64, a flagship (auxiliary command ship) with a complement of 387, and a shore-based support group of 82, all stationed or homeported in Bahrain, in addition to two Atlantic Fleet destroyers under the Force's command during their rotational assignments to the area. The primary mission of Middle East Force is to

² In telegram 859 from Manama, July 26, 1975, Twinam described the meetings he had conducted with the Bahraini Foreign Minister. He noted the Government of Bahrain's desire that the Middle East Force leave Bahrain by mid-1977. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D750258-0511)

³ See *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969-1972; Jordan, September 1970, Document 113.

evidence U.S. Government interest in the stability of the region by making goodwill visits to friendly ports.

During the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the Government of Bahrain invoked the one-year termination clause of the 1971 Executive Agreement, but as US-Arab relations improved, we were able to negotiate the continuation of the Middle East Force presence by meeting certain Bahraini concerns about exercise of criminal jurisdiction over U.S. Navy personnel and by increasing the rent for the Middle East Force facilities from \$600,000 to \$4 million per year.

In August 1975, bowing to pressure at home and in the region against providing military facilities to a major power, the Government of Bahrain notified us it wished to have the U.S. Navy withdraw from Bahrain by June 30 of this year.⁴ Since June 1976, however, there have been discussions, initiated by the Government of Bahrain, to seek a way in which Middle East Force might continue to use facilities in Bahrain. The Bahrainis indicated a need to have other states in the region share the political burden of support for the regional U.S. Navy presence.

The Government of Bahrain has now formally decided to consider an arrangement which would permit the U.S. to retain its logistic support facilities manned by 75 Department of Defense personnel and would allow Commander Middle East Force and his flagship to visit Bahrain at least 4 months per year, provided the 1971 agreement were terminated, Bahrain ceased to be homeport for the Command and flagship, and the Middle East Force Command had no ostensible connection with Bahrain other than as periodic visitor.

The Department of Defense has indicated it could maintain the Middle East Force presence in the area on this basis, provided that the flagship has access to at least six months in-port time in Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean countries, with at least four of those months in Bahrain, and with a requisite number of two-week visits for maintenance purposes. On the basis of the Department's queries to certain of our Embassies in Indian Ocean countries,⁵ it is our assessment that sufficient in-port time for the flagship can be arranged in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kenya which, along with the time assured in Bahrain, would meet Department of Defense requirements. (We may possibly also be able to obtain some in-port time in Pakistan, should our relationship permit.)

⁴ The Bahraini Government's letter of notification was handed to Ambassador Twinnam in a meeting with the Foreign Minister on August 12, 1975. (Telegram 948 from Manama, August 12, 1975; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D750278–0587)

⁵ See footnote 2, Document 2.

As soon as we are reasonably assured of a workable arrangement in Bahrain, we propose to approach other Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean governments about providing additional in-port time for the MIDEASTFOR Flagship. We are fairly confident that such friendly states as Iran, Saudi Arabia, or Kenya (and possibly Pakistan) would not seek specific compensation for permitting the MIDEASTFOR Flagship to conduct visits of somewhat greater frequency or duration than in the past.

Since last June, the Government of Bahrain has periodically suggested that some form of increased security assistance relationship with the US would be one of the conditions for its continuing to provide support for the Middle East Force. In keeping with our Lower Gulf arms policy, we have discouraged informal Bahraini feelers in the last few years about supplying such weapons at TOW, HAWK and REDEYE, but on the basis of surveys in 1972 and 1976 we have recommended that Bahrain acquire a small number of coastal patrol boats and 10 helicopters. We have provided a limited amount of training for Bahraini officers in the U.S.

Throughout the latter part of 1976, the Bahraini Prime Minister urged that future US/Bahraini Security Assistance arrangements involve concessional U.S. funding for arms purchases, while the Crown Prince/Defense Minister expressed interest in purchasing F-5 aircraft and missile-armed naval patrol craft. In December 1976, a Department of Defense survey team concluded a visit to Bahrain to take a comprehensive look at Bahrain's defense requirements. Its recommendations are currently under review in the Departments of State and Defense prior to release to the Government of Bahrain. In recent discussions of possible new arrangements for support of the U.S. Navy in Bahrain, the Bahraini Foreign Minister has refrained from raising with our Ambassador the question of future security assistance, but this issue could arise again as formal negotiations with the Government of Bahrain proceed.

The recommendations on military equipment, (helicopters, Vulcan anti-aircraft guns and lightly armed patrol craft) which we anticipate making to the GOB will be well within the parameters of the restrictive policy we have maintained for sale of military equipment to Lower Gulf countries since their independence and should be fully in accord with the thrust of the present world-wide review of arms transfer policy. Our Ambassador anticipates that these recommendations will meet with general approval within the GOB. While certain Bahraini leaders may wish to consider our willingness to provide such equipment as a condition for the U.S. Navy's continued use of facilities, we will insist that arms supply questions are outside the scope of these negotiations. We can with accuracy maintain that we are prepared to

sell to Bahrain only equipment that would be justifiable on policy grounds without reference to the future status of the U.S. Navy there.

U.S. Negotiating Approach

Since the feasibility of maintaining an afloat Middle East Force Command depends on in-port time in the area for the command and flagship totalling at least six months per year, our strategy will be to commence negotiations with the Government of Bahrain for access and support facilities and—as soon as the course of negotiations gives reasonable assurance of an agreement with Bahrain—to approach other regional governments including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kenya, and possibly Pakistan, to ensure reasonably that the required additional in-port time is obtainable.

With the Government of Bahrain, we will: a) agree to terminate the Executive Agreement of 1971; b) seek written assurances that the Middle East Force Command and flagship will be allowed at least four months in-port time per year; c) seek authorization to retain a logistic and administrative staff (reduced from the present 82 to 75, with accompanying dependents) and facilities, including facilities for the MIDEASTFOR flag aircraft and its crew, in Bahrain; d) seek to continue the status of forces provisions of the Executive Agreement of 1971 for any Department of Defense personnel residing in or visiting Bahrain. We plan to propose the exchange of notes at Tab 2;⁶ further details of the arrangement would be contained in a lease.

Regarding compensation, we will seek to reduce the annual rent payment from the present \$4 million. If necessary, we could fall back to the current \$4 million figure, in recognition of inflationary pressures and the value of the Bahraini facilities to maintenance of the afloat Middle East Force.

If the Bahrainis request military equipment as a condition for continued facilities for MIDEASTFOR, we will insist on handling this request as a separate aspect of our relationship. We would handle such requests on the basis of the existing Lower Gulf arms policy and in keeping with the present worldwide policy review on transfer of military equipment and training.

Legal Considerations

The U.S. negotiating objectives can be achieved in agreements which can lawfully be concluded as Executive Agreements, although the payment of rent for the use of facilities will have to be made subject to the appropriation of funds by Congress.

⁶ Attached but not printed at Tab 2 is the text of the draft notes.

A Memorandum of Law analyzing the relevant legal issues is at Tab 1.⁷

Congressional and Public Considerations

The proposed new agreement relates to a continuation of a currently existing U.S. presence under a changed format. No new U.S. facilities are contemplated. However, raising with Congress the administrative support arrangements for Middle East Force in Bahrain may well lead to questions concerning the general value of keeping this U.S. presence in the area. We believe that our case will be sufficiently strong and reasonable that, if necessary, it can be made public and successfully defended. It would, however, be inappropriate to invite public interest groups or other public comment, since the Bahrainis would be uneasy with any publicity about these arrangements. We can anticipate media interest which should be handled in close coordination with Bahrain.

We do need to consult with the Congress on the new arrangements, including any rent or other fees which the Department of Defense must pay in Bahrain for facilities. We do not anticipate serious Congressional opposition to the proposed new arrangements. However, there will be Congressional interest in the number of Department of Defense personnel remaining in Bahrain, or visiting there, and in the retention of status of forces privileges for them.

We can anticipate significant Congressional concern about any appreciable military supply commitments we make with Bahrain, particularly if Congress perceives them as linked to facilities to support MIDEASTFOR.

Once concluded, the agreement would be transmitted to Congress in accordance with 1 U.S.C. 112b (The Case Act).⁸

Indian Ocean Arms Control

As we progress toward US-USSR discussions on arms limitations in the Indian Ocean, our negotiating position will be best served by maintaining our force presence in the area—including Middle East Force—at a steady level. Continuance of Middle East Force as an afloat command would not limit our flexibility in these discussions since: a) agreement on actual limitations is likely to be a lengthy process; b) review and adjustment of Middle East Force is always possible; c) Soviet interest is focussed on Diego Garcia, rather than on deployments.

⁷ Attached but not printed at Tab 1 is the April 28 Memorandum of Law.

⁸ Reference is to the section of Title 1 of the United States Code governing the transmission of international agreements for congressional approval.

Recommendations:

1. That you authorize our Ambassador in Bahrain to enter into negotiations with the Government of Bahrain looking toward an agreement regarding access and support facilities in Bahrain for Middle East Force Command and flagship.

2. That you authorize an approach to other governments of the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean area as appropriate, to arrange the required additional in-port time for Middle East Force Command and flagship.

3. That you authorize the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, with the concurrence of PM, L, DOD and other concerned offices and agencies, to approve the wording of the above draft agreement with the Government of Bahrain.

4. That you authorize our Ambassador in Bahrain to sign the above agreement with the Government of Bahrain.⁹

⁹ Habib approved all four recommendations on May 3.

6. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

PS 77–10004

Washington, June 1977

Soviet Role in the Middle East

[Omitted here is a key to dissemination control abbreviations.]

Key Judgments

The Soviets' economic, military, and political position with the principal Arab states has eroded over the past five years, and shows no sign of early improvement. The low state of relations between the USSR and Egypt stands out as an important failure of Soviet foreign policy under General Secretary Brezhnev.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 50, Middle East: 4–6/77. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared with contributions from the Center for Policy Support and the Offices of Economic Research, Regional and Political Analysis, and Strategic Research, Directorate of Intelligence.

Moscow's relations with the radical Arab states—notably Iraq and Libya—have expanded significantly in recent years. This improvement has been based primarily on increasing sales of Soviet arms, and has not resulted in a commensurate increase in Soviet political influence among the Arab radicals.

The USSR has few official contacts and virtually no political influence with Israel. Occasional Soviet contacts with Israeli officials are intended primarily to intimidate the Palestinians and to show third parties that the Soviets play an essential role in Middle East diplomacy.

Substantial improvement in the Soviet position in the Middle East is not likely, at least until there is a fundamental change in the leadership of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iran, or Saudi Arabia. The Soviets probably will continue to make limited progress in strengthening their relations with Libya.

The Soviets' military presence in the Middle East has diminished considerably since 1973, but the Soviets retain the capability quickly to project additional military power into the area. This gives Moscow the potential directly to affect the military balance and the level of political tension in the region.

Soviet leaders want to reconvene the Geneva conference to demonstrate that the USSR plays a central role in Arab-Israeli negotiations. Moscow has neither the desire nor the ability, however, to force the Arabs or Israelis to make the political concessions that will be necessary to restart the conference.

The USSR would not be capable—even by withholding or providing additional military equipment—of eliciting fundamental changes in the Arabs' stand on the basic issues of the Middle East conflict. Soviet policy will remain one of supporting positions already endorsed by the principal Arab states and the Palestinians.

Soviet influence in the Middle East is greatest during periods of tension and "no war-no peace." In any negotiating forum the Soviets will attempt to avoid appearing obstructionist, but should not be expected to play an effective, positive role.

[Omitted here is the body of the paper.]

7. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Arab Emirates¹

Washington, September 14, 1977, 2156Z

220667. Subject: UAE Request for TOW's. References: (A) 76 State 178831,² (B) 76 Abu Dhabi 1911 (Notal),³ (C) 76 Abu Dhabi 2101 (Notal),⁴ (D) 76 Abu Dhabi 2135 (Notal),⁵ (E) Abu Dhabi 1921 (Notal),⁶ (F) Manama 723.⁷

1. In response to Embassy Abu Dhabi's recent inquiry regarding status of decision concerning sale of TOW anti-tank missile system to

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770334–0882. Secret. Drafted by David M. Winn (NEA/ARP); cleared by Douglas Keene (PM/SAS) and in DOD/ISA; approved by Twinam. Sent for information to Manama, Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, and Muscat.

² In telegram 178831 to Abu Dhabi, July 20, 1976, the Department responded to a UAE request for TOW missiles, noting that the U.S. Government had not furnished these missiles to the United Arab Emirates or other nations as it would contribute to an "unnecessary arms buildup in region." The Department instructed: "You could say that our desire is to give UAE arms requests the most careful consideration. In this connection, we would be interested in UAE rationale for renewed request for TOW in light of our common desire for stability and avoidance of an arms race in the region." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760278–0206)

³ Telegram 1911 from Abu Dhabi, July 14, 1976. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760272–0094)

⁴ In telegram 2101 from Abu Dhabi, August 3, 1976, the Embassy reported a discussion between Sterner and UAE General Khaldi regarding planned U.S. military training and weapons orientation for the UAE military. During the meeting, Sterner "noted specifically with regard to training that we would not believe it appropriate to offer training or demonstrations on weapons which were clearly not applicable to UAE needs." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760298–0887)

⁵ In telegram 2135 from Abu Dhabi, August 5, 1976, the Embassy evaluated the threat posed by the armored forces of the United Arab Emirates' neighbors, the United Arab Emirates' defense needs, and the U.S. policy of avoiding an arms race in the lower Gulf region as rationale for supplying TOW missiles. It concluded: "We do not minimize negative arguments on this question and recognize that decision on TOWs for UAE merits careful consideration. Nevertheless, we genuinely believe weight of argument is in favor of positive decision in this case. We particularly do not find persuasive argument that Department says is 'basic reason' for its previous negative decision—that UAE faces no present threat from armored attack. Today's peaceful border can overnight become the direction from which a hostile attack can be directed. In the Arabian Peninsula alone we have seen this happen in the case of Kuwait and Iraq, of Oman and the PDRY. In each of those cases we decided TOW was an appropriate weapon to supply in view of threat these states faced. It is certainly not unreasonable for UAE to be viewing this evidence and deciding that it would like to be prepared before the threat actually emerges." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760303–0427)

⁶ Telegram 1921 from Abu Dhabi, July 17, 1976. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760276–0467)

⁷ In telegram 723 from Manama, March 29, Cluverius discussed the question of U.S. arms sales to Bahrain. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770162–1118)

UAE (ref E), Department and DOD have conducted intensive review of issue similar to that carried out in September 1976. During review, both agencies concentrated in particular on question of whether or not TOW has become weapon common enough in inventories worldwide to be considered non-sophisticated in Gulf military context. Issue of Abu Dhabi defense justification for TOW also was closely examined.

2. Consensus of expert opinion emerging from review is that (a) TOW still is sufficiently sophisticated weapon to require compelling defense requirement justification for selling it to lower Gulf states, and (b) that sufficient defense justification—in form of specific armor threat to UAE—does not exist. Department therefore has decided not to pursue issue further at this time and Embassy should so inform MG Khaldi and Sheikh Khalifa.

3. In informing UAEG, post should draw on following: (a) Administration's policy is to minimize U.S. arms sales abroad, avoiding sales which go beyond legitimate defense requirements. (b) In this context, USG examined question of TOW sale in light of degree to which UAE's acquisition of weapon would meet realistic armor threat. (c) We were unable to identify threat to UAE for which TOW was appropriate defensive weapon. (d) USG remains committed to assisting UAE develop appropriate defense capability and welcomes further discussion of how we might be helpful to modernization of federal defense forces within U.S. policy framework.

4. For Manama and Doha: Bahrain and Qatar were included in recent review since they are remaining lower Gulf states to which we have not sold TOW, and Bahrain on several occasions has already informally expressed interest in acquiring this weapon. Conclusion in case of Bahrain and Qatar was same as in UAE case. While we have no desire to initiate discussion of TOW with these governments, Ambassadors are instructed to use above responses in parrying any future TOW requests.

Vance

8. Telegram From the Embassy in the United Arab Emirates to the Department of State¹

Abu Dhabi, February 13, 1978, 1223Z

409. Subject: UAE Desire for Military Relationship With U.S. USCINCEUR for POLAD. Refs: (A) Abu Dhabi 0286,² (B) Abu Dhabi 0408.³

1. In course of my February 12 meeting with Shaikh Sultan bin Zayid, new Commander in Chief, of UAE Defense Forces (reftels), he said moves toward unification of UAE armed forces had increased interest in UAE having real military relationship with U.S. He said UAE must take necessary steps to protect its wealth and assure stability. This required UAE to improve not only training but equipment of its armed forces so that it could provide a credible deterrent in the event of an external attack. To my question of where he felt the threat lay for UAE, Shaikh Sultan said that at moment, there is no immediate palpable external threat to UAE but situation could suddenly change.

2. After I had reviewed at some length the history of U.S. arms policy in lower Gulf and its constraints and U.S. belief that the UAE's security can best be achieved through regional cooperation especially with its two large neighbors in the Gulf, Shaikh Sultan said UAE understood U.S. policy but did not believe it was logical. UAE security, just as for any other country, first depended on UAE itself. Iran and Saudi Arabia played an important role in the general security of region but UAE could not rely on Saudi Arabia and Iran forever. What would happen if there were a sudden change in either of these two countries? He thought UAE had two choices, either to have capability to defend its oil resources or to ask Saudis or Iranians to do it but in latter case, UAE could not maintain its independence and it would be back to where situation was when British were responsible for regional security.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780067–0602. Secret; Exdis. Sent for information to Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, Manama, Muscat, Tehran, and USCINCEUR.

² In telegram 286 from Abu Dhabi, February 1, the Embassy described UAE plans to reorganize the country's military. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780048–0314)

³ In telegram 408 from Abu Dhabi, February 13, the Embassy reported on a conversation between Dickman and UAE Commander-in-Chief Brigadier Shaikh Sultan bin Zayid during which they discussed Zayid's desire to amend or cancel the 1975 U.S.–UAE agreement governing foreign military sales. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780065–0871)

3. Warming to his point, Shaikh Sultan said that UAE does not want intermediate military relationship with us, "one that is restricted to M-16s." While UAE has funds to purchase almost any kind of sophisticated weapons it wants from various sources, it would much prefer to have "a real military relationship with the U.S." so that it knows where to look for its security and for development of its armed forces. He believed U.S. had real interests in Gulf and particularly in UAE, which has now become important source of energy for U.S. markets. UAE welcomed this and wanted to expand its relations in all fields. However, he felt U.S., while outwardly manifesting interest in security and stability of UAE, was in fact "selective." If there are to be close relations between U.S. and UAE, it has to be close in all its aspects, neither side can pick and choose. If U.S. really interested in UAE security, then it should be willing to respond to requests which UAE believes are necessary for its defense.

4. My response was to point out where we had tried to be responsive, within the limits of our policy, in responding to felt UAE desires for cooperation in military field. A well disciplined and highly trained force could in many cases be just as effective as one with large amounts of sophisticated equipment. Given the small number of native Emirians, it seemed to me that UAE would want to improve quality of its native personnel rather than buy fancy equipment which could only be used by foreigners now in UAE armed forces. I also pointed out that thrust of U.S. administration to curb new arms sales abroad made it highly unlikely that UAE could expect any change in policy we had pursued in lower Gulf.

5. Shaikh Sultan indicated he hoped we could discuss issue again. He had raised matter to know where UAE stood so that government not stumble should matter be raised at higher levels in future. If UAE could not count on U.S. for help in protecting country's patrimony, it would like to know so that it could look elsewhere.

6. Comment: Shaikh Sultan's comments are a more expanded version of comments he and older brother Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayid conveyed to me last year (77 Abu Dhabi 708⁴ and 156).⁵ However, now that Sheikh Sultan has his new position, he speaks in much more authoritative terms and undoubtedly has done this to probe again

⁴ In telegram 708 from Abu Dhabi, March 8, 1977, the Embassy reported on a conversation between Shaikh Sultan and Dickman during which they discussed U.S. lower Gulf arms policy and the sale of TOWs to the United Arab Emirates. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770079-0405)

⁵ In telegram 156 from Abu Dhabi, January 13, 1977, the Embassy reported on Dickman's conversation with Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayid during which they discussed the United Arab Emirates' acquisition of TOWs. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770013-0255)

USG attitudes. Bright and ambitious but still young and relatively inexperienced in managing a modern military institution, Shaikh Sultan is less likely than Chief of Staff General Khaldi to understand and accept gracefully the broad policy reasons why the U.S. has been unable to meet the requests for TOW and other sophisticated weapons. While UAE President Shaikh Zayid probably did not instruct him to discuss issue with me, Zayid will have to listen to what Shaikh Sultan (his second son) has to say and weigh how U.S. response to kind of open-ended military relationship that Sultan seems to desire will affect nature of growing U.S.–UAE relationship in other fields.

Dickman

9. Memorandum From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Jones) to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

JCSM–282–78

Washington, September 7, 1978

SUBJECT

Review of US Strategy Related to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf (U)

1. (C) Reference your memorandum, 17 March 1978, “Review of US Strategy to Safeguard Availability of Oil from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf,” which requested a review of US and Soviet strategies for the region.²

2. (S) The Appendix contains the review,³ an advance draft copy of which was provided to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 4, Middle East/Persian Gulf: 9–12/78. Secret.

² In the March 17 memorandum to the Joint Chiefs, Brown noted: “The President and I have stated that the Middle East and Persian Gulf cannot be separated from our security and that of NATO and our allies in Asia; and that the United States intends to safeguard the production of oil and its transportation to consumer nations without interference by hostile powers.” To that end, and due to recent Soviet moves in the Horn of Africa with the goal of gaining access to the Gulf region, Brown continued: “I believe it appropriate for us to review Soviet and U.S. strategy, plans, force structure and deployments as they relate to these important U.S. and allied interests.” (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–81–0202, Box 60, Middle East 092 1978)

³ Attached but not printed is the 48-page review. In addition to identifying the major U.S. interests in the region, summarized here, the review details Soviet and American strategy, as well as Soviet capabilities, in the region. In part, the review concludes that “in light of US interests and the threats to those interests, it is considered that a coherent strategy for the Persian Gulf/Middle East region is now a matter of urgency.”

Security Affairs), in preparation for the Camp David Summit.⁴ The review concludes that:

a. The Soviet Union has well-defined interests and specific objectives, an opportunistic but congruent strategy, and the capability to pursue that strategy. Additionally, it is increasing its military capability and, given the opportunity, may opt for more overt military measures to further its interests. Section II of the review and the supporting annexes provide a detailed analysis of Soviet interests, objectives, and strategy.

b. The major US interests in the region are:

- (1) To assure continuous access to petroleum resources.
- (2) To assure the survival of Israel as an independent state in a stable relationship with contiguous Arab states.
- (3) To prevent an inimical power or combination of powers from establishing hegemony.

c. Existing US strategy should be expanded to provide adequate guidelines to insure that national interests are protected and advanced.

d. There are two major obstacles to the realization of US interests in the area: the turmoil produced by the Arab-Israeli conflict and the diametrically opposed strategic aims of the Soviet Union.

(1) Arab animosity toward Israel creates conditions leading to economic reprisals and possibly denial of oil to the West. It threatens Israel's security and provides an opportunity for Soviet penetration into regional states. While the Joint Chiefs of Staff strongly endorse the administration's efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute, additional measures to enhance the security of all parties to the dispute could improve stability and accelerate progress toward a settlement.

(2) Resolution of the Arab-Israeli problem, while of immense value to the United States, would still leave the Soviet Union actively and purposefully working against US interests in the region. In this decade, the Soviets have become increasingly confident of their ability to forcefully promote their interests in the area. It appears they are striving to gain ultimate control over critical raw materials, particularly oil; enhance their southern flank security by neutralizing Iran and Turkey; foster a more friendly government in Afghanistan; and generally strengthen the Soviet position at the expense of the West. The Soviets are adept opportunists and have reason to hope for significant gains in the Horn of Africa and in southern Africa. These gains, if realized, will impact so profoundly on key Middle East and Persian Gulf states that, without compensating measures by the West and the United States, in particular, these states may be forced to accommodate the Soviets to the jeopardy of the West and, particularly, the North Atlantic Alliance.

⁴ The Camp David summit between President Carter and Egyptian President Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin took place September 5–17.

3. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider the development and implementation of a comprehensive US strategy for the region a matter of utmost urgency. They recommend that the following objectives serve as the basis for that strategy:

a. A full or partial Middle East peace settlement enhanced by guarantees (which, if necessary, could include a presence of US military forces) and a determined effort to discourage reliance on the Warsaw Pact as the principal arms supplier to key countries in the area.

b. A revitalized CENTO Alliance with a more active planning and leadership role by the United States. In particular, the current impasse within CENTO over the issue of political guidance needs to be resolved before CENTO can proceed with military planning. In addition, the United States should minimize the restrictions on arms transfers to CENTO nations and take steps to coordinate NATO and CENTO plans.

c. A firm and public commitment to the security of Saudi Arabia and Iran. This commitment should provide sufficient flexibility to take whatever future steps are necessary to fulfill US obligations. It could also precede and facilitate an increase in the current levels of Western military sales to the region, the development of a base infrastructure, and, ultimately, an expansion of the US military presence in the region, if necessary.

4. (S) A public declaration of policy embracing the above objectives could serve to counter or deter Soviet military presence in the region and enhance regional stability. A supporting military strategy would include these basic elements:

a. Countering of Soviet military presence in the region.

b. Assisting in the development of local base infrastructures which are adequate to support the introduction of significant US military forces to the region.

c. Maintaining a limited military presence which is sufficient to provide evidence of US interest in the region, enhance stability, and facilitate the introduction of surge forces if and when necessary.

d. Seeking to prevent (and be understood as seeking to prevent) any major conquests by a regional power or powers.

Details of the recommended strategy are contained in Section III, with supporting US and allied military initiatives in Annex A.⁵

5. (S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff strongly recommend that the attached report be formally considered by the NSC and used as the basis for a

⁵ Attached but not printed at Annex A is the "Recommended US and Allied Military Initiatives in the Middle East/Persian Gulf Region."

strategy for the next decade, the implementation of which conveys to the USSR as well as US friends and allies the importance the United States attaches to stability and security of the region.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

David C. Jones

General, USAF

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

**10. Memorandum From the Deputy Secretary of Defense
(Duncan) to President Carter¹**

Washington, November 9, 1978

SUBJECT

U.S. Policy in the Middle East

I just returned from the Middle East and Africa, as you know, where I met with, among others, the heads of government and military chiefs of Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kenya and Sudan. I found in each country a great appreciation for what the United States had done to contribute to the peace and security of the region, and a desire for a closer relationship with us.

I also found grave concern in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan about the threat from the Soviet Union. Each leader saw himself and his country on the front lines of opposition to Soviet encroachment and domination. Each had clearly in mind the scope and speed of Soviet arms supply demonstrated in Ethiopia, and the Soviet propensity for subversion and political intervention accomplished in Afghanistan. Each thought we seriously underestimated the weight of the Soviet threat to the region. Each, in one way or another, professed not to understand the objectives of the United States in the region. They argued that we are equivocal in declaring and pursuing our objectives and in supporting our friends.

I explained that American policy was indeed aimed at building up and supporting our friends. I said we were not indifferent to Soviet

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 71, PRC 079, 11/30/78, Pakistan. Secret. Carter wrote "Charles" and initialed "J" in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum. Copies were sent to Vance, Brown, and Brzezinski.

activities. I said you personally had taken a number of actions that made this clear—for example, in Zaire; in arms supply to Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Turkey; in the F-15 sale to Saudi Arabia; and in your efforts to bring about a resolution of the Arab-Israel conflict, which would do much to limit Soviet opportunities in the region. The leaders acknowledged these strong steps.

I recognize that most of what I heard is a familiar story to us. I recognize also that the nature of these governments, and their relatively small size and close proximity to the Soviet Union or to Soviet activities in neighboring states, makes them more fearful than we believe is warranted.

Nevertheless, I recommend we carefully weigh their message. The area of the Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula is a fragile and potentially explosive one, as events in Iran suggest.² The risks of instability are significant and Russian opportunities for meddling are substantial. My preliminary judgment is that, for a small additional investment of political and financial capital, we could constructively advance American purposes in this area. For example, we might make stronger and more frequent statements of American interest and policy, do more consulting with the governments, develop a more elaborate web of defense and other contacts (ship visits, military exercises and the like), and consider, for the poorer countries, additional financial assistance.

In view of the extreme importance of this area to U.S. and Allied national security interests, I recommend we undertake, on an inter-agency basis, a prompt review of U.S. policy toward the area, to see what measures we might take to strengthen our position there. I know Harold Brown shares my view and I believe he also recommended such a study.³

C.W. Duncan Jr.

² On November 4, a protest by students at Tehran University turned violent when Iranian soldiers opened fire on protesters attempting to take down a statue of the Shah. This was followed the next day by attacks by anti-government crowds on Western businesses, hotels, and the British Embassy in Tehran.

³ Carter wrote “ok” in the margin next to this paragraph.

11. Memorandum From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Jones) to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

CM-182-79

Washington, January 11, 1979

SUBJECT

Middle East/Persian Gulf Initiatives (U)

1. (S) At our meeting on 9 January 1979² the subject of possible US military initiatives in the lower Persian Gulf, particularly the assignment of a Defense Attache to Oman and basing initiatives in Oman and Saudi Arabia, was discussed. These initiatives seem to support Deputy Secretary Duncan's recommendation for a prompt interagency review of US policy toward the Persian Gulf/Arabian Peninsula area,³ as well as Dr. Brzezinski's 30 November request to sketch out broad options for US strategy in a general region from the Horn of Africa to India.⁴

2. (S) You will recall that on 7 September 1978, in response to your request,⁵ the Joint Chiefs of Staff forwarded a proposal entitled "Review of US Strategy Related to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf," (JCSM 282-78), a copy of which is provided at the Enclosure.⁶ In that paper the JCS present the requirement for the development and implementation of a comprehensive US strategy towards the Middle East/Persian Gulf. While the current Iranian situation will obviously complicate achievement of US objectives in the region, the basic thrust of the memo—the need for a coordinated US strategy in the Middle East/Persian Gulf and the proposed military initiatives to support that strategy—remains intact and will continue to provide a major contribution to the development of a comprehensive strategy for the region. At pages 46-48 of the paper you will find a summation of a military strategy which would support such a policy. Annex A to the paper expands upon these military initiatives and includes the Lower Gulf states. Page A-3 describes possible basing initiatives in Saudi Arabia and the need for access to Masirah Island, Oman. The establishment

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330-82-0205, Box 16. Secret. Brown initialed the memorandum on January 12. A January 12 note to Brown from his assistant, Rear Admiral Thor Hanson, reads: "This has some bearing on your luncheon item on your ME trip." (Ibid.)

² No memorandum of conversation has been found.

³ See Document 10.

⁴ Not found.

⁵ See footnote 2, Document 9.

⁶ Attached; summarized in Document 9.

of a Defense Attache in Oman, although not specifically proposed, would be supportive of these initiatives.

3. (S) We are prepared to discuss the military initiatives listed above as well as others proposed in JCSM 282–78 with a view toward their implementation. Concurrently, we recommend that the NSC develop a comprehensive policy for the Middle East/Persian Gulf region.

4. (S) You may also want to consider expanding your forthcoming trip to the Middle East to include some of the Lower Gulf nations to discuss the implications of and requirements for a more declaratory US policy in the region. Pakistan, Turkey and Iran (if conditions warrant) might also be appropriate as a demonstration of our concern for CENTO.

David C. Jones

General, USAF

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

12. Action Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Saunders) to Secretary of State Vance¹

Washington, January 15, 1979

Response from the President to the Sultan of Oman

The Sultan of Oman wrote to President Carter January 3² expressing his concern at what he considers to be the deteriorating security situation in the Persian Gulf and neighboring areas, and proposing closer consultations between the Omani and U.S. Governments. Attached is a draft reply, for the President's approval, under cover of a Tarnoff-Brzezinski memorandum.³

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P890025–2682. Confidential. Drafted by A. Peter Burleigh and David Winn (NEA/ARP). Sent through Newsom, who initialed the memorandum. Tarnoff initialed the memorandum in the upper right-hand corner.

² The letter is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 73, Oman: 1–4/79.

³ Not attached and not found.

You met with the Omani Ambassador to the United States on January 5⁴ during which meeting he gave you a letter from the Sultan of Oman to the President. At the same time the Omani Ambassador stated that the Sultan would like to send a team to Washington to discuss the regional security situation with senior USG officials.

On January 8 our Ambassador to Oman met, under instructions, with the Omani Foreign Minister of State regarding some of the questions which have arisen about Omani arms requests of the United States Government.⁵ Minister Zawawi stated that his government would present an aide memoire on arms needs to the Ambassador at the end of this month or in early February.

In the same conversation, Minister Zawawi noted that he had recently been sent to Amman to discuss the status of the Middle East peace negotiations with King Hussain. He anticipated being sent to Cairo and Rabat in the near future for the same purpose. He then offered to proceed to Washington to brief appropriate USG officials on the substance of these talks.

As you know, the Omani Sultan is one of the very few Arab leaders who have been supportive of the Camp David agreements and who have publicly dissented from the Baghdad Summit decisions regarding Camp David in general and the role of President Sadat in particular.⁶ We would anticipate that if Minister Zawawi were to come to Washington, he would wish to discuss both the Middle East peace process and the Persian Gulf security situation.

In the attached Presidential reply to the Sultan, we mention your invitation to the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs as another sign of our determination to keep the dialogue with Oman active.

Recommendation:

That you authorize the despatch of the attached telegram to Embassy Muscat which instructs Ambassador Wiley to invite the Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs to Washington.⁷

⁴ The memorandum of conversation is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P790013-1325.

⁵ A partial record of Wiley's January 8 meeting with Zawawi is in telegram 31 from Muscat, January 9. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, [no film number])

⁶ During the November 2-5, 1978, Arab League Summit at Baghdad, the assembled leaders of 20 Arab States and the Palestine Liberation Organization voted to reject the Camp David Accords signed in September.

⁷ Attached but not printed. A handwritten note on the draft telegram indicates that it was sent as telegram 1849 to Muscat, January 16.

And that you approve the proposed Presidential reply to Sultan Qaboos.⁸

⁸ An unknown hand approved the recommendation. A stamped notation indicates that it was approved on January 16. See Document 13.

13. Letter From President Carter to Omani Sultan Qaboos¹

Washington, January 18, 1979

Your Majesty:

Thank you for your letter of January 3,² addressing pressing security problems in your area and proposing closer consultations between our two governments. I appreciate Your Majesty's views on matters which are of concern to all who value peace and stability in the Middle East, the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf.

I wish to assure Your Majesty of the United States' continuing interest in the security of Oman and its neighbors. The views that you expressed in your letter are of particular interest to me in view of recent events in Iran and the Soviets' efforts to enhance their influence in this area. Any threat to an area of such strategic importance to the United States would be of deep concern to us. You can be certain of our resolve to help our friends to preserve the independence and stability of your region. I know that this is an objective that we share.

Accordingly, Your Majesty, I am pleased that Secretary Vance has extended an invitation to Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zawawi to come to Washington in the near future. An exchange of views between our foreign ministers will be an important step in our continuing consultations. I know that the Secretary looks forward to meeting with Minister Zawawi.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 73, Oman: 1–4/79. No classification marking. Brzezinski sent the letter to Carter under a January 18 memorandum that indicated Vance had approved an earlier version of the letter (see Document 12) and requested that Carter sign the letter. A handwritten note on Brzezinski's covering memorandum states that Carter signed the letter on January 18.

² See footnote 2, Document 12.

Please accept, Your Majesty, my appreciation for your support and counsel. With best wishes for you and your family in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

14. Memorandum From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Jones) to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

Washington, January 23, 1979

SUBJECT

The Middle East/Persian Gulf: Updating National Policy (U)

(S) This complements the earlier memorandum on Saudi Arabian oil facilities.² It addresses the need for an overall strategy for the Persian Gulf region, and provides some specific proposals in that regard.

David C. Jones

General, USAF

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 4, Middle East/Persian Gulf: 1-3/79. Secret. Brown initialed the memorandum on January 23. Attached but not printed is a January 23 covering memorandum from Hanson forwarding the memorandum to Brzezinski. The covering memorandum also notes that Brown had sent a copy of the policy paper to Carter.

² Not found. Oil production in Iran came to a standstill on December 28, 1978, following strikes and continuing unrest. Documentation on U.S. concern about oil supplies and the vulnerability of Persian Gulf, and particularly Saudi, oil facilities is in *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974-1980.

Attachment

Paper Prepared in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy³

Washington, January 18, 1979

THE MIDDLE EAST/PERSIAN GULF: Updating National Policy

FOREWORD

The security of the Persian Gulf and continued Free World access to the region's petroleum resources are of vital interest to the United States. Particularly in light of recent events in Iran, the Horn of Africa, and the PDRY, there is a critical need for the development of a US national policy for the entire region. Such a policy should provide the necessary framework for the coordinated implementation of various diplomatic, economic, and military initiatives.

Several factors warrant consideration during policy formulation. These include the critical strategic importance of the region's petroleum resources, the US commitment to the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the significant impact of recent Soviet gains throughout the area.

Although policy objectives delineating vital US interests should focus on the expanding overt Soviet threat, US initiatives to counter lower levels of conflict should also be included. Initiatives in these areas will in turn deter larger scale confrontations as it is considerably more difficult to dislodge an established influence base than to deter initial entry.

A review of the current regional situation indicates that the two contingencies considered the most likely in the near term are these:

- Attack by the PDRY, with Cuban assistance, on the YAR and/or Oman.
- Incursions by Iraq on Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

While efforts to enhance the capabilities of Saudi security forces are ongoing, existing security arrangements to protect the oil fields are minimal at best. (It should be noted, however, that the Saudis have been especially sensitive to any US overtures to assist in oil field security in the past).

³ Secret.

With regard to the two contingencies cited, incursions by Iraq would have an immediate and direct impact on the US unless Saudi Arabia is provided significant outside military assistance. In the PDRY case, Saudi Arabia would be drawn into the conflict which in turn would threaten US interests. By assisting the Saudis with the PDRY problem, the US would serve its own best interests which include the need for stability in the region.

The formulation of a comprehensive national policy that signals heightened US concern and the desire to expand our role in Persian Gulf security should begin with a major policy statement by the President. Such a statement, preceded by consultation with key congressional leaders and set in the context of recent events in Iran,⁴ would establish the overall framework for the new approach and could have a significant impact on both the Soviet Union and the Middle East. The statement would also provide a useful backdrop for the forthcoming trip to the area by the Secretary of Defense.

An expanded discussion of specific military initiatives that should be coordinated with selected diplomatic and economic efforts commences on page 13.

The Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff are prepared to assist in further policy development and initiative implementation as appropriate.

[Omitted here is the table of contents, the 15-page paper, and Tabs A-H.]

⁴ The Shah left Iran for permanent exile on January 16.

15. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, undated

SUBJECT

My trip to the Middle East

I believe this trip will be an important one in the eyes of the countries I am visiting. It is the first visit of a Secretary of Defense to each of these states and, more significantly, it comes at a time of great tension and turmoil in the area. The Soviet Union and states of the area—moderate and radical—are watching and weighing American attitudes and actions.

I see the broad objectives of my trip as, first, to express in word and deed that the United States shares an interest in the security of the region, and second, to stimulate additional momentum toward an Egypt-Israeli peace settlement.

I attach draft instructions for your review and approval.² If you agree with them, I ask that you issue them to me. I especially call to your attention five issues requiring your scrutiny and decision:

1. *Linkage of security and political/economic issues.* I would not seek specific commitments on peace or economic policies, but would emphasize the importance of cooperation in the latter areas if the U.S. is to be able to help provide a security shield against external opponents.

2. *Regular Security Consultations.* I propose to establish mechanisms for regular security consultations with Saudi Arabia, Israel and Egypt. This mechanism would be a vehicle for continuing dialogue on a range of security matters.

3. *Arms Supply.* I propose meeting a limited number of the specific arms supply requests of each of the countries.

4. *U.S. Military Presence.* Without U.S. commitment, I propose to sound out Saudi Arabia on the desirability, from its point of view, of various forms of U.S. military and intelligence presence.

5. *FMS Credits.* I propose to offer post-treaty FMS credits to Egypt in principle and to propose to Saudi Arabia the possibility of at least

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Trips/Visits File, Box 112, 2/9–19/79 Brown Visit to the Middle East: 1/79–2/10/79. Secret; Sensitive.

² Attached but not printed. The final version of Brown's instructions is printed as Document 19.

nominal U.S. financial (FMS) participation in third country assistance programs, eg., Jordan, Yemen, Sudan, and Egypt.

I realize these are decisions on which there may not be full agreement within the government. I believe, however, that the Middle East is of such great importance that we must accept a more active leadership role on security matters in order to counteract the developing lack of confidence in the United States which has been exacerbated by events in Iran. We will need to manage this process carefully. I believe the approach contemplated by the draft instructions is a prudent first step.

Harold Brown

16. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, January 31, 1979

SUBJECT

PRC on Secretary Brown's Trip to the Middle East (C)

Defense has prepared a discussion paper (Tab A)² in the form of an agenda for the meeting. It covers the key questions and provides some suggested answers. The two key questions are as follows:

1. How far are we willing to go in providing strategic assurances to the Saudis and others? Are we prepared to offer some kind of unilateral U.S. presence or higher security profile?

2. What specific answers are we prepared to give these four nations on bilateral requests during the course of Harold Brown's trip? (S)

Strategic Issues

The underlying choices in the strategic issue are highlighted in two papers at Tab B.³ Rud Poats presents a case for a *multilateral approach* which incorporates security, energy, financial and other con-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 73, PRC 090, 2/1/79, Secretary Brown's Trip to Middle East. Secret. Sent for information. A stamped notation on the memorandum reads: "ZB has seen."

² Attached but not printed is the undated discussion paper which was forwarded to Secretary Brown in the form of a letter from Carter. See Document 19.

³ Attached but not printed are a January 31 memorandum from Rutherford Poats to Brzezinski and an undated memorandum by Ermarth.

siderations in a ministerial level consultation mechanism. Fritz Ermarth's comments, in contrast, stress the need to consider a larger *unilateral role* for the United States, with all the risks and costs that implies. Tab C⁴ presents the perspective from the Saudi desk at State which urges us not to proceed faster than the Saudis are prepared to move (all you need to know is that it compares the Saudis to a milk cow which produces best when calm and not startled). (S)

Our verbal reassurances to the Saudis have been less than convincing. This trip provides an opportunity to add both symbolism and substance to our security relationship. It seems to me that the proper theme for Brown's presentation is to stress the *two-way nature of security*. We do not want to make a strong pitch which links security protection to oil so blatantly that it "startles the cow", but we do want to engage them more actively in considering the kind of difficult decisions they must face if our security relationship is to be more than arms length. The following points spell out such an approach in detail:

—We are deeply concerned about the events of the past year for the security and stability of the region. (Review in fairly stark terms the events in Ethiopia, Yemen, Afghanistan and Iran.)

—We have taken some steps to respond in ways that would be apparent to the Soviets. (Accelerated arms deliveries to Yemen, Seventh Fleet ships on station in the Arabian Sea and at the mouth of the Indian Ocean, and the F-15 visit.)

—However, we see the threat of growing instability and the emergence of radical regimes as a serious development—as you do—as we are involved in a reexamination of our regional security strategy in the light of these events. (Brown might use some hypothetical examples of a higher U.S. profile, e.g. more frequent ship visits, a larger or more capable naval presence, regular visits of combat aircraft, joint military exercises on a broader scale, closer exchange of military intelligence, more frequent consultation on regional security matters, etc.)

—However, we cannot plan or act unilaterally. There must be active cooperation and support from our friends in the region. It is a two-way street. (Possibly note the need for congressional/public support, support facilities in the region, etc.)

—We would find it extremely helpful to have your views on the nature of the threats facing the region, the ways in which the United States could be most helpful in contributing to security and stability, and the ways in which we can work together. (S)

⁴ Attached but not printed is an undated paper prepared in advance of the PRC meeting.

This general approach would provide the opportunity to let them get their own concerns off their chest and to indicate areas where they feel we can be most helpful; it would also provide an introduction to a discussion of bilateral issues in a broader strategic framework; and—most importantly—it would serve to underline our shared concerns and our seriousness of purpose in a more convincing manner than heretofore. (C)

It also lets them know in unmistakable terms that *they will have to be prepared to play a role of their own that will not be cost free*, but it does so by making them partners, not merely objects of great power attention. The message would, of course, have to be *tailored to fit the audience*.

Specific Bilateral Issues

The Defense paper (pp. 2–5) examines a series of bilateral issues for each of the countries visited. Specifically, recommendations are made for the approval of arms sales for each country.⁵ Many of these suggestions have not been staffed. Many are extremely controversial (e.g. initiating FMS credits for Egypt, providing \$1 billion in loans to Israel for airfield construction, and providing F–5 munitions for Saudi Arabia previously turned down by Congress). Moreover, the Egypt-Israel package needs to be examined in the political context of the current negotiations and our overall relations. (S)

This meeting is not the proper place to put together a carefully balanced and politically sensitive package of items for the trip. (C)

Harold Brown should be provided with some positive replies which he can give in each case. The replies should be substantial enough to give life to the reassurances, but not so extensive as to empty our quiver prematurely. They should be carefully balanced among the Egypt-Israel-Saudi triangle. (S)

RECOMMENDATION: That you suggest the establishment of a small, high-level State-Defense-NSC working group to develop a package proposal which can be put to the President next Monday. (S)

Bill Quandt and Fritz Ermarth concur. (U)

⁵ Inderfurth drew a line from the end of this sentence to the bottom margin of the paper and wrote: “ZB, Keep in mind that the Congress is *less* favorably disposed to the Saudis than when the arms sales package was up last year. In fact, I have some doubts whether that same package could be passed today. Given their behavior at the Baghdad conference, the recent OPEC price increase + their lack of support for Camp David, the Saudis are losing friends here. As you know, Church (who railed against the package) was recently quoted as saying it's time ‘to take the gloves off’ with the Saudis. Concern about events in Iran + the security of the Gulf are the two factors going for us now in enhancing the relationship. Rick.”

17. Minutes of a Policy Review Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 1, 1979, 3–4:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Secretary Brown's Trip to the Middle East

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>JCS</i>
Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary	Gen. David Jones
Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State (NEA)	LTG William Smith, Assistant to CJCS
<i>Treasury</i>	<i>CIA</i>
Anthony Solomon, Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs	Adm. Stansfield Turner
Fred Bergsten, Assistant Secretary for International Affairs	Robert Bowie, Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
<i>Defense</i>	Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and South Asia
Harold Brown	Vice President Mondale
Charles Duncan, Deputy Secretary	Denis Clift, National Security Affairs Adviser
David McGiffert, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs	<i>White House</i>
Robert Murray, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs	Zbigniew Brzezinski
<i>OMB</i>	David Aaron
James McIntyre	<i>NSC</i>
John White, Deputy Director	Gary Sick
	Fritz Ermarth

Secretary Brown opened the meeting by noting that he had promised to make a visit to the Middle East when he had met with various Middle East leaders a long time ago. Many things had happened in the meantime. The Camp David meeting had occurred with its initial agreement and the subsequent slowing of the negotiation process. There had been the evolution of the Iranian political process and fall of Iran as a major regional security contributor at least with respect to U.S. advantage. It was now time to realign our security relations in the region and the trip provided a timely opportunity to discuss security issues with the nations of the region. The purpose of the meeting was to seek answers to three basic questions. First of all, should we seek closer relations with these nations in some cases? That question

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 73, PRC 090, 2/1/79, Secretary Brown's Trip to Middle East. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Sick sent the minutes to Brzezinski under a February 7 covering memorandum; Brzezinski subsequently approved the minutes.

on the trip was at best preliminary. However, it could set the stage for further action later on. Secondly, what sort of security cooperation do we want with these nations? In the case of Israel and Jordan, we have had a close cooperation for a long time. However, it should be possible to draw attention to the fact that the threat emanates not from each other, but from the outside. This might be hard to do, but on the other hand these nations are not likely to do it for themselves. Thirdly, if we wish to pursue this path, what is the state of U.S. willingness to carry out its end of the agreement? This turns on questions of public attitudes, congressional attitudes, and economic capacity. In addressing these issues Secretary *Brown* proposed to use the general outline which had been distributed to members of the PRC the previous day entitled, "Secretary of Defense Trip to the Middle East, PRC Discussion Paper."² He proposed dividing this into a series of five questions. First of all, are the general objectives as spelled out in the first page of the paper satisfactory? Secondly, are the proposed initiatives for each country acceptable? Three, how should we treat the linkage between oil and security of financial aspects [*assets*?] and security issues? Four, what financial support is available on our side to meet some of these requirements in the various areas? And, fifth, what sort of public posture should be adopted, specifically with regard to the press who will be accompanying on the trip? He then turned to the question of the general objectives spelled out in the paper and asked for comments around the table. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski led off and said that he found the objectives to be acceptable. He thought it was necessary to focus on regional security as a general issue. However, addressing that question, the next question was what we should do about the regional security issues. He would personally prefer to deal with this question as a whole, not to disaggregate it. (C)

Mr. Christopher said that he had no argument with the general objectives. However, he found the specific issues in the paper perhaps too ambitious. He did feel that the timing of the trip was fortuitous. (U)

Mr. Duncan noted that the time is right for this kind of a trip and felt that the public visibility is an important aspect.

Mr. McIntyre said that he was not certain that there was a sufficient consensus of opinion developed on what the precise needs and objectives are on this case. The questions as stated imply levels of commitment. He is not sure that enough inter-agency work has been done to examine those implications. He noted that he had caught hell on the Hill in presenting the foreign affairs budget in testimony. Even to imply

² See footnote 2, Document 16.

increased economic or financial commitment at this time would create great concern in the Congress.

Secretary Brown noted that a U.S. willingness to accept some obligations are important. He noted that our approach up until now had been largely to rely on words of assurance and in cases of third-country arms purchases to attempt to get the Saudis to pay for everything. This had left the Saudis feeling restive.

Mr. McIntyre suggested that the Secretary could go out and ask what they would like to have. Then perhaps the President would be in a position to make offers later on.

Mr. Duncan noted that they had been very specific on their requests for equipment.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that there was a real danger in asking them to specify what they want. In the Kenyan case we sent a survey team out and they came back with proposals for a billion dollars worth of equipment. Perhaps it would be better to give a range ourselves. He noted that the President attaches high importance to the Brown trip with respect to security, strategic and diplomatic objectives in the region. First of all, it will give the region a sense that U.S. shares their concern for regional security. He noted that this immediately leaves the question of how much we are willing to involve ourselves and that leads to a question of financing. Since the security of this region is also important to the Europeans, Japanese and others, it is possible that we might be able to turn to them for assistance in that line. Secondly, he looked to this trip to introduce some added momentum into the Egyptian-Israeli dialogue toward peace negotiations. Overall we should review the geo-strategic situation for the countries of the region and elicit a dialogue with them. We should focus on areas of interest to them, specifically South Yemen, Afghanistan, and Iran.

At that point (3:18 p.m.) the Vice President arrived.

Dr. Brzezinski continued that he would hope some form of consultative mechanisms could be established for security discussions with the countries of the region. This would serve as token of our seriousness of interest. However, such consultations should not serve simply as surrogates to strengthen the hands of one nation or another to improve its own bargaining positions in the negotiations. Rather it should create a sense of shared concern and shared objectives. In addition, perhaps we could go beyond the mere consultations and explore the possibility of a direct U.S. military presence in the region. Finally, he felt that we should think about multilateral consultative mechanisms which would bring in the Europeans, the Japanese, and others, particularly in areas of financial and energy interests.

Secretary Brown noted that would probably be most appropriate after the visit as a follow-up since it was not really in his area of responsibility.

Vice President Mondale asked how the discussions on this visit would relate to the Fahd visit to Washington.³ He felt that Crown Prince Fahd must be able to see something coming.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that it should provide more than tone to the forthcoming meeting. Secretary Brown should talk seriously about the U.S. role. He should encourage Israel to talk seriously about Yemen, Afghanistan, and other regional problems.

Mr. Solomon strongly seconded the suggestion that we make a serious effort to multilateralize these issues. He felt that if we go too far toward the bilateral and take too much of a lead ourselves we jeopardize getting the Europeans on board with us at a later date.

Secretary Brown wondered whether we could expect anything from the Europeans beyond financial assistance.

Dr. Brzezinski said they know unless we are willing to do it, their own security is at stake.

Mr. Solomon said that for us to get too far in the lead is risky.

Dr. Brzezinski said who else could we expect to take the lead? The French have only a little naval power; the British have some, but have withdrawn it from the area; the Germans are clearly not coming back in; and the Japanese have nothing to offer on the security side.

Mr. Solomon noted that the economic costs in providing security for the region could be a shared responsibility.

Admiral Turner said that he felt our approach should be more bilateral than regional and more regional than global. He noted that the Saudis disapproved not of the regional problems but of us. They needed reassurance directly from us and he was not sure that the regional approach would work. On the contrary it could drive the Saudis toward the arms of the Syrians and Iraqis. We need to reassure them that we are not using them as a pawn in a bigger game.

Secretary Brown replied that it is in their interests and ours for them to realize that the Iraqi threat depends on what happens elsewhere and that everything that happens in the region is catalyzed by the Arab-Israel conflict. The real threat is one of regional instability and Soviet stimulation of radical forces. The fact that they, i.e. the Saudis, must do something about it is new.

Mr. Aaron said that the Saudis don't believe that we have a vision of the regional situation.

Mr. McIntyre wondered if we do have a vision.

³ On February 20, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud informed Ambassador West that Fahd's visit, scheduled for March 13-14, would have to be postponed indefinitely due to Fahd's health. (Telegram 1515 from Jidda, February 20; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2387)

Vice President Mondale said that reduced to simplest form our vision is to stop the Russians in the region. He wondered whether the concerns that we are hearing from the Saudis are something new? He thought they sounded neurotic and rather vague on what they think we should do about it. Do they realize that in many of these cases that there was nothing that we could do about it? Or do they really believe we could? How much do they think is soluble by us?

Dr. Brzezinski said there were two new aspects to the question. First of all, the events of what happened in Ethiopia, Yemen, and Iran brings the danger home and very close to them. The U.S. did not respond to those events. They have the feeling that we didn't do much. Secondly, there are now more divisions among the Saudi royal family. In the past we saw Prince Saud as a hardliner, but then we felt that Fahd was in control. It is now less clear that Fahd is in charge of the situation. The succession to the Crown Prince position is in question. The Saudis today are faced with external anxiety and internal divisions.

Secretary Brown noted that in addition to that we are beginning to see public attacks on the U.S. in Saudi newspapers which is also something new.

Mr. Saunders agreed with *Dr. Brzezinski*. He felt that you could date the beginning of new attitudes in Saudi Arabia from the time of Angola and Somalia and those fears have been extenuated since the events of Ethiopia and Yemen.

Vice President Mondale wondered whether this situation was substantially worse. (The group felt that it was.) He thought that we had been getting along with the Saudis very well earlier in the Administration. Now it seems to be the reverse.

Secretary Brown noted it was the force of events. Previously they may have thought that we were stronger than we were. Now perhaps they think we are not as strong as we really are.

Mr. Duncan said that on the basis of his trip out there, he found that they do not understand our inability to act.⁴ For instance, when we tell them it takes 36 months to get them a tank, they simply can't believe that we are not stalling.

General Jones said that we are approaching a crisis in confidence. He had just left the head of the Turkish Army and he betrayed a sense of desperation. He thought that we should have been able to do something and was extremely worried about the situation in Iran. He had thought that we were more powerful than we turned out to be. We need to enunciate a clear policy and come to a consensus that this

⁴ See Document 10.

part of the world is absolutely critical to the well-being of ourselves and our allies. The nations of the region have come to expect the U.S. to be timid in responding and unwilling to face Congressional opposition.

Admiral Turner said they often do not hear an expression of concern on our part.

Dr. Brzezinski said that indeed one problem was that we didn't express enough concern, but even more important than that is that we really didn't do much and they are watching our actions as much as our words. In some cases we need to be prepared to do something unpopular and tough. We must be able to flex our muscles. For instance, if there is a direct threat to Saudi Arabia from South Yemen or if the Cubans suddenly arrive in South Yemen, it might be necessary for us to be prepared to run it over. He realized that this was not a popular line.

Vice President Mondale wondered why we do not simply say, when they ask us for equipment, that tanks are underway.

Mr. Duncan said that finally we did. When they asked for tanks for North Yemen, we ended up taking them from the U.S. inventory to make sure that they arrived expeditiously.

At that point (3:40 p.m) the Vice President and Mr. Aaron left the meeting.

Secretary Brown then turned to Saudi Arabia. Were we prepared to initiate consultations on security issues with the Saudis? Contingency planning?

Secretary Duncan said we should say yes on consultations and that we should be as forthcoming as possible on military equipment that they have asked for. In the past we have told them no on STINGER which they wanted. They had purchased some REDEYE but when they asked for more, we said that the line was not open. They said that cost was no object. Why not reopen the line? He could not see any objection to that himself. There was no money involved on our part.

Secretary Brown noted that there was indeed a Congressional problem about additional arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Christopher noted that the request for F-5 munitions has been put off in the past by Congress. His reading of the Congressional mood which he thought was no different from anyone else's was considerably upset by the fact that the Saudis had not followed through on the Camp David agreements and oil and had given us grounds for concern by their performance in Baghdad. It would take a hell of a sales job to convince them to give more on Saudi Arabia without a peace treaty first. However, with a peace treaty this position could change. But we should not kid ourselves, that we would be facing a major battle in Congress.

Mr. Saunders noted that Church is making a speech tonight in Miami attacking Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Solomon wondered how much better off we would be if an explicit linkage were made between our security provisions and their cooperation on economic and oil matters. He felt that there would be some good feeling on the Hill if we could get the Saudis to agree to a package of some sort on energy or finance.

Secretary Brown wondered how the Saudis would react.

Mr. Christopher said he thought it would be a mistake to try to create an explicit linkage. Fahd's reaction this week to a fairly explicit linkage attempt is a good example of the kind of reaction we could anticipate.⁵

Secretary Brown said they must know that we only love them for their oil.

Mr. Solomon said he hoped that by the time Fahd arrived to talk [to] the President enough linkage could be established to get the job done.

Dr. Brzezinski said that there is no need to make linkage explicit, but it can be put in terms of tying in our mutual interests in security and oil, because the two do overlap.

Mr. Solomon again stressed the fact that the Europeans should be brought in. This is as much in their interest as it is in our own. We are better off not having the United States as the semi-sole guarantor.

Secretary Brown said that the French, Germans, British and others certainly are free to sell weapons. They are not likely to do anything else on the military level.

Mr. Saunders wondered what we would do if they would ask for squadrons of combat aircraft.

Secretary Brown said that we could rotate aircraft through Dharam.

Mr. Solomon wondered if they should all be U.S.

Secretary Brown doubted whether the French, British or others would in fact participate.

Mr. Saunders said he had some doubts whether the Saudis would want such a show of force.

Secretary Brown said we have to think about what elements we could in fact multilateralize. He is not sure the Saudis were in fact interested in a multilateral role. He was not sure what kind of political guarantees they really would like to have.

⁵ See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 185.

Mr. Solomon noted that the Europeans can give something that the Saudis would like very much, and that is access to the Deutschmark, Swiss franc and other European money markets. If we would work it out with the Germans and other European countries, this would permit them to diversify their holdings somewhat.

Secretary Brown wondered if this would be a suitable subject for him to raise on his trip.

Dr. Brzezinski said we should talk to the Europeans first. Maybe it was not the best forum to discuss this kind of issue.

Mr. Solomon said he would be meeting with five Ministers of Finance from Europe next week. He would first of all need to do more homework. He would do some more work on it and send out a proposal for review.

Secretary Brown wondered whether he should raise the question of oil field security. The Saudis had been leery of this subject in the past.

Dr. Brzezinski said it would be a mistake for Secretary Brown to raise it; rather, he should ask the Saudis to define their own view of their security problems and to give us a list. We should ask them what is their list. Are they confident that the oil fields are secure? It is also important that we link our ability to help solve their problem to continued progress on the Camp David agreement. That is not simply a matter of psychology, it is a matter of fact.

Mr. McGiffert said he thought it was dangerous to go that far.

Mr. Bowie said that the Saudis see the Camp David accords as a threat to their own security.

Dr. Brzezinski said he understood that that's the way the Saudis viewed the subject, but it was our objective to try to make them understand that the Camp David agreements were to initiate a process in the West Bank.

Mr. McGiffert wondered when do we want the Saudis to act and what do we want them to do.

Mr. Saunders said that was very straightforward. If the treaty was signed, we would not want them to go back to Bagdad and join with the rejectionists.⁶ We would want them to support Sadat, to continue their aid to Egypt. We would like them to work to bring the Palestinians into the process. They are asking us to move the Israelis to an agreement.

⁶ The rejectionists included Algeria, Iraq, Libya, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Syria, and the PLO. They came together after the December 1977 Tripoli conference (see footnote 4, Document 161) in opposition to Sadat's dialogue with the Israelis. More information on the formation of the group is in telegram 1525 from Tripoli, December 5, 1977. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770450-1012)

If they want us to succeed, they must listen to us as to how to do it our own way.

Mr. McIntyre said he was concerned about the fourth point in the paper regarding the Saudis which calls for us to agree in principle to continue our joint cooperation in third country military assistance programs, including nominal US financial participation. He had reservations about agreeing to something he knows nothing about.

Dr. Brzezinski agreed and noted that agreement in principle often leads to a commitment which even worse leads to our not keeping the commitment.

General Jones noted that we should be forthcoming to our approach to consultations.

Mr. McIntyre said it is important that we not imply a lot of commitments when in fact we could encounter disagreement later on about those commitments. He had a real concern that the questions be analyzed in advance. He saw the approach outlined in this paper as exactly the same approach as we used toward the Iranians.

At that point (4:00 p.m.) *Dr. Brzezinski* left the meeting.

Mr. Sullivan wondered what arguments there were against the idea of consultations.

Secretary Brown said that the arguments against were that we would promise more than we could deliver.

Mr. Christopher said that the simple fact of talking often leads to a request. We are expected to put something into the pot.

Secretary Brown noted that regardless of that, there is no way that we could be more tied to the Saudis now.

Mr. Christopher wondered if this type of thing would in fact help prevent the situation that happened in Iran.

Secretary Brown said "no."

Mr. Saunders noted that it was not a budget problem.

Mr. Solomon wondered whether we should be careful to limit our involvement to external threats.

Secretary Brown said they don't want internal involvement from the United States.

Mr. McGiffert noted that the first question they would put to us in consultations is "What would we give if Yemen attacked?"

Mr. McIntyre wondered whether we had thought through our response in that case.

Mr. Solomon noted that our interests lie in working as closely as possible with them.

Secretary Brown said that it is alleged that the Saudis are not so much in danger as the Iranians were. They have a large royal family

which remains close to the people. He could not vouch that this was true.

Mr. Saunders said that the real issue in Saudi Arabia is that of corruption, and that's the point where the Iranian case and the Saudi case are very similar.

Mr. Duncan said that this region was an area of overwhelming significance to the United States and the West. There is a positive need to demonstrate that we understand that. The sooner there is public visibility on the subject, the better. He drew attention to a CIA paper which had just been published which was a reassessment of the Saudi position,⁷ and noted that they were re-evaluating their own policy. This was of overriding strategic importance to the United States. It should be met head on.

General Jones also drew attention to the point in the paper which indicated that the Saudis intended this call for consultations as a direct test to the US commitment. He felt that we should be forthcoming in regard to contingency planning.

Mr. Christopher said he agreed with that, but that we should not directly link security issues with economic and energy issues; and secondly, we should make it clear that we can't stop something from happening inside Saudi Arabia—external threats, yes; but internal threats, we could not deal with.

Secretary Brown then turned to Egypt. He wondered whether we should encourage Sadat to play a role outside his own country in line with his own idea of providing an intervention force for Africa and other regions. He said that if you examine the whole region, looking for a replacement for Iran except for money, Egypt came the closest.

Mr. Duncan said that he thought the list of initiatives presented for Egypt were very good, especially the fourth one which called for the initiation of FMS credits.

Secretary Brown thought that FMS credits to Egypt were more salable in Congress than arms sales to Saudi Arabia, although the former required US funding and the latter did not.

Mr. Christopher felt that until a peace treaty had been signed, we should not plan on large-scale consultations even on a survey team to Egypt.

Secretary Brown said we could take the line that we want to do it, but we can wait until after a treaty is signed.

Mr. Christopher agreed.

⁷ See Document 181.

Mr. McGiffert wondered if that applied to all five items on the list.

Mr. Christopher said that there could be talks about what the Egyptians might want from us. The first point was certainly alright. They need to know that it is a good thing to diversify their sources of supply.

Secretary Brown said that when we tell countries to go elsewhere for their source of arms, they take it as a lack of interest from us.

Mr. Christopher said we should not hold out the hope that we will be the sole source of arms for Egypt and also provide money.

Secretary Brown said that may be difficult, since the Egyptians just came out of that kind of relationship. We need to talk to the Saudis about the level of support for Egypt.

Admiral Turner said that it will be difficult to turn Sadat away from his concept of being a Middle East policeman, but there are real dangers in our encouraging that role. There is a danger that he will ignore his domestic problems, ignore the military dissatisfaction with such a policy, and that he could end up generating the same kind of problems that we have just seen in Iran.

Secretary Brown said perhaps our position should be that he would be in a better position to play that role after a peace treaty was concluded.

Mr. Christopher said he hoped we would not divert Sadat from the hard problems of a peace treaty and domestic problems.

Mr. McGiffert said he thought it would be bad if Secretary Brown goes to Egypt and offers only a few contingency possibilities. That would have a negative effect.

Mr. Christopher said that some APCs could be offered after the treaty is signed with the numbers to be determined later.

Mr. McIntyre noted we already provide \$750M in SSA to Egypt.

Secretary Brown then turned to Israel. He noted that the specific proposals called for security consultations on a regional basis. This would be something new in our security discussions with the Israelis. He would also need to talk about the relocation of the air bases. Our commitment to assist on air base relocation is ill defined. The President must discuss this with the Israelis, but he could lead the way.

Mr. McIntyre said that opposition [*our position*] should be that we will make no cash commitments, but after a settlement is reached we will assess the request and make recommendations. That is the line he has been taking on the hill—it implies some additional funding, but that is all. How would we rationalize that position if we now go forward with new commitments as a result of this visit?

Secretary Brown said he was only talking about 1981. Obviously, this would not apply before that budget year.

Mr. McIntyre said that there are general totals that we are operating on with regard to 1981, and that we have to tread very carefully on that.

Mr. Christopher said that the air base and other issues of that sort should be discussed under the general context of the peace process.

Mr. McGiffert noted that the \$1B figure in the paper is new. We have never given that to Israel before, although that is in the air base study.

Secretary Brown said we have never talked about \$3B in total aid, even if that is understood to include air bases and other factors.

Mr. Christopher said it would not be desirable now to make a commitment for \$1B for air base relocation. There are already big numbers there as far as the Israelis are concerned.

Secretary Brown said he had not intended to make a commitment on this, rather he intended to discuss the study and the estimated costs that came out of it. It would be a mistake to say that we would provide loans or grants of money to Israel for that purpose.

Mr. Christopher said that the words of the Secretary of Defense are heard as a commitment whether it is 81, 82 or any other time. Any discussion of the study should be prefaced with a clear statement that this would involve no commitment as to when or how we would provide funds.

Mr. McIntyre said he would want to [go] to the President to see how he would deal with the question of budget levels.

Secretary Brown said that he had told Weizman on several occasions that there would be \$1B in FMS credits and \$750M in SSA, and not more than that on an annual basis.

Mr. McIntyre said that we should not leave the impression that that level will continue in perpetuity; however, that is a subject that is probably left unsaid at this point.

Secretary Brown said he was worried about talking security with these countries without something to offer on his own.

Mr. McGiffert wondered how he could possibly be quiet on the entire list.

Mr. Saunders said that there were certain items that they had requested that certainly could be granted which didn't cost money and could be incorporated within the current aid levels.

Secretary Brown said he was afraid that such discussion would not send a positive signal. However, he thought he could avoid making new financial commitment.

Mr. Saunders said he didn't think it would be so negative. He thought the general objectives spelled out in the paper were excellent and provided a good basis for talking seriously with them about security needs. We could also discuss their specific needs and relate those to the situation in Oman and Yemen and elsewhere in the region.

Secretary Brown said that that was true as far as the Saudis, and that it was easier since there were no financial problems there; however, on the Saudi case there were Congressional problems.

Mr. Christopher wondered what you could say to the Israelis on any of these subjects without making a commitment.

Secretary Brown said there are some things on the list that could be discussed without any new financial commitments. By discussing

the study, we could show we have done something on the airfield situation. We can assure them that some work can be done on the airfields without an impact on the Israeli economy; however, no decision can be taken at this time. He felt that what was required was a decision memo for the President which had to be done immediately for him to examine some of the critical specific issues.

18. Telegram From the Department of State to Multiple Diplomatic Posts¹

Washington, February 8, 1979, 1500Z

33242. Subject: U.S. Posture Toward Persian Gulf States. Refs: A) 78 Muscat 1611;² B) Kuwait 99;³ C) Abu Dhabi 70;⁴ D) Cairo 594;⁵

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790060–0555. Secret; Priority; Exdis. Drafted by Twinam; cleared by George Muller (T), Saunders, J. Brian Atwood (H), Robert M. Maxim (HA), Kreisberg, O'Donohue, Carol C. Moor (INR/DDC/OIL), Quandt, McGiffert, and Richard Castrodale (S/S–O); approved by Newsom. Sent Priority to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, Manama, and Muscat. Sent for information Priority to Amman, USINT Baghdad, Bonn, Cairo, London, Moscow, Paris, Sana, and Tokyo.

² In telegram 1611 from Muscat, December 9, 1978, Wiley recommended the reassessment of U.S. relations with Oman, stating that the United States should “think in terms of building a larger community of interests with Oman and of raising somewhat our past very low official profile.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780509–1004)

³ In telegram 99 from Kuwait, January 7, the Embassy endorsed “Wiley’s well-conceived recommendation” regarding Oman, as elucidated in telegram 1611 from Muscat, December 9, 1978. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790009–0338)

⁴ In telegram 70 from Abu Dhabi, January 9, Dickman offered his assessment of U.S.-Omani relations: “With all respect for the views ably set forth by my colleagues in Kuwait and Muscat, I question whether as a knee jerk reaction to events in Iran we wish to leap into a closer and more active relationship with the Sultan, especially in military security matters. My reservations about this step are derived from more than a feeling that we seem to have a fatal fascination for absolute monarchs, especially potentially wobbly ones. I see potential problems for both Qabus and for his UAE neighbors from such a US embrace.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790010–1129)

⁵ In telegram 594 from Cairo, January 10, Eilts noted that Sadat was concerned about the “threat to Arabian Peninsula/Gulf area stability which might result from Iranian developments.” Eilts concluded that “Sadat is genuinely worried about situation. He would welcome anything that we might be willing to do that would strengthen Oman and the Gulf States.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790014–0425)

E) State 3732;⁶ F) Kuwait 147;⁷ G) Kuwait 227;⁸ H) Muscat 080;⁹ I) Abu Dhabi 188.¹⁰

1. Secret-entire text.

2. We have read with great interest comments of various posts on changing perceptions among the Arab Gulf states of the regional strategic balance and implications for U.S. relations with these states. Posts' views have been factored into extensive Washington policy view of U.S. posture toward the general region in the wake of events in Iran, Afghanistan and South Arabia and the apparent growth of anxiety among friendly moderate states in the region about the regional security situation. In this review we have carefully evaluated the U.S. policy posture toward the Gulf since the British withdrawal in 1971 and the development of the Gulf states and our relationship with them.

3. On the basis of this review we believe that U.S. policy of encouraging regional cooperation and orderly development of our bilateral relations with each of the states remains a fundamentally sound policy. In our presentation and implementation of it, however, we need to reflect recognition of changing circumstances, which include not just the weakening of the Iranian contribution to stability in the region, but

⁶ In telegram 3732 to multiple Middle Eastern posts, January 6, the Department noted that if discussion of the Iranian situation turned to Persian Gulf security, U.S. representatives could assure host governments of "continuing U.S. interest in and concern for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula stability." The Department also instructed the Embassies that "it would be helpful to ongoing policy review in Washington if you could try to draw out host governments somewhat on the precise nature of the threat." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790008-01845)

⁷ In telegram 147 from Kuwait, January 9, the Embassy described the reaction to the Kuwaiti Crown Prince's 19-day visit to Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf states and noted that regional security dangers had been discussed during his visit. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790012-1257)

⁸ In telegram 227 from Kuwait, January 15, Maestroni reiterated earlier comments made in telegram 99 from Kuwait, January 7 (see footnote 3 above), noting: "None of the Gulf States, except for Saudi Arabia and Oman, is a viable partner in a security arrangement." Maestroni also commented: "Naturally, any action we might undertake to promote a more active US presence in the Persian Gulf should be a subject of consultation with Saudis, whose policy interests are so closely linked with many of ours." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790103-0523)

⁹ In telegram 80 from Muscat, January 18, Wiley noted the comments he had received from his colleagues in the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, stating that some sort of common ground between the two viewpoints should be found. Specifically, Wiley believed that "it is time we step up our past very low profile in Oman, but I also agree with Ambassador Dickman that we should be careful to avoid projecting an image of all out American military involvement that would make Oman a target for the nationalist and leftist elements in the area." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790027-0961)

¹⁰ In telegram 188 from Abu Dhabi, January 22, Dickman offered additional observations on the future of U.S.-Omani relations in response to the comments made by Maestroni (see footnote 8 above) and Wiley (see footnote 9 above). (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790038-0069)

also the significant progress which the Arabian Peninsula Gulf states have made in developing strong societies and strengthening the trend toward regional cooperation.

4. Action addressees should therefore seek an ongoing dialogue with host governments on the political and security environment in the region and the U.S. response to it. In these discussions you should stress the following general themes:

—U.S. interest in the region is longstanding and ongoing and we have watched with great attention the development of the Gulf states over the last decade and the regional environment in which this has occurred.

—We recognize our common interest with the Gulf states in the security and orderly development of the area and the importance of close cooperation among the states themselves in furthering this objective.

—We assume host governments have appreciated that U.S. response to changed circumstances when British withdrew from Gulf in 1971 reflected a measured effort to develop a sound modern relationship with the area without assertively seeking the degree of presence which might in itself have been a destabilizing factor in the region.

—We believe that this U.S. posture has made some contribution to enabling the states of the Gulf to demonstrate their ability to prosper and progress as independent states and to soundly lay a basis of consensus for closer cooperation with one another.

—In view of the encouraging development on the Arab side of the Gulf and the changing circumstances in neighboring countries, such as Iran and Afghanistan, we welcome closer consultation with host governments on their perception of regional environment and their sense of proper U.S. response to it.

—In this connection (ref E), we seek a closer dialogue with host governments on their security concerns in an effort to define with greater specificity the exact nature of the threat they see to stability in the area.

—We tend to share assessment (ref F) that primary route for assuring stability in the area is continued emphasis on building strong societies in each of the Gulf states with careful attention to orderly economic and social progress including respect for internationally recognized standards of human rights.

—In the wake of events in Iran we are confident that host governments share our impression of the importance of permitting political institutions to evolve in a way that permits governments to keep in sensitive touch with and reflect the aspirations of their peoples. We are aware of the sensitivity of host governments to this aspect of orderly

development; we have watched with great interest and sympathy efforts of Kuwait and Bahrain to experiment with representative government and have shared disappointment of those governments that previous experiments with this particular type of institution have not been fully successful. With respect to political institutions we have no particular advice to offer, and certainly no particular ideology or institution which we seek to promote, but we do look forward to sharing with friendly governments in the area views on their efforts and our own to make government more responsive to the people.

—We want to continue to seek to find ways in which U.S. official and private technology and other assistance might help host governments to achieve their development goals.

—We have been impressed by the development of a consensus for regional cooperation within the region and it remains our policy to encourage this trend.

—In view of recent events in the region we assume host governments will carefully consider intensifying their search for the most effective method of working together in the interest of regional security.

—We remain prepared to assist host governments as appropriate in meeting legitimate defense needs and in considering our response in this area, we want increasingly to consider implications for regional security cooperation.

—Host governments should be assured of U.S. determination to maintain capability to preserve a global strategic balance and to maintain/promote great power relationship which will serve to deter outside intervention into the Gulf region.

—In this connection economic cooperation between U.S. and host governments, particularly OPEC governments, can develop in ways that will strengthen the ability of the U.S. and its industrial world allies to preserve global balance.

—In working to strengthen our relations with the Gulf states we want to stay in close consultation with our allies in the industrial world who have important interests in the area paralleling our own and also with Arab states such as Egypt and Jordan which have an avid interest in the security of the region.

5. In follow up to visit of Omani Foreign Minister Zawawi to Washington we are looking at possibility of encouraging similar ones by Foreign Ministers or other appropriate Cabinet members of the other Gulf states to pursue our dialogue at the Cabinet level.

6. We will be proceeding shortly to pin down dates for official visit of Shaikh Zayid of UAE. We will be looking in the coming months to the possibilities for other official visits from Gulf leaders and visits to the area by senior USG officials.

7. For Abu Dhabi and Muscat: You should inquire of host governments as to their receptivity to visits from Defense Attache stationed in Jidda and on basis of response and outcome of such visits we will be considering further desirability of attache presence, resident or non-resident, in UAE and Oman.

8. Info addressees (except Baghdad and Moscow) should brief host governments on the general lines of U.S. policy response to Gulf states as laid out above.

Vance

19. Letter From President Carter to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

Washington, February 9, 1979

To Harold Brown

The immediate purpose of your trip is to restore and reinforce confidence in the United States among our friends in the region. In doing so, you should begin to lay the basis for security collaboration among the U.S. and key states in the region—Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. Consistent with our strategy in the peace negotiations, we should be aiming for a situation in which Egypt and Israel are not isolated from the rest of the region.

To that end, you should place very high emphasis on the need for the rapid conclusion of an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty as the first step in a wider process of Israeli-Arab accommodation. You should make it clear that our ability to develop regional cooperation will be severely handicapped, and perhaps even negated, by continued Israeli-Arab hostility. That hostility intensifies internal strains in the Arab countries, contributes to growing radicalization, and opens doors to the reentry of the Soviet Union. You should, therefore, indicate that the United States expects a forthcoming attitude from our friends on this issue in

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Trips/Visits File, Box 112, 2/9–19/79 Brown Visit to the Middle East: 1/79–2/10/79. Secret. Carter's letter is the final version of Brown's draft instructions; see footnote 2, Document 15. An undated note from Vance to Carter suggesting additional revisions to Brown's instructions is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Trips/Visits File, Box 112, 2/9–19/79 Brown Visit to the Middle East: 1/79–2/10/79.

order to facilitate greater regional cooperation on wider strategic matters.

With the foregoing as a key point of departure, you should forcefully express our recognition of the strategic importance of the region, its strategic location, its vital resources, and its crucial role in establishing healthy patterns of internal development and North-South relations. Make it clear that we see the region to be under serious threat from Soviet power which is systematically exploiting internal instability as well as regional conflicts.

With or without a grand plan, determined Soviet efforts, as evidenced in the Horn of Africa, the PDRY, and Afghanistan, now abetted by turmoil in Iran, could lead to general disorder or the imposition of dominant Soviet influence, which the U.S. and its friends cannot tolerate.

To counter these threats, the United States sees the need for an integrated strategy for regional security to which it is prepared to make a strong political and military contribution. This strategy should be comprised of several elements:

- Rapid progress in bringing peace between Israel and her Arab neighbors, first and foremost between Israel and Egypt, but in a manner which progressively draws support from Arab moderates for subsequent peace negotiations.

- New forms of bilateral and multilateral collaboration in security management, including military assistance, intelligence cooperation, and contingency planning.

- Increased U.S. military presence in the region, possibly including increased naval presence and new collaboration on basing arrangements. You should explore reactions to possible forms of enhanced U.S. presence, without making any specific commitment at this point. Upon your return, I expect a full report on steps that can be taken to strengthen our position in the area.

- Concerted measures to counter radical forces that now provide a base for the intrusion of Soviet influence.

- Cooperation in oil matters that builds on the common interest of the U.S., its allies, and the region's moderate states in security and economic development.

You should emphasize our conviction that a new strategy for peace and security in the region will require new policies on the part of the U.S. and the governments of the region, demanding the resolve to effect them at home and internationally.

We will do our part, but will expect in return enhanced cooperation from each of the states that you will be visiting.

Saudi Arabia

In addition to a review of regional security along the lines indicated above, you should discuss with the Saudis the nature of the “special” relationship they say they desire. You should seek their views on specific security concerns. At their initiative, this could include discussion of oil field security. You should agree to more systematic security consultations, including the possibility of some joint contingency planning directed at threats from Soviet surrogates in the region.

In conversations with Saudi leaders it should be emphasized that it is vital that American policy have the support of the Congress and the American people. You should note that it is a reality of our political system that the success of our cooperation with them on security issues is dependent in considerable measure on U.S.-Saudi cooperation in the peace process and on economic issues.

With regard to specific arms transfer issues, you should indicate that a decision on air munitions will be made by me after my conversations with Fahd. You might also indicate to the Saudis that, subject to my final approval after the Fahd visit, we expect to continue with the modernization program for two Army brigades and four National Guard battalions. Following the discussions with Fahd, I will review also the issue of nominal FMS credits for third country military assistance.

Egypt

President Sadat believes that Egypt can play a constructive regional role in support of moderate states and in limiting Soviet influence, provided a peace treaty with Israel can be achieved and Egypt receives American support. Egyptian leaders should be encouraged to think realistically in these terms, consistent with their objective of alleviating Egypt’s economic problems, and to focus on specific situations, such as Sudan, Oman, the Emirates, and Yemen where an Egyptian contribution to security may be possible. We should seek to initiate the development of a close U.S.-Egyptian security relationship for the post-treaty environment. It is particularly important that the Egyptians understand that our ability to sustain a long-term security relationship with Egypt depends upon peace with Israel.

With regard to specific arms transfer issues, you can offer to send a survey team to survey Egyptian air defense requirements; indicate to the Egyptians that the United States will review the question of FMS in the light of regional developments; and that I am prepared to consider favorably the sale of 800 APCs for Egypt in the context of progress on the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. You should make the Egyptians understand the congressional sensitivity on this point, and

reiterate again the connection between regional security and Israeli-Arab accommodation.

Israel

In your meetings with Israeli leaders, you should provide assurance that the U.S. commitment to Israel's security remains firm. You should seek to gain understanding of Israeli perspectives of their security problems, especially those that would arise from a reduced military presence in the West Bank and Gaza. You should also encourage Israeli leaders to develop a regional approach to security matters, building on the common interests of Israel and the moderate Arab states in limiting hostile Soviet and radical influences within the area. The critical relationship between the Arab-Israeli peace process and regional security should be emphasized.

On specific bilateral issues, you should:

1. Convey the conclusions of the survey for the relocation of two Israeli air bases from the Sinai, but without commitment as to the extent or terms of U.S. financial assistance;
2. Agree in principle to provide equipment and technical assistance in overcoming the loss of intelligence and early warning stemming from Sinai withdrawal, the details to be developed in the course of ongoing security consultations.
3. The air base relocation aside, avoid any commitment in regard to Israeli requests for FY 1980 financial assistance in excess of the \$1 billion in FMS and \$785 million in security supporting assistance.
4. You can indicate to the Israelis that I am prepared to consider favorably the sale of 960 APCs and 200 Howitzers in the context of progress on the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. You should make the Israelis understand the congressional sensitivity on this point, and reiterate again the connection between regional security and Israeli-Arab accommodation.

Jordan

King Hussein will be seeking both general assurance of American support and specific commitments to supply arms of greater sophistication. You should encourage him to adopt a supportive role toward the peace negotiations, particularly as they turn to the West Bank/Gaza issues. You should also open the prospect of greater U.S. assistance in meeting his legitimate security needs in the future as Jordan becomes more actively involved in the peace process. You should specifically:

1. Discuss Jordan's security requirements now and during a period of protracted negotiations about the future of the West Bank, reaffirming our commitment to continue with military modernization programs which have already been agreed.

2. Agree to consider Jordan's additional defense needs, but without commitment to a favorable outcome.

3. Agree to continue detailed defense consultations through the existing Joint Military Commission in the spring with regard to Jordan's future security requirements.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

20. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, February 19, 1979

SUBJECT

Middle East Trip Report

You know from my personal messages² about the highlights of my meetings with Sadat, Begin, Dayan, Weizman, Hussein and the Saudi Princes. I will therefore confine this report to a general assessment and some suggestions for future action.

Conclusions

My overall conclusions are these. First, we must press forward as quickly as possible to an Israeli-Egyptian accord. Time is probably running against success. To make this step by Sadat digestible to the other moderate Arabs, we need to do three things besides portraying the treaty as part of a process designed to achieve a comprehensive peace: be forthcoming on regional economic development; be forthcoming on arms supplies, although not nearly to the extent of the announced demands; and find some form of US military presence which will provide reassurance without carrying the political burdens of a presence so intrusive as a US military base.

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–82–0205, Middle East (Feb 1–23) 1979. Secret; Sensitive. In the upper-right corner of the memorandum Carter wrote: “Good report J.” Brzezinski returned the report to Brown under a February 21 memorandum, commenting: “I thought you would want to see his [Carter’s] comment.” (Ibid.) Brown’s memorandum is also printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 178.

² Not found. For the Embassy in Jidda’s reports on Brown’s visit in Saudi Arabia, see Documents 185 and 186.

These actions will also lay a basis for a greater degree of regional security cooperation, with US support. That cooperation will come, if at all, on an evolutionary basis unless the perception of the threat intensifies. All the countries were concerned about the events in Iran; but there was no panic and, indeed, less anxiety than I had expected. None of the leaders thought we should do more than “wait and see” on Iran for the moment.

My second conclusion is that the most likely threats lie in internal violence supported from across borders or from internal political, economic, and social instability. The first will hardly, and the second not at all, be cured by major military hardware, which can however inhibit direct aggression across borders. We need to promote regional security cooperation, particularly where there is a threat from a Soviet surrogate as in North Yemen, and perhaps Oman, from the PDRY. And we need to continue forcefully to assert our willingness and ability to oppose direct Soviet aggression in the area. But most important of all, we need to do our best to forestall development of internal instability. Our influence is necessarily limited on this score, but the steps outlined above may help to enhance it. In particular, assistance in sensible economic development is needed. Several leaders stressed in private that this took priority over arms, though this wisdom did not extend to moderating their own long lists of arms requests.

My trip had four main objectives. Pursuant to your instructions,³ the first was to restore confidence among the moderate states that the United States understands the dangers to the region and intends to act to protect its interests. This was achieved. But there will be backsliding unless we now follow through on the commitment to play a more active role in the Middle East—in frustrating Soviet interference, in displaying some modest presence of our own, and in cooperating more actively with the moderate states in security terms.

The second objective was to stimulate the development of a general strategy for the region. I outlined the major elements: close cooperation between the United States and the individual states, concerted actions among moderate states, bilateral politico-military consultations about hypothetical contingencies, a potentially greater US military presence, cooperation on economic issues (oil) and economic assistance, and, above all, rapid progress on Arab-Israeli peace.

In response, the countries’ leaders acknowledged a commonality of interest. However, not surprisingly, the Arabs do not see Israel as having a regional security role, and tend also to criticize each other’s efforts. Several urged a US military presence in other countries “which

³ See Document 19.

are weak and need it” but see it as a lightning rod in their own (the exception was Israel, which would welcome such a presence for reasons both plain and, to us, unattractive). It is quite obvious as well that each country views US interest in promoting regional security as a lever to obtain more US arms for itself. This presents opportunities for the United States as well as problems, for we may be able over time to establish some degree of implicit linkage between bilateral arms supply relations and regional cooperation.

The third objective was to emphasize the peace process, and its importance for regional strategy. I did this at each stop. I pressed hard the argument that sustained progress toward peace would make an essential contribution to the security of the region. While all professed dedication to peace, recognized the threat to stability posed by its absence, and wished to exclude the Soviets from the negotiations, reactions to the Camp David Agreements were along predictable lines.

Sadat and the Israelis are wedded to the Camp David process, but holding to their positions that progress be on their terms. Each is seeking maximum reward in US security support as an incentive for moving forward. Hussein and the Saudis are convinced that the Camp David process carries more immediate danger than eventual safety. They appear to have no constructive, practical alternatives and have difficulty focusing on the threat that stalemate in the peace process poses to their security. Neither wants to close the door completely—their desire for our support in security matters precludes this—but they both seem to be hoping somehow that the moment of decision will go away. I believe concentration on Gaza with respect to the autonomy issue would be a good tactic.

The final objective was to strengthen bilateral relationships. Overall, I sought to convey the idea that a comprehensive peace settlement and other forms of defense cooperation are far more important to regional security and well-being than additional arms. I made very few commitments, handling most requests by undertaking to consider them on my return to Washington or to arrange for US teams to survey requirements or make staff visits in order to examine the need in greater depth. In some cases, I was frank in warning them not to expect approval.

In the main, however, offers of consultations and joint planning and intelligence exchange were welcomed but were not enough. We were judged in this functional area by how favorably we responded to arms requests. My approach was all right as a stop gap but will not work for more than a few months. No one was satisfied. Everyone had his list. Saudi Arabia renewed earlier requests for advanced systems, such as the XM1 tank, without addressing quantities or timing. Jordan presented a \$2 billion plan for filling shortfalls and for force moderniza-

tion, including F-16 aircraft and ROLAND missiles. Israel scrapped MATMON C,⁴ substituting a new eight-year force development plan for equipment which could cost \$6-8 billion. The new plan does cut back significantly on MATMON C's planned force expansion and is said to be 20-25% less expensive, but most of the savings appear to be in the later years. Egypt listed equipment which would total \$15-20 billion, in effect an "Americanization" of Egyptian forces.

I'm sure none of these nations expected us to respond fully to their requests. We cannot ignore them, however. I believe we should now approve military hardware items at a somewhat faster rate (without increasing dollar levels where credit is involved) than we have in the recent past for Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. I believe we need to plan for a sharply increased arms supply to Egypt, including FMS credits, although not to anything like the extent of Egypt's full request. The Egyptians have a genuine self-defense need to reverse the continuing decay of their military forces flowing from loss of Soviet support. And, with Iran gone, Egypt's role in regional security becomes more important; no other country in the region can play a comparable role. The expanded relationship must, of course, be paced by the peace talks; our survey teams will tide us over until May-June. Also, we will face a difficult task in adjusting Egyptian appetites downward to fit the threat and competing economic development needs.

You also asked that I report on the view of the regional states toward a greater US military presence. Israel favors a US presence, preferably one in Israel, but even one in the Arab states would be all right with them. Dayan and Weizman raised the possibility of our taking over the Sinai air bases. Weizman distinguished between a naval base at Haifa, which he said would not be antagonistic in an Arab-Israeli context, and other kinds of ground or air bases which would be.

Neither Egypt nor Saudi Arabia wants a base on its soil, although they might acquiesce in a US base in some other Arab country. Sadat thinks a US base would be a sign of Egyptian weakness and showed no interest in a US presence in the Sinai. The Saudis did not think direct Soviet military action sufficiently likely to warrant the political risks to them that, in their view, would follow from a major US military presence. Some Saudis thought a US presence somewhere else in the Gulf was worth considering, but it is by no means clear this represents a consensus.

It may be that, on reflection, one or more of the Arab countries may be interested in a form of US presence less intrusive than a military

⁴ Reference is to the military force development plan of the Israeli Defense Force originally projected to cover the period from 1978 to 1986.

base, such as periodic aircraft deployments, joint exercises, and the like. It may be that we can develop arrangements for use of facilities in a crisis, perhaps with some pre-positioning of critical items. This would give us some of the military advantages of a base with fewer of its political burdens. We will learn more about this as our security consultations progress.

There remain two other “presence” questions. First, the possibility of base facilities in another country, such as Oman. In 1977 Oman agreed in principle to our use of Masirah, the former British base, but at a very high cost.⁵ I did not get a clear view of Saudi Arabia’s or Egypt’s attitude on such a base, although I understand Crown Prince Fahd had expressed reservation about the idea in late 1976. We should examine this further within our government and perhaps with Saudi Arabia, to see whether the question should now be reopened with Oman. More importantly, I believe we ought to promote assistance from moderate Arab states to Oman to replace the capability withdrawn by Iran. The sooner this is done, the more South Yemen will be discouraged from seriously considering renewed efforts against Oman.

Second is the question of increasing US military presence off-shore. I believe we should carefully consider augmenting the Middle East Force (which now consists of 3 ships) and expanding the facilities on Diego Garcia. This is not for purposes of reassuring the moderate Middle East states, who showed little interest. Rather, its justification would rest on broader geo-political grounds or on improvement in our rapid deployment capability. I will send you a separate memorandum on this.

My impressions of the military capabilities of these countries can be only very sketchy ones, but I’ll give them anyway.

Israel’s forces are very capable, very tough, and very ready. In a short war with Egypt and Jordan, they should have no trouble winning, but could take casualties substantial for their small population. I have no way to judge their expressed strong concern about Syrian and Iraqi capability (the latter is touted in many of the countries of the region as the coming military power) but I hypothesize that during the next few years this would not change the outcome.

⁵ According to an undated information paper on the continuing U.S. effort to seek base rights at Masirah, drafted on January 11 in OASD/ISA/NESA, direct negotiations with Oman began after the withdrawal of the RAF on March 31, 1977. The report contained Wiley’s December 19, 1978, assessment that negotiations with Oman were “totally stalled” and that “if they are to be revived, the initiative will probably have to come from our side.” (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 73, Oman: 1–4/79)

Egypt's forces have rather good morale, are quite large, and claim to be ready. I doubt the last, and their denials of equipment unreadiness are undercut by their expressed concerns about spare parts. They are competent technically and professionally. I think they'd do well against anyone in the area except the Israelis, if we help them solve their equipment problems.

The Jordanians show spit and polish, are probably well trained (I saw only the honor guard!) but their forces are both small and very modestly equipped. They probably have considerable defensive capability, but would be wise to stay out of offensive operations. They can make a useful military advisory contribution in the Peninsula (there are said to be about 1500 Jordanian military personnel seconded to various countries in the Gulf and North Yemen).

The Saudis, though they are moving ahead toward a professional air force, seem to me a military zero at this time.

Recommendations

Our assurances of greater US interest and involvement are perishable. *We need to follow through:*

1. By means of the follow-on security consultations with the four countries to which I have agreed, we should:

(a) Further explore forms of US presence—short of permanent bases—which would be politically acceptable to host nations and militarily useful to the United States in deterring Soviet adventurism or enhancing our capability for rapid deployment of US forces in a crisis.

(b) Lay the basis for multinational regional security cooperation. We should concentrate on situations where stability is threatened by Soviet surrogates, in particular North Yemen and potentially Oman.

2. We should modestly step up the pace of our arms supply approvals within present dollar levels with Israel, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. In the case of Egypt, we should substantially increase our program, post-treaty, both quantitatively and by extending significant FMS credits. We should not, however, lend our assistance to force structure expansion in any of the four countries, and we should in particular encourage post-treaty force structure reduction in Egypt in exchange for our help in modernizing its forces. In Saudi Arabia we should encourage the development over time of a more professional army, not based solely on heavy and sophisticated equipment, but equipped and tailored to the environment and the Saudi capabilities to absorb. We should recognize that, at least in the case of the Army, the prospects for real military capability are very limited.

3. We should not encourage at this stage build-up of arms in the Gulf states. This issue needs further analysis.

4. The most serious threat to security is likely to be internal instability. We should review in depth our assessment of the political, economic

and social conditions in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the Gulf states to make sure our policies are best designed to minimize the development of internal instability in those countries. This is particularly important in the case of Saudi Arabia, for reasons that are self-evident. It is also true in Egypt, where former MOD Gamasy told me privately he is worried about the effects on Army morale and attitudes of an eroding economic position military personnel experience in their personal lives. Where we have to make a choice we should give priority to economic assistance designed to promote internal stability over arms transfers.

5. We should plan further speeches and statements—by you and others—built around the themes of my visit. This declaratory policy will help maintain momentum and credibility. In doing this, we should recognize that declaratory policy is no substitute for action and, indeed, can be counterproductive if not matched with concrete implementing steps.

Harold Brown

21. Action Memorandum From the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Gelb), the Acting Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kreisberg), and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Saunders) to Secretary of State Vance¹

Washington, April 19, 1979

SUBJECT

Proposed SCC Meeting on Middle East Security

The attached NSC memorandum proposes a schedule of meetings beginning May 1 to deal with Middle East security policy.² Specifically,

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Official Working Papers of S/P Director Anthony Lake, 1977–January 1981, Lot 82D298, Box 5, S/P Lake Papers—4/16–30/79. Secret. Sent through Newsom. Drafted by O'Donohue and Kreisberg on April 17. O'Donohue initialed for Gelb. Tarnoff also initialed the memorandum. In the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum, an unknown hand wrote: "Paul said PM will do—he has spoken with Dan *already*. 4/20."

² Attached but not printed is an April 13 memorandum from Brzezinski to Vance, Brown, Schlesinger, Jones, and Turner, with an attached undated paper entitled "Framework for U.S. Security Policy in the Middle East," prepared in anticipation of a scheduled May 1 organizing meeting of the Special Coordination Committee.

the NSC proposes an initial SCC meeting to review security, diplomatic and arms control issues in the area, to be followed by three PRC meetings chaired by State and Defense. The NSC memorandum also includes a paper for discussion prepared by the NSC staff dealing with the framework for US security policy in the Middle East. (This paper was not coordinated with either State or Defense and we would not like to have it accepted as the basis for subsequent policy discussions since it inadequately represents the range of problems and options.)

In our view we do not need an introductory SCC meeting and are dubious about the utility of three subsequent PRC meetings as defined by the NSC. Rather we recommend going back to the NSC, indicating that we see no need for an initial SCC meeting, proposing instead one or two PRC meetings dealing with the following issues:

a) in the context of our basic interests and objectives and given Middle East realities, what further feasible steps might we take to strengthen our bilateral and regional security relationships in the area, and, specifically

b) are new or different force deployments and other military responses needed or feasible given our overall force requirements?

Since your previous discussions on this were at the VBB luncheons,³ we believe that would be the best forum for conveying to Zbig and Harold our proposed approach to a review of our Middle East security relationships and force deployment options. If you do not want to take it up directly with Zbig and Harold, or if there is no VBB luncheon in the offing, we could convey your views directly back to the NSC staff.

Recommendation:

a. That you inform Zbig or Harold directly of our preference for the less cumbersome approach outlined above to the Middle East security policy review, eliminating the need for an SCC meeting;⁴

OR, b. that you authorize us to convey your views to the NSC staff and Harold's office.⁵

³ Reference is to the Vance-Brown-Brzezinski luncheons.

⁴ This recommendation was disapproved on April 19.

⁵ This recommendation was approved on April 19. In an April 20 letter to Dodson, Wisner stated: "we recommend proceeding directly to one or two PRC meetings on Middle East security, the chairmanship of which could be shared by State and by Defense." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P790064-1994)

22. Memorandum From Gary Sick, William Quandt, and Fritz Ermarth of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, May 9, 1979

SUBJECT

SCC on Middle East Security (C)

This is a particularly difficult moment to hold a discussion on developing a “consultative security framework”. With two potential partners to that framework, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, the trend of our relations is in the opposite direction. State and CIA, both of which are skeptical of this exercise in any case, may be especially reticent because of the current situation. (C)

The success of this meeting will depend in large measure on your setting the stage in your opening remarks. Without being too abstract or theoretical, you may want to spell out your thoughts that led to the suggestion that this meeting be held. The change of regime in Iran, the peace treaty, current problems in our relations with Jordan and Saudi Arabia, the Yemen crisis, and our continuing dependence on expensive Persian Gulf oil are all adequate reasons for taking a fresh look at security problems in the area. You could add that we are emerging from the post-Vietnam pattern of looking primarily to regional influentials to protect our interests. (C)

You will want to encourage each of the principals at the meeting to react to your initial comments and to the paper (Tab A).² To add concreteness to the discussion, we suggest that you raise the current problems we are having with Saudi Arabia. On the one hand, we want to press the Saudis hard to live up to their commitments. At the same

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 5, Middle East Security Planning: 5–6/19/79. Secret. Sent for information. A stamped notation on the memorandum reads: “ZB has seen.”

² Attached but not printed is the undated paper entitled “Framework for U.S. Security Policy in the Middle East,” which Brzezinski sent to Vance, Brown, Schlesinger, Jones, and Turner under an April 13 memorandum; see footnote 2, Document 21. In the April 13 memorandum, Brzezinski suggested that the first meeting should concentrate on “the sources of insecurity and instability in the Middle East. How are these likely to manifest themselves in the near future?”

“What is the net effect of the change in Iran and the conclusion of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel on our security interests in the area?”

“What are the constraints on enhancing our security presence in the area?”

“To what extent can we strengthen consultative security relations among the nations of the Middle East? Who are the prime candidates for such arrangements?”

time, we must be aware that interjecting ourselves publicly into an inter-Arab quarrel has its disadvantages. Egypt and Saudi Arabia may decide at some point—as they often have in the past—to stop feuding and resume normal relations. However, US Congressional and public attitudes may not be so easily reversed if we have adopted a tough public posture critical of the Saudis. (S)

A second concrete issue for discussion is our military presence in the region. Defense has done some work on this. State is not enthusiastic. Schlesinger will probably support Brown's approach. (C)

To conclude the meeting, you should summarize the main points of the discussion and recommend that State and Defense take the lead in chairing follow-on PRCs dealing with the diplomatic and military discussions of our security presence in the Middle East. (C)

If you have time on Thursday or on Friday morning, we would like to meet with you.³ (U)

³ Sick, Quandt, and Ermarth met with Brzezinski on the morning of Thursday, May 10. The conversation generated a number of talking points for the upcoming SCC meeting. In a May 11 memorandum, Sick, Quandt, and Ermarth provided Brzezinski with the talking points. (Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 30, [Meetings—SCC 164: 5/11/79])

23. Minutes of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, May 11, 1979, 3:30–4:20 p.m.

SUBJECT

Middle East Security Issues

PARTICIPANTS

State

Secretary Cyrus Vance
Harold Saunders, Assistant
Secretary, Bureau of Near
Eastern and South Asian Affairs

OSD

Secretary Harold Brown
David McGiffert, Assistant Secretary,
International Security Affairs

JCS

General David Jones
Lt. General William Smith

Energy

Secretary James Schlesinger
Harry Bergold, Assistant Secretary,
International Affairs

DCI

Frank Carlucci, Deputy Director
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asia

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

William Quandt
Fritz Ermarth
Sam Hoskinson

ACDA

Spurgeon Keeny, Deputy Director
Alan Platt, Acting Assistant Director,
Weapons Evaluation and Control

MINUTES OF MEETING

Dr. Brzezinski This should be a short meeting, primarily for planning and organization of further efforts to work on the problem of Middle East security. We need to focus on how to proceed with the broader problem of protecting our interests in the Middle East. We also have the more immediate problem of how to deal with the Saudi decision on the F-5s and the growing polarization in the Arab world resulting from the Egyptian-Israeli treaty. Specifically, the President has signed a letter to King Khalid which we want to look at. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 5, Middle East Security Planning: 5–6/19/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The Summary of Conclusions of this meeting is printed as Document 192.

I'd like to go back to the President's instructions to Secretary Brown last February.² In his letter of instructions he called for a comprehensive effort to develop an integrated strategy for regional security, with the United States making an important military and political contribution. There are several elements to this strategy. One was the continued American commitment to work for an Egyptian-Israeli peace. Harold Brown was also to discuss new forms of collaboration on security—intelligence sharing, contingency planning, and possibly an increased US military presence in the area. We were also supposed to consider ways of countering radical influences in the area. After Secretary Brown returned, we hoped to amplify on what he had accomplished, but events have inhibited further developments along these lines. There have been some consultations, but we have had primarily political problems in carrying out our strategy. (S)

Secretary Vance I talked to Sharaf (Jordanian Royal Court advisor). The Jordanians are already doing joint planning with the Saudis. (S)

Secretary Brown The Jordanians want us to consider ways of providing airlift support to them. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski I propose that we deal first with the F-5 problem. Then we should discuss the broader issues, such as the threats to our interests in the region, and our constraints on responding. We can also discuss the nature of our military presence in the area. I would like to use this discussion to set up a program for further meetings. Defense has been doing some planning, and we need to provide that with some political framework. I would suggest that Defense hold a PRC meeting, and that the State also chair one. We should work out the agendas. (S)

On our letter to King Khalid, we have received word that the Saudis may renege on their commitment to finance the F-5s for Egypt. Foreign Minister Saud has told us this. We have recommended to the President that he write to King Khalid. There are some signs that the King has not made his final decision. I understand that there are some reservations about this letter. (S)

Secretary Vance When I first heard about this, I sent a cable to Saud in Morocco and urged him not to take any further action in public.³ He hasn't yet responded. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Let me read the letter. (He reads the text of the signed letter from President Carter to King Khalid.) The question you should consider is to send this or not. Let's not try to edit the letter.⁴ (S)

² See Document 19.

³ Telegram 116140 to Rabat, May 8. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840133-1743)

⁴ The letter was transmitted to the Embassy in Jidda on May 11; see footnote 4, Document 192.

Secretary Vance Sadat made another blast at the Saudis today, and he included lots of other countries as well. (C)

Mr. Saunders At the mini-SCC meeting this morning⁵ there was concern expressed that we get a reply from Saud first. If we write directly to Khalid, this ensures that we will get a negative reply. Khalid is probably the most anti-Egyptian of all the top Saudi leaders. Sultan and Fahd may be more willing to reconsider and it may be better to go to Sultan to discuss the F-5 problem, and just to raise the broader issues with Khalid. These two approaches could go in parallel. We already have a letter from Sultan to General Graves which arrived on April 27. It discusses the terms of financing the sale. (S)

Secretary Brown We could pursue the issue as a financial matter. Sultan might still say no. (S)

Mr. Saunders We could acknowledge that the deal may be off, and express our regret, but then go on to discuss the arrangements. (S)

Secretary Vance There is a danger that unless we respond quickly, Saud may make some public statement in Morocco. The President got a personal assurance from King Khalid on this. This is a matter of a personal commitment.⁶ (S)

Dr. Brzezinski I agree with Secretary Vance. This will probably leak, and we will be asked what we are doing. There is a danger of a Congressional reaction that could threaten the F-15 program for Saudi Arabia. Kuwait has already threatened to remove its deposits. (S)

Mr. Quandt If possible, we should try to await the Saudi response to our original demarche. If Saud says that the issue is still open, then the letter to Khalid would be unnecessary. If Saud is negative, then the letter should be sent. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski That raises the danger of getting two nos from Saud and then going over his head. (S)

Mr. McGiffert We have a real problem of financing. Egypt may turn down the package in any case, and then we would be making a major issue over nothing at all. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski It would be better if Egypt were to cancel the project, but not in reaction to the Saudi decision. (S)

Mr. McGiffert We need to go to the Egyptians quickly to find out their reaction. (S)

⁵ The Summary of Conclusions of this meeting is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 253.

⁶ See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 248.

Secretary Vance I hate to think of a Congressional reaction if this falls apart. (S)

Secretary Brown It will be worse if the Egyptians cancel, because then Congress will be mad at both the Egyptians and the Saudis. (S)

Secretary Schlesinger I am impressed by what Cy has said. We need to remind the Saudis of their commitment. I am normally reluctant to appeal a decision if we are likely to get a no. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski We could use the upcoming meeting between King Hussein⁷ and King Khalid in Morocco. But there is already risk that the news will leak before that. We could combine this letter to Khalid with a letter from Secretary Brown to Sultan which starts with the assumption that the deal is still on track. (S)

Secretary Vance They will have to conclude that we take this very seriously if we proceed along that course. (S)

Mr. Saunders It sounds a little too much as if we cared only about Saudi money for Egypt. We should express ourselves more clearly on our concern over the split between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski We could put some of that into the Brown letter. (S)

Secretary Vance I already said some of that to Saud. (S)

Secretary Brown Sultan has the biggest stake in all of this and he may be helpful. We can strike a more conciliatory tone with him. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski It is a political fact that a strong Congressional reaction will hurt the F-15 deal. (S)

Secretary Brown I told them that public support was essential if we were to maintain our relationship. (C)

Secretary Vance I think we should go ahead with the letter, and I agree that Secretary Brown should write to Sultan as well. (S)

Secretary Brown That will mean that we have made three demarches to our counterparts. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski We should do this because it is an important matter on which to draw the line. Let's go ahead with the letters to Khalid and to Sultan.⁸ (S)

On the larger issues, we should discuss the main threats to the security of the region, some of the recent trends, the political constraints on us, and the nature of our military presence in the area. (S)

Secretary Vance I think it is clear that the basic sources of instability are the Arab-Israeli conflict, plus inter-Arab tensions. There is also the

⁷ An unknown hand circled the name "Hussein," drew a line from the circled name to the space between the paragraphs, and wrote "Hassan."

⁸ Reference is to a letter to Sultan from Brown; see footnote 4, Document 192.

Palestinian problem, and the basic disparity of wealth in the region. This provides potential for others to exploit the situation. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Do you think the Saudis see the threat this way? (S)

Secretary Vance They see it, but they don't agree with us on how to handle it. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski I think the Saudis see the external threat as greater than the internal one, and Israel is not their main concern. (S)

Secretary Brown But they saw the situation in Iran where the regime fell for internal reasons, not external ones. The internal situation in Saudi Arabia is closely connected to developments between Arabs and Israelis. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski The Saudis seem more confident that they can handle problems inside their country. The threat comes from outside. (S)

Secretary Vance There is some posturing in all of this. I think they are really less confident than they appear to be, particularly at the level of technicians. (S)

Mr. Carlucci We don't see the social ferment within Saudi Arabia as a current problem. There is relative stability. There is some problem of subversion, particularly with 130,000 Palestinians in the country. We don't know too much about the military. (S)

Secretary Vance I'm not sure that the Saudis are so confident that they can manage their external problems and their internal ones both. (S)

Secretary Brown But the external concern stems not from the Soviet threat, but from other Arabs. (S)

Secretary Schlesinger I agree with Zbig. They're afraid of external pressures, and they have lost confidence in the United States. We couldn't do everything that they wanted us to do. The effect has been that the Saudis are turning elsewhere for protection, including the Soviet Union and the radical Arabs. There is the increasingly important role of Iraq. The Saudis won't turn around on this until they see a US military presence in the area to deter these threats. (S)

Mr. Carlucci There is the question on whether they want a physical military presence. (S)

Secretary Schlesinger They want it, but not in Saudi Arabia. (S)

Secretary Brown They feel that the domestic irritant that would come from a military presence in that country outweighs the security game. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski What about a naval presence as a possibility? (S)

Secretary Brown Whenever the Saudis have wanted our help they haven't asked for carriers. They have asked for F-15s and AWACS. The naval presence is not what they think of first. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski I disagree. They didn't specifically ask for AWACS or for carriers. But they were impressed by both when we offered them. The naval presence did impress them during the Yemen crisis, and it impressed others.⁹ (S)

Secretary Brown I'm not decrying the value of a naval presence, but it is not a substitute for other things. (S)

Secretary Schlesinger But we have to develop this capability. A local display of American power is necessary. They feel it in their bones. They can't articulate what they want, but they have to see that we have the capacity to protect them. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Defense has already had some consultations with the Saudis. What is the status of work on military presence? (S)

Secretary Brown We have a long list of alternatives. We could strengthen the Mid East force which now consists of three ships. We could have more frequent visits of the carrier task forces to the area, or we could have the non-carrier components of a task force remain in the Arabian sea. The other sea-based presence would involve a helicopter carrier and marines. In each case, this would require some draw-down of our forces committed to Europe or Japan. (S)

We could also ask the Saudis and Egyptians about preparing bases in their countries for uses in certain contingencies. This would involve some pre-positioning of equipment. Sadat does not want any American bases in his country, but in an emergency, we might be able to move in. So we have something of an opening to work with. (S)

Secretary Vance Sadat would not let us have bases, but he would allow us to fix up facilities there, if we would pay for it. He has talked about Berenice on the Red Sea. (S)

Secretary Brown We'll make recommendations at the meeting of the PRC.¹⁰ We are now having consultations with the Saudis. General Lawrence is there now.¹¹ We've seen some of their contingency plans, and there is still a lot of work to be done. The United States and Egypt have also talked about joint strategies, and we have discussed some contingencies. They have implied that they would allow us to bring things in quickly in some contingencies. The Jordanians have also asked for airlift support for their contingency operations in Saudi Arabia. All these discussions have been on a conceptual level. With the Jordanians, the joint committee has evolved toward a planning exercise. So there has been some movement since my visit in February. (S)

⁹ See Document 271.

¹⁰ See Document 26.

¹¹ See Document 284.

Dr. Brzezinski Have Oman and the UAE been discussed? (S)

Secretary Brown Oman has been discussed with the Saudis. We've also had some air exercises with the Omanis. (S)

Secretary Vance We need to get CIA to evaluate the reaction of the Saudis and others to a permanent US military presence in the area. We need to have them look at different kinds of forces, not just a naval presence. This should be done for the PRC. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Let's look at bases, port calls, airfields, staging arrangements, task force presence, with and without embarked marines. (S)

Secretary Brown We need to look at not only the Saudi response, but also possible Soviet counter reactions. (S)

General Jones The JCS has developed lots of options. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski The first PRC should be chaired by State. CIA should prepare a report for that meeting, and State should work on the broader strategy. We need to assess the effect of our plans on our relations with the countries of the area. We need a political strategy for carrying this out. (S)

Secretary Brown We all see Iraq as a local power with more importance now that Iran has fallen. We need to review our relations with Iraq. (S)

Secretary Vance We've been trying. I've gotten some reports on Iraq. They are changing their positions, but they are cautious with us. (S)

Secretary Brown We don't need to discuss so much the modalities of our relations with Iraq, but where we want things to come out. (S)

Secretary Vance I would like to see us resume normal diplomatic relations if possible. (C)

Secretary Brown But what do we want the power relationship, and the political relationship, to be between Saudi Arabia and Iraq in a couple of years? The Saudis see that Iraq might move in a more moderate direction. (S)

Mr. Carlucci There is also a possible threat to the Saudis from Iran. (S)

Secretary Vance We also need to look at the consequences of Iraqi-Syrian affiliation. The Jordanians see some movement in that direction. (S)

Mr. Carlucci They're doing some joint military planning. (S)

Secretary Vance Sharaf tells me that the Iraqi-Syrian arrangements are going quite far. (S)

Mr. Carlucci CIA will do an update on this. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski The agenda for the PRC meeting under State's chairmanship should include the following items: an intelligence assessment

of the reactions to different kinds of American military presence in the area. This should focus on the regional parties as well as the Soviets. They should look at Iraq's role, to see if there is some openings in our relations, and we should also look at the Iraqi-Syrian relationship. We should review the recent PRC on Saudi Arabia to see if this decision still stands.¹² Finally, we should outline a political strategy to enhance our security consultations with the countries of the area. (S)

Secretary Vance Let's define the region. We've been talking about the Gulf. But should we include Iran and Turkey? If we are concerned with broad regional problems, Turkey and Iran should be included. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski I think we should focus on the Gulf and Iran. (S)

Secretary Brown From a military point of view, the Gulf and Turkey are not much related. (S)

Secretary Vance Let's define the area as the Gulf, including Iran and Egypt, but not Turkey. Sudan may be part of Egypt's security problem also. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Mostly we should look at the Arabian peninsula and Iran. (S)

Secretary Vance What about Ethiopia and Somalia? (C)

Secretary Brown They are also important. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski We should look at our policy towards Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Jordan, and see some of the others as possible problems in the area. (S)

Secretary Vance I would like to wait until after I return on June 3¹³ to have these PRC meetings. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Over the longer term, what we are talking about is an increasing American role in the area which recognizes it as vital to our national interests. (S)

Secretary Brown We've been acting as if we don't need a big presence in the area. First the British were there, and then the Iranians seemed strong. Now both are gone. So we may need to review our assumptions. (S)

Secretary Vance I'm not sure yet. (C)

Secretary Brown But we need to look at the problem. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski We're already beginning to see the Gulf as a vital region. (C)

Secretary Vance Let's have the meetings in the week of June 3. (S)

¹² See Document 190.

¹³ Reference is to Vance's upcoming travel to the United Kingdom, Egypt, Israel, Italy, the Vatican, the Netherlands, and Spain May 20-June 2.

Dr. Brzezinski I think we should have two in a row that week. (S)

Secretary Vance We also need to talk about how to stop Sadat from sounding off against the other Arabs. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski Maybe the President should call him. (C)

Secretary Vance Let me think about that. I'll talk to you this afternoon. (C)

24. Memorandum From Gary Sick and Fritz Ermarth of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, June 19, 1979

SUBJECT

PRCs on Middle East/Persian Gulf (U)

On 20² and 21³ June the PRC will meet under Vance's and Brown's chairmanship, respectively, to discuss foreign policy and military strategy for security in the Middle East/Persian Gulf area. These meetings follow the SCC of 11 May (Summary of Conclusions and Minutes at Tab A).⁴ (S)

These meetings should revolve around three papers tasked to State (Tab B),⁵ DOD (Tab C),⁶ and the DCI (Tab D).⁷ Nevertheless you can expect Cy and Harold to deliver their personal perspective as they conduct the meetings. The State paper is inconclusive and provides little basis for decision. The DOD paper describes various dimensions

¹ Source: Carter Library, Donated Historical Material, Papers of Walter F. Mondale, Policy Review Committee (PRC)/Special Coordinating Committee (SCC) Meeting, Box 98, PRC Meeting on Persian Gulf/Middle East Security Issues, 6/21/1979. Secret. Sent for information.

² An unknown hand crossed out "20" and wrote "21" above it.

³ An unknown hand crossed out "21" and wrote "22" above it.

⁴ See Documents 23 and 192.

⁵ Not attached and not printed. This paper was passed to the pertinent Department heads on June 15. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 5, Middle East Security Planning: 5–6/19/79)

⁶ Not attached and not printed. This paper was passed to the pertinent Department heads on June 13. (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–82–0205, Box 15, Middle East (17 May–13 June) 1979)

⁷ Not attached and not found.

of relevant US military capabilities and compares several options for increasing US military presence. Harold is reported by his staff to be readying a recommendation for increased US presence which he will deliver at the meeting. (S)

Underlying the DOD effort is a sense of acute anxiety based on a perception of vulnerability: US interests in the area are extremely vital; the potential threats to them are immediate and powerful; US capabilities in the area, under stress, are very weak. This sense of anxiety and vulnerability is not present in State's contribution. (S)

Main Issues

1. A Political Strategy for the Region

State's paper is aimed at discounting the need for increases in US permanent military presence. While surveying regional politics, it fails to address the fundamentals of diplomatic strategy and political priority, which was one of the PRC's intended purposes. State argues that the quest for a just and comprehensive peace must continue to have the highest priority in US regional policy. Other policy issues are neglected, e.g., how far should we go to respond to Egypt's evident desire for a tight US-Egyptian security tie? What emphasis should we give to Syria and Iraq in combating the post-peace backlash? How do we get on with the Saudis? (S)

2. The Need for Increased Military Presence

This is the key issue in both meetings and all three papers. All parties reflect awareness of great political pressure for increased US deployments, and seem to agree that a modest increase is advisable. State and CIA clearly go to great lengths, however, to stress the penalties of adverse local reaction and the case for great moderation. State prefers to rely on a capacity to surge forces into the area in time of crisis. (S)

Part of the problem is that the "we want you to be strong but not here" syndrome so evident in the area is easy to cite against any change in US deployment patterns. Nationalist objections to US power are more easily documented than fears about its erosion! Therefore, the potential benefits from increased presence in terms of respect, confidence, and self-confidence are not easily measured. (S)

There is a "catch 22" danger in attempting to assess the advisability of increased US presence in terms of local attitudes. Radical nationalists will never favor it. Our friends fear that US presence will provoke trouble for them from which we will retreat, leaving them in the lurch. Inadequately examined is the likelihood that demonstrated US commitment will breed confidence in and tolerance of US power, or that, ultimately, capacity to defend our interests rather than local good will might be the best test of our policy. (S)

The DOD paper cites several military benefits from increased presence: Deterrence and quick reaction, ability to cover intervention forces, and acquiring local operating experience. All three factors argue against regarding surge-intervention forces as a total substitute for local combat presence. (S)

3. Military Presence Options

The DOD paper develops three options for configuring US military presence in the near term:

- 1) the status quo (prior to the surge of Spring this year);
- 2) a moderate increase through adding several permanent combatants to MIDEAST Force and upgrading rotational deployments; and
- 3) near-continuous presence without increased carrier deployments (to avoid dramatic reduction of commitments elsewhere).

A fourth, long-term option would keep a carrier capability in the area at all times. It would require reduced commitments elsewhere, raised force levels, or home porting US forces in the area. Table 1 presents options. (S)

As a practical matter, any near-term US force increase must be in the neighborhood of Option 2, which raises the average level and quality of US forces in the area. Even the near-continuous deployment called for in Option 3 would significantly strain our resources and would draw down capabilities in the Pacific and/or Mediterranean. The Marine Air-Ground Task Force called for in Options 2 and 3 has not been adequately defined and needs further staffing in terms of its effect on available resources. Note that the generalized option put forward by State (p. 14 of Tab A)⁸ is generally consistent with DOD's Option 2. (S)

DOD elements are reportedly agreed to advise that Harold recommend an increased US presence. A "majority" (JCS, PA&E, OSD/Policy) stand behind four major naval deployments a year (where "major" is defined as a carrier group, a marine unit, or a surface combat group plus tacair). ISA reportedly wants something more modest. (S)

4. Other Aspects of US Military Capability

Both State and DOD see great importance to US military activity other than combatant presence in promoting US interests. These other measures are of two types: arms transfers, training, and joint planning aid *local self-defense* capability. Prepositioning, basing, staging, overflight, etc., enhance the capability for *US intervention*. (S)

⁸ An unknown hand crossed out the letter "A" and wrote the letter "B" underneath it.

Despite the Iranian experience, US policy is still to promote capabilities for effective local self-defense. Most analyses indicate that a major threat in the area, e.g., Iraq attacks Saudi Arabia, or Soviet intervention, would require the introduction of US forces from outside the theater. US *military presence* is, therefore, a link—both for deterrence and escalation management—between local self-defense and introduction of US forces from outside the area. US forces on the scene, moreover, can cover the introduction of forces from without. (S)

Policy options relating to US military assistance and intervention are not systematically addressed in the DOD paper. But fundamental questions do arise for the PRC:

—How do we shape arms transfers to the area into a coherent policy?

—What bases and local infrastructure do we need for a meaningful intervention capability? How do we get them?

—Have we the sea and air lift and forces needed to meet local threats without jeopardizing NATO commitments?

These are questions of defense policy, posture, and budgets. Because of the strategic priority we assign to this region, near-term increases in US military presence will not allow us to avoid addressing them.

5. *Indian Ocean Talks*

Our Summit commitment “promptly” to explore resumption of the Indian Ocean talks is not inconsistent with a decision to support some version of Option 2. That option would change the *quality* of the US presence in the area to permit greater capability to conduct operations ashore. However, it would not greatly change the number of deployments to the region. Any change in our posture will, of course, be protested by the Soviets as inconsistent with the levels discussed with them in the earlier rounds of talks.⁹ Our initial discussion with the Soviets on this issue should start with the assertion that the situation in the region has changed, to a considerable degree as a result of Soviet behavior, and that future talks will have to take into account those changed circumstances. (S)

⁹ U.S.-Soviet talks on demilitarization of the Indian Ocean began in June 1977, but broke down in February 1978 after the Soviet intervention in the Horn of Africa. See Document 123.

	NEAR-TERM OPTIONS			LONG-TERM OPTION	
	OPTION 1 <i>Maintain Previous Permanent Presence/Deployment Pattern</i>	OPTION 2 <i>Moderate Increase in Presence</i>	OPTION 3 <i>Near Continuous US Presence without More Carrier Deployments</i>	OPTION 4 <i>Continuous Major Presence</i>	
Force Elements in Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf area	1. MIDEAST Force (3 surface ships) 2. 3–6 ASW patrol a/c flying from Diego Garcia. 3. 3 task group deployments each year (alternating CVBG/SCTG)	Option 1 force elements plus some combination of: 1. 2–3 more surface ships 2. Alternate CVBG/vice SCTG. 3. Deploy periodically land-based TACAIR, AWACs, etc.	Option 1 force elements plus: 1. 5–6 CVBG/MAGTF deployments each year (220–300 days/yr.) 2. land-based TACAIR deployed on <i>routine</i> basis.	Option 1 force elements plus: 1. Continuous IO/PG deployment of a CVBG or MAGTF (300–360 days/yr.) 2. Land-based TACAIR routinely deployed.	
Quick Reaction Capability to Minor Contingencies Ashore	Extremely limited, except when CVBG is present. No ground force capability.	Adequate if CVBG/MAGTF are deployed, otherwise only show of force.	Adequate when CVBG/MAGTF deployed.	Adequate	
Support for Large Force in Moderate Contingency Ashore	Same	Same	Same	Adequate	
Capability in Serious Crisis (Iran vs. Iraq, Iraq-Kuwait, etc.)	Same	Very limited. Initial air strikes and retire from battle area.	Limited. With land-based MAGTF capable of <i>short</i> duration, <i>small</i> scale actions ashore.	Limited. MAGTF would require TACAIR support to sustain ground action beyond a few hours/days.	

FORCE UNIT DEFINITIONS

Surface Combatant Task Group (SCTG)—

Approximately 3 to 5 surface warships, at least one being a cruiser, the remainder being a mix of guided missile destroyers (DDG) and frigates (FFG).

Carrier Battle Group (CVBG)—

This is a grouping of approximately 10 ships including: a carrier (conventional or nuclear); 7 surface combatants (one cruiser, 5–6 guided missile destroyers and frigates); and two replenishment ships. Occasionally a nuclear attack submarine might be assigned in direct support of the battle group.

Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF)—

Not precisely defined. The term is loosely used to refer *at a minimum* to a Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) with transport helicopters (Defense calls the helicopters “organic air”). A MAU will have approximately 1800 combat Marines with 400 support troops transported in 4–5 amphibious ships. TACAIR is not ordinarily included as part of a MAU, but Defense has been giving serious thought to having 6–12 V/STOL Marine “jump jets” in any Indian Ocean MAGTF. Protection for the MAGTF’s ships would have to be provided by the destroyers of the MIDEAST FORCE.

Outcomes, Your Objectives

Although you do not have control of these meetings, you should have some chance to steer them toward several salient conclusions: If we could get the following into the record, the process could be counted a sterling success:

1. We recognize that the Persian Gulf region has become a region ranking barely behind Northeast Asia and Europe in strategic importance. A serious military threat to this region could easily coincide with severe tension in Europe. Our overall defense planning, budgets, and arms transfer policies must adjust more realistically to these propositions. (S)

2. We are agreed that US military presence in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf area should be increased on the order of DOD's Option 2 and the option outlined by State. We can remain flexible on the details so long as the principle is clearly established. (S)

3. We need a more coherent statement as to how we are planning to balance the competing priorities to our Middle East diplomacy: The peace process, amity with the moderates, new openings to some of the radicals, growing security collaboration with Egypt, and our traditional ties with Israel. (S)

If consensus appears within grasp, then it might be appropriate to propose that the NSC draft for circulation a Presidential Directive covering these points. Admittedly hard policy on all three points will require more work. But devoting that work to a PD would be more fruitful than more PRCs or a formal PRM. (S)

25. **Memorandum From Fritz Ermarth of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)**¹

Washington, June 20, 1979

SUBJECT

Further Points on Middle East PRCs (U)

1. These meetings could be among the most significant of this Administration because they could start the building of long-term strength in a region of the utmost importance to us but, simultaneously, the greatest vulnerability. One has the sense we are now getting down to hard military business. Should a *consensus* on increased US military presence be reached, it *should be recorded in some authoritative way*, e.g., a PD, that the system can act on and that will prevent backsliding. At the same time, we want to avoid highly publicized drama around actions that are necessarily modest and incremental. A carefully crafted PD—directing and characterizing increased deployments, laying down the line on the Indian Ocean Talks, directing further study of longer-term policy and force posture issues—could strike the right tone inside the bureaucracy and outside if it leaks. (S)

2. The immediate objective in making a decision on peacetime military presence in the region is to increase substantially the amount of time we have *deployments capable of projecting power ashore*. The critical difference is not really between options 2 and 3, as presented by DOD, but between carrier groups, marine groups, tactical air, on one hand, and surface combatant groups, on the other. The latter can steam around and look pretty; they cannot project power ashore. (S)

3. This decision must be a *step toward the creation of a US military posture* in and toward the region that is *commensurate with our interests*. This will mean yet more study and politicking over issues of force design, ship-building programs and naval policy, lift capabilities, basing, and budgets. As these matters move ahead, we shall be confronting issues such as these:

—Should we create a military command to coordinate activities in the area and speak for its strategic perspective?

—Should we beef up Diego Garcia?

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 25, Meetings—PRC 112: 6/21/79. Secret. Sent for information.

—Should we begin to plan and negotiate for homeporting in Australia, which is far from the important littorals, but a lot closer than San Diego?

—Should we increase land-based tactical deployments in the Western Pacific, i.e., in Japan or Korea, so as to free carrier air for the Indian Ocean?

—Should we review policy on carriers? (S)

These issues should probably not be broached immediately unless raised by others because they will only frighten the faint hearted. They will be faced soon enough. (S)

26. Minutes of Policy Review Committee Meetings¹

Washington, June 21, 1979, 1:30–2:30 p.m. and
June 22, 1979, 9:15–10 a.m.

SUBJECT

Middle East Security and US Military Presence (S)

PARTICIPANTS

State
Secretary Cyrus Vance**
Warren Christopher (chaired 6/21)
Deputy Secretary
David Newsom** Under Sec.,
Political Affairs
Harold Saunders Asst. Sec., Bureau
of Near East. & So. Asian Affairs
OSD
Secretary Harold Brown (chaired
6/22)
Charles Duncan* Deputy Secretary
David McGiffert, Asst. Sec., Intl.
Security Affairs
Dan J. Murphy** Dep. Und. Sec. for
Policy Rev.

Special Trade Representative
Robert Strauss
Ralph Gerson, Special Asst., Office of
STR**
ACDA
Spurgeon Keeny, Dep. Director
Barry Blechman, Asst. Dir., Weapons
Evaluation & Control
Energy
Secretary James Schlesinger
Harry Bergold, Asst. Sec.,
International Affairs
White House
Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

¹ Source: Carter Library, RAC SAFE39C-17-55-4-7, C03341983. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

JCS

Lt Gen William Y. Smith Asst. to the
Chairman

Lt Gen John Pustay Asst. to the
Chairman

DCI

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asia

NSC

Fritz Ermarth**

Robert Hunter*

Gary Sick

* Attended only 21 June

** Attended only 22 June

MINUTES OF MEETING

(21 June 1979—Deputy Secretary Christopher, Chair)

Mr. Christopher opened the meeting by referring to the discussion paper that State had prepared for the meeting² and asked if there were any comments on the agenda.

Secretary Brown said there was a question of a division of labor between the two meetings. He suggested that the PRC examine the specific force levels on the following day, whereas today's meeting would take a look at attitudes of various states and the role of military presence in U.S. Middle East relations.

Dr. Brzezinski wondered if it not might be just as well to cancel the meeting for this day and have a joint meeting tomorrow in view of the fact that Secretary Vance could not be present.

Secretary Brown said that we need to discuss how the security issue fits into the political situation.

Dr. Brzezinski said all right; there would be no decisions taken until the following day. He noted that he had to see the President before 2 o'clock.

Mr. Christopher summarized some of the points in the paper by noticing that the vehemence of the reaction to the Camp David accords had been greater than he had anticipated. It had now abated somewhat but not a great deal. Saudi Arabia may possibly try to find ways around their Baghdad commitments;³ however, that might be harder to do than had been anticipated. Saudi Arabia and Iraq were closer together than before. We need to try and improve our relations with Iran and

² See footnote 5, Document 24.

³ Reference is to the summit of Foreign Ministers from 18 Arab states and the PLO which was convened in Baghdad March 27–31, in order to sanction Egypt for concluding its peace treaty with Israel. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 242.

improve our dialogue with Iraq. Only some momentum in the peace process will be able to lure people back into the process.

Mr. Saunders noted that the post-Baghdad grouping was not a natural grouping. The natural allegiances are working in our favor. He noted that our present cooperation with Saudi Arabia is as close on issues of security and the practical aspects of our relationship as it has been for some time. It is not unreal to expect over time a loosening of the Baghdad grouping and the reemergence of a relationship between Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other natural allies.

Ambassador Strauss noted that the paper prepared by State has been extremely helpful to him.⁴

Mr. Saunders noted that within the bureaucracy there was no great difference with regard to the relations among the various nations and what we hope to see emerge. On the subject of Iraq he noted that the Egypt/Israel treaty gave Iraq the chance to get together with other nations in the area and had reduced its isolation.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that the paper prepared by State was all right on an analytical basis, however, he wondered what recommendations it provided.

Mr. Saunders said that it was not a paper of advocacy rather it was only for discussion.

Dr. Brzezinski said we have to ask ourselves what is the nature of the internal and the external security problem and what should we do about both. Everyone says that Saudi Arabia has lost confidence in United States; they see the growth of Soviet power. This is true not only of Saudi Arabia, it is also true of Oman. Mubarak had noted the same thing with regard to Egypt's military situation. We have a potentially explosive and disintegrating situation. If Bob Strauss can succeed, we can persuade others to join in the process. The question now is what to do about the sense of anxiety which exists in the region.

Secretary Brown noted that the Arabs are aware that there is no other power besides the United States which can offset the Soviets.

Dr. Brzezinski said there are certain implications in the State Department paper with which he probably could not agree. Specifically, he pointed to the end of page 8 which notes that an increased U.S. presence would be seen by Moscow not as recouping a loss but as creating a new and different imbalance which may in turn require redress. He noted that although he could not argue with the way in which this was worded, nevertheless, it could be taken to imply that our policy

⁴ President Carter nominated Robert Strauss as his Personal Representative to the Middle East peace negotiations on April 24.

could do little or nothing about the security situation with regard to the Soviets.

Secretary Brown said you could take that implication even further and suggest that we accept the fact that the Soviets are going to be dominant in the region.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that the President at Vienna had spelled out in some detail the vital interests of the United States to President Brezhnev.⁵ He specifically mentioned the Middle East as an area of vital interest to us. Brezhnev replied that it was the U.S. habit to single out certain areas as vital in their importance to us in order to justify doing what we wanted to do. However, it is clear that the Middle East is in fact vital to the United States and it is not vital to the Soviet Union.

Secretary Schlesinger said he wanted to address the longer term aspects. Without Middle Eastern oil the Free World as we know it is through. Our great value to the Middle East states is the protection that we can provide against the Soviet Union. For many years there was a presumption of U.S. dominance in the region which was sufficient even without any tangible evidence of instruments of power. Lately however, after Iran and other events in the region, there is a growing perception of U.S. weakness which is compounded by the lack of visible instruments of power in comparison to the overhang of Soviet power in the region. In view of the changing psychology of the countries of the region we must preserve our security position. He feared that unless we establish something akin to a stable balance in the region that it will slip under Soviet domination. We should have no illusion about the importance of visible instruments of U.S. power to counterbalance the presence of Soviet power. Oman wants us to come into the region partly to replace the protection which they previously got from Iran. He recalled the long discussions and problems we had with respect to building a base on Diego Garcia some years ago.⁶ He has had long talks with Saudis. Just because the countries of the region don't ask us to come in does not mean that they don't want us there. He had had three or four hour conversations with Yamani and asked him what we should do with respect to the security situation in the region. Yamani had said, "Don't expect me to say that we want a U.S. military presence in the region." He then asked him about a naval presence. Yamani had replied that he would expect it to be welcome, however, he could never say that publicly. The Saudis expect that we

⁵ The summit in Vienna took place June 16–18. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Documents 199–208.

⁶ Reference is to the expansion of the U.S. Navy facility on Diego Garcia. Documentation is published in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–8, Documents on South Asia, 1973–1976.

will be able to take action unilaterally to protect them to establish a military balance in the region. The Saudis would welcome the establishment of a permanent naval presence by the United States in the region.

Amb. Strauss wondered in view of the extensive communications we have with the region that we could get nothing better than a wink across the table on an issue of this importance to us.

Dr. Brzezinski said that many in the Arab world fear that if they ask us to come in the fact would leak and their request would become known and then we wouldn't do it and they would end up with the worst of all possible worlds.

Secretary Brown said the Arabs fear the Soviet Union, but in fact an invasion by the Soviets is not the most likely scenario. In fact the intervention by the Cubans or internal subversion within some of those countries is a worse and more realistic scenario. If asked why the United States is putting military forces into the Middle East, they are likely to think of their use in terms of the internal threat to their governments which is greater. They will wonder whether we are planning to use these forces against the Soviets or against the Arabs for something like taking over the oil fields. Hence, their reluctance to say that they wanted U.S. military presence or to be openly in favor of it. Although we all talk about the Soviet menace, there is no way the United States can guarantee we will not use these forces against them.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that in order to give assurances that we will not use these forces against them but against the Soviets we must move simultaneously on the peace process. However, the United States should also give a clear statement that we regard the Middle East as the third vital region in the world along with Western Europe and Japan. He disagreed with Secretary Schlesinger that we should be seeking balance. He thought that the correct objectives would be preponderance of U.S. military capability.⁷ However, he recognized that we must proceed sequentially and that we would have to get to a permanent presence via an increased presence over what we have now.

Secretary Schlesinger noted that when we send a carrier into the region they know that this could be used against them. However, a permanent presence creates a shift in the balance in the region vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.

Secretary Brown noted that permanent in this case could mean a presence at all times but not always the same units.

Mr. Christopher asked Admiral Turner for his views on the reactions of the regional states.

⁷ An unknown hand underlined the portion of this sentence beginning with the word "would."

Admiral Turner summarized the paper very briefly which had been prepared by CIA on the subject.⁸ He noted that with regard to a military presence the Arab states "want to feel it, not touch it." Thus, the closer you get to having an actual U.S. presence in their ports, on the ground or on their air bases the less they want it.

Ambassador Strauss wondered whether it was feasible to even discuss an option 1 which would be to work out something with the Soviets on a cooperative basis.⁹

Secretary Brown noted that the Soviets have nothing to gain by cooperating with us in the region. Fighting in that region would not hurt them unless it lops over into other areas of our relationship. They have had black eyes in the area before that did not stop them from coming back and trying again and did not affect their vital interests.

Mr. Christopher said that we have no common interests with the Soviets in the region which would provide the basis for a mutual approach. He asked with regard to the internal and external threats to the Arab states how a U.S. presence would affect the development of the internal process.

Admiral Turner replied that an external naval presence would not have a heavy influence on the internal threat in Saudi Arabia for example. It would not for instance deter the PLO from meddling if they decided to do so. However, an on-shore presence such as the U.S. Air Force on Saudi air bases would have a much bigger impact on the internal situation.

Secretary Brown summarized the relationship as: the bigger the presence of the United States the greater the advantages and the disadvantages. An increased presence gives us more capability to deal with problems but it also is a bigger irritant to the regional states since they fear it would not be used against the Soviets but against them. There is no difference among the group on that fact. However, some of the CIA evaluations with regard to the reaction of regional states to a U.S. military presence is more negative than he would have made it in his own evaluation.

Secretary Schlesinger said that sequencing is extremely important. Jumping in totally with a large force would result only in bad reactions, whereas a gradual increase would build confidence as it went. Since a naval presence is the least controversial it should be the first U.S. presence to be introduced. The sensitivities are such that anything that

⁸ See footnote 7, Document 24.

⁹ Strauss is presumably referring to the options in the Defense Department paper, summarized in Document 24.

we do now will raise their concern. Later he felt that a U.S. Air Force presence in Oman might be desirable.

Secretary Brown noted that despite the talk about sensitivity to our naval presence we have just completed six months of a very high level of naval presence in the region and as far as he could tell the results were positive not negative in terms of regional reaction.

Secretary Schlesinger said that with regard to the thought that U.S. forces might be used internally in the Arab world, if that served to deter forces which are contrary to our interests that would be a good result and one to be desired.

Secretary Brown noted that our security relationship with regard to military planning and supply has moved forward rather effectively. In fact he thought it got more credit in the region than it really deserved.

Secretary Schlesinger interjected that that perhaps tells us something with regard to their expectations of our ability to perform.

Secretary Brown agreed and added that we need to be able to respond more quickly to requests preferably from an existing stockpile of military equipment. Previously we have stayed away from this issue since we cannot get Congressional approval. We will have to consider establishing something in the nature of an excess stockpile of U.S. equipment which could be used for this purpose on short notice if required.

Mr. Christopher wondered what role would be played by Israel in the event of an Arab conflict or an internal Arab dispute.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that for example in the case of a conflict between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Israel would become involved at some stage and relieve the pressure on Saudi Arabia without the existence of any formal military or political relationship. He believed that some of the Arab states might subconsciously regard this as a deterrent on the actions of their enemies but that the thought would never receive any overt expression. In short, he felt that Israel was a stabilizing factor in the region. Objectively it was there as an element in the power equation, however, it is not something that can be talked about. He noted that it is also essential that the United States beef up Egypt's military capabilities and that the Department of Defense is working on that.

Secretary Brown noted that Mr. Perry was just back from a visit to Egypt where he discovered that the Egyptians have a substantial technical capability to build their own arms, however they need capital and managerial help. From what we have been able to tell they seem to have adopted the worst of both the Soviet and U.S. systems.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that there is a developing relationship between Egypt and China on Defense. Despite Chinese disclaimers this in fact

enlists China on the side of the Camp David accords. They deny this but that's the effect that it has. He believed that all of our actions on the security side are futile unless there is parallel progress on the Camp David accords. If there is no progress on the negotiations, United States forces will acquire a negative cast. We must have progress in the negotiations sufficient to convince the friendly Arab states that the Egypt/Israel treaty was in fact a first step of a negotiating process which over time has the possibility of resolving contentious issues.

Ambassador Strauss wondered what time-frame should be applied to the need for progress.

Dr. Brzezinski said about six months. By the end of this year we should see some progress or else the Arabs will see that we are engaged in a charade.

Secretary Schlesinger said that he is not convinced of the detrimental effect of a U.S. military presence in the case of no progress on the Arab/Israel side. A presence does give the impression of power and does assist in the security of the region. Returning to the original subject he said that the Saudis are not hypocritical, rather they are divided internally and are desperately weak. They do not see their role as telling a superpower how to do its job, but they do expect and hope for security. They fear that we will not provide it in a crunch.

General Smith commented that a strong military presence is in the U.S. interest in the region whether things go for the better or worse in the negotiations.

Dr. Brzezinski replied that if internal radicalism continues to grow in the region our military force is not utilizable to halt that process.

Secretary Brown added that our ability to dominate the Arabs by force is probably less than they think it is.

Secretary Schlesinger noted that there are two general areas that we are involved in: first, is the negotiations on the Camp David accord and that is not going well at the moment and is not received [*perceived?*] as successful by the Arabs; the second area is that of security. If we can't have both tracks going well at the same time, we should at least have one of them and give them reason to favor one side over the other.

General Smith added that if the Arabs cut off the oil flow the United States would need force to be able to deal with it.

Dr. Brzezinski said that the radicals will not cut off the oil instead they will reduce the supply and raise prices. We are seeing an example of the kind of effects politically that they can have today in the actions of the Japanese who are avoiding helping Sadat. Manipulation of the oil supply creates new political attitudes on the part of Western Europe and Japan who rely on the oil supply and it reduces their ability to act politically.

Ambassador Strauss said that if the flow of oil should be cut off that would be the worst possible case for Israel. If people were forced to choose oil as opposed to Israel, there is no doubt to how they would choose. The question is how can that message be transmitted effectively to Begin.

Dr. Brzezinski said the message perhaps could be relayed indirectly. Mr. Begin shares antipathy to the Soviets. You could begin talking to him about the effect of the growth of the Soviet and radical Arab presence and activities in the region on the Free World. He believes in the concept of the Free World. He was particularly responsive when the President talked to him with regard to our collective stake in keeping the Soviets out of the Middle East. Dr. Brzezinski did not see the danger as having a Soviet flag flying over Riyadh. Rather the danger is to have a government in Riyadh that is like the government in Baghdad. Over the last year our Arab friends have been shaken in their confidence about our reliability. We have built them up and let them down.

Secretary Brown referred to the talks he had with the Arabs during his visit to the region, noting that all of them were delighted regarding the security actions which we were taking with respect to the Soviets.¹⁰ Moreover, our actions during the Yemen crisis have them believing that we are able to produce on the security side.

Admiral Turner commented that it is dangerous to persuade them to lean too much on us, only to be disappointed in the end when we cannot do all that they expect.

(22 June 1979—Secretary Brown, Chair)

Secretary Brown: A specific item we must take up first is Congressional notification on additional support for the Saudi F-15s and for the Saudi National Guard programs. I don't think there is a problem here.

Secretary Vance: There is a problem. We are talking about \$1.4B, aren't we? Let's split the request to lower the cost.

Secretary Brown: We can submit the National Guard portion now. That is about \$1.2B.

Secretary Vance: That is too much. We might have prospects of getting half that. What we have heard on the Hill is not encouraging. We might lose the vote.

Secretary Brown: But we cannot tell the Saudis that we cannot get it through Congress. That would be politically bad.

Secretary Vance: It would also be bad were we to lose the vote.

¹⁰ See Document 20.

Secretary Brown: Why is there such opposition to assistance to the Saudi National Guard?

Secretary Vance: We urgently need more consultations on the Hill now. Then we can make a final decision after the President's Tokyo trip.¹¹ We have to be sure of the votes.

Secretary Brown: The attitude on the Hill is that the Saudis ought to produce more oil. People in the gas lines are beginning to see a connection between Saudi Arabia and oil. There is probably a growing reluctance to cast votes that represent a slap at the Saudis.

Secretary Vance: White House, State, and DOD people should meet today to plan prompt approaches to all the key figures on the Hill.

Secretary Brown: We are talking about both pieces, the National Guard and the F-15s.

Secretary Vance: David McGiffert should contact Frank Moore to start this up.

Secretary Brown: Yesterday the PRC discussed political conditions and requirements for US military presence and actions in the area. We should discuss actions other than military presence first. Actions now in train should go forward, e.g., our bilateral security association with Egypt. These must be reflected in the FY-81 budget proposal. I don't see much need to discuss this.

Secretary Vance: Agreed.

Secretary Brown: Then let's proceed. We should consider establishing a special contingency stockpile of equipment to support time urgent assistance efforts. Should DOD explore this concept?

Secretary Schlesinger: This is a good idea, long overdue. We have been held back by fears of another Vietnam.

Secretary Brown: Of course Congressional approval will have to be secured. We are talking about shortening the lead time on deliveries from years to weeks. DOD will explore this. As regards US military presence, the DOD paper lays out four options—the status quo, moderate increase, a near continuous US presence without more carriers, and a continuous major presence. These are four points on a multidimensional continuum. We want views about where on that continuum we ought to be. We discussed political pros and cons yesterday. Today we should get opinions on the appropriate military level. I would like to end the meeting with a charge to DOD to explore in detail and recommend action within a narrower part of the spectrum of possibilities.

¹¹ Reference is to Carter's trip to Tokyo June 24–29 to attend the G-7 Economic Summit and to meet with Prime Minister Ohira.

Dep. Sec. Christopher: The first point is that we cannot assume political benefits from augmenting our military presence without considering local sensitivities. This is not just a unilateral US matter. We have to consider reactions in various parts of Africa and throughout the Middle East and guard against overloading the political circuits with presence, port visits, and activities ashore.

Secretary Brown: Our carrier task forces have not involved activities ashore.

Mr. Newsom: There has been a requirement for staging reconnaissance and logistics flights to support carriers. P-3 flights were deemed necessary for the safety of our carriers. This required landing rights in Oman and Djibouti.

Secretary Brown: Such landing rights are involved in any case. It does not matter whether we put one, two, or three carriers a year into the area.

Dep. Sec. Christopher: Because of the inevitable impact ashore, even of naval activities, State believes we ought to concentrate on improving our capability to surge forces into the area and emphasize joint exercises with local countries, contingency plans, and consultation with our Allies to increase their support and involvement. Our level of military presence should be established flexibly on a case-by-case basis. A surge capability is the main requirement.

Ambassador Strauss: What is meant by a surge capability?

Secretary Brown: This means essentially shortening the time it takes to introduce military forces into the area from outside. This is not the same as maintaining a constant military presence in the area. In some situations, who gets there first is important. In any case, surge capability is measured in terms of weeks, not days.

Secretary Vance: Is there merit in upgrading the airport in South Egypt, Berenice, as Sadat has proposed?

Secretary Brown: This could be quite expensive and might not give us much additional capability quickly. We want to move aircraft and supplies more quickly through existing facilities. Sadat has already offered to make such facilities available on a contingent basis. It looks like he is trying to get an upgrade of Berenice as the price of something he has already offered.

Gen. Smith: Berenice is too far away anyhow.

Dr. Brzezinski: Surge capability is not equivalent to presence. Enhancing our surge capabilities certainly makes sense. It demonstrates our interest and our potential willingness to act. Surge capability is necessary, but insufficient. We must remember fundamentals. This

region is vital to the US. It is not vital to the USSR.¹² This region is insecure and perceives an erosion of US capability and willingness to defend it. We must move forward on two tracks, promoting positive political developments favoring the moderate Arabs, and also demonstrating our willingness to defend vital US interests. This will take more than a surge capability, which represents potential for involvement. We must also have increased real capability on the scene. We must establish presence on the order of DOD's Option 2, perhaps, in time, but not too rapidly, moving toward Option 3.¹³ We must accept the reality of an ambivalent attitude toward our presence on the part of the Arabs. We must demonstrate to the Arabs that we mean it when we say their region is vital to us. We must also demonstrate this to the Soviets. At the Summit the President told Brezhnev that the Middle East is vital to us. Brezhnev scoffed saying, "The US always declares a vital interest where it wants to do something." Option 2 is the right way to proceed and is compatible with increased surge capability. Neither local presence of the sort we are discussing nor improved surge capability is adequate by itself. Improved surge capability backs up increased presence.

Secretary Brown: In principle, we could either increase presence or improve surge capability.

Dr. Brzezinski: That would not be adequate.

Sec. Schlesinger: We must consider the long-term thrust of our policy. We must recognize that the balance of power in the area is unfavorable and perceived to be so. Our interests require new and visible means to respond to major aggression. Our actions will have to be unilateral at first. We cannot expect people in the area to stand up and applaud our presence until we have demonstrated our resolve and capability to be there in strength. If we don't make the necessary repairs in the military balance in 5–10 years, the resources of this area will come under Soviet domination. We must create a situation in which we are expected normally to be present. Occasional appearances and surge capability will not do the job. Moving naval forces into the region, which takes two weeks from Subic Bay, may often generate a signal we don't want to send. I favor something between Options 3 and 4.

Dr. Brzezinski: The Soviet Union is building up permanent facilities at Dalakh. It is inconceivable that we should hesitate building up our permanent presence when they are doing this.

Secretary Brown: What about the Indian Ocean Talks?

¹² An unknown hand underlined the three sentences beginning with the word "We" and ending with "USSR."

¹³ The Defense Department options are summarized in Document 24.

Mr. Keeny: ACDA supports State in favoring concentration on surge capability. In the short term we must consider local political reactions. In the long run we have to consider the possible effects of reducing our capability in Europe and the Far East.

Secretary Brown: We have had near continual presence for the last six months. In the longer run we ought to draw naval assets from the Mediterranean rather than from the Far East. This would mean one less carrier in the Mediterranean and one more in the Indian Ocean. In my judgment, a major conflict with the Soviets would oblige us to take our carriers out of the Mediterranean anyway, or at least to move them westwards.

Dep. Sec. Christopher: I support Option 2 but in somewhat different terms than Zbig does. We have to be specific about what we are going to do and to consider the political costs.

Ambassador Strauss: Are we talking about force changes with prior announcement, or is it a quiet change, observed but unannounced?

Dr. Brzezinski: This is an important question. We can announce our policy or we can seek to be less vocal about it. I lean toward the second course. Public statements create reactions to the statement, quite apart from the action. We must think this through.

Secretary Vance: I agree. Dramatic pronouncements, e.g., a Carter doctrine or the formation of a fifth fleet, would be a mistake.

Mr. Aaron: Therefore, there should be no debriefs or leaks out of this meeting.

Dr. Brzezinski: Leaks are less dramatic and less binding than pronouncements from the President.

Secretary Vance: I agree with David Aaron, no leaks or pronouncements.

Dr. Brzezinski: We have to be realistic about the likelihood of leaks. The problem is what course of action to take. First, we should decide for sustained deployment of carriers, and, second, we should explore the possibility of getting a regular anchorage for them near the Arabian Peninsula or off Somalia. Oman is willing and Somalia is eager to see us nearby.

Secretary Brown: On the matter of surge capability vs. presence, it should be noted that truly effective intervention capability requires land forces. They, in turn, require local training and local prepositioning of equipment. In this sense, real surge capabilities run into political constraints more rapidly than do naval deployments, which can be undertaken more or less unilaterally.

Admiral Turner: The key political consideration is the likely reaction of moderate Arab opinion. The moderate Arabs want to be protected, but they are most concerned about domestic threats and domestic

attitudes. They fear our military measures will be clumsy and possibly directed against them and their oil. The degree of local acceptance of US military presence will be crucially influenced by further success in the peace process. Radicalization of moderate states is the greatest threat. We need major improvements on the West Bank. Short of that, even Oman will not accept such things as US anchorages.

Ambassador Strauss: What I am hearing is that we have got to use our political muscle in the peace process before or in parallel with military measures aimed at the overall security situation.

Mr. Keeny: Regarding the Indian Ocean Talks, it will be difficult to proceed with those talks if we are also significantly increasing our local military presence. Admittedly this is not an overwhelming argument against increasing presence, but we have to consider it.

Secretary Brown: Remember that the Soviets are developing a facility at Dalakh.

Mr. Keeny: We may be headed for higher levels of military presence on both sides, and have to conduct the Indian Ocean Talks on that premise.

Secretary Brown: Our past proposals in those talks surely preclude Option 3 in the DOD paper, and may severely constrain what we could do under Option 2.

Mr. Keeny: We may have to change our negotiating position to permit higher ceilings. In any case, it would be unwise to move on the Indian Ocean Talks, as we agreed at the Summit, until we have a clear idea what we are going to do about deployments.

General Smith: As you know, the JCS have never been enthusiastic about the Indian Ocean Talks. The real constraints on increased presence and improved surge capability have to do with our total resources and commitments elsewhere. We favor augmenting MIDEASTFORCE and increased periodic naval deployments, augmented by Marines and land-based air if possible.

Dep. Sec. Christopher: In refining deployment plans under Option 2 we must remember to consider the impact on Africa. We don't want military actions to intensify polarization there along US-Soviet lines.

Secretary Brown: Reactions in Africa are likely to vary in different regions. Egypt, an African country, tends to favor increased US presence.

General Smith: I want to repeat that resource constraints oblige an evolutionary approach.

Mr. Aaron: What are the costs of increased military presence?

Secretary Brown: We judge the dollar costs to be relatively modest, on the order of several tens of millions of dollars.

Mr. Keeny: I am suspicious of your cost figures. I'd bet the real dollar costs come out higher.

Secretary Brown: You are probably right, but they're sure to be small as compared to our stake in Middle East oil.

Dr. Brzezinski: Maybe we need another PRC meeting to consider a refinement of Option 2, including costs, etc.

Secretary Brown: I take it from this meeting that DOD is tasked to develop a concrete plan for augmented presence within the range of Option 2, to include specific steps, rates of deployment, etc.

Dr. Brzezinski: This should then be submitted to the President, along with possible variations and indications as to the degree of support for specific actions.

Secretary Brown: The President can decide where in the general spectrum of possibilities he wants our deployments to come out.

Dr. Brzezinski: The President needs some sense of the tangible costs of his choice.

Secretary Vance: The key issue in any deployment policy along the lines of Option 2 is the rate at which we increase our level of presence.

Secretary Brown: We will develop that.

Dr. Brzezinski: So we are talking about a plan within the confines of Option 2, what it means concretely, what disagreements there are among us.

Mr. McGiffert: Isn't there some confusion here? As presented in the paper, Option 2 is relatively specific. Is it the pace of implementation that is of concern?

Secretary Brown: It is a question of pace, of which combinations of force elements (e.g., carriers, Marines, surface units and tac air), of possible base requirements, and of the relationship to surge capability.

Mr. Aaron: Don't we need shore access for both Marine units and tac air?

Secretary Brown: Shore access is not absolutely necessary for Marines to be deployed to the area.

Mr. McGiffert: Options 2 and 3 are comparable in their impact on our commitments in other theaters. They do differ in their impact on carrier deployments.

Ambassador Strauss: This discussion reinforces the impression I am getting that we must move more quickly on the peace talks and get some progress by the end of this year at the latest.

Secretary Vance: Progress is definitely needed earlier than the end of the year.

Ambassador Strauss: I have got to step up my plans, then. I will be moving full steam by 30 June.

Sec. Schlesinger: We must see deployment decisions as the first step in a sequence of actions that improve our military posture in the Middle East/Persian Gulf area. We should tell the President what the ultimate objective is.

Secretary Brown: We can make deployment decisions now and be more tentative as to what steps might follow later.

Sec. Schlesinger: We really do need a longer-term military strategy for the area and, if he is able, the President would be advised to decide on one.

Dr. Brzezinski: Once we have established a strong sense of direction, there is nothing wrong with letting some aspects of our strategy evolve. We may need a specific Presidential Directive that links increased military effort and increased efforts in the negotiations. But this is part of a dynamic process that can evolve.

Sec. Schlesinger: If it is our view that the importance of our interests in the area requires a preponderance of power, something better than an equilibrium with the Soviets, then we must present that to the President.

Secretary Brown: The Soviet Union can react to, and possibly offset, what we do.

Dr. Brzezinski: The President deals with the reality of the situation, which is the overwhelming importance to the West of this region. Force ratios must reflect that reality.

Sec. Schlesinger: We may be implying military activities for which we lack the requisite resources. That remains to be seen.

27. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, July 11, 1979

SUBJECT

US Military Presence in the Middle East/Persian Gulf (U)

(S) Three SCC/PRC meetings have been held to review US policy toward the Middle East/Persian Gulf in light of the fall of the Shah, Soviet activities in Afghanistan, the Horn and South Yemen, and our increasing dependence on imported oil.² With respect to regional security issues, the consensus of the meetings was that the US should strengthen its defense ties with the moderate Persian Gulf states, continue to assist them in improving their self-defense capabilities, improve US military surge capabilities, and moderately increase peacetime US military presence in the region. This memorandum outlines specific initiatives which I propose to take within DoD if you approve these general conclusions.

Defense Ties with Regional States

(S) To establish closer defense ties with the moderate Persian Gulf states as a means to improve their self-defense capabilities and to reduce the political strains caused by the US role in the Egyptian-Israeli peace process and by our economic differences, DoD, in coordination with the State Department, will continue efforts already underway to establish regular bilateral security consultations with selected Persian Gulf states, to be responsive to the requests of the moderate Arab states for arms and equipment where it makes sense to do so, and to improve the readiness of local forces by, for example, participating in exercises with them.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 3, [Indian Ocean]: 2–8/79. Secret. Bartholomew sent a copy of Brown's memorandum to Vance under a July 19 briefing memorandum, noting that Vance, Brown and Brzezinski planned to discuss it at their scheduled July 20 luncheon. Bartholomew noted: "This memo accurately reflects the PRC decisions and we agree with its overall thrust. However, we need an early State/DOD assessment of the diplomatic implications and military support requirements essential to some of Harold's recommendations (e.g., MIDEASTFOR increases, land-based tactical air deployments, and marine air-ground task force). The results of that assessment should be reflected in Harold's memo before it goes forward." (Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Cyrus R. Vance, Secretary of State—1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Box 1, Vance/Brown/Brzezinski Lunches, 7–9/79) Vance and Brown did set forth plans for implementing the increased presence outlined in Brown's memorandum; see Document 30.

² See Documents 23 and 26.

US Military Presence

(S) To provide a moderate increase in US peacetime military presence in the region, I plan to: (1) expand the permanent US naval presence (now three ships) by two or three surface combatants; (2) increase the number of routine naval deployments to the region from three to four per year including, normally, two carrier battle groups (in the past there have been either one or two such carrier groups deployed each year) and a Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF); and (3) deploy, if politically feasible, at least one TACAIR squadron to the region each year to participate in training and combined exercises with local states. Before a MAGTF is deployed to the vicinity of the Arabian Peninsula, political consultations would be held as appropriate. Of course, additional short-notice deployments may be required to deal with unforeseeable events in the region.

(S) The JCS have prepared an illustrative deployment schedule with notional forces covering the CY 1980–82 period which is attached as Appendix A.³ Initially, most of the naval forces will be drawn from CINCPAC, but we are exploring ways to provide part of the necessary assets from USCINCEUR and CINCLANT as well. Undoubtedly, such deployments will have some impact on our Mediterranean and Asian commitments as well as on fleet readiness. The extent of this impact will become clearer when we develop specific (as opposed to illustrative) schedules, including composition of each naval deployment. With judicious scheduling we should be able to honor the bulk of our peacetime commitments in Europe and Asia.

(S) For the longer term, we in DoD will be studying the feasibility of moving toward near-continuous or continuous naval presence with major combatants in the Indian Ocean using more than two carrier deployments per year. As part of this study, we will be formulating options that would give the US the capability to sustain significant combat forces (carriers, MAGTFs, TACAIR) in the region for prolonged periods. We will also shortly be sending you other ideas with respect to presence enhancement that might involve less diversion of existing naval assets.

US Surge Capabilities

(S) I have in mind the following measures to upgrade our surge capabilities: attempting to prearrange necessary clearances from states en route to the region to permit the US access and overflight rights in a Middle East/Persian Gulf contingency; concluding agreements with states in the region which would provide us access to airfields and

³ Appendix A is attached but not printed.

ports in a crisis; exercising these access and overflight rights on a routine basis in peacetime; upgrading the defenses and capabilities of local facilities so that the flow of men and supplies can be expedited; reviewing US strategic and theater lift capabilities to determine whether the US can adequately deploy and support a significant combat force in a Middle East/Persian Gulf contingency; refining our contingency planning for the region, considering expansion of the facilities at Diego Garcia, exploring the need and opportunities for pre-positioning equipment and supplies in the region; and improving operational capabilities through increased liaison and exercises with local states.

Recommendations

(S) I recommend you agree to the general conclusions outlined above. In that case, I would issue policy guidance within DoD to implement these conclusions as indicated.

(S) I also recommend that the increase in US military presence be handled in a low key manner. In particular, we should avoid a declaratory policy and other actions which lock us into a particular deployment pattern. Additionally, I recommend that the Administration brief key members of Congress on a confidential basis concerning the increase in US presence and the full range of initiatives which will be implemented to improve US surge capabilities and regional self-defense forces.

(S) Finally, I recommend that we continue to enlist the cooperation of our allies to protect our mutual interests in the region. In this respect, we have already begun a low key process of encouraging support, and participation where possible, by our NATO allies in efforts to improve regional security.

(S) The Joint Chiefs of Staff agree with these recommendations.

Harold Brown

28. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, July 31, 1979

SUBJECT

US Capabilities to Respond to Limited Contingencies (U)

(S) This memorandum responds to your 9 July request² for a status report on the progress which has been made in implementing the limited contingency aspects of PD/NSC-18.³

(S) First, by way of background, even prior to August 1977 the US had forces which could be used to respond to limited contingencies. However, the focus on planning for limited contingencies in the Middle East/Persian Gulf has increased substantially since PD/NSC-18 was issued. Competition for limited resources has precluded additions to our basic force structure, which is not the limiting factor in our capability for rapid deployment in any event.⁴ However, we have designated specific type units for a rapid deployment force, are refining our contingency plans, tailoring our training, and programming logistics, mobility, and support resources for the rapid deployment force so that it can operate effectively in the Middle East/Persian Gulf and Korea.

(S) I have instructed the Services to program logistics, mobility, and support for a rapid deployment force consisting of two Army divisions (one light and one mechanized) along with an armored brigade and combat support forces, four tactical fighter wings (seven for a Korean contingency), three carrier battle groups, a Marine Amphibious Force (MAF), and two tactical airlift wings. These units are being identified within the existing force structure; many of them also have NATO missions. Although forces programmed for NATO use can be used to respond to a limited contingency elsewhere, they will generally need more logistics (including lift) and military support for use in a rapid deployment force elsewhere than is currently funded for them.

(S) I have directed the programming of support for the rapid deployment force so that eventually it can operate for at least 90 days

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 7/79-3/80. Secret.

² Brzezinski's July 9 request is *ibid*.

³ PD/NSC-18, "U.S. National Security Policy," August 24, 1977, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. IV, National Security Policy.

⁴ An unknown hand underlined the portion of this sentence beginning with the word "Competition" and ending with the word "structure."

in an austere environment. The Services, however, are having difficulty meeting this goal, given the many competing demands for resources.

(S) The rapid deployment force is capable of responding adequately to a wide range of non-NATO contingencies. It is possible, however, to envision major non-NATO contingencies where the rapid deployment force would have to be reinforced by additional units committed to NATO, particularly if Soviet forces invaded the Persian Gulf region through Iran. To meet large-scale non-NATO contingencies, the JCS have noted a requirement (based on a Persian Gulf scenario) for five divisions and nine tactical fighter wings (as well as the MAF and three carrier battle groups). This would require either an expansion of the active forces or acceptance of a somewhat greater risk to NATO. Additionally, to deploy a force of this size quickly would require, at a minimum, an increase in our mobility forces and/or substantial prepositioning in the area.

(S) With respect to mobility, DoD is pursuing a range of programs to enhance the capabilities of our airlift assets.⁵ These programs include: the C-5 wing modification program; the C-141 “Stretch” program which will raise the C-141 force’s lift capability by about one third; the purchase of KC-10 tankers; and modification of civil passenger aircraft to carry cargo as part of the CRAF program. The naval forces provide their own lift and are largely independent of foreign bases for support.

(S) The initiatives outlined above, combined with the operating experience acquired in recent deployments to the Middle East/Persian Gulf (e.g., the increased naval deployments and the deployment of F-15s and AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia)⁶ indicate that we have made progress in the last two years to project forces to respond to limited contingencies. However, I would emphasize that there are significant problems that have not yet been solved. Many of these problems are not soluble without major programmatic efforts such as I described in the PRC meeting on the Draft Consolidated Guidance.⁷ Specifically, we are particularly concerned about programmatic difficulties in maintaining continuous combat presence in the region for immediate reaction and rapidly deploying mechanized forces to the area.

Harold Brown

⁵ An unknown hand highlighted this paragraph, underlined “DOD is pursuing a range of programs,” and wrote a question mark in the right-hand margin next to the sentence.

⁶ See Document 271.

⁷ See Document 26.

29. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, August 6, 1979

SUBJECT

Unified Middle East Command (U)

Background

You asked for comments on Bill Odom's memo.² A couple of words of background are required. At the present time, the Middle East south of Suez and the Indian Ocean is the "backyard" of both CINCEUR and CINCPAC. For years, they have been trying to work out some kind of reasonable command structure for the area without any significant success. Middle East Force, the only permanent U.S. military presence in the region, as well as the attache/military assistance programs, have always been under CINCEUR. CINCPAC has been playing a much more important role since 1974 when we began the policy of periodic task force deployments into the region at a time when the Suez Canal was closed and the Sixth Fleet had no ready access to the region. At the present time, we have the anomalous situation where Middle East Force CINCEUR is responsible only for the Persian Gulf/Red Sea and adjacent land area; while all the rest of the Indian Ocean is technically the responsibility of the Pacific Command. Thus, when MIDEASTFOR ships sail out of the Gulf (which they do routinely) they are technically in CINCPAC's territory, and when Seventh Fleet units operate off the Arabian Peninsula they report back to Honolulu, although MIDEASTFOR has a "liaison" responsibility. (S)

Harold Brown is well aware of this issue and tasked the JCS on June 22 to do an evaluation. A preliminary report has been completed within the JCS which identifies seven possible options. Although this report has been briefed to the Chairman, it has still not been reported

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 7-8/79. Secret. Outside the System. Sent for information. A stamped notation on the memorandum reads: "ZB has seen."

² Reference is to a July 24 memorandum that Odom sent to Brzezinski. Odom wrote: "As you make progress in establishing the policy of an increasing U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf, there is a major 'next step' which should be considered: a change in the DOD's Unified Command Plan to create a unified command for the Persian Gulf region." Brzezinski forwarded the memorandum to Gary Sick with a handwritten notation in the margin that reads: "GS, your comments on the politics of this in the region? ZB." (Ibid.) Notations on Odom's memorandum indicate that Aaron also read and commented on it.

out of the JCS. (I have a copy of the original slide presentation on this report if you want additional details. It is in Pentagonese and requires a translator.) Any significant alteration of the present arrangement would involve a battle for turf among the Services and the existing Unified and Specified Commands. My understanding is that there is little enthusiasm within the JCS for a potentially bruising territorial fight and they would prefer simply to leave things as they are for the moment. The impetus for change will almost certainly have to come from outside the JCS, either from SecDef or the NSC. (S)

Security Relationship with Saudi Arabia

One of the most important elements of any new Middle East Command would be the military relationship with Saudi Arabia and the nations of the Arabian Peninsula. As you know, Major General Dick Lawrence has recently returned from a three-month mission to Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Peninsula to examine this issue.³ Based on his findings, he is convinced that a thorough reorganization of the U.S. military relationship is required. As a result of his conversations, he believes that the Saudi top leadership is aware that their primary problems are not lack of hardware but shortcomings in management, planning, coordination, and command and control. Our present effort in Saudi Arabia is oriented almost exclusively toward hardware and is constrained from providing management advice and assistance. (S)

Lawrence believes that it is now time to restructure our military relationship with Saudi Arabia to take account of the two aspects of our effort—i.e. FMS and advisory/planning assistance. He would propose giving the organization a new name and a new charter with greater regional orientation, with cognizance over all U.S. military in the country. He believes this can be done within existing manpower ceilings. Lawrence has briefed his proposal widely in DOD and State (and to this office). There is a great deal of support for the idea, but it will require a push from above to get things moving. (S)

In my view, this is the place to begin restructuring our Middle East security efforts. The Arabian Peninsula is the heart of our security concern, and we should get our house in order there before proceeding to restructure the next layer of command. In that Dick Lawrence has already briefed specific recommendations to State and Defense, changes along these lines would be more easily and quickly adapted than those for a Mideast command. I will be sending you a memo in the next few days proposing a strategy for dealing with this issue.⁴ (S)

³ See Document 197.

⁴ Not further identified and not found.

Regional Politics

The regional reaction to the establishment of a Middle East Command would depend very heavily on which of the seven JCS options we chose to pursue. If we merely establish a subordinate command attached to EUCOM or PACCOM, or if we add this responsibility to REDCOM or create a Washington paper command, I suspect that the reaction in the region would be muted. This would amount to nothing more than a bureaucratic restructuring of our present organization, with the same assets except for a few headquarters personnel thousands of miles away, it should not be unmanageable on the political level. I dare say that very few in the Middle East understand our present command relationship. (S)

If, however, we undertook to establish a unified command *in the region*, or if we made it clear that this was our ultimate intention, this would be seen as the long-anticipated "Fifth Fleet" and would arouse intense concern. That should be undertaken only after the most careful study and advance preparation. (S)

At this point, I would be content to leave the question of a major command restructuring where it is in the Department of Defense, while we direct our attention to the subsidiary problem of getting our security relationship with Saudi Arabia in order.⁵ (S)

⁵ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this final paragraph with a line connecting to his notation in the lower margin that reads: "ok for time-being ZB."

30. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance and Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, August 17, 1979

SUBJECT

U.S. Military Presence in the Middle East and Indian Ocean

Harold Brown's memorandum of July 11 outlined the proposed increase in U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean area.² This memorandum sets forth our plans for implementing the increased presence. We expect that these plans, when carefully executed, will enhance respect for U.S. interests and will reassure our Middle Eastern friends.

Matter-of-fact presentation and low-key implementation of our plans will elicit private, though probably not public, acceptance on the part of the most moderate states in the region. We can improve the chances for positive reaction by providing opportunities for joint exercises and training with U.S. forces. We expect a more favorable reaction from our Asian and NATO allies so long as our force commitments to their regions are not significantly reduced. We should anticipate criticism from the USSR, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, the other radical Arab and African states, and some moderates such as India.

Naval deployments will be the least controversial aspect of the proposed increases. In general, the "over-the-horizon" nature of naval forces is welcomed by our friends in the region. Four rather than three major deployments will require some increases in U.S. Navy use of local facilities for port calls and fuel and for access for maritime patrol and logistic aircraft.

Adding two surface combatants to MidEastForce can be accomplished without causing undue concern to Bahrain and other regional states by assigning the additional ships to Commander Middle East Force for command and control purposes only, by focusing the activities outside the Persian Gulf, and by not formally increasing our MidEastForce strength or increasing our day-to-day presence in the Gulf. MidEastForce has, in fact been augmented off and on since last November, without evidence of concern by friendly states.

The increased support requirements for our expanded activities may encounter resistance from some littoral states or demands for *quid*

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–82–0205, Box 15, Middle East. Secret. The memorandum is on Department of State stationery.

² See Document 27.

pro quo in the form of assistance. In general, however, these problems should be manageable.

While more sensitive, the TacAir deployments should be favorably received if they are clearly tied to joint training exercises with regional states. In any event, these deployments will require previous consultations and approval of host nations. There is precedent for such deployments as the U.S. sent F-15s and AWACs on separate occasions to Saudi Arabia in early 1979.³

More controversial will be the Marine deployments. These have the potential for adverse publicity by those who wish us ill or fear American intervention. We will have to approach this issue very carefully, with regard to both timing and the countries involved. We would suggest to them Marine exercises within the context of joint exercises. The most likely initial amphibious exercise could be with Australia, or alternatively, with Saudi Arabia if it were willing.

In order to avoid negative reactions, it is important that we consult with appropriate moderate states and our NATO and East Asian allies, in conjunction with any announcement of increases in U.S. naval presence. We should also carefully lay the groundwork with key members of Congress.

We should not seek endorsement of proposed naval increases from our regional friends. This is a U.S. decision. It should be explained as a logical step to strengthen the position of U.S. and moderate forces in the region, and as an indication of American concern for the security of our friends.

We will not proceed with consultations until after the NAM Summit in September.⁴ Since our decisions are likely to leak publicly once consultations take place with Congress or abroad, we would exacerbate expected NAM criticism of our Indian Ocean military policy. Our friends in the region would then be forced to acquiesce in resolutions specifically condemning our decisions.

Procedures for Implementation of Policy

After the NAM, we intend to proceed along the following plan of action:

1. Inform key members of Congress of our plans.
2. Concurrently inform key countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan) of our plans, as well as our NATO and East Asian allies.

³ See Document 271.

⁴ Reference is to the Non-Aligned Movement Summit scheduled to take place in Havana, Cuba, September 3-9.

3. If deemed appropriate, make a low-key public announcement of U.S. plans. No announcement should be made of possible tactical air or Marine deployments, nor should the additional surface combatants be officially termed a part of MidEastForce.

4. As necessary, undertake consultations with friends in the area regarding support requirements and joint exercises.

Cyrus R. Vance
Secretary of State

Harold Brown
Secretary of Defense

31. Memorandum From William Odom of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, October 2, 1979

Political-Military Planning for the Arabian Peninsula:

Harold Brown's memo on planning for the next Yemen crisis and the Arabian peninsula provokes my comment.² No matter what planning we do at the NSC level, we cannot compensate for inadequacies in "organizational" structure in the region and on the peninsula. Projecting forces and military equipment into the peninsula will not necessarily prevent the two Yemens from getting together, reduce Saudi fear of a strong anti-Soviet North Yemen, integrate Oman into the peninsula security system, and take advantage of the anti-Aden tribes in eastern South Yemen. We are wasting valuable time by not changing the MAAG missions to emphasize (a) peninsula-wide security planning; (b) military management assistance vice "military sales";

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Geographic File, Box 15, Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf—2/79–12/79. Secret. Marked "FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI ONLY." A table entitled "East Europe: Arms Deliveries to Yemen (Aden) and Yemen (Sana)" is *ibid*.

² Reference is to a September 28 memorandum from Brown to Brzezinski in which Brown noted: "I believe it would be desirable to do some politico-military anticipatory planning with respect to contingencies with which we may be faced in the coming months." Brown went on to "suggest we start with the scenario of a renewed PDRY attack on North Yemen and/or attack on Oman." Sick sent the memorandum to Brzezinski under an October 1 covering memorandum. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Yemen)

(c) support of covert actions in South Yemen. We do not need a bigger MAAG in Riyadh; we need a properly staffed smaller MAAG with a different charter, one extending beyond Saudi boundaries. (C)

In addition to a new mission for the MAAG, we need to press forward with the Middle East Command. JCS has the options stopped cold. They need a prod from above to produce options which (a) take command of the MAAGs away from EUCOM; (b) give the new command direct and full control of intelligence and operations for both *local defense* and *deployments into the region*. JCS's first proposal split command authority, leaving the MAAG with EUCOM and the "operations" with REDCOM in Florida. We must ensure that a truly unified option is offered. (S)

We need a two-prong strategy in the region, particularly on the Peninsula. First, *local defense*. Local defense will not develop through military sales alone. I have spent several hours with General Lawrence who recently assessed the region, developed a defense scheme for North Yemen, and proposed a number of steps to improve Saudi capabilities. His account is not unlike my assessment a number of years ago on Vietnam. Our approach, pouring in FMS, not insisting upon proper management and staffing capabilities within the host regime, runs the risk of destroying the very regime we want to save. The U.S. Navy in the Indian Ocean will not prevent such an outcome. Internal fragility of the regimes on the peninsula is the primary enemy. F-15s do not compensate for fragility, and they may contribute to it. (S)

I watched the first years of the U.S. assistance effort to Iran. We tried to develop a proper infrastructure. We soon gave way to the military-sales-above-all approach. I personally knew several Iranian officers who began as serious young lieutenants and grew into "corrupt" colonels 15 years later. The corruption also infected our MAAG. I can only wonder about the MAAG in Riyadh, especially in view of its proposal for expansion. (S)

The *second prong* should be our *force projection* into the region. Again, the need for a unified U.S. command is crucial. It can provide the C³I essential for a smooth operation. If we depend on EUCOM, we get a refraction through the prism of a "Central Front" outlook. (C)

These views are fully shared in ISA. Some in the JCS share them but cannot act on them. They threaten Navy turf and SACEUR's turf. (C)

32. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Bahrain¹

Washington, October 30, 1979, 1926Z

283380. Subject: Bahrain's Request for Hawk Missile System. Ref: Manama 1512 and related.²

1. Secret-entire text.

2. Summary: We are prepared to undertake substantive discussions with the GOB in regard to its request for purchase of the improved Hawk missile air defense system.³ Our agreement to enter discussions with the GOB on the I-Hawk is conditioned on the Bahraini battery becoming associated with the Saudi air defense network in a manner to be worked out by the Bahrainis and Saudis. We assume GOB will seek Saudi funding. Our agreement to discuss the supply of the I-Hawk to Bahrain would be subject to granting an exception to the National Disclosure Policy and normal 36 (B) review procedures⁴ including both Presidential approval and congressional review. End summary.

3. Background. The I-Hawk missile system can be employed only in an air defense role. Its range (approximately 35 kilometers) and mission make it an [garble—appropriate weapon?] for Bahrain (and other Gulf states) to use against aerial attack. Over much of the last decade, U.S. policy has consistently supported cooperation among the moderate Arab states of the Persian Gulf in defense, education, industrialization and other fields. The sale of the I-Hawk would serve as a

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D7900502–0072. Secret. Drafted by Countryman; cleared by Saunders, Roscoe Suddarth (P), Douglas E. Keene (PM/SAS), Sick, A. Peter Burleigh (H), and Murray and in DOD/DSAA and JCS; approved by Benson. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Amman, Dhahran, Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, Muscat, USLO Riyadh, Sana, Tehran, the Department of Defense, DA WASHDC, DA//DALO–SAC WASHDC, DA//DAMO–SSA WASHDC, DA//DAMA WASHDC, and USCINCEUR Vaihingen GE. In an October 25 action memorandum to Benson, O'Donohue and Saunders attached a draft of this telegram, noting that the Government of Bahrain had again expressed a desire to purchase one Hawk missile battery and commenting that there was "military justification for the sale." Benson approved the telegram on October 29. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P790179–0863)

² In telegram 1512 from Manama, July 19, the Embassy reported threats from Ayatollah Sadiq Rohani to revive Iranian claims to Bahrain, noting that Rohani's statements "are worrisome to GOB." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790332–1048)

³ In telegram 153170 to Abu Dhabi, June 14, the Department detailed new Bahraini requests for Hawk missiles and the U.S. Government's dilemma over what to do in light of U.S. arms policy toward the lower Gulf region and new regional developments. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790270–0625)

⁴ Reference is to Section 36(B) of the 1976 Arms Export Control Act.

concrete expression of the seriousness of our intent. Such a deployment, moreover, of a defensive anti-aircraft missile system will enable us to credibly deflect possible Bahraini requests for fixed wing aircraft. End background.

4. You are authorized to convey the following points to the GOB. We would suggest that you inform both the Crown Prince/Minister of Defense and the Foreign Minister and leave to your discretion whether to convey these points to other GOB officials.

—We agree to undertake substantive and detailed discussions with the GOB in regard to its request to purchase the I-Hawk missile system;

—The GOB should be aware that any final agreement is subject to granting an exception to the National Disclosure Policy as well as the normal 36(B) review procedures which include Presidential approval and congressional review;

—Our agreement is based on our understanding that Saudi Arabia is prepared to fund the purchase. We have no policy problem with the sale but believe that a separate, wholly Bahraini financed Hawk battery cannot be justified in terms of cost effectiveness;

—We envisage the acquisition of the I-Hawk by Bahrain as an important step in promoting regional air defense cooperation and that it is sensible only in such a regional context;

—We plan to inform the SAG of the substance of our decision;

—We would encourage the maximum possible association of the Bahraini with the Saudi I-Hawk system—and [garble—would expect?] at a minimum, that the air defense commands of the two countries would be linked by a common communications net and by common exploitation of long-range target acquisition radars;

—Such linkage would not deny Bahrain the ability to defend itself independently from attacking aircraft, but does provide economy in logistical support of the system and avoid duplication of systems to the degree possible;

—The USG would be involved only in supplying the missile system and its components to Bahrain;

—Although the sale would be under FMS procedures (because of its dollar value), we would not envision any large or long-term official presence connected with the sale;

—We presume that technicians and training necessary would be contracted to private American firms, as has been done in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. This should be done in the closest possible cooperation with the Saudis to avoid duplication of efforts and unnecessary expense;

—We are prepared to send, on a reimbursable basis, a team of air defense experts to Bahrain to consult with the Ministry of Defense and

to examine the technical requirements for the establishment of an air defense system once Bahrain informs us that Saudi financing is firm and that Bahrain and Saudi Arabia have reached general agreement about associating their two air defense systems;

—If both the GOB and SAG agree, this team could also visit Saudi Arabia to look into requirements for associating the two countries' air defense capabilities;

—If the GOB decides to pursue the matter further, it should request through the Embassy, a letter of offer for the team;

—There are great complexities associated with the deployment and use of this weapons system. The Hawk missile not only is expensive; it demands highly-trained officers and men to use it effectively. A [garble—Hawk missile?] battery consists of two fire units totalling six launchers supported by radar and computer technicians. Normal staffing is 150–200 men per battery with several hundred more required for logistical, administrative and technical support;

—One Hawk battery of six launchers costs about dols 30 million. Each missile costs dols 135,000. Each launcher has three missiles per load. To this must be added substantial maintenance/logistics training requirements. We believe that the total package cost could reach dols 70–100 million depending on the actual equipment eventually acquired by Bahrain and the degree of Bahraini use of Saudi support facilities;

—If, after considering all of the above, the GOB should continue in its desire to purchase the I-Hawk, it should be aware that the I-Hawk will go out of production in the next two–three years, and that orders must be placed within the next twelve months. (FYI: The U.S. will be adopting a new air defense missile system, the Patriot. End FYI.)

5. For Abu Dhabi, Doha and Muscat: If approached by host governments expressing interest in the I-Hawk, you are authorized to inform them of the substance of this cable adding that we are prepared to discuss with them the general subject of their air defense needs in a regional context, but cannot make any commitment to sell a specific system until we jointly agree on military requirements.

6. For Jidda: The contents of this message have been discussed with Ambassador West. He will raise this matter with Prince Sultan when he returns to Saudi Arabia.

Vance

33. Summary of Conclusion of a Mini-Policy Review Committee Meeting¹

Washington, November 1, 1979, 10–11:30 a.m.

SUBJECT

Mini-PRC on Strait of Hormuz (C)

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs
Harold Saunders, Asst. Sec. for Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs
Dan O'Donahue, Dep. Dir. for Politico Military Affairs

OSD

David McGiffert, Asst. Sec. for Int'l Security Affairs
Henry H. Gaffney, Director, Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs
Colonel G.W. Plummer, Director, Arabian Peninsula
Captain Chris C. Shoemaker, Policy Analysis

JCS

General John Pustay, Assistant to the Chairman
Commander Richard S. Shawkey, U.S.N.

DCI

Robert Ames, NIO, Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs

White House

David Aaron

NSC

Gary Sick

General Pustay briefed the mini-PRC on the geography of the Strait of Hormuz and its vulnerability. The width and depth of the Strait makes it difficult to block physically, but the fjords of the Musandam Peninsula provide possible hiding places for isolated terrorist operations. The most likely contingencies would be emplacement of a limited number of moored mines or a seaborne rocket attack on a tanker. The best minesweeping capability in the region is the four new Saudi minesweepers; the equipment is excellent but Saudi capability to use it is still very limited.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 83, MPRC 016, 11/1/79, Straits of Hormuz. Confidential. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes of the meeting were not found.

34. Memorandum From William Odom of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, November 28, 1979

SUBJECT

Strategy for the Persian Gulf in 1980

I promised some ideas on next steps after the present Iranian crisis.² As a preface, I want to set forth a short assessment of our present position and possibilities in region. That is followed by a list of concrete steps.

Opportunities and Constraints for a US Strategy in the Persian Gulf Region

A number of previous obstructions to an effective strategy are being overcome offering new opportunities for action. The Indian Ocean Arms Talks have been removed as a block to U.S. military power projection into the region.³ We have loosened up the arms sales policy a bit. The present Iranian crisis seems to be creating the chance to begin a serious regional intelligence rebuilding effort as well as a physical military presence. The time for action, therefore, is at hand.

At the same time two objective factors, however, must be recognized as constraints in the development of an effective strategy for the region. First, we have lost Iran for the present. Yet the focus of most of our thinking is on Iran. The most viable and promising U.S. posture will be one built with its center on the Arabian Peninsula. Although we cannot march straight into Saudi Arabia tomorrow, we can keep a Saudi-centric concept as the basis for each small step into the region. Second, to the extent possible, we should separate our Arab-Israeli policy from our strategy for the Persian Gulf. That means, of course, that bases in Israel and the Sinai are not appropriate for increasing our military presence in the region.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 43, Security Framework [Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf]: 2–12/79. Secret; Sensitive. Outside the System. Sent for information. Brzezinski wrote “good, am proceeding along these lines. Give me memo ZB” in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum.

² Iranian students seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on November 4.

³ See Document 123.

The Strategic Configuration of the Region Today

The Persian Gulf itself has become the “forward edge of the battle area” with the temporary loss of Iran. Our position, if we are to build one, must rest primarily on the perimeter of the Arabian Peninsula.

Iraq, on the north end of this new line of conflict, presents opportunities to turn this flank. Implicit Iraqi cooperation against Iran looks more possible each week. Explicit cooperation is, admittedly, unlikely.

Pakistan, on the south end of the line of conflict, is critical for turning that flank. Not only does it influence Iran, but it is the base for influencing Afghanistan.

Another line of conflict is a circle around South Yemen, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. Somalia, Oman, North Yemen, and Sudan are key locations for influencing the competition in this secondary conflict area.

The friendly states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Oman, are extremely weak in two regards. First, they lack the domestic institutions for an effective military establishment (the confusion in Saudi Arabia during the Mecca incident is an example).⁴ Second, they have no effective institutions for coordinating a peninsula-wide interstate security system. The Soviets are attacking both of these weaknesses—infiltrating and developing internal opposition movements—and coordinating the interstate actions of Soviet client states—Yemen and Ethiopia.

What the U.S. Must Do

The *first step* we must take is to create a *unified regional command* for the Persian Gulf and Middle East. The headquarters must be near Washington at first, in the region after we are invited. Earlier arguments about the adverse political affects of making this organizational step no longer are compelling, if they ever were.

The JCS is still dragging its feet, obstructing movement on this front, but OSD has demanded a recommendation for a “joint task force” organization in the near future. I shall review it with Bob Murray (ISA). He has invited me to comment on it.

Until we have a “regional” approach in our security/intelligence organization, we shall stumble along in the fashion of November and December 1978 and November 1979. Intelligence won’t improve, and our ability to move into the region will not increase. State is delighted to keep it that way. We can only do what we are organized to do, and for the past three years that has been to “send cables,” the only kind of action State is organized to take.

⁴ See Documents 201 and 202.

The *second step* is an *approach to Oman, Saudi Arabia*, and possibly to Sudan and Pakistan, asking them what *we can do to help*. There are several myths about what these countries will and will not accept from us, but General Dick Lawrence, who commanded USMTM in Saudi Arabia, 1975–77, and who took the team to advise on security in Yemen last summer, insists that the Saudis will find a way to let us in if we start by asking them what they recommend. King Khalid likes Lawrence and jokes about his “Lawrence of Arabia.” During his last visit,⁵ Lawrence got more exposure to close-hold Saudi military plans than anyone before. His team wrote a “national strategy” plan for the Saudis. None existed before; and the Saudis accepted it unaltered!

Oman is asking through various channels for a U.S. move or gesture. The Omani ambassador has used two of my very close friends, whom he knew at Oxford in the 1950s, to convey messages and questions about possible U.S. military assistance. “Does the U.S. ever send assistance without being asked?” he asked. Clearly he is fishing for a U.S. gesture. Lawrence insists that a base is available for the asking in Oman.

The point is, we must open a dialogue, regional in scope, but not at all public, which lets the Saudis, Omanis, and maybe others lead us into closer security relations. The outcome after a year or two, will be a regional security system, *de facto* but not *de jure*.

The *third step* is *acquisition of bases in the region*. I believe you realize the importance of such bases after the military contingency planning for the present Iranian crisis. Bases must provide us secure areas for staging. They must hold stocks of equipment. And they must increase our intelligence capabilities.

We should seek two categories of bases. First, permanent bases, and second, bases for temporary exercise use.

In the first category, two, possibly three, bases could be acquired soon. Masirah Island, off the Omani coast, is probably available in exchange for some military assistance. Somalia, of course, would like to make a similar deal. I know Paul Henze’s reluctance towards deals with Somalia, but we should not heed him now. Rather we should drive a tough bargain for Berbera or another location nearby. A third possibility is Aswan in Egypt. Naturally this tends to entangle the Arab-Israeli issue with our Persian Gulf posture, but its southern location makes it worth serious consideration.

⁵ See Document 197.

The second category, temporary basing, could expand on the PASEX⁶ arrangements we now have with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and others. The Emirates, Sudan, and Jordan are possibilities for the second category. Each “in and out” exercise helps us learn the route, know the terrain and facilities, and make our contingency plans more up to date. This second category, of course, is more a long-range matter, one to be expanded or contracted as the political climate allows.

The *fourth step* is *occasional operational deployments* of U.S. forces into the region. This could start with P-3 intelligence flights, AWACS, and other small actions.

The *fifth step* involves *intelligence collection and covert action*. It goes without saying that we must step up support to the Afghanistan insurgency.⁷ This helps us with Pakistan, and it will eventually help us in Iran. We must also explore the opportunities in South Yemen. Tribes in the east, near the Omani border, reportedly are crying for help and could tie up South Yemen’s forces for years. If we do this, the threat to Oman is reduced. At the same time, we should look into covert opportunities in North Yemen, Eritrea, Somalia, and elsewhere in the Gulf of Aden region.

Covert action in Iran is a separate matter. David Aaron’s little group’s analysis of the options is relevant but somewhat artificial and misleading about proper choices. Analytically, the choice is between putting a centralizing movement back together *or* supporting the ethnic minorities and the probable breakup of the Persian state. We must do both, but both are not enough. We have failed to recruit several hundreds of Iranian students in the U.S. as agents. We have failed to recruit hundreds of junior officers in Iran. We are floundering around discussing either the choice of emigre leaders *or* the Kurds.⁸ That is not the important choice. Iran’s future depends on who builds a small military organization and intelligence net the quickest. The Bolsheviks could never have survived without the few hundred Lettist Rifles.⁹ They had bolshevized three battalions by June 1917 in Riga. These troops came to Petrograd in November. They made the difference.

The point is, we must put Iran back together as a state, and to do so, we must dominate the covert action among the centralizing Persians

⁶ Brzezinski underlined the word “PASEX” and wrote “what is this?” in the right-hand margin.

⁷ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this sentence and wrote “we are.”

⁸ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this and the preceding two sentences.

⁹ Reference is to a Latvian military formation that fought in the Imperial Russian Army during the First World War.

and also among the tribes—Kurds, Baluchis, etc. *No ground can be left to the radical left.* Seize it all!

Positive intelligence, of course, must be expanded. It is a precondition for CIA efforts as well as all other actions. I only flag it here.

Possible Action for You

The thinking in ISA, particularly by Bob Murray, is similar to what I have suggested above. State, of course, will object. CIA will probably go along. I do not believe we will get movement unless you and Harold Brown take the lead. The President's instruction to look into bases in the region is sufficient reason to take such a proposal to the President. If you desire to try that, I shall prepare a memorandum from you to Brown soliciting his reaction and support.¹⁰

Alternatively, you could put the concept to the President, and if he likes it, he could ask Brown to propose implementing plans.¹¹

¹⁰ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this sentence and wrote "yes."

¹¹ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this sentence and wrote "will do [illegible]—will do both."

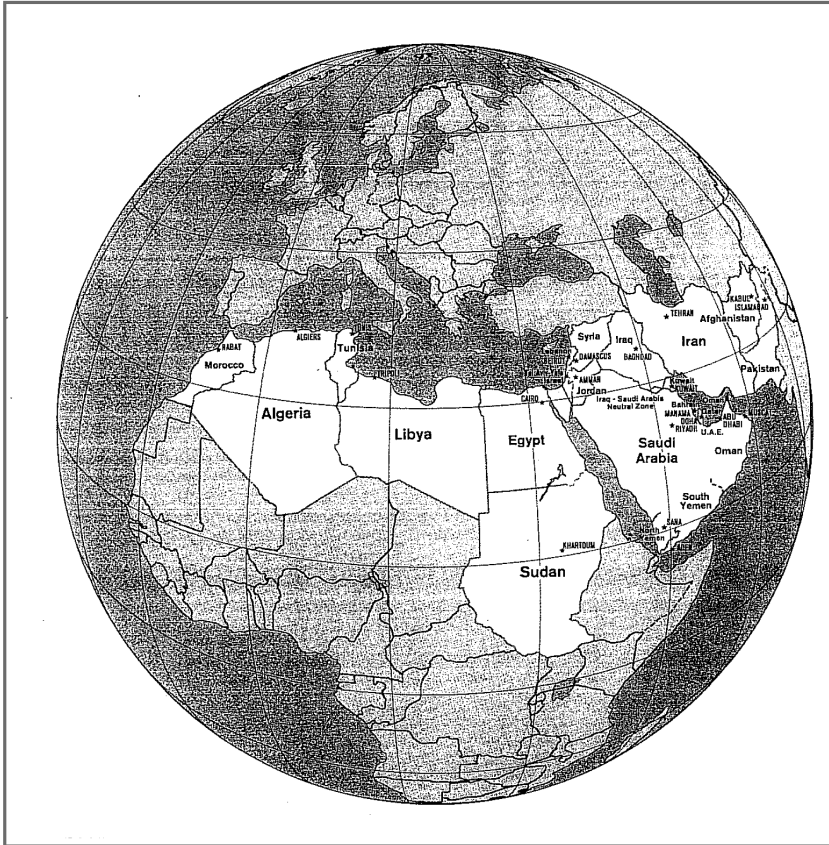
35. Interagency Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

NI IIM 79-10026

Washington, December 1979

NEW REALITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

[Omitted here is the table of contents.]



¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, History Staff Files. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. Drafted in the Office of Political Analysis, National Foreign Assessment Center, and coordinated with the Departments of State and Energy, National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Intelligence Staffs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. A note on the title page reads: "Information available as of 29 November 1979 was used in the preparation of this memorandum."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1973 the United States has become heavily dependent on oil from the Middle East, and has seen US interests in the area increasingly affected by events and regional politics that are not subject to US control. US relations with Israel, the Arabs, and some of the South Asian states have experienced repeated strains as these states have pursued their national interests independent of the great powers. US influence in the area has declined, and manifestations of anti-American feeling have increased, in part because the United States is seen as irresolute, but basically as the result of a historical trend that is not likely to be reversed.

These changed circumstances are primarily the result of dramatic developments that have occurred during the 1970s: the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the rapid increase in oil prices, the revolution in Iran, the resurgence of a politicized Islam and a rejection of Western culture, and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Together, these developments have reoriented the politics, the economics, and to a lesser extent the military balance of the region. Egypt is isolated within the Arab world, Iran is militarily weak and nearing anarchy, and the pro-US Arab states often called moderates are taking a more independent course, seeking new allies in the area, and cooperating more often with radical, anti-Western Arab governments.

The Soviets, of course, have attempted to expand their influence in the Middle East during this period of fundamental changes, instability, and increasing difficulties for the United States. They have suffered some setbacks, but their arms deliveries have enabled them to strengthen relations with a number of Arab states; their military position in the area has been maintained; and they are abetting the growing instability in the region. Soviet gains have come more in the indirect form of the reduced US role in the area than through direct expansion of Soviet influence. The greatest potential for substantial Soviet gains in the near term is in Iran, where continuing serious instability could give way to a leftist regime more sympathetic to the USSR.

In the increasingly significant Persian Gulf region, recent developments have left Saudi Arabia and Iraq more important in both Arab and international politics, and have increased the vulnerability of all Persian Gulf states to internal disruption and foreign meddling. The impact of Shia unrest in Iran, Iraqi nationalist aspirations, [3 lines not declassified]. The stability assumed under the Saudi-Iranian hegemony has collapsed, and the smaller Gulf states' search for accommodation with Iraq is likely to restrain their interest in security cooperation with the United States.

Additional and perhaps equally fundamental changes are likely in the coming year. The leaders of Israel and several Arab states—espe-

cially Syria, Morocco, and Sudan—face serious domestic challenges, and the socioeconomic strains associated with rapid modernization could stimulate serious unrest in others, primarily among the traditional monarchies of the Gulf. Bilateral disputes have the potential to lead to armed conflict in several areas—including in the Maghreb, the Yemens, and between Iran and Iraq—but these appear unlikely in the near term to provoke a general Arab-Israeli war or a direct military clash between the superpowers.

The security of Israel and the internal stability of the Arab states most critical to US interests—Saudi Arabia and Egypt—seem as nearly assured as is possible for the next year. The Saudis and Egyptians will remain unreconciled, however, and their bilateral dispute will continue to impede the United States as it pursues its two immediate aims in the area: progress in negotiations on West Bank autonomy, and ensuring the supply of oil for the West.

The Egyptian-Israeli negotiations seem all but certain to extend beyond the time frame originally envisaged, and there is some danger that domestic politics in Israel or Egyptian frustration with limited Israeli concessions could lead to tougher demands on either side or even to suspension of the talks. It is more likely, however, that the two sides ultimately will reach an agreement that meets their minimum needs but is not acceptable to the Palestinians, Syria, Jordan, or Saudi Arabia. These other Arab parties, therefore, are unlikely to participate in negotiations. This will increase further the tendency of the Arab oil producers to introduce political considerations into their decisions on oil prices, production levels, and marketing strategies.

DISCUSSION

THE NEW REALITIES

1. The period from 1973 to 1979 has brought to the Middle East changes more fundamental than any since Israel and several Arab countries with their independence in the years after World War II. This period has also seen a significant increase in the United States' stake in, and vulnerability to, the policies of area states. Israel and the key Arab states of the region now display a heightened determination to pursue their national interests independent of the superpowers.

2. The 1973 Arab-Israeli war irrevocably altered the outlook of the major actors in the area. The Arabs—despite their weakened military position vis-a-vis Israel overall—regained their sense of pride and no longer view Israel as invincible; they view their success as the product of coordinated political-military action. The Israelis, for their part, feel less secure in their belief in the superiority of Israel's capabilities and the inability of the Arab states to mount a successful unified attack. This has led to an enhanced state-of-siege mentality. The Israeli perception of the erosion of US support has magnified this conviction.

3. Since the early 1970s we have seen the rapid increase in oil prices and the growth of immense oil wealth among the Arab states, notably Saudi Arabia; the reordering of the military and political balance in the critical Persian Gulf area following the collapse of the Pahlavi dynasty; a revolutionary change with the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel; and a substantial increase in the margin of Israeli military superiority over the Arabs. Ironically, these far-reaching changes have occurred during a period of unprecedented and generally overlooked stability in the leadership of the Arab world. With the exception of the two Yemens, no Arab state has experienced a violent change of regime since 1970.

4. These developments have given rise to a number of seemingly anomalous political trends:

—Fundamental changes have occurred in the relationships among the principal Arab states.² The traditionally most important Arab country, Egypt, has been isolated as never before.

—The eastern Arabs, especially Saudi Arabia and Iraq, have become more important in regional and international politics. Saudi Arabia's increased prominence rests on its central role in international oil and financial matters, and on its ability to tip the Arab political balance against Egypt. Iraq's importance derives primarily from its heightened military capabilities.

—The outlook and role of the Arab moderates—such as Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia—have changed, and their policies now are less congruent with those of the United States. The word “moderation” is increasingly irrelevant in describing the attitudes of Arabs toward the superpowers, or toward the desirability of a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute.

5. Over the coming year these trends can be expected to continue—and perhaps more fundamental changes to occur—as a result of pressures growing out of several currently dynamic or atypical situations, each with uncertain ramifications:

—Revolution continues in Iran, threatening the integrity of that country and fostering regional instability that could threaten the security and stability of other Persian Gulf states.

—Ideologies that have a radical impact on area politics (ranging from Islamic to Marxist) will continue to exert a powerful appeal in the area. The clash of ideologies is most graphically represented in the case of Afghanistan, but potentially serious situations exist even in such currently stable countries as Egypt, where a variety of Islamic

² See also annex A (Political Reorientation Among the Arabs). [Footnote is in the original. Annexes A–E are not printed.]

groups are testing the security services and competing for a political following.

—The constancy of leadership in the Arab world, virtually unchanged throughout the 1970s, seems unlikely to endure for long; the leaders of Syria, Morocco, and Sudan, for example, face especially serious domestic problems. Similarly, Prime Minister Begin's problems with his health and his coalition government suggest we may soon see a change of leadership in Israel as well.

—Continued Arab pressure for Palestinian self-determination and for a revision of US policy toward the Palestinians will ensure strains in US relations both with the Arabs and with Israel.

—Israel's continued military actions in Lebanon and lack of flexibility in West Bank negotiations will reinforce present political trends in the Arab world. These factors have the potential to spark wider hostilities on Israel's eastern front and to further strain both US-Israeli and US-Arab relations.

6. A socioeconomic revolution has been under way in many countries of the Middle East since the escalation of oil prices began in 1974.³ This, along with the perennial problems of frustrated expectations in such countries as Egypt, also has the potential to further social and political instability in the area. Such concerns contributed in a major way to the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, and—although the situations are dissimilar in many important respects—constitute a latent threat in virtually all oil-producing Arab states in the Gulf. Their rulers are aware that rapid economic development, especially with concomitant modernization and Westernization, may stimulate social and political unrest. Most rulers also recognize, however, that there is no assured way to avoid this challenge. Political liberalization and political repression each solve some problems, but intensify others; vacillation between these strategies virtually ensures political trouble.

7. The altered balance of forces in the Middle East—caused by the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, US and Soviet weapons sales to Israel and some Arab states, the policies of the Marxist government in South Yemen, and the effective disappearance of Iran as a stabilizing force in the Gulf—also serves to increase the prospects of area instability and regional conflicts, despite the sharply diminished likelihood of war between Egypt and Israel.⁴ The most likely areas for renewed hostilities having the potential to involve US interests in the coming year include the dispute between Iraq and Iran; the tension between Morocco and Algeria over Western Sahara; the conflict involving Israel,

³ See also annex B (Socioeconomic Revolution). [Footnote is in the original.]

⁴ See also annex C (The Changed Security Situation). [Footnote is in the original.]

Lebanon, and Syria (where war through miscalculation will remain a possibility); the dispute between the two Yemens; and the Egyptian-Libyan border problem. Over the next year it is less likely, but possible, that subversion in Oman or an Israeli reaction to an Iraqi or Iranian troop movement into Syria could also result in military clashes.

THE PERSIAN GULF

8. The area of greatest political uncertainty in the coming year almost certainly will remain the Persian Gulf, where the collapse of the Pahlavi dynasty has left Iran weak and unstable, and where the changes in Iran and in Arab politics generally have increased the prominence and importance of Iraq. Under any foreseeable circumstances, US influence in the region is not likely to regain its former level.

9. In Iran, internal turmoil and strife are likely to continue for at least the next year, with the possibility of more widespread bloodshed among the religious/political factions and between the government and ethnic minorities seeking autonomy. Given the disruption of the Iranian security and military forces, there is little likelihood that the government of Ayatollah Khomeini will be able to impose domestic order or deploy sizable forces beyond Iran's borders in the near future.

10. If stability is restored to Iran, it may only be the precursor to more determined efforts to export the revolution. Khomeini has already called for all Muslims to attack US interests throughout the Islamic world, and for revolution in some area states. Many in Khomeini's inner circle believe they are the only truly Islamic leaders in the world and that their revolution must be followed by others, especially in Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. If a leftist regime were to emerge in Iran, it too would probably be committed to exporting revolution and might well be aligned with the USSR.

11. The revolution in Iran has created new uncertainties for Iraq, raising especially the possibility that Shia unrest might spread from Iran to the majority Shia population of Iraq. On the other hand, the collapse of the Iranian armed forces has left Iraq the dominant military power in the Persian Gulf. Additionally, Iraq more than any other Arab state has gained from the reorientation of Arab politics that has followed the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. The Iraqi leadership shows every sign of attempting to build on these two areas of strength to expand the influence of its Ba'thist ideology both in the Persian Gulf and in the Arab world generally. The Iraqis are in no hurry, believing time will work against Egyptian and US policies and against Iraq's moderate opponents in the area.

12. The traditional regimes in the Gulf have generally disdained close contact with the Iraqi Ba'thists but now have little choice but to come to an accommodation, which will further increase Iraqi regional

influence. Although some states such as Saudi Arabia apparently hope that improved relations with Baghdad and its involvement in regional security matters will lead to moderation in Iraqi actions, we believe it unlikely that there will in fact be any alteration of basic Iraqi aims. If Iraqi influence continues to grow, any increased identification of the smaller Gulf states with US interests will become a political liability and a focal point for extremists.

ISSUES OF CURRENT CONCERN

13. Apart from the crisis in Iran and the difficulties it has created in the area, Middle East issues of greatest concern to the US Government in the coming year will continue to include: progress in the ongoing negotiations on West Bank autonomy; the supply of oil to the industrial states and the use of oil as a political weapon; and the security and stability of governments sympathetic to the United States, especially in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco. The political, economic, and military developments of recent years bear directly on each of these immediate US interests, and on such additional basic US concerns as the protection of US and Israeli security and the minimizing of Soviet influence in the region.

Negotiations

14. The outcome of the ongoing Egyptian-Israeli negotiations on West Bank autonomy will probably be the most significant independent variable in determining the course of near-term political developments in the Middle East. Failure of the negotiations to result in sufficient progress could jeopardize the present relatively favorable Saudi policy on oil production levels. Such a failure over time could have much more serious additional repercussions: stimulating the further growth and spread of anti-American attitudes and actions in the area (conceivably including the use of oil sanctions as threatened by the Libyans and Iraqis), weakening the domestic position of Egypt's President Sadat (leading possibly to an eventual Egyptian turn away from close identification with the United States), and intensifying the pressure on Arab regimes normally close to the United States to move still closer to the radical Arabs. Alternatively, success in the negotiations might help slow the implementation of oil price, production, and marketing decisions detrimental to US interests, contribute to the domestic security of pro-US states in the region, arrest the movement of generally pro-US Arab states toward positions espoused by the radicals, and help forestall any resurgence of Soviet influence in the area.

15. Progress in the autonomy negotiations to date and political developments in the West Bank itself provide little hope that the Egyptians and Israelis by themselves will reach agreement on the establishment of a genuinely self-governing authority by 25 May 1980—the

target date Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat set for themselves in their joint letter to President Carter in March 1979.⁵ Apart from the intractable nature of the substantive issues involved, delay is almost certain to result from the serious internal divisions within the Israeli Government and its negotiating team, the prospect of early elections in Israel, and the Israeli conviction that time will increase President Sadat's political need for an accord, thereby leading him to reduce his demands. Israel in fact perceives no need for a West Bank agreement except insofar as one may be necessary to prevent Egyptian backsliding on the peace treaty already signed, or to protect against new strains in US-Israeli relations. The Israelis see Egyptian noncompliance with the treaty as a real possibility, and this may induce limited flexibility in the Israeli position; with US elections approaching within the next year, however, the Israelis will be less apprehensive and less influenced by potential American pressures.

16. On the Arab side, Egypt will continue to press publicly for progress on Palestinian issues to relieve Arab political attacks on Cairo and, ideally, to prompt Palestinian participation in the talks. These goals motivated the Egyptians at the outset to seek an agreed statement on the overall aims of the negotiations; ironically, they were also behind Egypt's subsequent willingness essentially to sacrifice that strategy and to accept the Israeli approach of focusing on more specific, concrete issues. Egypt hopes that this latter strategy will allow at least some demonstrable progress that will soften the opposition of the other Arabs.

17. The Palestinians, Jordanians, Syrians, and Saudis believe that the current process will not result in a peace agreement acceptable to them. None of these Arab parties, therefore, appear likely to support or participate in the peace process during the next year. In the case of some, notably Jordan, increased and more regular financial assistance from the wealthy Arab states provides an important incentive for avoiding peace negotiations. Over the longer term, substantial Israeli concessions on the settlements issue and on territorial autonomy, and US recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization are likely to emerge as necessary conditions for wider Arab participation.

18. In the probable continued absence of wider Arab participation in negotiations, the likelihood will grow that President Sadat will accept an autonomy agreement essentially on Israeli terms in return for minor Israeli concessions. Such an accord almost certainly would include

⁵ Reference is to the March 26 letter from Begin and Sadat to Carter included as part of the documentary package accompanying the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty and signed by the three leaders in Washington the same day. The text of the letter is printed in *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book I, p. 515.

various marginal gains for Arabs in the occupied territories, and Israeli pledges to negotiate more basic issues with the Palestinians or Jordanians if those parties elect to become involved. This would enable Sadat to say that he had accomplished everything possible and that, as a result of Egypt's actions, further gains for the Palestinians were available for their taking; this might satisfy the Egyptians but not the other Arabs. The result would be an agreement protecting Israeli and Egyptian interests but leaving the United States accountable to the other Arabs for achieving real progress on Palestinian issues.

19. Given President Sadat's psychological and political investment to date in the negotiating process, we believe it less likely that he will react to the continuing slow pace of negotiations by reversing course and withdrawing from the talks. It is quite possible, however, that he may adopt a significantly tougher negotiating stance as the May 1980 deadline approaches and as he regains Egyptian control of much of the Sinai.

Oil

20. Middle East oil-producing states over the next year are unlikely to increase production significantly, and there is a good chance that their output may fall. During most of 1979 the Saudis allowed production to exceed their preferred ceiling of 8.5 million barrels per day. This increase brought Saudi output to its maximum sustainable capacity of approximately 9.5 million b/d. Iran is producing 3.5 million to 4 million b/d, but continued instability could cause that country's production and exports to fall sharply or even temporarily to cease. The Persian Gulf producers with large reserves—Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia—all believe that their long-term national self-interest, including the important question of how rapidly to deplete their resource base, dictates that they limit output. All but Iraq have already imposed ceilings on production. Any near-term production increases will be small.

21. As for oil-pricing policy, Middle East members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries are virtually certain to push for (Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Iran) or agree to (Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar) another increase in prices in December 1979. Kuwait has become more aggressive in pushing for price hikes, and Saudi Arabia has lost most of its former ability to limit increases. Several principal producers—notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq—have expressed concern about the impact of price increases on the economies of the industrialized states and on the less developed countries, but neither consideration is likely to weigh heavily enough to constrain OPEC as a whole. There is an apparent belief within the organization that the West can afford higher prices, and that the LDCs should be afforded relief through

special programs. The size of the December OPEC price increase will depend heavily on market conditions prevailing just before the meeting, and could be substantial. There seems to be virtually no chance of a price freeze.

22. Decisions of the Arab states on oil production and price during the coming year will primarily respond to market forces, but they will be influenced by political factors as well. The oil weapon—in the sense of an embargo of the United States such as occurred following the 1973 Middle East war—is unlikely to be used by the Arabs except in the circumstances of renewed Arab-Israeli hostilities, the accession to power of more radical regimes in key producing states, or possibly US support for an Israeli-Egyptian agreement ending the autonomy talks in a manner that left the Palestinians with no significant gains. Some Arab states would be likely to join Iran in an embargo of the United States if Iran were to take such action as a result of a US-Iranian military confrontation.

23. The oil weapon is in fact a continuum of possible actions, however, and oil policy decisions are already being made with political considerations in mind—despite the ritual protestations of some Arab leaders that oil and politics are unrelated. The Arabs' political leverage will increase as the tight market makes marginal shifts increasingly critical to importing countries. Libya has already raised the possibility of cutting back its oil exports to the United States, and Iraq is expanding exports to France in return for access to French technology and arms. The political factor will become less important only if the industrialized states suffer an economic slowdown sufficiently severe to reduce market pressures.

24. Political considerations are virtually certain for the foreseeable future to remain central to Iran's decisions on oil pricing, production, and marketing.

Security of States Sympathetic to the United States

25. The important pro-US Arab regimes that appear to face the greatest threats over the coming year are those of King Hassan of Morocco and President Nimeiri of Sudan. In neither case are the regime's problems primarily the result of the strains in inter-Arab politics surrounding the Arab-Israeli issue; each faces political challenges growing out of economic difficulties and unique security problems with neighboring states. Because these problems will not go away in the near future, the continuation in power of both governments is likely to depend primarily on the ability of the individual leader to demonstrate consistent and vigorous leadership. During much of 1979 both Hassan and Nimeiri seemed to appreciate the need to provide such leadership but to be uncertain what policies to follow. Hassan

wavered most noticeably on how to deal with his weakening position in Western Sahara, and Nimeiri shifted between conciliatory and repressive policies toward labor and student unrest.

26. The security of the two Arab states of critical importance to US interests, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, is (unlike the situations in Morocco and Sudan) directly entwined with the inter-Arab political disputes that have resulted from the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Moreover, their security is directly related to the two other paramount interests of the United States in the area—peace negotiations and oil. At present, neither Egypt nor Saudi Arabia faces a serious external threat, and neither President Sadat nor the Saud family appears to face a serious near-term domestic challenge.

27. In each case, however, circumstances could develop that would create a much less stable domestic situation. If the autonomy negotiations should collapse, for example, Sadat's position would be much less secure as a result of the substantial deflation of the Egyptian popular pride that so far has protected him from the opposition of Egyptian intellectual, leftist, and Islamic groups. If negotiations end in an agreement unacceptable to the other Arabs, Sadat's position may also be jeopardized by the likely invocation of additional Arab sanctions. In Saudi Arabia, the anachronistic nature of the political system and the effects of socioeconomic modernization make it likely that the royal family at some point will face a challenge from groups within the society that do not share political and economic power. There is no basis, however, on which to predict with confidence when such a threat will materialize.⁶

⁶ The occupation in November 1979 of the Great Mosque of Mecca—the holiest shrine in Islam—was a violent protest by fundamentalist Sunni Muslims unhappy with the growing modernization and Westernization of Saudi Arabia. Although the incident was apparently an isolated act by religious fanatics, the seizure of the supposedly well-guarded shrine seems certain to have reinforced an already strong sense among the Saudi leadership of the country's basic weakness and the pressures on the Saudi Government to shun foreign influences. Social conservatives point to the incident as an indication that the modernization process has moved too rapidly and has undermined social cohesion. The strength of the attackers illustrated the danger posed by the numerous arms being smuggled into the country and highlighted the weakness of the Saudi internal security and intelligence apparatus.

The initial Saudi effort to conceal the attack and the Saudi Government's subsequent repeated false claims that the situation was under control while fighting was still in progress pointed to the leadership's lack of confidence. The incident, combined with recent events in Iran, Pakistan, and the Yemens, seems certain to weaken Saudi credibility in the area and to heighten Saudi fears of foreign—particularly Iranian and Yemeni—subversion. It could also lead to serious divisions within the Saudi royal family as its members assess responsibility for the problem.

For the United States, the most disturbing political consequences of the Mecca siege will be to make it more difficult for the Saudi Government to maintain a visibly close relationship with Washington. The Saudis will now have to balance their needs for US security support with the fear that too close an identification with the United States could undermine their status in the Muslim world. [Footnote is in the original. See Documents 201 and 202.]

*THE SOVIET ROLE*⁷

28. Soviet objectives in the Middle East region are to gain greater political leverage, reduce US influence, increase access to Middle East port and air facilities in order to support naval deployments in the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean, further hard currency earnings through arms sales, and increase access to the energy resources of the area. The USSR's successes, although significant, have been limited in recent years by its inability to convert its activities and support to Arab countries into permanent influence. This has resulted from the limitations of its political leverage over major states in the region, from basic Arab antipathy for Communism and suspicion of Soviet intentions, and from an Arab preference for the hard currency and civilian technology of the West.

29. The Soviets have made a number of gains in the region:

—They have established relations with a number of Arab states based on arms supply.

—They are backing a variety of forces in the region that are seeking to destabilize established governments and replace them with leftist regimes.

—They have reestablished in South Yemen and Ethiopia many of the naval, air, communications, and intelligence facilities previously held in Somalia.

—Since the mid-1960s, they have deployed and maintained a significant naval presence in the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean.

—They have recently signed a Friendship Treaty with South Yemen, thus formalizing the presence they have built there over the past year;⁸ and they have reached a new arms agreement with North Yemen.

—Their military involvement in Afghanistan and Ethiopia may, in the future, increase their ability to influence events in neighboring countries such as Iran, Pakistan, and Sudan.

30. The Soviets undoubtedly view the past year's events in the Middle East favorably, although they have not been able to convert the new situation into direct gains for themselves. They are certainly gratified that the polarization resulting from the signing of the Israeli-Egyptian treaty has isolated Sadat and strained US relations with the moderate Arab states. But their own efforts to capitalize on these strains by courting Jordan and Saudi Arabia have not yet been productive. Their attempts to strengthen ties to their clients have made little con-

⁷ See also annex D (The Soviet Role). [Footnote is in the original.]

⁸ See Document 290.

crete progress, except in the case of South Yemen, and, to a lesser extent, Libya. Although the Soviets have made large-scale deliveries of arms to Syria, for example, they have apparently received no political concessions in return, and their relations with Iraq remain strained.

31. The fall of the Shah and the decline of US influence in Iran were welcomed by the Soviets, although they have not been able to work out a satisfactory relationship with the Khomeini regime. The new regime's rejection of past ties to the United States and Israel, its withdrawal from the Central Treaty Organization, and its rejection of a security role in the Gulf region were considered setbacks to the United States and thus relative gains for the USSR. Iran's November 1979 moves against the United States have been perceived as a further gain by the Soviets, who have renewed hope that the Iranian revolution will assume a shape and direction favorable to Soviet interests. The Soviets are probably optimistic that, over the long term, forces that they are backing in Iran may establish a secular, leftist regime that will adopt a pro-Soviet policy.

32. There are a number of other possible events that could strengthen the USSR's relative position in the area over the longer term. Should Sadat be overthrown, for example, the strong anti-Sovietism of the current Egyptian regime would probably be mitigated to some extent. A successful reunification of the Yemens under the aegis of the South would be an extension of Soviet influence and would pose a threat to Saudi Arabia's security. The undermining of any of the pro-US regimes in the area, such as Morocco, Sudan, or Oman, would be an important advancement of Soviet interests.

33. Any one of these developments would encourage destabilizing trends in other Middle East countries, which would benefit the USSR. However, even though disillusioned with US policies, most Arab states would hope to avoid moving closer to the Soviets. Arab nationalism and the new tide of Islamic sentiment militate against dependence on any outside power, and Arab rejection of Communism as a philosophy is still an inhibiting factor. The Soviets have little, except arms, with which to tempt these nations, which prefer Western technology and civilian products. In general, therefore, the Soviets must hope that US failures will redound to their benefit or that instability will eventually lead to more pro-Soviet regimes. Further instability in the area, combined with Soviet influence and military presence in peripheral countries, may cause some accommodations to Soviet interests in traditionally Western-oriented Arab states.⁹

⁹ See also annex E (Key Factors in the Coming Year). [Footnote is in the original.]

36. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, December 12, 1979

SUBJECT

Broadcasting to Muslims (U)

The Summary and Conclusions of the SCC I held on 11 December 1979 to review proposals for expanding and improving VOA and Radio Liberty broadcasts to Muslim audiences as well as two CIA proposals for covert communications assistance to [*less than 1 line not declassified*].² [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

The total *yearly* cost of all the steps that can be taken *immediately* is not greater than \$10 million dollars. Our task forces in the Persian Gulf area are probably costing this for only a few days' operation. Longer-range improvements, which would be funded over two or three years, add up to about \$70 million. (C)

I am inclined to think that if we had not let our ability to communicate with this part of the world decline over a long period of time by failing to add modest increments of funds regularly, we might not have to be facing such large outlays of money for augmenting our military capabilities in the region. The costs of improving our position in the broadcasting field are extremely modest in comparison, but we have no time to lose in setting about the job. I plan to have my staff monitor everything we are doing in this field closely to ensure that momentum is maintained. (U)

¹ Source: National Security Council, Carter Administration Intelligence Files, Box I-020, Minutes—SCC—1979. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for action. Brzezinski handwrote the date on the memorandum. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum. Henze sent the memorandum to Brzezinski under a December 12 memorandum; a handwritten notation on that memorandum indicates that Brzezinski hand-carried the SCC Summary of Conclusions and the memorandum to the President on December 13. (Ibid.)

² The CIA proposals were not found. In an undated memorandum to Carter, Brzezinski addressed a question that Carter had relating to CIA financing of the VOA and Radio Liberty broadcasting effort. Brzezinski responded: "Without financing the operation, CIA does not feel we can assure ourselves of control over it." Carter approved the recommendation that CIA finance the operation. (Ibid.)

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the Summary of Conclusions attached at TAB A.³

Tab A

Summary of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting⁴

Washington, December 11, 1979

SCC Meeting on Broadcasting and Covert Action—
11 December 1979

I held an SCC this afternoon to review proposals of the VOA and BIB for improving and increasing broadcasting to Muslim audiences. We agreed that VOA should develop immediate plans to expand broadcasting in Persian. It will also plan increases in other key Muslim languages as rapidly as possible. VOA and State will give immediate priority to finding a location for building four South Asian transmitters which you approved in March 1977. (I have ordered State and ICA to report why action on these has been delayed for more than 2½ years.) Steps to expand Radio Liberty broadcasts in seven languages to Soviet Muslims will be taken immediately and urgent efforts to lease transmitters in the Middle East will be made. Concrete plans for further expansion of programming capabilities and transmitter power for both VOA and Radio Liberty will be developed by an SCC working group. (C) The meeting also endorsed CIA proposals for covert broadcasting projects in [*less than 1 line not declassified*].⁵ (S/Sensitive) CIA also agreed to improve the performance of FBIS. (U)

³ Carter neither approved nor disapproved the recommendation. However, he wrote underneath the disapproval line: "This is a *summary*?! I approve the immediate action, but OMB will have to assess for me the other new expansion projects. J."

⁴ Secret; Sensitive.

⁵ In a December 14 memorandum to Turner, Brzezinski indicated that Carter had reviewed the December 11 SCC recommendations. (National Security Council, Carter Administration Intelligence Files, Box I-020, Minutes—SCC—1979)

37. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, December 13, 1979, 9–9:55 a.m.

SUBJECT

Iran

PARTICIPANT

State

Warren Christopher
David Newsom
Harold Saunders

Defense

W. Graham Claytor

JCS

General David Jones
General John Pustay

CIA

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Frank Carlucci

Justice

Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti**
John Shenefield**

Treasury

Robert Carswell**
Anthony Solomon**
Robert Mundheim**

White House

Jody Powell
Lloyd Cutler**
Hedley Donovan
Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

Colonel William Odom
Gary Sick

** Present for domestic issues only.

[Omitted here is material on the situation in Iran.]

Political-Military Issues:

1. *Middle East Facilities.* Dr. Brzezinski relayed the President's concern that Oman, Somalia, Kenya and Saudi Arabia have not yet been approached concerning the possibility of U.S. facilities in the first three countries. State noted that they had been preparing a diplomatic strategy while awaiting DOD's recommendation of what would be needed. State, Defense and NSC will meet today to accelerate the process and draft prospective cables.² One serious problem is the price. General Jones noted that the improvements in Masirah would require about \$200 million in construction plus about \$190 million further for operational costs over a five year period. That money is not in the budget. State also pointed out that there is enormous sensitivity at this moment about possible U.S. military action against Iran. There was a considerable

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 31, [Meetings—SCC 228: 12/13/79]. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the upper right-hand corner of the first page.

² No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found.

risk that going to some of these countries with a general request at this particular moment risked a quick negative response. Dr. Brzezinski noted that a generalized request would serve to engage them in discussion without spelling out particulars which might be difficult to accept on the first round. All agreed that each of the potential host countries would require a quid and that it would be expensive. It was noted that there is no FMS credit or ESF money in the budget for any of the three countries in question.³ (S)

[Omitted here is material on the situation in Iran.]

³ In the left-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter drew an asterisk and an arrow pointing to the bottom of the page where he wrote: "It is debilitating, once we (or I) decide to proceed on a plan, for us to begin finding so many ways to delay any action. We cannot decide at an SCC meeting what Oman, Kenya, or Somalia will say or demand. You cannot decide at an SCC mtg how budget demands will be met. If we run into obstacles in the future we'll either surmount them, change the plans or drop the idea. Idle debates among ourselves don't help. If you all detect an unpredicted problem after I've made a decision, come directly & immediately to me—otherwise, carry out my decision, without delay."

38. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, December 25, 1979

SUBJECT

Improved Prospects of US Access to Bases in the Middle East (U)

The State–DOD–NSC team got on balance a remarkably positive reception on its recent trip to promote US access to air and port facilities in the Middle East.² In each country the team stated that you had sent

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 51, Middle East: 8–12/79. Secret; Eyes Only. Outside the System. Sent for information. Brzezinski handwrote the date on the memorandum. Carter initialed the memorandum, indicating that he saw it. Ermarth sent the memorandum to Brzezinski under a December 24 memorandum requesting that Brzezinski sign it. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 9–12/79)

² The joint State/DOD/NSC team was led by Bartholomew and Murray, and included Ermarth. The team visited Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kenya, and Somalia December 18–22. (Telegram 325388 to Jidda, Muscat, Nairobi, Mogadishu, Dhahran, and Paris, December 18; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790581–0757) Christopher reported to Carter on the team's trip in a December 24 memorandum. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 9–12/79)

them urgently to make our case for improved access (e.g., port calls, air transit, and on-site storage) to support US naval presence and surge deployments in crises. (S)

The team's hosts more than echoed our concern about Soviet exploitation of regional turbulence. They generally welcomed increased US military presence in the area, and, in varying degrees, were positive about improving our access to facilities. (S)

Displaying familiar timidity in the face of political risk, the *Saudis*—although not asked to afford us basing access—gave our team its coolest reception. But they said they would try to be helpful to us in Oman and Somalia. (S)

President Moi of *Kenya* expressed the most unqualified support for our efforts and for you personally. He simply invited us to start work with his government on the access we need, notably to Mombasa port. (S)

Sultan Qabus of *Oman* was receptive to increased US use of facilities on Masirah. Although not stating them as preconditions to next steps, the Omanis made clear that they see increased US basing access in the context of additional military assistance and a more formal US commitment to Oman's security. (S)

Somalia is the most problematic case because of the Ogaden insurgency and her vast needs for political, military and economic support. Siad Barre stated those needs forcefully, but gave permission to a prompt survey of the facilities at Berbera. (S)

In each case, it was agreed that US survey teams should visit the facilities in question, as early as January. No doubt obstacles and conditions will emerge as we proceed on details. But clearly this trip was a strategic step forward in our construction of a security framework for the greater Middle East. Deciding how to proceed with Somalia will require the most careful examination and your personal attention.³ (S)

³ Brzezinski wrote in the margin below this concluding paragraph: "But all in all, it was a very significant step toward a truly major Carter strategic initiative: the shaping of a security framework for the Middle East, and esp. the Arabian Peninsula. ZB."

39. Memorandum From William Odom of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, January 7, 1980

SUBJECT

Progress on the RDF (S)

You asked for my comments on David's memorandum about the JCS briefing on the RDF (Tab A).² His points are valid, and I agree that we need to push DOD. I would, however, analyze the problem differently and offer a different action plan. (S)

The Problem

The JCS did not really ignore PD-18³ for two years. They were discouraged from addressing it by ISA. Convinced that they would demilitarize the Indian Ocean, the ISA staff in Defense had no time or enthusiasm for the RDF. They got lots of encouragement from State and no discouragement from NSC regional and security clusters. The services—as distinguished from the JCS—also need some blame. The JCS, surprisingly, tried to take the RDF seriously but could not get service or OSD support for funding to meet JSPID requirements. (S)

There are three major sets of RDF issues: (a) the composition of the forces; (b) projection capabilities (i.e., air or sea lift, or local basing); and (c) command and control. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 7/79-3/80. Secret. Sent for information. Brzezinski wrote in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum: "WO Discuss with J[asper] W[elch], and let's plan an SCC on it—unless he objects ZB." The Rapid Deployment Force was discussed at the January 14 SCC meeting; see Document 40.

² Attached but not printed. In the December 27 memorandum to Brzezinski, Aaron noted that there had been "little in the brief that added substantially to the information" Brzezinski had received since August. The JCS told Aaron that Brown had "approved an RDF command arrangement that would have the commanding general of the RDJTF reporting directly to CINC Readiness Command (CINCRED) at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida." It was still unclear as to who would command the RDF if deployed in the Middle East region. Aaron commented: "We should keep the heat on Harold to ensure that Defense makes these difficult bureaucratic decisions soon, so they can get the 'chair-shuffling' behind them and get on with the harder task of formulating specific military objectives and plans for the region." Aaron also noted: "The message throughout the briefing was that the PD-18 requirement for an RDF was essentially new—and that it will take at least 5 years to have in-hand all the programs needed to break the RDF logistic logjam, e.g., C-X, Maritime prepositioning ships, etc."

³ See footnote 3, Document 28.

A. *Forces*. The forces have been picked. The issues remaining are, first, sufficient funding and personnel to meet readiness standards, and second, whether to use NATO contingency forces. The obvious solution to the first is more funding, but the second, creation of new forces, will require the military draft. We cannot recruit enough manpower to fill units now in existence. (S)

B. *Projection*.

—*Airlift* is too expensive to buy in large stand-by formations. The CRAF program is the answer along with legislative authority to implement it. To be credible, however, we must exercise CRAF, mobilizing civil aircraft from time-to-time. (S)

—*Sealift* needs a boost in the roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) ship area. I have told you much about Soviet RO/ROs. A good RO/RO system could pick up an armor brigade on one ship in a few hours and deliver it to Europe in 4–5 days, 10–12 days to much more distant regions like the Persian Gulf. The Navy has no real interest in this “you call and we haul” mission. We could create incentives for merchant marine RO/RO ships to be mobilized in emergencies like aircraft under the CRAF program. (S)

—*Bases* in the region and enroute are the third critical aspect of force projection. First steps in Oman and Somalia have been taken and the next steps can be expedited. And the enroute bases (Lajes, Azores, Beja, and Cairo) must be certain—a task for diplomacy. One enormous caveat: do not stock POMCUS at the regional bases. Some stocks, fuel, ammo, and equipment, but not the POMCUS type because the expense is too great and the flexibility in use is limited to the region. We have gone crazy with POMCUS in Europe. We cannot afford what is now planned, and we would lose it in a major war before the units arrive. (S)

C. *C³I*, of course, means more than the REDCOM/JTF which David mentions. That structure, sitting in Florida, does little to help us in the Persian Gulf. Brown instructed the JCS to open the Unified Command Plan and develop a Middle East regional command, but they dodged successfully. They have substituted JTF for a change in the UCP. David’s point about the “chair shuffling” is key. It involves more than decisions, however. It involves getting Harold to go back to the JCS with instructions to redesign the UCP, cutting the Persian Gulf out of EUCOM and PACOM regional control. (S)

General Jones will suffer enormous pressures if he tries to push through a unified command change. Brown also would anger senior military figures in the services if he forced the UCP change. Thus, both the Secretary and the Chairman are understandably reluctant to create this internal discontent if they can avoid it. We could take the “heat” for them by getting the President to send a directive that it be done. (S)

Actions

1. *SCC on Forces*. Hold an SCC which addresses the following questions:

—Should *forces* in the RDF also be liable for NATO or other contingencies? (David's concern)

—*Readiness*: What funding is required for higher readiness?

—*Manpower*: How to meet the higher levels? (The OMB report to Congress on the military draft, January 15, is relevant here.)

2. *SCC on projection*. This meeting should address the issues related to movement of forces:

—*Airlift*, what needs to be done on CRAF and related matters?

—*Sealift*, what are our capabilities and what ways can we improve them (such as a RO/RO merchant fleet that serves military purposes analogous to CRAF)?

—*Bases*, what next steps and funds are needed for regional bases, permanent and temporary, and what to do to ensure enroute basing?

3. *On C³I*, I recommend that this not be made an SCC matter but rather handled by a memorandum to Defense directing the formation of a Middle East Command. I do not believe you want more "process" and debate on this matter. All the arguments raised against it (backlash in the region, etc.) have been undercut by the success of the Bartholomew-Murray trip⁴ or overtaken by events in Iran and Afghanistan. Brown's response can be used for the President to announce a major "action" in the Persian Gulf region in the next six weeks. I will prepare a memorandum for this purpose if you desire.

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 38.

40. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, January 14, 1980, 10 a.m.–noon

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on U.S. Strategy for South West Asia and Persian Gulf

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>Energy</i>
Under Secretary for Political Affairs,	Secretary Charles Duncan
David Newsom	
Assistant Secretary Harold Saunders	<i>White House</i>
	Zbigniew Brzezinski
<i>Defense</i>	David Aaron
Deputy Secretary W. Graham Claytor	
Mr. Robert Murray	NSC
	Colonel William E. Odom
<i>JCS</i>	Colonel Leslie Denend
Chairman, General David Jones	Henry Owen
Lt. General John Pustay	Thomas Thornton
	Robert Hunter
<i>CIA</i>	Fritz Ermarth
Director Stansfield Turner	
Mr. Robert Ames	

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting with an overview of what is happening and what is at stake in the region. The results of this meeting, he said, are to provide a basis for a National Security Council meeting with the President later this week.² We must deal with the continued deterioration of the U.S. position in the region. Whatever the Soviet motives for their actions in Afghanistan, they have created an objective threat and a dynamic development in the area as serious for our security and vital interests as Soviet actions in Greece in 1947.³ We must provide the President with a basis for responding adequately to this change, specifically what we should do about Pakistan and about the larger Persian Gulf region. The President believes that there will be lasting

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 31, [Meetings—SCC 250: 1/14/80]. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes of the meeting are not attached and were not found. In the upper right-hand corner of the first page, Carter wrote “No comment now C.”

² No NSC meeting was held. See Document 43.

³ On December 25, 1979, Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan, taking control of cities and military installations. President Carter addressed the nation on January 4, calling the invasion a “serious threat to peace because of the threat of further Soviet expansion into neighboring countries in Southwest Asia.” For the full text of the address, which outlined steps the administration would take to thwart Soviet aggression, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1980–81*, Book I, pp. 21–24. It is also printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 136.

strategic consequences. He wants to reaffirm that there will be no zig-zag in U.S.-Soviet relations on our side. No warm up is to be expected soon. The mistake in 1968 after the Soviet action in Czechoslovakia was, in the President's view, to ease up on Moscow too early.

The President spoke with Aga Shahi over the weekend and reaffirmed our commitment to the agreement of 1959.⁴ The problem is how to define the U.S. commitment under the agreement. If there is major Soviet aggression, the U.S. will respond within the limits of our Constitutional authority. The U.S. will not, however, become involved in border skirmishes. We want our support to help Pakistan to take a firm stand against Soviet forces in the region even if they are faced by a Moscow/Kabul/New Delhi axis. In that case, the U.S. will develop a U.S./Saudi Arabian/PRC/Pakistan/and eventually Iran axis as a counter.

Dr. Brzezinski next declared that the task before us is how to translate this basic stand by the President into:

—effective military relations with Pakistan and other countries in the region;

—economic assistance to Pakistan in a way that supports our broader purposes;

—a regional web of political relations to counter effectively the threat created by Soviet moves in Afghanistan.

We cannot duplicate NATO in this region; a more eclectic mix of bilateral, multilateral, and informal arrangements must suffice.

There was a brief discussion of the implications of Dr. Brzezinski's framing of the overall context and the tasks to be accomplished. State asked if the U.S. guarantee to Pakistan against aggression was for only a Soviet attack or also an Indian attack, adding that this would be a major problem in our relations with India if it included both. Defense insisted that it must include both because the Pakistanis cannot shift forces between their western and eastern frontiers to meet the Soviet aggression without a guarantee in the east as well as against the Soviets in the west. State accepted this argument by Dr. Brzezinski and Defense that sooner or later we would have to face up to Pakistan's security problem with India. Dr. Brzezinski said that the U.S. commitment was only against a threat from the north. Dr. Brzezinski asked at this point if there were disagreements with his analysis of the situation because

⁴ Carter met with Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. on January 12. The memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XIX, South Asia. The 1959 U.S.-Pakistani Agreement for Cooperation pledged the United States, under certain conditions, to assist Pakistan against external aggression.

it carries a number of assumptions which are key for further decisions. No dissenting views were expressed. Defense strongly supported the analysis. State added that we must include the nuclear issue within this policy context. State also pointed out that we must anticipate the criticism that we are merely restoring a “cold war alliance” with the rebuttal that such an alliance is inadequate for the contemporary political and military realities in the region. Dr. Brzezinski accepted both points, especially that we have in mind something more than a cold war alliance as we build a new regional security system.

The meeting next turned to specific issues for decision.

I. Military Assistance to Pakistan

In discussion of the fighter aircraft issue, Graham Claytor reported that the Pakistanis did not request specific U.S. aircraft but rather asked the United States to provide what is necessary for them to defend themselves against the new Soviet threat which includes MIG–23s and MIG–25s. There was discussion of the value of A–7 fighters for close air support along the western borders, the extent to which helicopter gunships could perform the same mission, and whether the A–7s were meant for an air defense role also.

General Jones agreed that helicopters would be useful but added that A–7s would provide much greater air ground capability. All agreed that we should encourage the Pakistanis to use the French Mirage fighter for the larger air defense problem against the Soviet Union.

Tasking: State was asked to:

1. determine whether the Mirages will in fact suffice to meet the threat;
2. clarify with the French their willingness to provide Mirages;
3. with Defense, consider A–7s for Pakistan, about 30.

II. Bases, Political Assurances to Host Nations, and Increased RDF

Bases. Dr. Brzezinski raised the question of a base in Pakistan. General Jones said “facilities” (“bases” have a poor political connotation, it was observed) for air and naval deployments to Pakistan would be a significant advantage. Others pointed out that such U.S. facilities in Pakistan would drive India into closer cooperation with Moscow against Pakistan. Most all agreed that this is possible, but there were differing views on whether we should take the step and the risks it involves. Dr. Brzezinski added that we should consider it but not overload our relations with India by taking the step now.

Tasking: State and Defense will develop a paper on U.S. military “facilities” in Pakistan, describing their purpose, possible Indian reaction, and what those reactions would entail for the United States.

Military Consortium for Pakistan: State reported that George Vest and Peter Constable will be going to Europe for discussions about

British, French, and Saudi Arabian participation in the military consortium. Dr. Brzezinski added that the Japanese should also be asked to participate. Newsom and others were less enthusiastic about bringing the Japanese in. It would be a new step for them. Newsom and Owen suggested we emphasize greater Japanese economic aid to Pakistan in forms that will release Pakistan domestic funds for military purposes. There was some question about the Japanese laws permitting financing of direct military aid to Pakistan. Dr. Brzezinski argued that the Japanese have greater interests in the area than the U.S. Thirty years after the war, when they are economically powerful, surely they can contribute to the security of the Persian Gulf. We should raise the issue with them even if they do not accept our proposal.

Tasking: State will check what the Japanese law permits. Defense will produce a paper outlining a specific division of labor among the members of the military consortium, integrating each country's contribution to meet the overall Pakistani military needs in the most efficient fashion possible.

Political Assurances to Host Nations: Defense made clear that the technical survey teams can proceed to Oman and Somalia without providing their hosts with "political assurances" on what the U.S. will give for the bases. Work is presently under way to produce a military-economic aid package for each host country with appropriate "political assurances."

Tasking: State will provide a paper which sets forth the assurances for each country, the form in which the assurances should be given, and what consultations with Congress are appropriate.⁵

Diego Garcia: It was recommended that we expand the runways and the storage facilities on Diego Garcia. Conservationists may lobby against this construction. When Dr. Brzezinski asked whether we actually need this expansion in light of acquisition of bases in Oman and Somalia, State and Defense pointed out that it is much better to have a larger number of small bases to absorb minor setbacks if we must abandon some bases in the future.

Tasking: None.

Improved RDF Capabilities: General Jones made a presentation at this point in which he pointed out that Soviet military deployments into Afghanistan will fundamentally change the military threat to our allies on the Persian Gulf:

—Soviet fighter aircraft based in Afghanistan will be able to reach the Gulf of Hormuz, a wholly new development.

⁵ Not found.

—Soviet armored ground forces could reach the waters of the Arabian Sea through Baluchistan in 10 to 12 days if unopposed.

—Preferred Soviet land routes to Tehran probably still remain those from the Caucasus. Soviet heavy military ground forces on this route could reach the oil field regions in the vicinity of Kuwait in 10 to 12 days.

—Using sealift from the Black Sea, the Soviets could project forces through the Suez Canal to the Persian Gulf in about 21 days.

—One Soviet airborne division, about 8,000 troops, with organic armor vehicles, could land anywhere in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf in two to three days if all Soviet airlift is employed.

General Jones outlined our options for rapid short-term measures to meet this changed Soviet threat by early spring this year:

1. Our *naval presence* in the Arabian Sea will eventually have to be reduced to one aircraft carrier battle group. We do not have sustaining power for the two there at present.

2. *Tactical air power* projected into Egyptian and Jordanian bases can improve our air projection capability. We should also request that the Saudis “over build” their air fields, something we can do privately with no political costs, but something which will greatly enhance their capability to support “fly in” of U.S. fighter formations.

3. *Prepositioning of heavy equipment and supplies* backed up by a significant increase in our sealift capability can give us a much larger and earlier force projection capability into the region. To achieve this in the next two to three months, General Jones proposes the following package:

a. Purchase two RO/RO ships which will hold the prepositioned equipment for one mechanized brigade and ground support equipment for three fighter squadrons.

b. Lease three cargo ships to be prepositioned with dry cargo supplies, ammunition, water, and fuels.

c. Followup supply from the U.S. can be moved through the Suez Canal in 11 days by SL-7 class sea-land ships. General Jones proposed to lease a fleet of eight SL-7s, six of which would be kept in use and two of which would be under conversion to a RO/RO capability.

d. The overall cost for this package is estimated at \$450 million.

The advantages of this proposal are:

—The deployment time for getting heavy ground forces through the region would be cut from roughly 25/28 days to 5/8 days through prepositioning.

—For the first time we would have a followup sealift supply capability in the SL-7s which travel at 33 knots, a difficult speed for an enemy to locate and intercept.

—This capability could be exercised for demonstrations in the region by late spring or early summer.

Tasking: Defense is to submit the proposal in detail to OMB⁶ and have the results available for the NSC meeting.

Exercises. Dr. Brzezinski insisted that we need ground force exercises in the area soon in order to improve the local sense of confidence about American commitment to the region. General Jones agreed that he could speed up the deployment of two Marine units, one from the Eastern Mediterranean and one from the Pacific to exercise in Oman and Somalia by March. Airlift of ground forces from the United States would be extremely expensive. General Jones prefers not to take that step but rather only exercise the Marines now. General Jones argued that more importantly, if we purchase the two RO/RO, which are ready for immediate delivery and loading, we can use them for exercises in March or April, exercises that will have a much greater psychological effect for a lesser cost than projecting airborne units with no armor from the U.S.

Tasking: State will give us a paper by Thursday on the political effects that exercises would have.⁷ Defense will provide a paper recommending specific exercises.⁸

[Omitted here is Section III on consultations with India and Pakistan.]

IV. Consultations with North Yemen

The danger of an imminent union between North and South Yemen was discussed. An NSC working group recommended that we pursue a two-track strategy, U.S. demarches to President Salih in North Yemen and a Saudi Arabian demarche to Salih. Most argued this is an unpromising course of action. Dr. Brzezinski pointed out that we should consider a much more fundamental political change in South Yemen. It is clear that U.S. interests in the area could be greatly damaged by a union of South and North Yemen. Egypt and Jordan interests would be similarly hurt, not to speak of Saudi Arabia's concern. We should, therefore, consider a joint action to bring about a fundamental political change in South Yemen. A discussion followed on Saudi capabilities to do this, which were judged wholly inadequate, and the difficulties of getting Egyptian and Jordanian cooperation.

Tasking: State [*less than 1 line not declassified*] to consult on preparing a high level mission to North Yemen to make Salih aware of the depths

⁶ Not found.

⁷ January 17; not found.

⁸ Not found.

of our opposition to a union of the two Yemens. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that [*less than 1 line not declassified*] might be an appropriate person to head such a mission. A NSC-chaired working group will prepare a paper on the Yemen problem.⁹

[Omitted here are sections on refugees, international support for U.S. policy, the Middle East peace process, and aid to Pakistan.]

⁹ See footnote 1, Document 294.

41. Memorandum From Jasper Welch and Fritz Ermarth of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, January 16, 1980

SUBJECT

Basing Access and Exercise Issues at Thursday's SCC² (S)

The SCC needs to make some basic decisions to guide the crucial next step of political negotiations in Oman, Kenya, and Somalia for access to basing. If time permits, the SCC will also take up Harold Brown's recommendations (sent to the President on 21 December, but not forwarded to him yet) on a broader effort to improve transit and overflight rights, and near-term options for exercises in the region.³ (S)

This memo gives you essential background and a substantive plan for the meeting, following the distributed agenda (inside cover). (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 107, SCC 254, 01/17/80, Southwest Asia, Persian Gulf & Yemen. Secret. Sent for information. Printed from a copy that does not bear Welch's or Ermarth's initials.

² January 17; see Document 42.

³ Reference is to a December 21 memorandum from Brown to Carter entitled "Access and Overflight Rights in a Persian Gulf Contingency." The focus of the memorandum was "the near term measures likely to be most immediately profitable in improving access and overflight, but we also discuss longer term actions and programs." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Presidential Advisory File, Box 84, Sensitive XX, 1/80)

BASING ISSUES: SOMALIA, OMAN, KENYA, DJIBOUTI

Background

There is no controversy as to what we are after: Long-term access to physically improved facilities in these four countries. In military terms, the important objectives are summarized on the table (Tab A)⁴ with which you are familiar. On the technical-military side, there are continuing questions as to the condition of facilities at Berbera and the cost to improve them, which the current survey effort will clarify. But they will probably not much influence our initial bargaining strategy in Somalia (in any case, we can adjust that if the survey team's results so indicate). (S)

There is no controversy about the next step: Political negotiations should be conducted in the last week of January, probably by the Bartholomew-Murray team,⁵ to define access arrangements and terms with the four countries. (S)

No fundamental choices confront us with respect to Oman, Kenya, and Djibouti given our present fairly limited objectives. What problems there are are treated in this memo below. (S)

With respect to the tough issue, Somalia, since the President has already decided that he's prepared to take some risks for access there, what we need now are a *basic strategy* for handling Somalia, and *opening position*, and the *tough-mindedness* to assure that we are in charge of the relationship. The operational significance of the latter is a) a stronger ambassador in Mogadishu, and b) tight discipline among our Horn specialists to get with the program we decide on. (S)

The strategy for Somalia should aim at getting the basing access we want in Berbera and Mogadishu at minimum cost in aid, security commitment, and likelihood of entanglement in the Ogaden conflict.⁶ We want to minimize the chance that a new US-Somalia relationship will shackle us tightly to Siad or strengthen Soviet-Cuban influence in Ethiopia in the long term. We want to leave open the possibility that this new relationship could be part of a broader effort to reduce Soviet influence in the Horn. These aims require a stingy opening position on our part with Siad, and a willingness to walk away if he gets too greedy. (S)

⁴ Tab A, an undated table entitled "Indian Ocean Facilities and U.S. Access Objectives," is attached but not printed.

⁵ See footnote 2, Document 38. The team returned to the area in early February. See Documents 49 and 50.

⁶ Reference is to the Somali-Ethiopian conflict in Ethiopia's Ogaden desert. Documentation on this conflict is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. XVII, Part 1, Horn of Africa.

These principles have the following operational application to which you should get the SCC to agree:

—The US continues to oppose Somali involvement in the Ogaden insurgency because it is dangerous for the Horn, for Africa, and for Somalia.

—The US expects that any new US-Somali relationship on security matters will make Somalia receptive to US advice and sensitive to US interests with respect to Ogaden.

—Specifically, the US will insist that none of the weapons or military goods it may supply to Somalia will be used to support the Ogaden conflict.

—While the US is interested in the security of Somalia against the Soviet-Cuban threat, any commitment the US may make will be evaluated in the light of circumstances if called into question by retaliation arising from the Ogaden conflict. And it will not apply if regular Somali forces are involved, openly or surreptitiously, in Ethiopia.

—In general, US-Somalia relations will be served if the level of violence in Ogaden is reduced and Somalia promotes ideas for a fair peaceful settlement.

—US military assistance to Somalia will be keyed to the value of our basing access (not to the military appetites of Somalia).

—The US will insist that Somalia take concrete steps to improve her relations with Kenya. (S)

These positions would be explicitly or implicitly communicated to the Somalis as we talk about our base access. Note that we do not and probably cannot insist on complete Somali withdrawal of support for the insurgency. In any case, we don't want to do that since it would simply deliver the Soviets and the Cubans a local victory and deprive us of future leverage on Ethiopia. (S)

In addition to the above communications to Siad, our strategy will have to involve:

—Toughening our representation in Mogadishu (not a topic for the SCC).

—Increasing our intelligence on the Ogaden war and Somali involvement.

—Political (covert) action to explore alternatives to Siad (at least as a source of leverage). (S)

We are, to put it somewhat pessimistically, seeking a kind of control over Somali behavior that the Soviets failed to secure. But by arming Siad to the teeth they gave him options we shall not give him. (S)

The other major questions for Somalia concern military aid and financing. The consensus of the Bartholomew-Murray team is that we

should be operating in the range of Option I (for openers) in the State/PM paper (Tab B).⁷ And we should try to get the Saudis to finance more than 50% of the package. (S)

Meeting Plan

General

You should advise the group that this portion of the agenda is very rich in opportunities for distraction into trivia. Hence you should summarize points that seem straightforward or on which there is working-level consensus, considering them decided unless there are objections. (S)

—A political team will visit Oman, Kenya, Somalia, and, if possible, Djibouti between 24 January and 2 February. (S)

—Since we are after extensive, redundant access we shall pursue all options seriously, unless (as possibly in Somalia) insuperable obstacles arise. (S)

—It is agreed that extensive consultations with our allies, especially the UK and France, and our friends in the region should promote patterns of multilateral security cooperation we can build up in the longer term. (S)

—We should encourage Saudi support, but not become hostage to their timorous ways. (S)

Somalia (See Tabs B and F⁸)

—We are agreed that we are after long-term access to both Berbera and Mogadishu, but that the overall difficulties of the Somali case will require a step-by-step approach (in which we concentrate initially on our activities and quids pro quo out no more than two years). (S)

—We do want an access agreement that defines the status of our personnel. Joint US-Somali use of facilities is agreeable. (S)

—You should then turn to the nexus of Ogaden and a security commitment, laying out the strategy proposed above. The only specific points of view on this that have surfaced in our debates, (other than the usual arguments among Horn specialists) is the view of General Lawson that Berbera and Mogadishu may, in the end, not be worth the trouble. On a security commitment as such, our position should

⁷ Reference is to a paper prepared in PM entitled "Indian Ocean Access" which Ermarth and Welch attached as Tab H to their memorandum. The paper references the charts on specific countries and provides additional detail and issues for discussion. Tabs A-F referenced in this memorandum, none printed, were attached to this paper. Tab B is an undated chart entitled "Military Assistance Options for Somalia."

⁸ Tab F is an undated chart entitled "Security Commitment Alternatives."

be that US presence and a new relationship alone should add considerably to Somali security if Somalia behaves herself, and that we are willing to give our interest in Somali security appropriate public expression. (S)

—Get agreement to opening discussion on military assistance as per State Option I (Tab B) and to seeking Saudi assistance. (S)

Oman (See Tabs C⁹ and F)

Oman is the most important potential host, but poses no serious problems. (S)

—Our objective is long-term access and facilities improvement programs for Masirah and a port/airfield combination on the mainland (either Muscat or Matrah, and Seeb). (S)

—In initial negotiations we should be prepared to lay out our long-term (5 year) objectives. But, if the Omanis insist, we should concentrate on plans and access arrangements over the next two years. (S)

—We should open negotiations with military assistance offers in the area of State's Option II on (p. 16, Tab C). Saudi financing should be sought. (S)

—Consultation and cooperation with the UK will be done throughout. (S)

—The only (somewhat) contentious issue is the *character of a security commitment to Oman*. I think it is now recognized that it is in our interest to give Oman a solid security commitment. Most of the difference will be on the Omani side owing to Arab sensitivities. But if we show reluctance it will undermine our entire confidence-building effort. We should give a commitment to assist Oman against external threats and externally assisted internal security threats (it is hard to imagine a serious purely internal threat in that country in today's world—but this should be discussed). We should take our cue from Oman as to the form and publicity of such a commitment, within our own legal limitations. (S)

Kenya (See Tabs D¹⁰ and F)

Kenya presents no serious problems requiring SCC debate. In the longer run, a closer US-Kenyan security relationship will probably lead to greater economic assistance. (S)

—We should, in initial negotiations, simply state our near and longer-term desires for access, and hear Kenyan terms. (S) (See Tab D)

⁹ Tab C is an undated chart entitled "Military Assistance Options for Oman."

¹⁰ Tab D is an undated chart entitled "Military Assistance Options for Kenya."

—We should express our determination to use possibly improved US-Somalia relations to improve Somali-Kenyan relations. (S)

—A security commitment is not likely to be needed. (S)

Djibouti (See Tabs E¹¹ and F)

There are no major policy issues to be resolved on Djibouti unless Somali problems lead us later to seek greater access there than we now seek, largely in deference to local and French sensitivities. Basically, we are asking for expanded routine use (P-3 flights and ship visits) and some commitment on Djibouti's part to give us crisis access on a larger scale. (S)

Other

—We shall keep the key Congressional committee chairmen apprised of the access effort, informing them of our objectives and soliciting reactions before the political negotiating teams next visit the region. (S)

—It would be desirable if some of the funds needed for this effort (which cannot be defined before the survey teams report back) be secured in an FY80 supplemental. You will want to solicit the views of principals on the timing of security assistance requests, if time permits. (S)

HAROLD BROWN'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON OVERFLIGHT AND TRANSIT ACCESS RIGHTS

Background

At the President's urgent request Harold Brown prepared a memo on the basing access problems of our getting into the region, and recommended a comprehensive political approach to improving our historically uncertain access. This memo was sent to us on 21 December, and to SecState, the Chairman, and the DCI. We forwarded it to you with a cover for the President and a summary of Harold's action recommendation on 8 January.¹² Graham Claytor sent you a "what's happened" memo on 11 January. All this material is at Tab I.¹³ (S)

Harold's diagnosis and recommendation are sound. The latter call for efforts with "enroute countries" (principally UK, Portugal, Spain, Egypt) and "receiving countries" (Saudi Arabia, Oman) to sensitize them to the extraordinary importance of basing access in crises, to create greater willingness to give it to us. State is developing specific

¹¹ Tab E is an undated chart entitled "Military Assistance Options for Djibouti."

¹² See footnote 3 above.

¹³ Attached but not printed.

diplomatic initiatives and time-tables to act on these recommendations. A State/PM paper reflective of their initial efforts is at Tab J.¹⁴ (S)

Meeting Plan

—After soliciting comments from principals on the Brown memo, seek agreement to its recommendations and to prompt State/DOD efforts to implement them. (S)

—Ask whether we should not give particularly urgent attention to those countries where physical improvement to facilities is required to make access meaningful. For example, Saudi Arabia should be encouraged to expand airfields and POL storage as a “receiving country.” (S)

POLITICAL VALUE OF NEAR-TERM MILITARY EXERCISES

After a brief discussion of two kinds of exercise options (marines and a light army brigade), Monday’s SCC¹⁵ directed that a paper be prepared on the political value (and risk) of near-term US exercises. State/PM undertook to do this with CIA assistance. At this moment, unfortunately, this task is not fulfilled. If there is time for the subject at all, I suggest the following:

- Retask State/CIA and schedule the matter for another meeting.
- Reiterate interest in marine exercises into Oman, possibly Egypt.
- Ask the Chairman to comment specifically on the desirability and feasibility of a light army (e.g., brigade of the 82nd Airborne) exercise any time in 1980. (One of his subordinates fears that such an exercise would reveal more weakness than strength.)
- Discuss the value of continuing exercises of tactical air units into the region. (S)

¹⁴ Attached but not printed at Tab J is an undated paper entitled “Diplomatic Strategy for Increasing Access to Facilities and Overflight Rights in States Enroute to Southwest Asia.”

¹⁵ January 14; see Document 40.

42. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, January 17, 1980, 9–10:45 a.m.

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf

PARTICIPANTS

State

Secretary Cyrus Vance
Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown
Ambassador Robert Komer

JCS

Chairman General David Jones
Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Deputy Director Frank Carlucci
Robert Ames
[name not declassified]

OMB

Deputy Director John White

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Hamilton Jordan
Jody Powell
Hedley Donovan
David Aaron

NSC

Colonel William E. Odom
Captain Gary Sick
Thomas Thornton
Fritz Ermarth

Dr. Brzezinski explained that the purpose today is to cover a number of points, not all of them for decision, but as information and recommendations to the President as a backdrop for the decision he will shortly be making about our policy toward Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf region. He noted the agreement about the strategic dynamics of the Soviet military move into Afghanistan expressed at the previous SCC, the consequences for Pakistan and Iran, and also the importance of Soviet influence in Yemen and Ethiopia.

Dr. Brzezinski also added that the Soviet publication "New Times" has issued a call for all Communist states and parties to seize new revolutionary opportunities created by the present political conditions in the world, disturbing evidence of present Soviet policy directions.

Military Assistance to Pakistan

Dr. Brzezinski and Secretary Vance commented that the President's meeting with Agha Shahi went as well as could be expected.² Secretary

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Trip File, Box 40, Brzezinski, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia 2/1–5/80: Briefing Book [I]. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes of the meeting are not attached. In the upper right-hand corner of the first page, Carter wrote: "Zbig—These are very serious matters. The discussions are necessary but any proposal for contentious action must be submitted to me first J."

² See footnote 4, Document 40.

Brown asked how we will deal with the situation if the Pakistanis insist they want \$1 billion in aid while we only offered \$400 million. Secretary Vance predicted that they will take our \$400 million and complain, not reject our aid.

Dr. Brzezinski asked about the French willingness to sell the Mirage aircraft to Pakistan. Secretary Vance reported that the French will probably supply the Mirage. As a next step, it will be discussed at the Political Directors Meeting in London on January 24th. State will push France to make a decision by then.

Dr. Brzezinski raised the question of American A-7 aircraft for Pakistan. It was pointed out that the Pakistanis did not ask for them. Rather they asked that they be supplied with aircraft sufficient to protect themselves against the Soviet air threat, implying, of course, for the need for the US F-16 or the Mirage. The A-7, as Dr. Brzezinski pointed out, would be very useful in a ground support role along the Western frontier. Furthermore, because the U.S. has a large number, nearly 700, it can undoubtedly spare 30 or 40. Secretary Brown agreed the Pakistanis might be willing to buy some A-7s.

Military Consortium

Dr. Brzezinski asked for Defense's proposal for a division of labor among the members of the military consortium.³ Secretary Brown submitted a paper showing which countries can produce what categories of military equipment. The issue of who pays remains to be solved, he added. Secretary Vance noted that according to Agha Shahi, the Saudis promised Pakistan \$800 million for military purchases over a year ago but have not yet delivered. We should press the Saudis to make the promise good.

Concerning Japan, Vance has instructed Phil Habib to ask the Japanese for \$400 million for the consortium. They may give less, but Vance feels we should ask for that much. We will get little from Britain and France, he continued, but the French should be willing to sell them aircraft and the British will certainly be willing to sell tanks and tank guns. Secretary Brown added that the U.S., France, and Germany can provide anti-tank weapons, much needed for insurgency and defense. It was also pointed out that the Pakistanis want foreign assistance for building a communications infrastructure on their western front.

Dr. Brzezinski asked if we need a big consortium figure for public and political effect such as \$1 billion. Secretary Brown observed that one to one and a half billion dollars for equipment spread over three

³ Reference is to an international consortium to provide military assistance to Pakistan.

years could be absorbed effectively by the Pakistanis; therefore, Dr. Brzezinski's figure is about right. Dr. Brzezinski added that we must avoid a figure which is so high that we are open to criticism that we are "saturating" Pakistan with arms the same way we did Iran.

Dr. Brzezinski added that we need a military equipment package and a concept for a division of labor which we can propose to the allies. Secretary Vance suggested that this be done at the upcoming Political Directors Meeting on January 24. Dr. Brzezinski agreed; we must supplement our delegation with technical teams sufficiently competent to make concrete decisions on both funds and equipment.

Agreed action:

—State will press France on the Mirage aircraft.

—The Political Directors Meeting will be reinforced with sufficient staff to discuss military assistance and funding.

—The U.S. will give an exemplary package to the Political Directors as a proposal for a division of labor.

—To fund the consortium, we will press the Japanese for \$400 million and the Saudis for \$800 million which, combined with our \$400 million, should be above \$1 billion.

—Britain and France will be encouraged to supply specific military equipment.

U.S. Assurances to Pakistan

Secretary Vance reported that we are still working out contingency scenarios to define circumstances under which we would come to Pakistan's military assistance against foreign attack. Secretary Vance promised to have a paper by Friday or Saturday which spells these out in considerable detail for the President.

It was agreed, at Secretary Vance's suggestion, that this is the next big decision issue which should be discussed with the President.

Contingency of a Soviet Invasion of Iran

Dr. Brzezinski proposed that the President mention in his speech that the United States has been committed to the independence of Iran for the past 30 years and remains so committed today.⁴ Secretaries Vance and Brown wondered if this does not so clearly imply our previous ties to the Shah that it will provoke Khomeini's public rejection and fail to achieve the political effect in the region for which it is intended. Dr. Brzezinski observed that we must simply accept the cost

⁴ Reference is to the President's upcoming State of the Union address; see Document 45.

of a possible Khomeini statement because our vital interests in the area are so great. Secretaries Vance and Brown suggested omitting reference to “30 years.” They accepted Dr. Brzezinski’s alternative language “as we have been” so that a sentence in the speech might read: “The U.S. remains committed to an independent Iran today as it has been in the past.”

Agreed action: The record of the meeting should solicit the President’s reaction to this proposal.⁵

Military Facilities in the Region

Dr. Brzezinski expressed concern that while progress is being made on the technical level in acquiring military facilities, we are lagging on the political level. We need to expedite giving political assurances to the host countries. Until we do, these countries are vulnerable to Soviet pressure to reject our requests. They have already been exposed in the press as potential locations for U.S. facilities; some are undoubtedly already being pressed by the Soviets to reject the U.S. request.

Secretary Vance reported that State is now drafting messages to our ambassadors in these countries instructing them to discuss political assurances. Hal Saunders added that if the President mentions these countries in his speech, it might kill their willingness. Dr. Brzezinski reemphasized that they have already been fingered in the press. The danger for us is the gap between political progress and technical progress. He proposed a Presidential message, a very candid one to Oman and Somalia, giving political assurances in principle to be followed up by more specific details at the diplomatic level. Vance and Saunders argued that any assurances must be specific because we must also consult with the Congress before we are committed to them. Dr. Brzezinski conceded that while those points may be legally valid, they do not deal with the present political vulnerability of the states we want to assist. Secretary Vance proposed that we go to these states with messages which make the following points:

—We agree in principle to political assurances and therefore want the technical teams to proceed as rapidly as possible.

—Ask the head of state if he objects to the President mentioning publicly his country in connection with U.S. military facilities.

—Promise to consult with the Congress as soon as the details on the assurances can be worked out.

⁵ Carter neither approved nor disapproved the recommendation. In the margin below this recommendation, he wrote: “Covered on Meet the Press.” President Carter was interviewed on “Meet the Press” on January 20. Responding to a question about economic sanctions against Iran, he said: “We want a stable and independent Iran, and we want a secure Iran.” (*Public Papers: Carter, 1980–81*, Book I, p. 113)

—Reaffirm publicly that the United States considers its interests in the region vital.

Agreed Action: A draft of the message proposed by Vance is to be cleared later today with the NSC staff.

Harold Brown said we need more flights into Djibouti. They pointed out that we already have access to Pakistan, but more permanent “military facilities” would be desirable. It was argued that we should not raise this issue with the Pakistanis until the military assistance package to Pakistan is worked out in more detail.

Agreed actions:

—Ask for more flights into Djibouti.

—Postpone discussion of “military facilities” in Pakistan for a few weeks.

—Vance, Brown, and Brzezinski will call about ten key Congressional leaders to give them a progress report on our efforts to acquire military facilities in the region. The NSC staff will provide talking points to ensure that the same message is given to all ten Congressmen.

Enroute Basing and Overflights

Secretary Brown said that Defense has been ready for some time and is waiting for State to go forward, asking Spain, Morocco, Portugal, Philippines, and others about contingency overflights and base use. Some argued that to ask now might ensure a turndown. Dr. Brzezinski argued that it is important to tell these countries now that we are serious, that we are making plans, and that we may be asking them in the future but we are not asking for a positive response at present. General Jones noted that we already have effective access to countries and need no commitment; furthermore, what we need in each country is different. In Morocco, for example, we would like to pre-position fuel. The two most urgent cases are Spain and Morocco. Secretary Vance insisted that he needed a chance to check once more on the Moroccan situation before taking a final position.

Agreed action: Pending Vance’s check on the Moroccan situation, inform Spain and Morocco that we are planning for crises; vary the message to each according to what we want it to provide. State and Defense will prepare this message.

Military Exercises and Deployments in the Region

Secretary Brown raised Diego Garcia. There are two issues, present use, and longer term construction programs. Komer argued that because Diego Garcia is the only reliable base in the Indian Ocean, we need to undertake the expansion. General Jones said that it would cost

about \$500 million spread over the next five years. Dr. Brzezinski reported that the British Opposition Leader Callaghan had encouraged the United States to move fast on Diego Garcia. Secretary Vance cautioned that Margaret Thatcher may look at it differently.

Dr. Brzezinski observed that this will outrage Indira Gandhi. Komer added that what we are doing for Pakistan will outrage her even more. All agreed that India's sensitivities should not make us hesitate on the expansion.

Agreed action: OMB will look into funding not for this year but for FY 1982 and later.

Next the discussion turned to military exercises. General Jones reported that a Marine amphibious unit, about 2,000 strong, and a group of four to six ships can exercise in any number of places in the region, Oman for example, and Egypt. Followup units, up to a Marine brigade, can also participate.

Dr. Brzezinski declared that an exercise is needed for its political effect as a demonstration of American determination to remain in the area. Secretary Vance replied that privately political leaders in the region will like it, but publicly they will have problems. He therefore recommended that an exercise be held in Diego Garcia. Secretary Brown insisted that such an exercise makes no sense, and therefore would have no desired political effect, perhaps even an undesired effect. Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt were discussed as possible exercise sites. Dr. Brzezinski proposed that we ask Oman and Saudi Arabia, and if they turn us down, we should ask Egypt where a positive response is almost assured. Secretary Vance asked that this be delayed ten days until after the President's speech.

Dr. Brzezinski next raised the question of a U.S. airborne brigade projected into the region for an exercise, possibly a combined exercise with Jordan and Saudi Arabia. This could take place later in the spring or summer. Secretary Vance argued that the political problems are simply too great for us to attempt this. Dr. Brzezinski agreed that we should not overload ourselves with this undertaking but that Defense should look into the costs, planning, and other details.

Agreed actions:

—State will go forward and seek political assurances on enroute basing and overflights.

—We will wait ten days and seek permission for a military exercise in Oman or Saudi Arabia, then Egypt if the first two are not forthcoming.

—Gently probe Jordan on the possibilities of a combined US/Jordan/Saudi Arabian exercise.

[Omitted here is a section on Yemen. This section is printed as Document 294.]

Afghanistan Insurgency

Secretary Vance reported that Agha Shahi calls the insurgency in Afghanistan “a dangerous lightning rod” and, therefore, a very difficult decision for General Zia. Dr. Brzezinski commented that a massive insurgency at present is probably not in our best interest. Rather a low-level and enduring insurgency is essential to keep the Islamic states mobilized against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Secretary Brown added that Agha Shahi’s comments were probably not meant to indicate that Zia will be backing out, but rather to keep the option open for the future.

Afghanistan Refugees

State reported that it is possible for the United States to provide bilateral aid for refugees in Afghanistan as well as aid through the UNHCR.

Agreed action: State was tasked to prepare a plan for providing at least a small part of their refugee aid through bilateral channels and present it at the next SCC on refugee support.

Dr. Brzezinski observed that the large degree of consensus on all agenda issues today may negate the need for an NSC meeting with the President on the same topics. All agreed and Secretary Vance added that the next issue we need to discuss directly with the President concerns the contingency scenarios for Pakistan and the assurances we give that government.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf.]

43. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, January 18, 1980

SUBJECT

SCC Summary of Conclusions on Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf

I am attaching the record of the SCC held on Thursday² as a back-drop for your State of the Union address and policy toward the Persian Gulf region. We discussed a comprehensive list of issues on which there was sufficient consensus to make an NSC meeting unnecessary. We do need your reactions to some of the agreed actions. Others are important for your information.

You will note from reviewing the report of the meeting that we have before us a very complicated and difficult agenda. Once your speech has been delivered, outlining our overall approach, it may be important—indeed necessary—for someone to go out to have high-level talks on security matters with the Saudis, Turks, Jordanians, Omanis, and the Paks. If this program is to succeed and to have any coherence, it will have to have high-level commitment, visible direction, and be undertaken with genuine energy. We are dealing with a much more complicated situation than Western Europe in the late forties. At the very least, in the light of the fact that my recent trip was kept secret³ I think a quick trip by me to Turkey and Saudi Arabia will be necessary. One simply does not have the necessary “touch” for some of the decisions that need to be made, and the leaders there need to be directly convinced that we mean business when we say that we plan to project our military and political influence into the region on a sustained basis.

No decision on the above is required, but you should give it some thought. We also need your guidance on the minutes, so that we can implement effectively, especially after your overall speech defines our national policy for the entire world.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 43, Security Framework: 1/1–23/80. Secret; Sensitive. Sent for action. The date is handwritten. Carter initialed the memorandum indicating that he saw it.

² See Document 42.

³ In his personal diary, Carter wrote on January 15: “Zbig had a disappointing meeting with Giscard; [France's] relationship with the Soviets will continue as usual, different from what he told me last week.” (Carter, *White House Diary*, p. 392)

44. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassies in Oman, Somalia, and Kenya¹

Washington, January 19, 1980, 2232Z

15122. For the Ambassador. Subject: Indian Ocean Access.

1. (Secret)—entire text.

2. We want to get back to host governments at the highest level now to confirm our serious interest in continuing our discussion of access and other forms of security cooperation. We are concerned that the combination of a hiatus in high-level dialogue and press speculation may have left them vulnerable to political pressures. We want to dispel any question about this with them and also to affirm our full understanding that the context of our interest in access is our desire to cooperate broadly with them in order to enhance our mutual security. We would like host country agreement for a return of the high-level State/Defense team in the period February 3–February 10.

3. Accordingly, you should immediately approach Sultan Qaboos, President Siad, and President Moi, (or, in all cases, if early appointment impossible appropriate senior officials) using the following talking points:

A. The President is pleased with the results of our discussions with you about our mutual security interests and your responsiveness in this matter. He is seriously interested in pursuing this matter. He hopes that you agree in general on the need for greater cooperation and on the need to press ahead with the dialogue.

B. In this connection we are studying a number of specific steps which the U.S. would propose taking to enhance your security. We will also have more specific ideas regarding our access objectives. We are prepared to send a high-level team back to the area to discuss these specific ideas with you and your officials during the period from February 3–10.

C. We will get back very soon with specific dates in this time frame for each country.

4. For Nairobi: We are considering the possibility of sending only one or two members of the team to Nairobi, given acute Kenyan con-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 1/80. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to the White House. Printed from the copy that indicates the original was received in the White House Situation Room. Drafted by David C. Gompert (PM); cleared by Seton Stapleton (S/S-O), Bartholomew, William C. Harrop (AF), Twinnam, Kreisberg, Ermarth, and Murray; approved by Newsom.

cerns about visibility and also the very limited character of our access objectives in Kenya.

5. For Mogadishu: You should mention to Siad that we will, of course, need to discuss our concern about the Ogaden issue when the team is in Somalia.

Vance

45. Editorial Note

In response to the situation in Iran, namely the taking of 66 American hostages on November 4, 1979, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the administration of President Jimmy Carter developed a new U.S. policy for the Persian Gulf region. This new policy began to take shape in late November 1979 among the National Security Council Staff and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Zbigniew Brzezinski. On November 27 and 28, National Security Council Staff members sent Brzezinski several memorandums that dealt with broad Middle East issues and contained ideas for a U.S. response. In a November 27 memorandum to Brzezinski, National Security Council Staff member Paul B. Henze wrote that the United States needed to “display a determination to stick it out and assert ourselves,” which the administration could achieve “by showing the kind of determination and strength that will enable our friends to help us assert ourselves.” (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 30, Iran: 11/28–30/79) The following day, National Security Council Staff member Robert Hunter, in a November 28 memorandum to Brzezinski, noted that while the Iranian situation had precipitated a major crisis, there were “also increased opportunities, especially with greater American public willingness to see us take a leadership position, a fading of the ‘Vietnam syndrome,’ but also a sense of greater balance and maturity in the nation about the uses of power.” Hunter commented that “there will be insistent demands for a strong, coherent policy, and clear leadership by the President.” He recommended that Carter deliver a televised address immediately following resolution of the hostage crisis. Hunter asserted that Carter should propose:

“a series of *concrete, specific*, steps, including domestic and international energy efforts; some *tailored* increase in defense spending and activity; and our position toward and support for other countries in the

region (within the context of respect for individual national integrity, independence, and respect for Islam). There should be a clear *integration* of political, economic, and military efforts—no one is enough; the inter-relationship is critical.

"If enough pieces of a long-range strategy can be ready for use, this could become a *Carter Doctrine* for the Middle East, dealing with the whole nexus of oil-security-U.S. resolve and leadership issues." (Ibid.)

Also, in a November 28 memorandum to Brzezinski, National Security Council Staff member William E. Odom noted: "The present Iranian crisis seems to be creating the chance to begin a serious regional intelligence rebuilding effort as well as a physical military presence. The time for action, therefore, is at hand." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 27, Iran: 11/78–11/79)

The administration's belief that a strong statement on the Middle East was needed took on new urgency following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on December 25, 1979. Brzezinski noted in his memoirs: "I discussed that issue [a "wider strategic challenge" in the Persian Gulf as a result of the invasion] at some length with the President." Brzezinski "stressed that the issue was not what might have been Brezhnev's subjective motives in going into Afghanistan but the objective consequences of a Soviet military presence so much closer to the Persian Gulf." (*Power and Principle*, page 430) This exchange likely occurred in a 30 minute telephone conversation between Carter and Brzezinski on December 31. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary) After this discussion, Brzezinski commented:

"The President's approach served as the point of departure for a wider response which, in the course of the next several weeks, took three forms: (1) the adoption of sanctions directed at the Soviet Union; (2) the formulation of a doctrine linking the security of the region with that of the United States and a U.S. effort to shape a regional security framework; and (3) the acceleration of our strategic renewal, in terms of both doctrine and defense budget." (*Power and Principle*, page 430)

The level of importance to which Brzezinski ascribed the situation and the administration's response were evident in his January 2, 1980, memorandum to the President entitled "Relevance of the Truman Doctrine to Current Situation." Brzezinski wrote that he "would like to recall for you an earlier crisis which in my judgment has some striking parallels with the present challenge we face in Afghanistan, in that region and globally." He then summarized the history and importance of the Truman Doctrine. Placing the present situation in even starker terms, Brzezinski concluded: "The Soviet intervention in the present case is both more blatant and more brutal than in 1947, and the Gulf is unquestionably more vital to Western interests today than were

Greece and Turkey 30 years ago.” (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 67, Truman Doctrine: 1/80) In a January 3 memorandum to the President, Brzezinski outlined a “Strategic Reaction to the Afghanistan Problem,” including the possibility of selling defensive arms to China. (Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Geographic File, Box 17, Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf Afghanistan: 12/26/79–1/4/80) Both memoranda are printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Documents 134 and 135. In a memorandum to the President on January 9, entitled “A Long-Term Strategy for Coping with the Consequences of the Soviet Action in Afghanistan,” Brzezinski listed possible U.S. actions in the Persian Gulf region to enhance regional security. The memorandum is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, volume VI, Soviet Union, Document 256.

The President elucidated what would become known as the Carter Doctrine in his State of the Union speech delivered to Congress on January 23, 1980. Speaking directly on the Middle East region, the recent Iranian situation, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter noted that “we face a broader and more fundamental challenge in this region because of the recent military action of the Soviet Union.” He asserted that the “Soviet Union has taken a radical and an aggressive new step. It’s using its great military power against a relatively defenseless nation. The implications of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan could pose the most serious threat to the peace since the Second World War.” Getting to the crux of the issue, Carter stated:

“This situation demands careful thought, steady nerves, and resolute action, not only for this year but for many years to come. It demands collective efforts to meet this new threat to security in the Persian Gulf and in Southwest Asia. It demands the participation of all those who rely on oil from the Middle East and who are concerned with global peace and stability. And it demands consultation and close cooperation with countries in the area which might be threatened. Meeting this challenge will take national will, diplomatic and political wisdom, economic sacrifice, and, of course, military capability. We must call on the best that is in us to preserve the security of this crucial region. Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.”

Carter then outlined the steps the United States was taking to make this doctrine a reality, such as improving capabilities to rapidly deploy U.S. forces to the region, preventing conflict in the region, strengthening the U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean, and solidifying the U.S. guarantee of Pakistani independence. (*Public Papers: Carter, 1980–81*, Book I, pages 194–198)

The full text of Carter's address is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, volume I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 138.

46. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

Washington, January 24, 1980

SUBJECT

Strategic Review of our Unified Command Structure (S)

The President desires that you look into the Unified Command Plan as it relates to the Persian Gulf region and our changing military, intelligence, and diplomatic requirements. Events over the past two years make it apparent that our command structure for the region is fragmented and refracted through European and Pacific headquarters; with the RDF/JTF under REDCOM, a third headquarters is centrally involved. The President would like to have your views on the changes which might facilitate unity of command and coordination of regional intelligence and military and economic assistance missions. They should be available by February 28, 1980.

Zbigniew Brzezinski²

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 7/79–3/80. Secret. An undated covering memorandum, under which the memorandum was to be forwarded from Brzezinski to Carter for his approval, was prepared, although there is no indication that Carter received the memorandum, that Carter approved Brzezinski's recommendation, or that Brown received the memorandum.

² Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

47. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, January 25, 1980

SUBJECT

Amphibious Deployment (U)

(S) As a further measure to increase US military presence and capability in the Arabian Sea, I propose deploying an Amphibious Task Force to join the two Carrier Battle Groups (Task Force 70) presently operating in the region.

(C) The proposed Amphibious Task Force would be composed of four amphibious ships and an embarked Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU). The MAU consists of about 1,700 Marines organized into an infantry battalion, a helicopter squadron, and a combat service support group. Their combat equipment includes 22 assault helicopters, 12 amphibious assault vehicles, and five tanks.

(C) The MAU is presently enroute to the Western Pacific and, if you approve the deployment, would depart the Philippines in mid-February, arriving in the Arabian Sea around the end of the month. Subsequently (March or later) I anticipate that a substantially increased Marine amphibious capability would temporarily augment this force. The III Marine Amphibious Force (MAF) located on Okinawa, will remain ready to respond to other limited contingencies in the Western Pacific, with some lift constraints.

(S) While operating in the Arabian Sea, we would hope to be able to conduct exercises with one or more countries in the region. The location and scope of these exercises can be determined after the facilities survey team has finished its work and negotiations with potential host countries have been concluded. Even without the conduct of exercises, I believe the deployment of Marine forces to the Indian Ocean is a prudent measure on the basis of both the perception and the fact of increased US military capability. We should recognize, though, that taking this step could well commit us to maintaining some US Marine presence in the region for the indefinite future.

(C) Until the facilities survey team returns and exercise arrangements, if any, are firm, I would propose no announcement or public

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 1/80. Secret. Brzezinski forwarded Brown's memorandum to Carter under a January 29 memorandum recommending that Carter approve Brown's proposal. Carter approved the recommendation and added the handwritten notation: "I presume Cy agrees."

discussion of that possible aspect of the deployment. The only early publicity would be a routine announcement that an Amphibious Task Force had joined Task Force 70 in the Arabian Sea.

(S) With your approval, I am prepared to direct the deployment. I would make a routine public announcement early next week, since media speculation about our sending Marines is already rife and I anticipate many questions when I testify on the Defense posture and budget next week.

Harold Brown

48. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, January 26, 1980

SUBJECT

Rapid Deployment Forces (U)

As you know, as part of our efforts to improve our capabilities to project forces in contingencies, I have directed the JCS to develop specific sets of Rapid Deployment Forces, and a controlling Joint Task Force headquarters. The purpose of this memorandum is to keep you abreast of the developments in this area, specifically RDJTF command arrangements. (U)

The JCS have developed a general structure for the RDJTF headquarters. It will be commanded by Major General (Lieutenant General selectee) Paul X. Kelley, USMC, and will be established at MacDill Air Force Base by March 1, 1980. It will also have a liaison staff here in Washington. The Commander of the RDJTF will have an exercise budget under his control. (C)

In peacetime, the RDJTF headquarters will be subordinate to the Readiness Command, but during contingencies it will transfer with its subordinate units to an appropriate Unified Commander (CINC) or will operate directly under the National Command Authorities, as appropriate. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 7/79-3/80. Secret.

As an integral part of its function, the headquarters will assume planning, coordinating, and implementing responsibilities for military exercises in the Middle East, as well as planning and execution of combat operations in the region. This will help us determine the need for a separate unified command for this critical region. (S)

We have made considerable progress to date in our work on the RDJTF and we expect to meet our deadline of March 1 for the activation of the RDJTF headquarters. I will keep you informed. (C)

Harold Brown

49. Memorandum From Fritz Ermarth and Jasper Welch of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)¹

Washington, January 28, 1980

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Access SCC on (Kenya, Somalia, Oman, Saudi Arabia) (S)

Background

The primary purpose of this SCC is to review and approve the instructions to the political negotiating team going to the four countries next week. The SCC should also review our legislative strategy and timing. (S)

The draft instructions to the political team (at Tab A)² are in very good shape, in our view. They have been extensively worked by the interagency team, including thorough coordination within State and with OMB. They provide a good substantive guide to the overall effort and the issues before the SCC tomorrow.³ (S)

The principals should appreciate—and you may wish in opening the meeting to mention—several fundamental points: (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 32, [Meetings—SCC 264A: 1/80]. Secret. Sent for information. Copies were sent to Sick, Henze, and Funk. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates that Brzezinski saw it. There is no indication that Aaron saw the memorandum.

² Attached but not printed are the undated draft instructions.

³ The SCC meeting took place on January 30; see Document 50.

—The Indian Ocean access campaign is at the cutting edge of our effort to build a security structure in SW Asia in terms of its importance and its difficulty. It is one of the most visible (unfortunately) and concrete things we are doing. Its immediate military benefits will be important but modest. It will not revolutionize our military posture in the area. At the same time, although Afghanistan has increased both our need for access and local anxieties about Soviet power, the political impediments to progress remain severe. For these reasons, we must conduct this effort ever mindful that 1) it should give us options for dramatic increases in local presence through surging and exercise activity; and 2) that it should help create the political basis for regional security collaboration. (S)

—There is a widespread sense among Washington experts, and people in the area, that it's "later than we think," especially on the Arabian Peninsula, that the forces threatening stability from the PDRY, and within Saudi Arabia and Oman are more advanced than our strategy accounts for. Because of local political sensitivities, we stress modest access objectives and low visibility. But we may have to prepare ourselves to move beyond these initial conditions quite rapidly, not only in response to overt Soviet threats, but to deal with heightened internal security problems in Oman and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, we must recognize that our new relationship with Somalia will oblige a more comprehensive political strategy toward the Horn. [5 lines not declassified] (S)

The state of play logistically is as follows:

—The technical facilities survey teams are still in the area, due to return by 30 January. Their initial reports have permitted refinement of our access objectives. The most significant result so far is that Berbera looks more attractive than we expected, and Masirah somewhat less so. This does not alter our plans; it merely confirms us in our original determination to seek diversity and redundancy in access. (S)

—The political team will depart on 1 February because of airline schedules, proceeding to Nairobi, Mogadishu, Muscat, and Riyadh, between 3 and 10 February. (S)

—Ideally, we wish to nail down the framework of agreement including concrete next steps (e.g., military-needs survey team to Somalia) and leave certain details (e.g., status of US personnel) to embassies. We may, however, have to continue high-level negotiations in some places, most likely Somalia. (S)

Meeting Plan (Very Fast Track)

You may find yourself so pressed for time as to be unable to work through the programmed agenda. If principals have read the draft instructions at Tab A and been appropriately briefed, it would not be unsafe for you to proceed as follows:

—The draft instructions look satisfactory. Do other principals agree?⁴ (S)

—If Siad is not at all forthcoming on Ogaden issues and does not agree to next steps on access without final agreement on security assurances and military assistance (which depend heavily on his Ogaden line), the team should merely agree to report back to Washington. (S)

—It is absolutely essential that we keep tight control of publicity on this effort, especially as it concerns the views and positions of host countries. Only Public Affairs officers should discuss this with the press, on the basis of tight guidance, until we move into the public congressional phase. (S)

Meeting Plan (According to Agenda)

General and Item I

—You should open the discussion as you see fit or along lines suggested above. Please be aware that the agenda contains items which can easily divert discussion, e.g., whether we want to pay base access fees in Oman.⁵ On some of these things, the team can call for instructions when we see what we are up against. (S)

—You should ask General Jones for a brief overview of our access plans and the results of the technical survey teams, and ask Harold Brown to comment. This is largely to assure that the principals are clear and ratify our objectives. Details are found on pp. 5, 8, and 14 of the draft instructions (Tab A). (S)

Kenya

—There seem to be no issues to resolve for Kenya. Our main immediate problem is to control publicity. Over the longer run we'll have to develop guidance to explain our access activities to other African countries. (S)

Somalia

—You are thoroughly familiar with the problem: to link our position on Ogaden to what we offer on security assurances and assistance. We think the instructions are sound on this score. The linkage is made effective at this point in the relationship by our willingness to walk away if Siad is not reassuring. (S)

⁴ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this and the two following points.

⁵ Brzezinski underlined the phrase "base access fees in Oman" in this sentence.

—Siad will almost surely find our security assistance offer too modest. He will express an urgent need for help on air defense. Beyond specifics we propose on p. 9 (Tab A), we'll deal with this by proposing a survey of his defensive needs (thus fending off the issue for the moment), and we indicate a willingness to get carefully into the air defense business by broaching the possibility of installing air surveillance radar at Berbera (partly for our own protection). (S)

—The team will need license to go to the “high option” on military assistance (p. 10, Tab A). (S)

Oman

—A peripheral but valuable move: We should remove Oman from the list of countries that are “dangerous for Americans.” There is no objective need for Oman to be so listed, and it is insulting to Oman.⁶ (S)

—To Oman, security assurances are more important than military assistance. We expect no problem in offering what the Omanis have said they want, a low-profile statement of our interest and commitment. (S)

—The issue of base access fees has caused some controversy at the working level. State favors our being willing to go up to \$10 M because they expect the Omanis to want base access fees, there is precedent in Bahrain, and our military assistance offer doesn't go beyond what we would want to do for Oman anyway. DOD is ill-disposed because we have no control over what happens to fee money (much of it will line pockets in a graft-ridden country). DOD prefers to offer additional effort to upgrade facilities or infrastructure which will redound to common benefit. OMB warns that Congress will object to paying access fees as a “back door” device for supplying military assistance or aid funds. The right instructions (as in the draft, p. 15, Tab A) are to be reluctantly willing.⁷ (S)

Saudi Arabia

—The only real issue is a general one: how much we wish to rely on Saudi Arabia for political and financial support. Our aim is to get as much support as we can but mainly for the purpose of creating a more reassuring and cooperative relationship and to decrease Saudi timidity on security collaboration. The instructions are sound. (S)

⁶ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this point.

⁷ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to the first four sentences of this point. He drew a vertical line and wrote a checkmark in the left-hand margin next to the sentence that begins “DOD prefers to offer” and wrote a question mark in the left-hand margin next to the last sentence.

Legislative Strategy

—All recognize the need to inform key leaders of our objectives and plans before the political team depart for the region. (S)

—As to the timing of legislative submissions, the most desirable course would be to wrap up enough of the money issues (military assistance and facilities improvement costs) to permit covering them in an FY80 supplemental that includes Pakistan and other steps. Should we not advance the access negotiations that quickly, we may have to consider an additional supplemental request, despite Congressional objections to such incremental approaches. In view of the urgency of the situation, it would not look good to domestic critics or to local countries were we to take the leisurely approach of funding initial Indian Ocean access activities through FY81 ammendment. OMB is prepared to comment on this. (S)

Publicity

Please make a point of the third tick under Very Fast Track above. We must maintain tight control on publicity. No backgrounders except by Public Affairs officers under tight instructions. (S)

50. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, January 30, 1980, 9–10 a.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Access

PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President's Office

Mr. A. Denis Clift

State

Secretary Cyrus Vance

Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher

Mr. David Newsom

Under Secretary for Political
Affairs

Mr. Harold Saunders

Assistant Secretary, Bureau of
Near Eastern and South Asian
Affairs

Mr. Reginald Bartholomew

Director, Bureau of Politico-
Military Affairs

Mr. David Moose

Assistant Secretary, Bureau of
African Affairs

OSD

Deputy Secretary W. Graham
Claytor, Jr.

Ambassador Robert Komer

Under Secretary for Policy

Mr. David McGiffert

Assistant Secretary, International
Security Affairs

Mr. David Ransom

Deputy Director, Near East and
South Asia Region

JCS

Lt General John Pustay

DCI

Mr. Bruce Clarke

Director, National Foreign
Assessment Center

Mr. Greg Cowan

NIO for Africa

ACDA

Mr. Ralph Earle II

Director

Mr. James Montgomery

Acting Assistant Director,
Weapons Evaluation and Control
Bureau

OMB

Mr. Edward Sanders

Deputy Assistant Director for
International Affairs

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

Mr. David Aaron

Mr. Lloyd Cutler

Mr. Hedley Donovan

Mr. Hamilton Jordan

Mr. Jody Powell

Mr. Stuart Eizenstat

NSC

Colonel William Odom

Captain Gary Sick

Mr. Thomas Thornton

General Jasper Welch

Mr. Fritz Ermarth

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 1/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Brzezinski sent the Summary of Conclusions to Carter for his approval under a January 31 memorandum; Carter initialed his approval.

The SCC reviewed the negotiating instructions for the team scheduled to visit Kenya, Somalia, Oman, and Saudi Arabia for the purpose of augmenting US access to military facilities in the region.² The team is instructed to recapitulate our view of threats to the region, the commitment of the US to their security, the need for improved US access, and to offer various degrees of military assistance nuanced to local circumstances. In Saudi Arabia, the team will seek political support and financial help for Oman and Somalia. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski, upon hearing no objections to the basic instructions, led the meeting through the instructions for problems of detail. He noted that general and country-by-country discussion of security assurances must be strong enough to affirm the President's commitment to security in the region.

Kenya

Dr. Brzezinski, Graham Claytor, and Warren Christopher emphasized the importance to the President's regional policies of getting proposed economic support funding (\$10 million) for Kenya. This would require supplemental appropriations in FY80. If it could not be readied in time for the Pakistan supplemental, it would be submitted separately, and moved urgently. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski emphasized the importance of limiting publicity. If the Kenyans felt that a US visit to Nairobi presented too high a profile, they should have the option of sending a Kenyan team to Washington. (S)

Somalia

Dr. Brzezinski observed that the President had already decided to provide Somalia with defensive equipment.³ The issues now were levels of assistance and Saudi financing. To evidence our seriousness and to minimize our dependence on the Saudis, it was decided that we would offer our "higher" (but still modest) assistance package, including \$40 million annual FMS credits in FY 80 and FY81, and seek to stand firm on it.⁴

It was noted that there would inevitably be some risk that Somali support to the Ogaden insurgency would trigger aggressive Ethiopian-Soviet-Cuban actions which would call our security assurances⁵ to

² The instructions are summarized in Document 49.

³ Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVII, Part 1, Horn of Africa.

⁴ Carter wrote in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph: "Get Saudis to help as much as possible, but don't depend on them."

⁵ Carter underlined "security assurances."

Somalia into question. We would have to be prepared to take action on Somalia's behalf in some circumstances. We should make it clear to Siad Barre that we oppose the Ogaden war, that an increase in the violence or his use of regular forces would jeopardize our security ties, and that we would not respond to an attack he provokes. The offer of security assurances to Somalia should be as follows: "The US military presence at Somali facilities will be in itself a tangible expression of US interest in Somali independence and integrity. The US would view any direct threat to Somalia with serious concern, would consult promptly with the Somali government on an appropriate response, and would react in accordance with US constitutional processes." (S)

Dr. Brzezinski noted that, while Somalia had little political support in the region, it was for the US a more favorable area militarily than Pakistan, where we might have more political support but face grave military problems. He thought we should tell Mengistu that our new relationship with Somalia would not be directed against Ethiopia. Warren Christopher said that Ambassador Chapin doubts Mengistu is sufficiently independent for such messages to make a difference. (S)

Oman

All agreed that we should avoid arrangements for access that involve payment of access fees because they set precedents with other countries, their results are uncontrollable, and Congress objects. The team should offer to bring the matter back to Washington if Oman insists on fees, but should stress the great benefit to Oman, as well as the US, of the substantial improvement to local military facilities we would be paying for. On the basis of technical surveys, we should suggest a general cost magnitude for the facility improvement we are seeking. It will be on the order of several hundred million dollars over a five year period, far in excess of any plausible access fees. (S)

It was agreed that Oman should be offered \$25 million in FMS credits annually in FY80 and FY81; but we would not now offer a squadron of F-5s. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski suggested removing Oman from the list of Muslim countries ruled dangerous for Americans. Since State had problems doing this for Oman but not other countries in the Gulf, it was agreed to tell Oman authorities privately that this was under review and would soon be done. (S)

Saudi Arabia

It was agreed that Saudi Arabia should be told in some detail what the US was offering to the other countries in the way of security assistance, facilities up-grade, and security assurances to convince the Saudis of our own seriousness and willingness to invest in regional stability. (S)

Legislative Strategy

It was agreed that Secretaries Vance and Brown would call key congressional leaders before the team's departure for the region to explain our plans and objectives. (S)

51. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, January 30, 1980

SUBJECT

The Skeleton of a Strategy for the Middle East

The purpose of our Persian Gulf strategy is to protect our vital interests there—interests shared with Europe and Japan. Because the projection of Soviet power and influence into the region is the major threat to those interests at the moment, countering those is the first priority strategic task.

In effect, we have to complete the third phase of the great architectural task undertaken by the United States after World War II. We constructed an alliance in Western Europe; we undertook explicit defense commitments in the Far East; we built CENTO, a regional security organization that never really flourished. Now we need to shape a more flexible framework for regional security in the Middle East. That regional security framework will have to avoid excessive formality, adapt to the realities of intraregional conflicts, and facilitate varieties of participation by concerned friends both in the region and in the other two central strategic zones, Western Europe and the Far East.

The following outlines a number of steps we are either taking or need to consider taking in order to fulfill your vision of the security requirements and American interests in the region. The essence of our strategy is to strengthen our presence and capability by

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 77, Persian Gulf: 1–10/80, 2. Secret. A January 29 memorandum from Vance to Carter entitled "Blueprint for Implementation of Your State of the Union Message" is *ibid.* Brzezinski's memorandum is also printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 140, from a copy with Carter's handwritten comments.

- establishing facilities for U.S. forces;
- strengthening friendly governments and the security cooperation among them; and
- reducing the influence of the Soviet Union, its surrogates (Cuba, the GDR) and its friends (PDRY).

You are well aware of our work on obtaining facilities in the region and improving our rapid reaction force capabilities. We plan to strengthen friendly governments and the security cooperation among them by engaging in joint efforts to protect Pakistan, support the Afghan rebels, and reduce the threat of the PDRY against Oman, North Yemen and Saudi Arabia. In the latter connection, we will also be cooperating with our European allies, and possibly the Jordanians and Egyptians, both in operations and contingency plans. Our long-term objective can be described as a Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean region with a permanent U.S. naval presence and surge capability, an Afghanistan whose neutrality has been restored, a strengthened Pakistan, a more cohesive and cooperative Iran, and an Arabian Peninsula free from threat from the PDRY.

We have taken a number of actions to begin the implementation of our Persian Gulf strategy. A status report follows.

Please indicate whether you would wish an NSC meeting on some of the following subjects, whether some of them in your judgment should be dropped, and whether you have any specific or general guidance that you could give us as we continue to work on the following:

Actions Undertaken and/or Ongoing

1. *Political/Diplomatic:*

- The State of the Union Address.²
- Agha Shahi visit to Washington.³
- Reaffirmation of the 1959 Agreement with Pakistan, new definition of assurances, and consultations with Congress.
- Development of political assurances for states providing military facilities (Oman, Somalia, Kenya—before SCC).
- Approaches to Spain, Morocco, and others about enroute basing and overflight support (in progress).
- Christopher trip to Europe on Afghanistan and East-West relations.⁴
- Brown mission to China.⁵

² See Document 45.

³ See footnote 4, Document 40.

⁴ Christopher visited London December 31, 1979, for a meeting with U.K., French, German, Italian, and Canadian officials. He also visited Brussels January 1 for an emergency meeting of the North Atlantic Council.

⁵ Brown visited China January 6–13.

—Clifford mission to India.⁶

—Brzezinski/Christopher mission to Pakistan.⁷

2. *Economics:*

—Actions for the Persian Gulf region:

- Economic aid package for Pakistan: bilateral (ready); multilateral (being negotiated).
- German efforts to reschedule Turkish debt.
- Bilateral refugee aid to Pakistan.

3. *Military:*

—Bartholomew/Murray mission to Oman, Somalia, and Kenya for military facilities (in progress).⁸

—Technical teams for base surveys in Oman and Somalia (there).

—Initial effort to create a military consortium for aid to Pakistan (Japan, Saudi Arabia, U.K., France, and FRG—underway).

—Bilateral U.S. military aid to Pakistan.

—Military exercises:

- AWACS to Egypt.
- B-52 flights over Indian Ocean.
- Marine Amphibious Unit enroute to the Arabian Sea may conduct one or more exercises if local states agree (Oman, Saudi Arabia, or Egypt), and if you approve.

—Increased U.S. Naval presence in the Indian Ocean (two carrier battle groups).

—RDF (forces allocated, JTF in progress of formation, limited contingency planning).

4. *Intelligence:*

—Special efforts toward Iran.

—[less than 1 line not declassified]

—[less than 1 line not declassified] mission to Saudi Arabia.

—Several “Presidential findings.”

⁶ Clifford visited India January 30–31.

⁷ Brzezinski and Christopher visited Pakistan February 1–3 and Saudi Arabia February 3–5. Information on preparations for this trip is in telegram 22784 to Islamabad, January 27. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800046–0689) Documentation on their meetings in Islamabad is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIX, South Asia. For Brzezinski’s report on the meetings in Riyadh, see Document 207. He and Christopher reported on their mission in the February 6 meeting of the SCC; see Document 208.

⁸ See Documents 49 and 50.

Actions Under Consideration

1. *Political/Diplomatic:*

—Meeting of the seven foreign ministers on aid to Pakistan (being scheduled).

2. *Economic:*

—7-nation consortium for Pakistan: German lead on Turkey.

3. *Military:*

—RDF sea-lift improvement: rapid acquisition of commercial RO/RO ships and SL-7 class transports.

—Expansion of Diego Garcia facilities.

—Brigade exercise in Egypt (employing forces now based in the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division, for example).

—Contingency planning with Jordan and with U.K. and France for a crisis in Arabian Peninsula.

4. *Intelligence:*

—Iraq connection.

Additional Steps to Consider

1. *Political/Diplomatic:*

—Western Summit (in addition to the foreign ministers meeting).

—Propaganda offensives against Cuban and GDR involvement in the Persian Gulf region.

—Steps to accelerate the West Bank autonomy talks.

—Further high level China/U.S. visit (President to China; Hua to U.S.).

2. *Economic:*

—Long-term program of economic aid to Turkey and Pakistan by Europeans and Japan.

—Alter U.S. position on sanctions toward Iran.

3. *Military:*

—Form a separate U.S. unified command for the Persian Gulf region.

—Shift our military assistance groups into training and management assistance, not just military sales (critical for all MAAGs on the Arabian peninsula).

—Military facilities in Pakistan.

—French aircraft carrier to replace U.S. carrier in the Mediterranean?

4. *Intelligence:*

—[less than 1 line not declassified]

—[less than 1 line not declassified]

52. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, February 4, 1980

SUBJECT

Amphibious Deployment to the Indian Ocean

Harold has proposed the deployment of an Amphibious Task Force to the Indian Ocean beginning in mid-February.² He would hope to conduct exercises after reaching the Arabian Sea at the end of this month.

I concur, with some reservations, in Harold's basic recommendation that we make such a deployment.

I believe there should be no announcement until after Reg Bartholomew and his team conclude this round of talks on facilities access with Oman, Somalia, and Kenya.³ The Bartholomew team returns to the United States on February 12th. Any publicity before mid-February regarding Marine deployments could affect the prospects for success on this mission. It may be prudent to delay not only the announcement but the actual departure of the Marines from the Philippines. That way we would avoid a situation in which there were rumors of preparations for deploying Marines without our being able to offer a public explanation for fear of disrupting the talks with Oman, Somalia and Kenya.

I believe this deployment should be on the basis of a stop at Diego Garcia and a circuit of the Indian Ocean and a return to Subic Bay without at this time anticipating any landings. Until our facilities mission has completed its work, we are not in a position to say with certainty whether any exercises in the area are possible.

Finally, I believe we should proceed with this deployment without any presumption of maintaining a continuous Marine presence in the Indian Ocean. We need to think through the scale and composition of our Indian Ocean presence over the longer term in general, taking into account the strains being placed on our presence and readiness elsewhere, including our carrier levels, Marine deployments, and lift requirements. Any decisions regarding permanent Marine presence in the Indian Ocean should await that general review, which I believe we should begin soon.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 7/79–3/80. Secret.

² See Document 47.

³ See Documents 49 and 50.

53. Telegram From the Embassy in Oman to the Department of State¹

Muscat, February 10, 1980, 0918Z

369. Pass SecDef and CJCS. Subject: Omani Response to U.S. Proposals.

1. (S-entire text)

2. Following is text of Omani response to U.S. proposal, given to Bartholomew by Zawawi in form of memorandum at end of second round of discussions evening February 9. Reporting on discussions and Omani response transmitted septel.²

3. Quote: United States/Sultanate of Oman Military Cooperation.

1—Introduction:

The response of the Sultanate of Oman Government to the United States proposal is discussed under three headings:

A—Access to facilities.

B—Cooperation in building Oman's military capability.

C—U.S. commitment to Oman's security.

Access to facilities:

2—Short term requirements.

A—The request for immediate clearance for surveillance and support flights is agreed in principle subject to normal request procedure and to the limitations of fuel and accommodation at this stage.

B—The requirements to use Masirah as a diversion airfield for aircraft of the carrier wing is agreed in principle, subject to normal operating hours at this stage.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880026-0356. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

² These discussions, held between Omani officials and the joint Department of State-Department of Defense delegation led by Bartholomew, were the third part of a regional visit that included Kenya, Somalia, and Saudi Arabia to discuss regional security and U.S. military access. See Documents 49 and 50. In a meeting with Saudi Princes Sultan and Saud on February 11, Bartholomew explained that in Kenya, Somalia, and Oman, the United States "had made specific proposals for access to ports and airports for three purposes: support of in place forces, periodic exercises and to support large forces staging into and through the area on short notice in time of need." (Telegram 366 from Riyadh, February 12; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870047-0899; N800003-0357) In telegram 353 from Riyadh, February 11, Bartholomew reported: "Oman Government officials have agreed in principle to all rpt all USG proposals for use of their facilities by our military." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870047-0874) During an audience with Qaboos on February 10, Bartholomew extended an invitation from Carter to the Sultan to visit the United States, which was accepted "in principle." (Telegram 397 from Muscat, February 13; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800081-0282)

Other facilities:

3—A—The longer term requirements for facilities for visiting aircraft and ships, improved infrastructure and handling facilities and joint exercises are agreed in principle, subject to further detailed discussion.

B—In considering the improvement of its defense infrastructure the Oman Government would like to propose that consideration be given to the improvement of facilities in the strategically-vital Mussandam Peninsula; in particular the construction of a small deep water port at Khawr Naid and the extension and black-topping of the Khasab airstrip.

Military Assistance Programme:

4—A—The Oman Government takes note of the U.S. Government offer of \$25 million in the FY 1980 and \$25 million in the FY 1981 and also the intent to encourage the Government of Saudi Arabia to finance other Omani defence requirements.

B—Whilst appreciating this offer the Government of Oman would like to propose that the U.S. Government gives consideration in addition to the provision of a grant in economic assistance to promote the economic and political stability of Oman, without which the enhancement of purely military capability would be valueless.

C—The Government of Oman would wish to relate this grant in aid to its five year development plan and would there propose a sum of \$100 million annually for the next five years.

Security backing:

5—The Government of Oman takes note of the assurances of the President of the United States in his State of the Union address, but would wish to see this expressed as a more positive reaction by the United States Government entering into a formal written agreement. End quote.

4. Bartholomew team carrying copy of document to Washington.

Wiley

54. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 13, 1980, 4:30–5:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Security Framework for the Persian Gulf

PARTICIPANTS

State

Deputy Secretary Warren
Christopher
Mr. David Newsom
Under Secretary for Political
Affairs
Mr. Harold Saunders
Assistant Secretary, Bureau of
Near Eastern and South Asian
Affairs
Mr. Reginald Bartholomew
Director, Bureau of Politico-
Military Affairs

OSD

Secretary Harold Brown
Ambassador Robert Komer
Under Secretary for Policy
Mr. David McGiffert
Assistant Secretary, International
Security Affairs

JCS

General David Jones
Chairman
Lt. General John Pustay
Assistant to the Chairman

DCI

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Mr. Robert Ames
NIO for Near Eastern and South
Asian Affairs

The White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Mr. David Aaron

NSC

Gary Sick
General Jasper Welch
Thomas Thornton
Colonel William Odom

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 30, NSC/SCC Minutes, 1/16/80–2/29/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote “Zbig J” in the upper right-hand corner of the first page. In a February 15 memorandum to Vance, Brown, and Turner, Brzezinski noted that Carter had approved the conclusions of the SCC meeting subject to the following: “1. The military equipment options for Pakistan, which Defense is developing, should all be based on a U.S. contribution of not more than \$400 million for the first two years. 2. F–16s should not be considered in the options. 3. On any future facilities access missions to the Indian Ocean, we should make a special effort to avoid publicity. 4. Similarly, the activities of the MAU in the Indian Ocean area should not be publicized. 5. Our use of Diego Garcia should be made as routine as possible.” (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 43, Security Framework: 2/1–27/80)

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by explaining that the purpose today is to take stock of what we have accomplished in a number of activities related to our Persian Gulf security framework.

Next week, we will consider some additional steps we might take. The following items will compose the agenda:

1. A review of our political-economic presence in the region (paper by State).
2. The longer-term implications of our naval presence after the hostages problem is solved. (paper by Defense)
3. Military contingency planning.
4. Allied military deployments which might help us in the region.
5. Taking stock of our en route basing problem.

Dr. Brzezinski then proceeded with today's agenda:

I. Pakistan

A. Economic and Military Aid. There was discussion of how next to proceed, whether the Pakistanis want us to go to the allies on the military consortium, and how specific the Pakistanis are willing to be on what military aid they will accept. Defense can have a reasonably complete paper on Pakistani military needs by next week. Doubt was expressed about whether the Pakistanis would permit us to take that list to our allies and what the allies response would be without a direct request from Pakistan. We will of course not approach the allies until the Pakistanis agree that we should do so. There was also discussion of the size of military requirements package we should develop based on the McGiffert visit.² Harold Brown believes that we can develop at least 3 levels—a low of \$600 million,³ and a couple of higher ones. *Dr. Brzezinski* encouraged Defense to also prioritize equipment to the extent possible within each of these three levels. It was noted that the Pakistanis prefer F-16 aircraft⁴ because of the ordnance they will carry, but they have a number of Mirage aircraft which provides a basis for our refusal to provide the F-16s.

To overcome the impasse in coordinating Pakistani aid in our coordination of the Pakistan military consortium it was agreed that:

- Defense will produce the equipment list options by next week;
- State, in the meanwhile, will tell the Pakistanis such a list is coming and ask that they make approaches directly to our allies,

² Documentation on McGiffert's visit to Pakistan is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XIX, South Asia.

³ Carter underlined "a low of \$600 million" and in the left-hand margin wrote: "From U.S., a total of Not > \$400 mil first 2 years."

⁴ Carter underlined "F-16 aircraft" and in the left-hand margin wrote: "No, this would be a reversal of what we've decided."

thereby underpinning the U.S. coordination role when we approach the allies.

B. *Aid package and security commitment.* Christopher observed that we need to pull things together so that we make only one trip to the Hill for Pakistan, taking the aid package, security guarantees, and nuclear issue together. He also added that the Pakistanis remained opposed to our taking up our current aid package. Perhaps later we could take only the economic aid element. It was agreed that State will consult and provide advice about how to proceed on this front. We may be able to go to Congress in about 2 weeks. Christopher reported that we have told the Pakistanis that they must make initial approaches to potential donors. We do not know if they have done this yet. Assuming the Pakistanis cooperate, Cy Vance will approach the Europeans in a week or so with specific suggestions for support. We will raise the matter with the Japanese Foreign Minister when he comes here.

II. *Facilities Access.* Bartholomew provided a list of 15 next steps, some of which need SCC discussion. First, it is important to get back rapidly to all the countries with details on executive agreements and on military construction plans. Second, the country requests for additional assistance were not made a condition of the agreements but raised as issues beyond them in every case. It was agreed that all three of these additional requests need to be vetted and reviewed by a working group and checked with OMB. Particularly, it is important that the OMB position be final.⁵

Third, Oman will require a written agreement. A number of alternatives were suggested—a letter from the President, a letter from the Secretary of Defense or State, and an exchange of diplomatic notes. Bartholomew emphasized that Oman is risking a great deal by making this abrupt turn in policy toward the U.S. and therefore, we must not fail to meet their request in a satisfactory form. Most discussants favored an exchange of diplomatic notes at the Secretary of State level as the acceptable form of the agreement.⁶

Fourth, a Presidential determination to the Congress on Somalian FMS eligibility must be prepared and a military requirement survey team dispatched within two weeks. All agreed that careful consultations with the Congress are important preparations for this step.

Fifth, on briefing other nations, it was agreed to be candid about those basing agreements in briefing the Chinese.

⁵ In the left-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter wrote: "On any future mission we must leave the press and/or the blabbermouths at home."

⁶ In the left-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter wrote: "Oman is making negative statements."

It was agreed to get a draft agreement for Oman within 10–14 days. Defense will also prepare the military construction budget request for Oman within two weeks.

As an additional point, Harold Brown proposed that he send a note to the Saudis asking them to go on a parallel track to Oman with financial assistance in light of our financial and military assistance. In the discussion, it was pointed out that we are unaware of how much the Saudis are already doing and whether we want them to increase that or continue it. Dr. Brzezinski emphasized that Senators Byrd and Stevens are very firm in their view that the Saudis must pay for some of this assistance because our efforts there are primarily for Saudi Arabian security. It was agreed that Defense will draft a letter to the Saudis for review by the SCC.

On access to Djibouti, no further action is needed.

III. *Diego Garcia*. Defense proposed to use Diego Garcia as a fueling stop for B-52 recce flights from Guam to the Persian Gulf and return. This will reduce the number of tankers needed. Christopher expressed surprise at this proposal because it is the public image that Diego Garcia cannot handle B-52s. It was explained that the runways cannot handle B-52 bombers loaded but B-52s as recce aircraft can land there. Christopher wonders, in view of the public perception, what effect these recce flights would have on the public attitude. Brzezinski solicited Christopher's further comments on foreign policy considerations. Christopher emphasized two. First, we must approach the British. Second, we must consider the Indian attitude. There was discussion of the danger of allowing the Indian attitude to become a veto on B-52 flights to Diego Garcia, a development that would raise questions about our utility to expand the runways to accept loaded bombers. It was agreed that:⁷

—State would approach the British.⁸

—State will not approach the Indians but rather make an assessment of what their response would be.⁹

IV. *Memorandum on the Enhanced Sealift Capability*

A. Harold Brown reported that a memorandum is en route to the President on this matter. Unless the President gives him a quick disapproval, he intends to go ahead, by reprogramming funds, to

⁷ In the left-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter wrote: "Using D.G. should be routine."

⁸ In the left-hand margin next to this point, Carter wrote: "ok."

⁹ In the left-hand margin next to this point, Carter wrote: "ok." He also underlined the phrase "not approach the Indians."

acquire the two RO/RO ships and lease some support vessels so that we can have the capability very soon.

B. Turner's previous proposal that we consider prepositioning equipment in Egypt was judged not desirable by Defense. There were more problems than advantages involved.

V. MAU Deployment

A. Defense commented briefly on its effort to correct press stories and to tone down the press attention to this deployment.

B. It was proposed that we consider opening discussions with Oman, Kenya, Egypt, and even Sudan on the possibilities of exercising the MAU in those countries. Christopher suggested that it was probably unwise to have our first military deployment to Oman, Kenya, and Somalia be a ground force exercise. Troops on foreign soil are a particularly neuralgic point with the Congress. When we do that, we must brief the Congress effectively. Furthermore, it might be best to precede ground force exercises with less disturbing air deployments to those countries. Harold Brown added that because air deployments have already gone to Egypt, Egypt is the most appropriate first choice for a MAU exercise. It was observed, however, that the Middle East peace talks may make that less desirable than an exercise in Sudan. Harold Brown added that it is not absolutely essential for the MAU to go ashore, but that this had been our earlier plan. It was agreed that the Defense team headed by McGiffert will approach the Egyptians to explore the possibility of a MAU deployment while it is in Cairo on arms issues.¹⁰

VI. Egyptian Arms

On the question of who and when to take the President's decision to Egypt, Harold Brown proposed to prepare options which would be presented to the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington and also presented in Cairo. He emphasized that it is essential that the various options be presented by briefers, not simply by written correspondence. McGiffert or Lieutenant General Graves can go to Cairo with options to present and explain to the Egyptians. In light of this discussion, it was agreed that the following sequence would be followed:

—We will tell the Egyptian Ambassador in Washington and then allow Atherton to inform the Egyptians in Cairo.¹¹ At the same time,

¹⁰ In the left-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter wrote: "Keep all of this out of the press, for a change."

¹¹ Carter circled this sentence and wrote "no" in the right-hand margin.

Atherton will present a short letter from the President to Sadat and announce that a Defense team will soon come for talks.¹²

—A week or so later, the Defense team will go to present the options.

VII. *The Allies military program response on Afghanistan*

Harold Brown added this item to the agenda today for initial discussion. He reports that the bureaucracy in State and Defense have been unable to state a concrete set of program steps we want NATO to take, both in Europe and the Persian Gulf. It is important that we get a U.S. paper into NATO early and follow it with a meeting of Permanent Representatives to consider it. It must include actions for both the Central Front and the Persian Gulf. Otherwise, if there is delay, the allies may take actions only in Europe and give us an answer which excludes actions in the Gulf. It was agreed that Aaron, Komer, and Newsom will meet to pull together a paper on this for next week.

¹² Carter wrote “ok” in the right-hand margin and in the margin to the left of the point he wrote: “To reiterate, I want *Americans* to present the options to Egypt’s military unless Sadat objects.”

55. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, February 15, 1980

SUBJECT

Near Term Enhancement for Rapid Power Projection (C)

Harold has sent you a memo (Tab C)² recommending the following course of action to significantly enhance, in the near-term, our Middle East/Persian Gulf rapid reaction capability:

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 2/80. Secret. Sent for action. The memorandum is mistakenly dated February 15, 1989.

² Not attached. The February 12 memorandum from Brown to Carter entitled “Near-Term Enhancement for Rapid Power Projections” is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Shoemaker, Box 124, Rapid Deployment Force [2–10/80].

—Promptly establish a seven ship prepositioned force afloat in the Indian Ocean composed of two commercially chartered roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) ships; three Military Sealift Command (MSC) C-4 cargo ships; and, two MSC tankers;

—Direct the Secretary of Commerce to proceed with the acquisition of eight SL-7 container ships. (S)

The cost of acquiring and operating the seven ship prepositioning force over FY 80-82 is approximately \$290M. The second part of Harold's sealift package, the enhancement of our CONUS surge capability, consisting of eight SL-7 container ships and possibly two additional RO/RO ships plus a SEABEE barge ship, could cost an additional \$671M in the Defense budget to acquire and operate over the FY 80-82 period. Acquisition costs of the SL-7 and the MARAD differential construction subsidies to current SL-7 owners would total about \$585M in the Commerce Department budget. (S)

Funds to operate the first two RO/ROs during FY 80 would be obtained by reprogramming current funds (Congressional authorization required). Harold also contemplates the need for an FY 80 defense supplemental and an FY 81 budget amendment to cover other acquisition and operating costs. (C)

The program Harold recommends has been discussed and approved in principle by the SCC. While several decisions have yet to be made that may significantly impact on SL-7 acquisition costs (e.g., should some or all of the SL-7s be retained as container ships or should they be converted to the RO/RO configuration) I agree with Harold that these issues should not delay the basic decision to enhance our projection force capability. The uncertainties can be resolved in the near-term and should not prevent the Commerce Department from undertaking preliminary discussions with the SL-7 owners. I intend to work closely with OMB, Defense, and Commerce to develop the proper strategy for financing and acquiring the sealift enhancement ships. (C)

I have consulted with OMB on this issue and we are in general agreement on how to proceed. Jim McIntyre will be providing you a separate memo stressing the wider budgetary impact of the several possible courses of action in acquiring and modifying the SL-7 ships. (Tab D)³ (C)

³ Not attached and not found.

RECOMMENDATION:

—That you sign the memo at Tab A⁴ approving in principle⁵ Harold's proposal to establish a seven-ship prepositioned force in the Indian Ocean and his leasing of the two Maine-Class RO/ROs;⁶

—That you sign the memo at Tab B⁷ directing the Secretary of Commerce to initiate preliminary discussions⁸ with the owners of the commercial ships currently under consideration by DOD with a view toward acquiring these ships on the most favorable cost basis.⁹ (C)

⁴ Not attached. The February 19 memorandum from Carter to Brown is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 2/80. A copy was sent to McIntyre.

⁵ Carter underlined "in principle" and in the right-hand margin wrote: "only."

⁶ Carter approved the recommendation.

⁷ Not attached. The February 19 memorandum to Secretary of Commerce Klutznick is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 2/80. A copy was sent to McIntyre.

⁸ Carter underlined "preliminary discussions" and in the right-hand margin wrote: "only."

⁹ Carter approved the recommendation and in the margin below it wrote: "Be cautious—I need SCC & OMB assessment of need & cost. Can total cost be borne by reprogramming? J."

56. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 22, 1980, 3–4:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Security Framework for the Persian Gulf

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs

Reginald Bartholomew, Director, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown

Robert Komer, Under Secretary for Policy Affairs

JCS

Lt. General John Pustay, Assistant to the Chairman

CIA

Director Stansfield Turner

Robert Ames, NIO for Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs

OMB

John White, Deputy Director

Harry Shaw

White House

Zbigniew Brzezinski

David Aaron

NSC

William E. Odom

Thomas Thornton

Henry Owen

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by adding two items to the agenda: first, a recent report from Somalia; and second, post-settlement actions in Iran.

[Omitted here is material on Somalia and Afghanistan.]

Political and Economic Presence in the Persian Gulf

Dr. Brzezinski pointed out that the State paper² recommends no actions for decision. He then asked if we are in fact out of phase in

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 109, SCC 277, 2/22/80, Security Framework for the Persian Gulf. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Odom sent Brzezinski an agenda for the meeting along with several papers prepared in the Department of State and CIA under a February 21 memorandum. (Ibid.)

² Under a February 21 memorandum to Brzezinski, Seitz sent five papers prepared in the Department of State for the February 22 SCC meeting. The papers cover a number of topics, including the "impact of the Iranian Revolution," the "economic situation," the "impact of US security role," and "balancing factors," which included the Middle East peace negotiations and called for the continued building of U.S. "cultural and informational programs in the Gulf countries." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P800170–0547)

the area in that our military presence has outgrown our political and economic presence. Or are we to conclude from the State paper that the two presences are still in phase, requiring no actions at present? There was brief mention of Saudi desires to buy more arms, of Secretary Duncan's visit to the area next week,³ and of how the Brzezinski/Christopher dialogue with the Saudis can be kept alive. Saunders suggested that every week or so we can send the Ambassadors a list of things they can press their governments to do.

CIA finds the State paper overly optimistic about the internal stability of most regimes in the region. Henry Owen added that the main determinants of our political and economic presence remain, first, progress on the Arab/Israeli talks, and second, U.S. energy policy. It was suggested that the British and French take more action in the region, but it was also noted that their present activities are growing, e.g. Giscard's upcoming visit to the UAE.

It was agreed that next week State will recommend some actions we might take, such as instructions to our Ambassadors.

Sustaining a Military Presence in the Persian Gulf

Harold Brown asked that we defer discussion of (1) British and French deployment into the region and (2) enroute basing access to next week.

a. *Our Naval Presence in the Persian Gulf*. Harold Brown opened this topic with a brief discussion of our initiatives in sustaining a naval presence after the hostage problem in Iran is resolved. We will need three components: (1) ground forces (e.g. the MAU), (2) some air power, and (3) some surface combatants. He suggested several mixes but added that a MAU and a carrier battle group is the most feasible one although it strains our resources. He prefers, if possible, to substitute ground-based air for half of each year. He assumes, for all approaches, that a MAU will remain permanently in the Persian Gulf. It could be needed to secure an air-head or beach-head in a crisis. Doubts were expressed that our right to facilities would allow six months for a F-15 squadron in Oman. Bartholomew reported that he had mentioned "a few weeks" for forces ranging from a battalion to a brigade in size.

Dr. Brzezinski asked Harold Brown about timing, when he would want to begin one of these approaches. Brown answered that after the hostages are out of Iran he would recommend withdrawing one carrier battle group. Dr. Brzezinski wondered if this reduction would be appro-

³ Duncan visited Saudi Arabia March 1–4 primarily to discuss energy issues and Saudi oil production. He reported on his trip in the March 21 SCC meeting; see Document 210.

priate. We need to think this through and answer the question "Is this enough for the strategic problem we confront?"

It was agreed that the discussion today is merely a preview for the President, not a basis for decision. Defense will provide a report, probably by next week, which will provide a basis for decision.

OMB added that given the CPI release today and the additional \$16 billion in the budget above previous estimates we will be under enormous pressure to trim back spending. He offered these remarks because Harold Brown underscored that no matter what approach we take to our military presence in the Gulf, it will cost more money. Brown argued that these factors will affect "timing" more than the "substance" of our naval presence in the Persian Gulf. If we back off those commitments now, we will lose our credibility. Moreover, the Congress will force us to spend the money anyway. We cannot expand our commitments without increasing our resources to meet them.

b. *A MAU Exercise in Egypt.* State expressed doubt that a military exercise in Egypt is appropriate in the near future. Although Egypt may be anxious to accept such an exercise, they should not. Dr. Brzezinski asked if this means that Egypt might make the wrong decision in State's view. Newsom replied that indeed Sadat might not decide correctly. He went on to insist that the MAU and the four ships make port calls individually in the region, not as a group.

Dr. Brzezinski asked if this would not send the wrong signal. Have we not sent the MAU into the region in order to accustom the countries in the region henceforth to view a MAU exercise as a normal deployment? Brown noted that there has been remarkable little outcry in the region about the MAU. He expected much more. Furthermore, he said that a decision about an exercise can be postponed until mid-March.

In discussing sites for an exercise other than Egypt, Harold Brown suggested Kenya. Dr. Brzezinski and David Aaron responded that Kenya is on the wrong continent to transmit the signal intended by a MAU exercise. Oman was considered before, and we should keep it under consideration.

It was agreed to defer recommending a decision to the President and not to recommend a negative decision. We will continue considering Egypt, Oman, and Kenya. A recommendation will be made to the President no later than mid-March.

c. *B-52s based on Diego Garcia.* Brown interpreted the State paper on the possible Soviet reaction to B-52s on Diego Garcia as one of "screams" but no serious effort to prevent us from putting them there. Turner disagreed. He believes the B-52s will provoke a greater Soviet reaction than State believes. Bartholomew added that the Indian Ocean Arms Talks revealed the deep Soviet concerns about strategic aircraft in the region. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that a promise not to deploy

B–52s might be used as part of an Afghanistan neutralization package. Turner objected, pointing out the undesirability of giving up our strategic presence on the weakest air defense approach to the Soviet Union. Dr. Brzezinski countered that Soviet aviation based in Afghanistan permits a large Soviet air presence over the Strait of Hormuz, making a swap with the B–52s on Diego Garcia possibly a desirable one for us.

It was agreed to make a recommendation about a decision next week.

[Omitted here is material on Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan.]

57. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 29, 1980, 3:30–4:40 p.m.

SUBJECT

Security Framework for the Persian Gulf—III

PARTICIPANTS

State

Deputy Secretary Warren
Christopher
Under Secretary for Political Affairs,
David Newsom
Assistant Secretary for Near
Eastern & South Asian Affairs,
Harold Saunders
Reginald Bartholomew, Director of
Political/Military Affairs

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown
Deputy Secretary Graham Claytor
Under Secretary for Policy Robert
Komer

JCS

General David Jones, Chairman
Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Director Stansfield Turner
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East &
South Asia

OMB

Deputy Director John White

The White House

Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

Henry Owen
Jasper Welch
William E. Odom

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 30, NSC/SCC Minutes, 1/16/80–2/29/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote “Zbig J” in the top right-hand corner of the first page.

I. Political and Economic Presence in the Region

Dr. Brzezinski noted that none of the State recommendations appear controversial.² Harold Brown, however, raised two caveats. First, the absorptive capacity of countries in the region for military aid is a critical matter. Saudi Arabia is a terrible offender, purchasing far more than is needed. Second, our embassy in Saudi Arabia tends to be an amplifier for the Saudis' requests.

Dr. Brzezinski asked what our capabilities are to assist with internal security in Saudi Arabia. We are caught in a historical paradox. The things that will promote rapid development of the economy and political participation will also bring crises and probably disintegration of the present system. Our need for the next decade is internal stability rather than rapid change. Our policy, therefore, should be to direct Fahd away from buying F-15s toward achieving effective control of the population and the social forces of change. Should we develop a strategy in this direction? Internal stability for five or ten years would be a very good deal for the U.S.

Dr. Brzezinski next asked who in the government is in a position to prepare such planning. Komer said no one is. Christopher added that we are not good at it, and our laws proscribe many actions required for such a strategy. [7 lines not declassified]

It was agreed:

a. To develop a program for internal security assistance to Saudi Arabia.

b. To develop an approach to persuade the Saudis to accept it.³

Turner added that any approach should be regional, not just a single country approach, because terrorists operate across borders. Turner also observed there are a number of reports of skepticism about the U.S. longer-term determination to stay in the Persian Gulf; we have not yet persuaded states in the region that our present policy is serious.

Actions recommended by the State paper and approved by the SCC:

—Near term visits by senior U.S. government officials to the Gulf and by senior Gulf state officials to Washington.

—Financial and commercial actions:

a. Review our present posture with Congress and the IRS on U.S. tax on investment income of the Gulf countries.⁴

² See footnote 2, Document 56.

³ Carter wrote "ok" in the left-hand margin next to these points.

⁴ Carter drew lines from points a, b, c, and d and wrote a question mark in the left-hand margin next to each. Carter wrote to the left of these notations: "This is not the forum to change tax laws, etc."

b. Consider liberalization of our regulations on taxation of overseas Americans in bidding on foreign projects.

c. Provide a clear set of guidelines for the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

d. Take a position on repeal of current boycott language.

e. Increase the number of trade exhibits and missions we sponsor in Gulf States.

f. Approve the late April Franchising Mission to the four Emirates.

g. Continue planning for the FY 1981 promotional events, i.e. trade missions and major exhibitions.

—Economic and technical assistance: Respond to UAE unofficial approaches on reimbursable technical assistance, linking this with a concept of a business council or joint commission that would institutionalize Treasury Department access to this capital surplus country.

—Explore extending technical assistance to Bahrain at a level of \$2–3 million annually.

—Saudi Arabia: The problem is not strengthening this relationship but keeping the variety of our efforts with the Saudis in harmony.

II. *Military Presence in the Persian Gulf*

a. *Naval presence.* Harold Brown reviewed three options in the Defense paper.⁵ Option one includes maintaining one carrier battle group in the Indian Ocean on a continuous basis, periodic land-based TACAIR deployments; periodic battalion-size exercises, probably in Egypt and Oman; and frequent B–52 operations. Discussion centered mainly on an enhanced version of this option.

All agreed that we should maintain our present level of two carrier battle groups until the hostage situation in Iran has been resolved. Dr. Brzezinski asked if we could hold the present level as long as the Afghanistan situation⁶ remains unresolved and then move to Option 1.

Harold Brown responded that to keep two carrier battle groups for the remainder of this year will virtually destroy the Navy's budget and resource programs. Thus he recommends that after an Iran settlement, we drop to one carrier battle group and explore the use of periodic TACAIR deployments to substitute for the second carrier.

General Jones expressed concern that a dramatic reduction i.e., removing one carrier battle group, will be the wrong signal in the region at a time when we should be improving our overall military

⁵ Not found.

⁶ Carter underlined "the Afghanistan situation" and wrote "may be permanent" in the left-hand margin.

presence. Therefore, General Jones recommends that when one carrier battle group is removed, TACAIR be more or less continuously deployed in and out of Oman and Egypt. This would make up for the drop in naval air and at the same time lessen the resource demand on the Navy.

Christopher expressed a preference for Option 1 and noted that General Jones's approach sounds too much like permanent bases in the region for TACAIR.

Turner added that carriers won't have much impact on the Soviets because of their limited range toward the north. At the same time we must ask the question how can we take this decision without looking at the effect on our military presence in the rest of the world.

Brown admitted that keeping one or two carrier battles in the Indian Ocean would require a drawdown from the Pacific or Mediterranean. Moreover, another \$150 million minimum operating cost will be incurred per carrier battle group.

There was further discussion of General Jones's proposal to keep TACAIR more or less permanently in the region as a substitute for the second carrier. Harold Brown observed that his position was very close to Jones's. At issue is only what time period the TACAIR would deploy. Christopher and Turner observed that the TACAIR might create the impression of an increased military presence rather than a substitute for the second carrier battle group. Dr. Brzezinski and Brown added that such an impression is desirable.

Harold Brown asked that we recommend to the President that he make a public statement about our commitment to keep at least one carrier battle group in the Indian Ocean. No one else supported this view. Political reasons, both domestic and foreign, were advanced against it.

It was agreed:

a. That we maintain the present level of two carrier battle groups until the Iranian hostage situation is resolved.

b. That we accept Option 1 as modified by Harold Brown to include more frequent TACAIR deployments to the region. We shall request the first TACAIR deployment in Egypt. It was judged better to delay such a request to Oman. Harold Brown and General Jones will try to find common ground on how much time each year TACAIR should be in the region.

b. *B-52s to Diego Garcia*. General Jones recommended that we approach the UK quietly to get permission for B-52 recce flights staged through Diego Garcia. Once that is obtained, we will tell the Congress just before the mission and try to complete a mission before it becomes public knowledge. General Jones also asked for permission to fly

B-52s non-stop from Michigan through the Mediterranean, across Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Oman, eventually landing in Guam. Finally, he asked permission to open discussion with the Portuguese about B-52 staging at a Portuguese base. Most discussants liked Jones's approach in the staging of B-52 recce flights through Diego Garcia. Christopher preferred that we only take the first step consulting with the UK, and then review the matter in light of the Iran situation.

It was agreed:⁷

a. To go to the UK for permission for the B-52 recce flights⁸ and then discuss the issue at the next SCC meeting.

b. That the non-stop flight from Michigan to Guam be approved if Egypt, Oman, and Saudi Arabia will grant overflight permission.

c. That State will raise the B-52 staging issue with the Portuguese at an upcoming opportunity.

Allied Deployments. Dr. Brzezinski asked Defense if it is clear what we want from the allies. Harold Brown replied that our talks with the Australians have clarified what we want from them, and he recommended that we encourage the British to go ahead with their planned deployment of two destroyers, three frigates and three or four auxiliaries to the Indian Ocean in 1980.

Concerning the French, Turner recommended that we ask the French to allow a carrier to participate in our Mediterranean fleet activities. This would substitute for drawdown of a U.S. carrier. Brown reported that the French have recently turned us down on such a request which passed through military channels.

It was agreed that Defense would draft a message for State to review and pass to the French at the political level. Dr. Brzezinski may also make an approach from the White House as a parallel effort.

Enroute basing. There were no objections to the series of efforts under way by State to improve our enroute basing access for deployments to the Persian Gulf.

Oman. Two issues were discussed. First, language for an agreement on security assurances; second, the form of the agreement.

All agreed that the form should be a Presidential letter.⁹ The language for such a letter was agreed as follows:

"In line with my general view of vital U.S. interests in the Gulf Region, I want to emphasize that the security and independence of Oman are of great importance to the U.S. The new cooperative arrange-

⁷ Carter wrote "Keep me informed" in the left-hand margin next to this line.

⁸ See footnote 3, Document 129.

⁹ See footnote 2, Document 66.

ments which have been concluded by our two governments are tangible evidence of our concern in this regard and are a mutual response to threats to the security of the sovereign nations of the region. Any such threat to the independence and territorial integrity of Oman would be regarded by the U.S. with grave concern, and in that event it would be our firm intention to consult promptly with your government on an appropriate reaction in accordance with our constitutional process¹⁰

The legal view in State is that this is not a bilateral agreement but merely a unilateral expression of U.S. intent. It does not, therefore, fall under the Case Amendment requirements for consulting with Congress.

It was agreed, however, that we shall keep the Congress fully informed of the details of the letter.

Additional assistance for Oman, Somalia, and Kenya. It was agreed to stand pat on the question of additional assistance for the present. Harold Brown asked that we make an exception for certain helicopter training programs with Kenya.

Dr. Brzezinski observed that such completion was fully within the President's earlier guidance on assistance to these countries.

MAU exercise. Christopher asked that we postpone the issue until next time. Dr. Brzezinski observed that we had decided at the last meeting that we have already made the decision to have an exercise;¹¹ the only question is where, in Kenya, Oman, or Egypt. The choice should be with State because Defense is indifferent from a military viewpoint. Christopher said that he might want to reraise the question of an exercise at all.

Pakistan. It was agreed that, because the issue is urgent, Harold Brown will read the Pakistan papers over the weekend and that all principals will be called early next week and asked if they have objections or questions which will require a meeting. If there are none, State's recommendations will stand approved.

The next SCC¹² will take up the items not discussed on today's agenda:

1. Possibly Pakistan.
2. Further discussion of a MAU exercise.
3. The Komer paper on regional strategy.
4. Post-settlement Iran.
5. Afghanistan neutralization proposal.

¹⁰ Carter wrote "ok" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

¹¹ See Document 56.

¹² See Document 62.

58. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, undated

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State

The Secretary of Defense

The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

SCC on Security Framework for the Persian Gulf (S)

The President has reviewed the Summary of Conclusions for the February 29 SCC meeting² and issued the following instructions:

1. Political and Economic Presence in the Persian Gulf

The financial and commercial actions recommended by State are not approved in so far as they affect our tax laws. (S)

2. Access to Facilities in Oman

The text of a Presidential letter on assurances to Oman was approved as follows:

"In line with my general view of vital U.S. interests in the Gulf Region, I want to emphasize that the security and independence of Oman are of great importance to the U.S. The new cooperative arrangements which have been concluded by our two governments are tangible evidence of our concern in this regard and are a mutual response to threats to the security of the sovereign nations of the region. Any such threat to the independence and territorial integrity of Oman would be regarded by the U.S. with grave concern, and in that event it would be our firm intention to consult promptly with your government on an appropriate reaction in accordance with our constitutional process. . . . (S)

3. Saudi Arabia

Approval is granted to develop a program for internal security to Saudi Arabia, and to develop an approach to persuade the Saudis to accept it. (S)

Zbigniew Brzezinski³

¹ Source: Carter Library Brzezinski Donated Material, Geographic File, Box 15, Southwest Asian/Persian Gulf—[3/80]. Secret.

² See Document 57.

³ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

59. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Oman¹

Washington, March 8, 1980, 1825Z

63088. Subject: PM Director's Talk With Omani Foreign Minister Zawawi.

1. (Secret)-entire text.

2. Summary: —In a 2-hour conversation on March 3, PM Director Reginald Bartholomew and Omani Foreign Minister Zawawi covered the following topics: Bartholomew informed Zawawi of the SCC decision not to provide economic assistance, to consider possible facilities improvement projects in the Musandam Peninsula, and to provide written expression of our interest in Oman's security in the form of a Presidential letter.² Security assistance, facilities improvements and regional reactions were also discussed. Zawawi expressed disappointment on not receiving economic assistance, raised the problem of delays on FMS cases, and suggested that the Oman Government handle contracting for facilities improvements. Proceeding with increased U.S. access to Oman was not conditional upon resolving these issues. End summary.

3. Omani Foreign Minister Qais Zawawi accompanied by Omani Ambassador Sulaiman met with PM Director Bartholomew March 3rd. Also on the U.S. side were PM Deputy Director David Gompert, NEA/ARP Director Countryman, and PM Special Assistant Edgar (notetaker). The following topics were discussed.

4. "Economic assistance:" Bartholomew informed Zawawi of the SCC decision not to provide economic assistance which Oman had requested (dols 100 million annually for 5-years). Bartholomew explained that we were sensitive to the importance of having a dimension of the program which related to civil and economic needs and had taken a very hard look at the problem. Unfortunately, given broad cuts in economic and military assistance programs necessitated by budget reductions to combat inflation, it was not possible at this point to meet their request. We have, however, maintained the dols 50 million in FMS.

5. Zawawi expressed Oman's strong disappointment at our response. He argued that the amount involved was not too great and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800120-0532. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Vedgar (PM/ISP); cleared in PM, NEA/ARP, and S/S; approved by Bartholomew. Sent for information Immediate to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, Manama, and Sana.

² See Documents 57 and 58.

that it was the minimum required to convince their people that there would be a significant economic benefit out of the relationship with us. He argued that if the U.S. were as serious about the situation and as concerned about the stability of the region as Oman, some solution should be sought. Oman had responded positively and cooperatively and wished to see our relationship proceed, and he did not see how he could go back and explain our decision.

6. Bartholomew responded that we felt that access was a benefit not just to the U.S. but to both of our countries, just as we felt that helping strengthen Oman was in both our interests. In this context we had brought their proposals on economic assistance and doing something in the Musandam back with us and considered them very seriously, even though we understood they were not conditions for proceeding with a relationship in the interest of both sides, including increased access. Our budget constraints are real, but Oman will feel the impact less than a good many others. We will try very hard to give our facilities improvements a direct civil pay off.

7. Zawawi rejoined that the question of security was of prime importance and that the assistance was not a condition to proceeding with the new relationship. Pointing out that \$100 million over 5 years was not a “big deal,” he emphasized the necessity of convincing the people that our cooperation was not just in the security field. In fact, he said, (in a comment that may have been facetious) if necessary, they would lend the money to the U.S. so we could give it back to them publicly; anything to show the Omani people that they would benefit economically from the relationship. (Note: —We suspect Zawawi meant to say \$100 million for each of the next five years, vice over the next five years).

8. “Improvements in Musandam:” Bartholomew explained that the team which had surveyed Musandam had just returned. In general, we share Oman’s assessment of the importance of the area. However, in view of slashes in economic aid, we will have to justify anything we do in military terms. We have the question under active review and are not now in a position to decide. Zawawi responded only to point out that a port or airfield in the Musandam would be of military significance.

9. “Security assurances:” Bartholomew informed Zawawi of our intention to record our interest in the security of Oman in the form of a Presidential letter to the Sultan, which might well come in response to the Sultan’s letter which Zawawi was about to deliver to the President.³

³ See footnote 2, Document 60. For the President’s letter, see footnote 2, Document 66.

10. "Security assistance:" Noting that the Omanis now had the report of the military requirements survey team, Bartholomew asked about their thinking on how they would proceed. He also noted that C-130's would not be available by National Day (November, 1980), but that we would take a sympathetic look to see what we could do to help get 6 tanks by then.

11. Zawawi replied that they were going to buy (4) C-130's but would wait until spring of 81 since training would also take that long. He had been quoted a price of dols 14/15 million for aircraft with spares. Zawawi then proceeded to elaborate on the problems of lead times. The two examples he gave were 175 MM guns and Sidewinders. He claimed that they had been quoted a lead time of 45-50 months on delivery of 175 MM guns and that they could buy 130 MM guns from the Soviets for less, with a delivery of 3 weeks. On Sidewinders, he said they had been quoted a lead time of 24-30 months. They had an urgent need for the first 50 or 60 within 6 months. He could get air-to-air missiles from Europe sooner and cheaper.

12. Bartholomew replied that he had been unaware of the problems on the 175 MM gun, but would look into them. Commenting that lead times were a problem, he explained it would be part of our new relationship to be as sensitive and responsive as possible and to expedite these matters. In this regard, he suggested that it was important to make contact on the political level as well as the technical level to make sure the systems works. Bartholomew also pledged a full faith effort to make sure this aspect of our relationship is managed correctly.

13. Further on security assistance, Zawawi expressed the desire of his MOD to see where they stand on FMS, costs, and availability before moving the list of equipment recommended by the survey team.

14. "Facilities improvements:" Zawawi raised the question of whether Masirah would be improved to accommodate both U.S. and Oman aircraft, and left a paper describing Omani plans for Masirah.⁴ Bartholomew replied that we hoped to get a preliminary version of a detailed facilities improvements plan out to them soon.

15. Zawawi then said that the Oman Government would like to handle the contracting for construction, putting out requests for tender, and acting as the customer, subject of course to our approval at each step. Bartholomew replied that he would look into this though he was quite sure it would present difficulties. There are numerous regulations governing military construction that we would have to observe.

16. "Regional reaction:" Bartholomew asked whether the Omanis wanted to take the lead on briefing any of the regional states. Zawawi

⁴ Not found.

said he would get a reply back to us but thought basically they could do most of the briefing themselves.

17. Zawawi commented that general opinion in the Gulf was officially not very favorable. There was a great deal of sensitivity to an open and declared relationship with the U.S. Iraq has called on the Gulf states to turn against any strategic relationship. The Saudis had stated publicly that there was no problem requiring an outside presence and had not been responsive on financing the Oman purchase of Sidewinders.

18. Bartholomew answered that if we manage correctly, our access will become part of the landscape, just as MIDEASTFOR has become.

Vance

60. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 4, 1980, 1:15–1:45 p.m.

SUBJECT

Summary of the President's Meeting with Minister Zawawi, Oman Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

PARTICIPANTS

President Jimmy Carter

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Assistant Secretary Harold H. Saunders, Bureau of Near Eastern and South

Asian Affairs, Department of State

Reginald Bartholomew, Director, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State

Gary Sick, NSC Staff

Minister Zawawi, Oman Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Timothy Landon, Adviser to Sultan Qaboos

Omani Ambassador Sadek Sulaiman

General William Parris

Mr. Chester Nagle

During introductory pleasantries, the President and the Foreign Minister discussed the Foreign Minister's recent visit to Georgia where

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Subject File, Box 38, Memcons: President, 3–4/80. Confidential. The meeting took place in the Cabinet Room.

he went quail hunting. As the meeting began Foreign Minister Zawawi presented the President with a letter from Sultan Qaboos.²

The President opened the meeting by expressing his deeply felt gratitude and strong feelings about the relationship developing between the U.S. and Oman. The President admired the courage exhibited by the Sultan in standing firm against the very serious Communist and Soviet threat to the region. The U.S. shares the concerns of Oman and looks forward to a close relationship. We appreciate the Omani decision to permit U.S. forces to use facilities in Oman.³ This will send a clear signal to Oman's neighbors and the Soviets not to interfere in the internal affairs of the nations of the region. The geographical placement of Oman is of great strategic importance. The U.S. looks forward to working closely with Oman in its economic progress. The President thought there was a good opportunity for U.S. private business relations with Oman, and he specifically mentioned the possibility of EXIM Bank credits as a possible means of assisting Oman's economic development.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said he wished to convey the Sultan's best wishes. The Sultan is satisfied with the talks we have had so far about the cooperation between our two countries, which had discussed U.S. access to military facilities, and the advantages to the civil sector in Oman. He hoped that development of airports, ports and other facilities could be valuable for civil as well as military uses. The Sultan is also interested in security assurances from the President. The Sultan is outspoken in his response to the U.S. initiatives. He has recognized the Soviet threat for many years. The threat is not Communist, since Oman maintains good relations with China, Romania and others. It is not an ideological question. Rather, the intent is to safeguard the integrity and independence of Omani territory. So when the U.S. approach came, Oman was ready, and now Oman sees a new era of relations with the U.S. Oman would like to go slow in this process. The proper way is not to affect the traditions, culture and customs of the country. It must also be a two-way street. The U.S. has its requirements, and Oman has its own. We understand the strategic nature of the region and we wish to cooperate in the interests of Oman's security. We are

² In his February 18 letter to Carter, Qaboos commented: "we trust that the United States will consider adopting a more energetic policy in our Area and Globally, with the aim of pre-empting further Soviet attempts at subversion or aggression." He continued: "We must say that we feel the Western World has for the past few years been complacent in the face of the massive Soviet psychological and subversive effort. We very much hope that you and your Allies in the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe will be prepared to combat the Soviet threat, not only in the short-term but also in the long-term." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P800057-1182)

³ See Document 53.

prepared to be outspoken in forming a relationship with the U.S., while our neighbors are reluctant to say openly what they may believe in private. These other states stress the liabilities of open cooperation with the U.S., but we do it, not them. We want to give you the ability to maintain a credible military capability, but we would like as little fanfare as possible. We would prefer as few discussions as possible with others in the area. The PDRY did not inform Oman when it accepted a close military relationship with the Soviets, so why should we inform them of the nature and scope of our relationship with the U.S.? The Sultan is frank and open in wishing to establish good relations with the U.S. I am here to confirm this and to stress the importance of economic assistance which Oman seeks from the U.S. The Sultan is presently on the campaign trail, visiting towns and villages throughout the country. He must be seen to show the extent of our cooperation and what is in it for the people. Internal stability is as important as external stability. We seek this assurance from you, and we would like a continuing response from the U.S. Our needs are modest. Unlike some others, when we presented our military needs, we were realistic about what we could absorb and did not ask for everything. At times, the lead time for delivery of military equipment is longer than we feel is necessary. For example, about a year ago we asked about the 175 mm. artillery gun. Now your Defense people say we have changed our requirement to the 155 mm. gun, but that change was made on the basis of the U.S. recommendation. We can purchase the Soviet 130 mm. from European sources at a much lower delivery time and at very competitive prices. We would like to see a quicker response to our minimum and modest needs.

The President asked if the Sultan covered these points in his letter.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said that he did not.

Mr. Bartholomew said we were checking on the 175 and 155 mm. guns.

Foreign Minister Zawawi interjected that the artillery was no longer an issue. He simply raised it as an example of the kinds of problems which can arise. "We know that when you want, you can respond. We would not want to wait two years . . ."

The President said to let him or Dr. Brzezinski know directly if something arises which needs attention.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said their most urgent requirement is for Sidewinder Missiles. They would like to see the early dispatch of these missiles, together with their launchers.

The President asked *Mr. Bartholomew* to let him know about that case.

Foreign Minister Zawawi asked the President if he would not like to read the Sultan's letter.

The President said he would, and opened the letter and read it. He said it was a very nice letter and he appreciated it. The President said there were two other items of evidence of the new closer relationship between us. One was the hospitable reception given to our military team during its visit to Oman. The other is the constructive attitude of Oman toward the Camp David negotiations, which he hoped and trusted would be successful. He asked what are Oman's relations with South Yemen.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said Oman had received overtures over the past 6 months to normalize relations, using Kuwait as an intermediary. Oman saw this gesture merely as a tactic, but they were willing to go along. They asked the Kuwaitis to set a date and they would be willing to meet with the South Yemenis. Thus far no satisfactory date had been found, due to no lack of interest by them or reluctance on the part of Oman. The PDRY had raised some points, which were not conditions to a meeting, that Oman should have discussions with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman. This used to be called the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, but now it has been cut down to size. Oman no longer sees the PFLO as a threat, but it is unacceptable for Oman as a sovereign nation to meet with an organization dedicated to its overthrow. The PDRY has also asked Oman to pay compensation for damages incurred during the struggle over Dhofar. Oman has replied that if there were some damages, Oman had not started that conflict and whatever damages had occurred were deserved. The Foreign Minister had personally passed that message along to the Yemenis. He told them that if they wish to normalize relations, they must show some gesture of cooperation and denounce the activities of the PFLO. So a dialogue is going on, but this is merely a tactic on their part and is temporary until they achieve their goal of unity with North Yemen under South Yemen domination. Oman's relations with Saudi Arabia are good. The Saudis are supportive except from time to time when they offer some suggestions about Camp David, but that is only in passing.

The President said that the Saudis make some suggestions to us on the same subject—and not just in passing. He asked the Foreign Minister whether he had personally gone to China to establish diplomatic relations.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said that he had, in 1978. He thought it had worked well. At the President's request, he then reviewed his relations with his Gulf neighbors. With Iraq, Oman has normal diplomatic relations, though they do not see eye to eye on several issues. Oman welcomed the Iraqi condemnation of the USSR for its invasion of Afghanistan. The recent Iraqi proposal opposing any foreign invasions in the region was probably a ploy or an attempt to focus attention

on the future cooperation between our two countries. There was some prospect that Iraq and Saudi Arabia would get closer together. Kuwait is an unusual case since they tend to be the socialists or liberals in the group of governments in the Persian Gulf, but relations are normal. Oman gets on well with Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE. They have been working on an agreement demarcating the border with the UAE, and it has taken quite a while. On Iran, he was aware that most of the Iranian diplomats have problems communicating with their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He had met with some of them in Islamabad who were old hands there of five or six years before. These diplomats talk of a new phase of Iranian history starting now to build at the roots, with the people. It was his view that this process will take some time to reestablish any stability in the country. The Foreign Minister had not personally met with Ghotbzadeh or Bani-Sadr.

The President said that he would like to see the Iranian situation resolved, with the release of the hostages. He wondered about Oman's relations with Egypt.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said their relations were good.

The President said that he viewed this time as an exciting new phase of our relations with Oman. He hoped the Sultan would be able to visit.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said they had been considering a visit in December, but now they thought that a visit next February or March would be more appropriate—and the Sultan specifically hoped to meet with President Carter at that time.

The President said that the Sultan's letter indicated his hopes in that regard. He said he was pleased to see General Parris here since he had been the head of the Georgia National Guard when the President was Governor of the state.

Foreign Minister Zawawi said that Oman wanted to have some friends. When he was in Georgia, he had seen some farms and some remarkable sprinkler systems. He hoped that the U.S. would be able to assist Oman in this area. He thought that the Corps of Engineers could be helpful in planning dams, and there was much that could be done in agriculture. This kind of effort would make it credible for the Sultan to go ahead with the relationship with the U.S. in future long-term cooperation.

The President said that Secretary Vance had outlined for the Foreign Minister the budgetary problems which we are now experiencing. The President will instruct Secretary Vance to work in the closest possible way in the area of economic development of Oman, including direct aid, EXIM Bank financing, private business investment, the Corps of Engineers, and technical assistance. Again he welcomed Foreign Minister Zawawi to the United States and said he looked forward to the

Sultan's visit and to the long term close cooperation between our two countries.

61. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, March 6, 1980

SUBJECT

Strategic Review of our Unified Command Structure

The JCS and I have reviewed further the command arrangements for the Persian Gulf region described in my memorandum of January 26.² This memorandum describes the conclusions I have reached and outlines the proposed changes to the operational and planning concept contained in the Unified Command Plan (UCP).

As a result of the review I have decided to confirm the current area responsibilities that have been assigned by the Unified Command Plan to both USCINCEUR and CINCPAC (the line falls between Pakistan–Afghanistan and Iran). These commanders are now responsible for daily interface with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other Unified and Specified Commands, as well as with supporting organizations within their region of responsibility such as State, CIA, DIA, and DCA. In addition, they now plan and administer security assistance, provide operational direction, intelligence support, and logistical directive authority, and are responsible for other services in the region. These functions, including the administration of overseas base structure, could not be easily transferred to a CONUS-based commander without serious mission degradation.

Moreover, in the event of hostilities, USCINCEUR and CINCPAC are staffed and organized to provide expanded logistics, command and control, civil affairs, and intelligence functional support to the combat force commanders in wartime. This would include the ability to act in a support role to a new CINC in the Persian Gulf. Examples include logistics and (from PACOM) fleet support. Therefore, the JCS and I

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 37, Serial Xs [7/80–9/80]. Secret. A notation on the first page indicates that Carter saw the memorandum.

² See Document 48.

see little point in transferring such major peacetime responsibilities to a new Unified Command as that would require substantial added staff and equipment to execute the mission.

I intend, however, to assign primary responsibility (in peacetime as well as wartime) for operational planning for major contingencies in the Persian Gulf region³ to the Commander, Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF). In addition I will designate the Commander, RDJTF, a Unified Commander for joint operations in the region, in the event of plan execution. In effect, this action will create a new Unified Command, if and when needed, that would report directly to the NCA (President/Secretary of Defense), through the JCS as our agent, as is the case for the other CINCs.

The review also confirmed the need for assignment of the additional duty in peacetime as Commander Forward Element of the RDJTF, to the Commander, Middle East Force. This appointment will require a modest augmentation to the staff based in Bahrain. The political realities of the region will require a very low profile for this activity (perhaps a dozen people). These peacetime missions will include collection of intelligence, liaison with US representatives in the region, and establishing forward operating bases to facilitate preparations for deployments, military exercises, and, if required, combat operations. This organization will insure unity of command, if RDJTF elements are employed, without disturbing the services and responsibilities currently provided by COMIDEASTFOR.

I agree with the JCS that these arrangements and the modifications to the UCP will further improve operational planning for the Persian Gulf region and facilitate the execution of contingency plans—without disturbing the wide array of services currently provided by PACOM and EUCOM. This arrangement would, in my judgment, be wiser than establishing another Unified Command, particularly because of the added costs and staff that would be required.

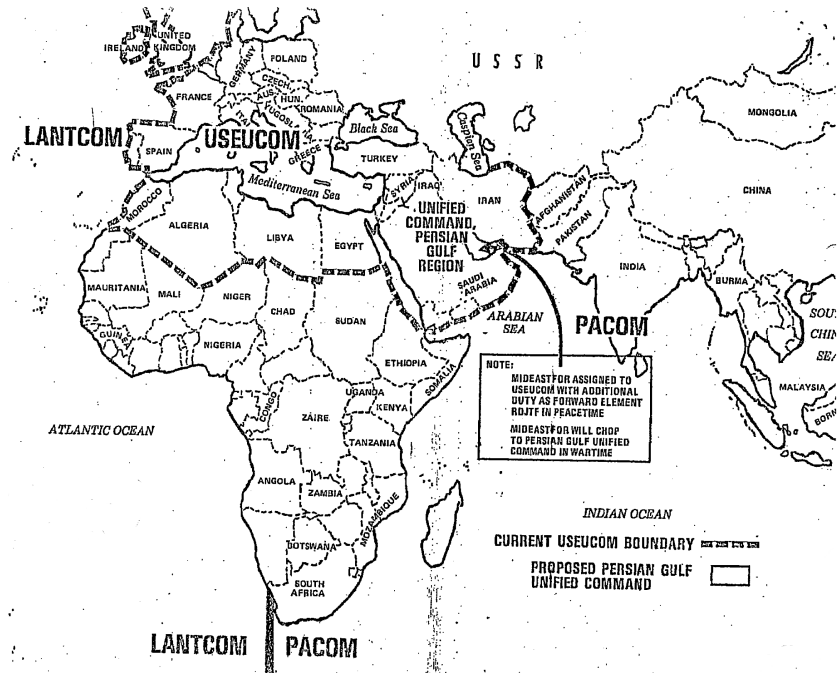
I recognize that these arrangements may in time require further modification; the JCS and I will review them in six months. In the

³ The Persian Gulf region is defined as Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and all the countries on the Arabian Peninsula; the countries of Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, and Kenya on the Horn of Africa; the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf and adjacent waters. It excludes Egypt, Sudan, Israel, Jordan, and Syria, which remain in the EUCOM area of responsibility. But depending on the wartime situation, that could be adjusted at the time. See attached map. [Footnote is in the original.]

meantime, I need your approval for this concept and the appropriate modifications to the UCP.⁴

Harold Brown

Attachment⁵



⁴ On March 7, Brzezinski sent Carter a memorandum commenting on Brown's memorandum. Brzezinski noted that it was "different from his previous proposal in two ways." He continued: "Otherwise, it leaves many of the old problems of dealing through three commands: logistics, intelligence, and control over attaches and security assistance." Brzezinski concluded: "It also introduces new complications." Referencing the attached map, he asserted: "The complexity of the proposal, so graphically apparent from the attached map, makes me less than comfortable. Therefore, I suggest you ask Harold to address these issues before you give final approval to his concept for the Unified Command Structure." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 7/79-3/80)

⁵ Secret.

62. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 7, 1980, 3–4:45 p.m.

SUBJECT

Followup on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—IV

PARTICIPANTS

Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher
Under Secretary for Political Affairs,
David Newsom
Assistant Secretary Harold Saunders
Director, Political/Military Regional
[Reginald] Bartholomew
Defense
Secretary Harold Brown
Deputy Secretary Graham Claytor, Jr.
Ambassador Robert Komer
JCS
General David Jones, Chairman

CIA
Director Stansfield Turner
Robert Earle
OMB
Associate Director Randy Jayne
White House
Zbigniew Brzezinski
NSC
William E. Odom
Jasper Welch
Gary Sick

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting with a brief mention of items for next week. We will ask Secretary Duncan to report to the SCC on his recent trip to Saudi Arabia.² The Saudi Arabian internal security proposals should be related to Matt Nimetz's activities. The Komer paper will be treated at a mini-SCC early next week³ and the results presented to the SCC following. (S)

[Omitted here is a section on Pakistan.]

MAU Exercise

Dr. Brzezinski asked State to clarify its view on the advisability of a Marine Amphibious Unit exercise in the Persian Gulf region.

Christopher argued that we should not move too rapidly in order to avoid souring of our relations in the region. We should not push any one to accept an exercise. The Iraqis, for example, are pressing the

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 20, SCC Meetings: #285 Held 3/7/80, 3/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the top right hand corner of the page. Odom briefed Brzezinski on the agenda of the SCC meeting and forwarded background papers in a March 4 memorandum. (Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 110, SCC 285, 03/07/80, Security Framework)

² See Document 210.

³ See Document 63.

Omanis to avoid a military relationship with the U.S. It is better at the present time, therefore, that the MAU stay afloat or make port calls, not engage in an exercise. (S)

Brzezinski asked if State's view includes all countries in the region, Kenya for example. Christopher replied that it does. Brown expressed the view that the two best possibilities are Kenya and Egypt in that order. Brzezinski agreed with Christopher's overall assessment but suggested that "to push" is an expression that prejudices the decision. Should we not ask rather than push? Christopher argued that for the U.S. to ask is to push. Brzezinski agreed with regard to Kenya but not in the case of Egypt. Sadat will make up his own mind. It might give Sadat a boost, although what the Israeli reaction would be is uncertain. (S)

It was argued that although Sadat may be eager for an exercise, it would isolate him even more in the Arab world, something we cannot afford because Sadat is too valuable to us. As a challenge to this view, it was asked if having no MAU exercise would make him any less isolated or would it improve the possibility for future negotiations? In response to this question, it was argued that others in Egypt than Sadat perceive a serious internal threat from the PLO and therefore put a higher priority on eventually resolving the PLO problem than on the short run gain that might come from a larger military relationship with the U.S. (S)

General Jones suggested an alternative approach to exercises in the region, what he called a stair-step approach. The object is to accustom states in the region to a MAU presence. Acceptance of the present deployment is the first step. The second step can be port calls during which dignitaries come aboard the ship. A third step could involve port calls with helicopters flying non-operationally. These early steps will allow a military-to-military relationship to develop which could be used to prompt local military authorities to ask the political leadership for a combined exercise with the U.S. Once that step is achieved, we can give publicity to an exercise, even TV coverage, which will ratify a public acceptance. The important thing is a successful long-term presence, not just for an exercise this spring. In order to execute this approach, Jones asked that the regional commander have authority to deal directly with the ambassadors in the countries involved in the region. (S)

This approach was well received with three small caveats. First, Turner is anxious that we not press Oman early for fear of destroying that relationship. Second, Newsom wants Washington clearance on the last step where helicopters will be involved rather than leaving it to our ambassadors. Third, Christopher prefers to begin with one or two

ships at a time not an armada-size port call. Fourth, State needs some lead time with the helicopter step in order to inform the Congress.⁴ (S)

[Omitted here are sections on Iran and Afghanistan.]

General Jones added a caveat about the fiscal implications for our Persian Gulf strategy. Harold Brown argued that in one way we have addressed it, that is, in telling the Europeans and Japanese that we may shift our emphasis to that region in military programs. Jones responded that this may be true with regard to one carrier or two carriers in the Pacific Ocean but not in the fullest sense. (S)

⁴ Carter drew a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this and the preceding paragraph and wrote “ok.”

63. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 10, 1980, 4:45–6:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Mini-SCC on the Komer Paper

PARTICIPANTS

State
Reginald Bartholomew, Director of
Politico-Military Affairs

Anthony Lake, Director of Policy
Planning

Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Near East and
South Asian Affairs

Defense
Robert Komer, Under Secretary for
Policy

Walter Slocombe, Deputy Under
Secretary for Policy

JCS
Lt. General John Pustay

CIA
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asian Affairs

OMB
Donald Gessaman
Harry Shaw
Edward Strait

White House
David Aaron

NSC
William E. Odom
Gary Sick
Jasper Welch

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 122, SCM 113, 03/10/80, Mini SCC, Komer Paper. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes of the meeting were not found.

David Aaron chaired the meeting and asked Komer to review key points in his paper.² (C)

Komer argued that we need an overall plan which he tried to provide in the paper. Many of the points he recommended for action are already in progress, many have been completed, and a few others are extremely comprehensive and not easy to address as a security problem alone, such as an energy strategy and the overall fiscal question of whether the budget will support our apparent requirements in the region. He then touched briefly on three points for emphasis:

—*A rear base area*—Plans for a major rear area support base for a large U.S. force projected into the area have yet to be developed. The obvious options are Egypt and Israel. Komer preferred Egypt. (S)

—*Internal security and reform programs*—Komer finds this a particularly important issue, but he notes we are addressing this on Saudi Arabia at the next SCC.³ (S)

—*Our strategic dialogue with states in the region*—Komer argued that we have failed to engage in a strategic dialogue with the Pakistanis, the Saudis, the Emirates, the Iraqis, and the Turks. (S)

Next Komer said he would like to add three additional points for action:

—A list of military contingency plans for the region.

—Pressing the Saudis and Egyptians toward a rapprochement.

—The economic support required to keep Sadat in power. (S)

State's reaction to the paper was essentially favorable, noting most of the action list is in progress. (C)

² Komer produced the paper for the February 29 SCC meeting on Persian Gulf security but discussion of it was deferred until the March 7 meeting, when it was deferred again. Komer forwarded the undated paper to Brzezinski under a February 28 memorandum in which he stated that he had "personally" written the overview and analysis presented. Komer observed: "While much of it will be familiar and some is at least nominally underway, the paper really pulls together for the first time most of the strands of a coherent policy." In the paper itself, Komer addressed the "various aspects of the problem" of developing a Persian Gulf Security Framework: deterring direct Soviet intervention, the type of "security umbrella" the United States should create in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean (PG/IO) region, the construction of a U.S. response capability, security assistance requirements, "key collateral areas of risk," the need for a regional oil strategy to complement the deterrent strategy, the role of the Allies, and the need for "programs to deal with the threat of internal instability/subversion in vulnerable PG/IO states." He concluded the paper with an "Action Program," detailing 8 short- and long-term actions to be taken by the Department of Defense and 13 actions to be taken jointly by the Department of State and Department of Defense to address these problems. The paper and Komer's February 28 memorandum were attached as Tab D to Odom's March 4 memorandum to Brzezinski on the SCC meeting agenda. (Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 110, SCC 285, 03/07/80, Security Framework)

³ See Document 64.

OMB raised serious questions about force-sizing for any contingency such as the defense for southern Iran. Following the lengthy discussion, it was underscored that an effective military posture in the region inevitably will involve large costs. It was emphasized, in particular, that the political climate has been fundamentally altered by Soviet military involvement in the region. To reverse this or to check it from further expansion will require a much larger U.S. military commitment to the region than is now planned. (S)

David Aaron drew this discussion out at length because he felt it was important to understand budget constraints for any strategy that we pursue in the region. This completed discussion of Komer's first and second action points. (C)

What follows is a status on each of the action points as reflected in the discussion:

Point 2—Some work has been done, but both State and Defense should develop papers on a country-by-country basis.

Point 3—Elaboration of our declaratory policy should await the papers written for Point 2.

Point 4—Enroute transit/refueling rights are being pursued by State with Defense support.

Point 5—Homeporting facilities—work is in progress. Defense needs to present specific requirements and bases to State before dialogue can be opened with relevant countries.

Point 6—No action for the present.

Point 7—The Turkish military aid package is being worked on. Should be brought to a SCC in a few weeks.

Point 8—A post-hostage Iran program needs no additional discussion for the present.

Point 9—Next phase vis-a-vis Pakistan and India, needs a State paper on India and Tarapur for a SCC.

Point 10—A FY 1980 security assistance supplemental, was not discussed.

Point 11—Relating our energy needs to our security needs in the Persian Gulf was discussed briefly, but Komer has no proposals beyond a dialogue with the Saudis on their security interests being highly compatible with our energy interests.

Point 12—Pressing our European and Japanese allies to participate in our game plan was acknowledged to be underway.

Point 13—Internal security for Saudi Arabia will be addressed at the SCC on 3/14.⁴ (S)

⁴ The next meeting was on Monday, March 17; see Document 64.

Follow-up taskings were:

- NSC will provide an overall status report on who has done what.
- State will produce a short strategy paper based on this action and as an alternative to it.
- Defense will spell out more clearly its assumptions for planning in the region. (S)

64. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 17, 1980, 5:30–6:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Followup on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—V

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>CIA</i>
Under Secretary for Political Affairs,	Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner
David Newsom	Deputy Director, Frank Carlucci
Assistant Secretary Harold Saunders	Robert Ames, NIO for Near East &
Director, Political/Military Affairs,	South Asian Affairs
Reginald Bartholomew	[name not declassified]
Counselor, Matthew Nimetz	<i>OMB</i>
<i>Defense</i>	Associate Director Edward Jayne
Secretary Harold Brown	<i>White House</i>
Deputy Secretary Graham Claytor,	Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Jr.	David Aaron
Under Secretary for Policy,	<i>NSC</i>
Ambassador Robert Komer	William E. Odom
<i>JCS</i>	Jasper Welch
General David Jones, Chairman	Gary Sick
Lt. General John Pustay	

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting with a brief discussion of the agenda. Duncan's report will be postponed until the next meeting. Pakistan should also be discussed at the next SCC. Finally, the issue of TOW missiles for Oman is added to the discussion today. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 111, SCC 289, 3/17/80, Security Framework. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes were not found. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand margin: "Zbig—Discuss all of this carefully with John West *before* proceeding. My guess is that Saudis, Egyptians & Israelis will object to any US basing in their country. J."

Rear Bases

Dr. Brzezinski asked Defense to report on the follow-up issue from the Komer paper, rear bases.² Harold Brown declared that we definitely need rear base capabilities if we are to deploy to the region a U.S. military force of any significant size for several months or more. There are several ways to acquire such support basing. First, overbuilding Saudi facilities could solve part of the problem, but views within Defense differ on how much. Second, Egypt is the most desirable location, and Berenice and Ras Banas are prime candidate bases. There is no doubt about the need. The real question is how, when, and whether we can acquire such bases without unacceptable political consequences. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked if U.S. military personnel would be required at those bases. Brown answered that we could man them with a few U.S. contract civilians and many Egyptians. The Egyptians, he added, have shown considerable technical capability in logistics and support activities. Brown next asked General Jones to comment on the rear base issue.³ (S)

General Jones pointed out that, for the contingency of “holding the Soviets,” if this means the USSR pouring division after division into the area, we cannot do it. At the other end of the spectrum, a very small contingency, we can operate without a major rear base. For contingencies in the mid-range between these two extremes, bases are imperative, particularly for the U.S. Army and ground activities. Like Harold Brown, General Jones favors Berenice and Ras Banas. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski pointed out that there appears to be no request for a decision today beyond authority to study and propose such basing. Harold Brown agreed and offered to provide a paper within two to three weeks for State and CIA reaction. There was some discussion of basing in Turkey, the Sinai, and other areas. All were judged impractical or politically too sensitive to raise now. (S)

It was agreed that Defense will produce a paper on rear bases and submit it for State and CIA reaction before proposing it to the SCC. (S)

² See Document 63. Following the March 10 mini-SCC meeting, the Department of State produced an annotated version of the Komer Action Program to show the status of each recommendation. The annotated Action Program was sent by O'Donohue and Saunders to Christopher under a March 13 memorandum in preparation for the March 17 SCC meeting, which was originally scheduled to take place on March 14. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870147–0499)

³ Carter wrote in the left-hand margin next to this and the next three paragraphs: “I also do not want any public failure or rebuff, which I consider almost inevitable. Past experience indicates that *all* of this will be in the news before any decisions can be made.”

Overbuilding Saudi Facilities

The next military issue, getting the Saudis to build their facilities to support our contingency plans, is, in Harold Brown's view, something we should talk to them about as soon as possible. We know now that they are not building airfields and storage areas to the level we might desire. General Jones said that a military-to-military approach might get better results than an approach at the political level which makes overbuilding look like a political favor to the U.S.⁴ (S)

There was discussion of how to justify such an effort to the Congress for bases, which would be built by the Corps of Engineers. In particular, there would be worry about the threat to Israel of larger airfields. Harold Brown argued that we can disaggregate these issues by private contractor construction and by choice of bases to overbuild, i.e. not those closer to Israel. (S)

It was agreed that this issue would be looked at in the context of the foregoing discussion and the Defense study on rear bases. (S)

Guiding FMS Sales to Saudi Arabia

Dr. Brzezinski asked how we are to do this. Newsom said that we need to define U.S. needs before we can take such an approach. Brown conceded the point and also noted the difficulties caused by other foreign sales such as French equipment in Saudi Arabia. It can only complicate our contingency planning. (S)

Matthew Nimetz pointed out that we can make progress on this issue only after Ambassador West comes to Washington and we work out with him Saudi FMS requests and justification to the Congress. In particular, Nimetz is concerned about explaining the Saudi absorptive capacity for more and sophisticated weaponry which we might want to sell for our contingency use. Komer emphasized that there are, indeed, two concerns here. First, the Saudi absorptive issue and second, consideration for our use. We will have to work out a way to manage both within our legal constraints. (S)

[2 paragraphs (12 lines) not declassified]

Harold Brown said that we must detach ourselves for a moment and ask ourselves what we are trying to do. Is it not illegal for us to engage in internal police support activities for the Saudis? Considerable discussion of this point followed. The action, police support against terrorism, it was argued, is legal. If counterinsurgency is our aim, the

⁴ Carter wrote "Very doubtful" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

question is how far to go, argued Harold Brown. Dr. Brzezinski said that this is the same issue he posed some time ago, how to buy time for the present Saudi regime.⁵ (S)

Next there was discussion of how the Saudis would react to our offer. Dr. Brzezinski said that they will not like it; our problem is how to sell it to them. State pointed out that there are [1 line not declassified]. CIA acknowledged this and argued that we should, therefore, approach the Saudis at a very low level.⁶ (S)

Dr. Brzezinski ended the discussion by tasking CIA for a paper on their programs for the next SCC which will be circulated and commented on by INR at State. (S)

Next Dr. Brzezinski asked Harold Brown to comment on DOD's efforts to support internal stability in Saudi Arabia. Harold Brown listed a number of things that we might do:

—[2 lines not declassified] (S)

—[2 lines not declassified] (S)

—The U.S. military advisory effort might go beyond what the CIA proposes in its counterterrorism programs. (S)

—How to coordinate the contingency use of other forces in the region might be raised, although this is an extremely sensitive subject for the Saudis. (S)

—[2 lines not declassified], something that was sorely missed during the Mecca incident. (S)

State was concerned with the implications for military sales that any such defense advisory efforts might have. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski tasked Defense to prepare a paper on the above points for the next SCC and to take into account State's comments on military sales. (S)

TOW Sales to Oman

Dr. Brzezinski expressed the President's concern about the long lead time for U.S. TOW deliveries to Oman as they are now scheduled. Harold Brown explained that this is a long established and well known delivery rate for U.S. FMS. If, however, we want to make an exception for Oman, we can divert from other FMS sales, or we can take the equipment from the U.S. Army. If we do that, we can deliver the total amount by the end of July 1980, but the Army will file a complaint

⁵ Carter wrote "Discuss w/Cutler & w/West" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

⁶ Carter wrote "Who at a low level can make a decision?" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

about the adverse implication which the Secretary of Defense will have to waive. The waiver must also be explained to the Congress. (S)

The discussion centered on the psychological impact that rapid TOW delivery would have. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that we split the delivery, making it half in July and half by the end of the year in order to sustain the psychological effect on the Omanis for a longer time. (S)

Next, the discussion turned to our need for an FMS stockpile. We are frequently taking sorely needed equipment away from our own forces for FMS emergencies. Tunisia was a recent example. Both State and Defense underscored the importance of developing a stockpile which allows a delivery rate equal to or better than the Soviet delivery rate. We are measured against the Soviet performance by states in the Persian Gulf region. (S)

It was agreed that Harold Brown will take steps to speed up delivery by diversion from the Army this year if the President approves. As soon as the President's decision is known, State will notify the Omanis and consult with Congress.⁷ (S)

⁷ Carter wrote "DoD, Give me a quick analysis & proposal" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

65. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 28, 1980, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Followup on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—VII

PARTICIPANTS*State*

Counselor Matthew Nimetz
Director, Political/Military Affairs,
Reginald Bartholomew
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near
Eastern & South Asian Affairs,
Joseph W. Twinam
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near
Eastern & South Asian Affairs,
Jane A. Coon

Defense

Under Secretary for Policy,
Ambassador Robert Komer
Assistant Secretary for International &
Security Affairs David McGiffert

JCS

Chairman, General David Jones
Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Director Stansfield Turner
Deputy Director Frank Carlucci
NIO for Near East & South Asia,
Robert Ames
[name not declassified]

OMB

Associate Director, Edward Jayne

White House

Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

William Odom
Thomas Thornton
Henry Owen
Jasper Welch

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by adding an urgent item to the agenda concerning our agreements with Oman. As a result, the Indian/Tarapur issue was not discussed. It will be treated at a separate SCC. (S)

Oman

Dr. Brzezinski said there are two points to be decided. First, whether or not to ask the Omanis for a troop cantonment as part of our military infrastructure development. Second, how to deal with economic aid for Oman. (S)

On the first issue, Dr. Brzezinski recommended strongly that we not burden the relationship with one more military infrastructure request. It is the wrong signal at a delicate time when other outside powers could use it to embarrass and intimidate Oman. No objections

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 47, Security Framework: Minutes of Meetings: 1–4/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes were not found. Carter wrote “ok J” in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

were raised to this, and Bartholomew was instructed not to raise the cantonment area with the Omanis during his upcoming visit.² (S)

There was brief discussion of the large number of Congressmen descending on Oman next week, the Price Codel from the House and the Biden/Baker/Zorinsky Codel on the Senate side. Dr. Brzezinski asked Defense and State why they had allowed the coincidence of these visits with Bartholomew's trip. Defense has talked to Price and State will discuss it more specifically with Biden. Oman, it was pointed out, is not objecting to the Codels because it has long been Omani policy to encourage more Congressional attention. As Dr. Brzezinski pointed out, however, there is an unfortunate coincidence of a surge of Codel activity and sensitive bilateral negotiations. He instructed State and Defense to explain the sensitivity once again to both Price and Biden. (S)

The second issue, economic aid, occasioned an extensive debate. The Omanis are asking that we pave an airfield and improve a port on their shore at the Strait of Hormuz. If we do not build the cantonment facilities at Masirah, we could presumably have funds for this request. They would be difficult to get through Congress, however, because they come from the military construction budget. (S)

For economic aid to Oman, State proposed to reprogram ESF from Sudan and replace it by PL 480.³ The only reprogramming alternatives, in State's view, are Sudan and southern Africa—Zimbabwe. The Israeli lobby in Congress probably will oppose reprogramming from Sudan, thereby forcing the money to be taken from southern African funds. (S)

The overall objective of the military construction and ESF is a \$100 million package for Bartholomew to take to Oman next week. Anything less was judged by all present as likely to result in a failed mission. (S)

Henry Owen tabled another alternative in which we would offer to establish a U.S./Omani commission on economic and technological cooperation, analogous to the commission we have with Saudi Arabia. It would require annually \$5 million ESF, AID Reimbursable Technical Assistance Funds, authorized international technical cooperation activities of USG technical agencies (HEW, USDA, USGS, DOT, etc.), and facilities of the Export-Import Bank and OPIC. This commission would serve as an umbrella and coordinator for many private contractual services to Oman. (S)

Out of the discussion, three alternatives developed:

² See Documents 70–72.

³ Public Law 480, also known as Food for Peace, which President Eisenhower signed into law on July 10, 1954, permits the sale of commodities to foreign governments on grant or credit and allows the United States to donate foods to recipient governments or private voluntary organizations for use in emergencies. The USDA and AID administer the program.

—Commit ourselves to the overall \$100 million package of ESF and military construction funds with a promise of follow-on in FY 1982–83 appropriations.

—Combine the joint commission and reprogramming of the ESF and military construction funds this year.

—Offer the joint commission with only \$5 million ESF reprogramming, which is required to launch the commission. (S)

In the discussion that followed, three key points emerged again and again. First, we cannot be sure of the out-year appropriations in FY 1982–83. Second, we are facing a mood in Congress which is unsympathetic to most reprogramming activities as well as larger ESF and military construction outlays. Third, we are discussing very small sums of money in the context of a major strategic problem, one of the largest since World War II. If our arrangements with Oman suffer a setback, we will see our security framework for the region collapse. An enormous amount is at stake, therefore, on these comparatively small budget sums. State emphasized that we must sort out our priorities. If Oman means this much, then we must take on the Jewish lobby over Sudan, or relegate southern Africa to a lower priority. DOD, JCS, and CIA all endorsed this view of the gravity of the choice the President must face. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski instructed Bartholomew, OMB, and Owen to get together with Odom and prepare a separate memorandum for the President on the choice he must make in this case. It will explicate the budgetary implications and the political and strategic consequences for the President. (S)

Internal Stability in Saudi Arabia

Dr. Brzezinski turned to the Defense paper on programs that might be provided the Saudi Government. There are two points to be decided. First, do all agree on the programs, and second, how shall we approach the Saudis in presenting them. (S)

State expressed concern about the program to improve [2 lines not declassified], it was argued. In rebuttal, Dr. Brzezinski and Defense pointed out that circumstances are changing and the power balance within the royal family is altering. Furthermore, [less than 1 line not declassified]. We are only deciding whether to make such things available. (S)

Next, State raised questions about the use of [less than 1 line not declassified] for intelligence and influence. All agreed that this is a delicate issue into which we should not rush. Turner argued that we should manage this matter as we have done it traditionally, [2 lines not declassified]. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski tasked Defense to elaborate in a paper what would be entailed in their recommendation [less than 1 line not declassified].

We can judge with more confidence, based on that paper, how to proceed. On the [*less than 1 line not declassified*], Dr. Brzezinski, Defense, and CIA argued that there is no reason not to explore this matter, but they agreed that State's stricture about pushing it on the Saudis is well taken. (S)

Turner raised the question about rapid reaction forces in the Defense paper. It was pointed out that any Defense personnel committed to such an effort would be through the CIA program discussed last week. This matter is being coordinated extensively at the staff level between CIA and Defense to prevent duplications. If later on the Saudis express a desire for something larger than a small hostage release force, that would have to be dealt with in Defense channels. We are nowhere near that point at the present. (S)

The method of approach to the Saudis was discussed next. [*1 line not declassified*] Defense could use the Lawrence report⁴ as a basis for opening a separate dialogue. We have already promised them the Lawrence report. Or, as Defense pointed out, it might be part of Harold Brown's discussion, if he makes a trip to Saudi Arabia later this spring. (S)

All agreed that [*less than 1 line not declassified*] should go ahead with its approach to the Ministry of Interior making as much progress as possible and reporting back to the SCC on its results. Later, Defense can, as it has promised the Saudis, give them the Lawrence report and follow up with a dialogue if the Saudis want it. The results from both efforts will be reported to the SCC as a basis for judging next steps. (S)

[Omitted here is material on Pakistan.]

⁴ See Document 197.

66. Summary and Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 28, 1980, 4:30–6 p.m.

SUBJECT

Oman, Somalia, Kenya Facility Access

PARTICIPANTS

State

Mr. Reginald Bartholomew
Director, Bureau of Politico-
Military Affairs
Mr. David Gompert
Deputy Director, Bureau of
Politico-Military Affairs
Mr. Daniel O'Donohue
Deputy Director, Bureau of
Politico-Military Affairs
Mr. Robert Keely
Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Bureau of African Affairs
Mr. Joseph Twinam
Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Bureau of Political-Military
Affairs

OSD

Mr. David Ransom
Deputy Director, Near East and
South Asia Region

JCS

RADM. J.A. Lyons
Deputy Director for Political-
Military Affairs, J-5

DCI

[2 names not declassified]

OMB

Mr. Randy Jayne
Associate Director, National
Security and International Affairs
Mr. Harry Shaw
Chief, International Security
Affairs Branch

White House

Mr. David Aaron

NSC

Mr. Jasper Welch
Mr. Fritz Ermarth
Mr. Gary Sick
Mr. Rutherford Poats

Summary and Conclusions

Somalia

CIA reported indications of a near-term step-up of military operations in the Ogaden. It was agreed, therefore, that we cannot take new steps on access negotiations until these indications are confirmed or discredited. Meanwhile, State will review options, including “standing

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 5, Middle East/Persian Gulf (Basing): 2–9/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes of the meeting were not found.

pat" on access negotiations. State will also develop diplomatic options for a demarche to Somalia on the Ogaden situation. (S)

Kenya

A new proposal was tabled to include a \$1 million package of improvements to an existing Kenyan facility, to facilitate joint ground training with the Kenyans. It was agreed that such joint training and the facility improvements were desirable. There was concern on timing because of political sensitivity at the start of the relationship, and because the SCC recently deferred a decision to request on-shore training in the area. The following approach was agreed, *ad referendum* to principals in the case of Defense and JCS:

- a) Do not raise project with Kenya at this time.
- b) Keep alive the prospect of joint training with Kenya (it is in the draft access agreement now with Kenya).
- c) Raise the project as soon as (1) access agreement is in hand, (2) Congress has acted on other aspects of construction for FY 81, (3) the other aspects of Kenya program are in implementation.
- d) Set aside sufficient funds for the project in FY 81 funds to permit financing in FY 81 if the timing track permits. (S)

Oman

It was agreed that the team to Oman will include Reg Bartholomew, State; David Ransom, Defense; Major General Irions, JCS; and Major Gerald Robinson, JCS. The Churchill team will be on hand to support. Bartholomew will present our case on the access agreement after presenting the President's letter, the aide memoire on construction,² and our economic offer. On hearing Oman's concerns, he will make an on-the-spot judgment as to whether he and the Churchill team should begin negotiating technical details, or pitch a generalized fall-back position on which Oman could agree or reflect further. (S)

The aide memoire on construction was approved, except for the amended section on Musandam, to be sent around for clearance by DOD on 29 March. (S)

It was agreed that:

- a) State will flesh-out the Joint Commission concept for presentation to Oman and begin planning on implementation.

² No copy of Carter's letter, as approved and sent to Qaboos, has been found. A draft prepared in PM/ISP and sent by Tarnoff to Brzezinski for approval under a March 21 covering memorandum is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P800057-1179. The draft, prepared in response to Qaboos' February 18 letter, incorporated the language agreed on at the February 29 SCC meeting. See Document 57. For the aide-memoire on construction, see Document 72.

b) Delivery commitments stated in the Oman Aide Memoire are valid.

c) DOD will provide State with a paper outlining our approach to contracting in Oman (based on pre-qualification of bidders).³

d) The President's letter on security assurances should be in the hands of the Bartholomew Team by Monday a.m.⁴ (S)

³ The paper was not found.

⁴ March 31.

67. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, March 29, 1980

SUBJECT

Economic Assistance for Oman

We are now at a critical juncture in our negotiations with Oman. There is a problem—Oman continues to press for an economic element in our relationship even though we have repeatedly told them that substantial economic assistance is inappropriate in view of our budget constraints and their relatively favorable economic situation.

When you met with Zawawi you made this point.² But in view of Zawawi's concern that our relationship demonstrate an interest in the welfare of the Omani people, you said we would reexamine what we could do, taking into account Oman's need for economic development.

The SCC met today and agreed on a low-cost package (up to \$5 million ESF per year starting in FY 1981) of technical assistance and other assistance under a Joint U.S.-Oman Economic Commission (to be established).³

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 73, Oman: 3/80. Secret. A draft of the memorandum is *ibid*.

² See Document 60.

³ See Document 65.

However, this probably will not be sufficient to satisfy the Omanis' perceived need to show their own people a tangible economic benefit from the U.S. relationship.

The SCC identified three options for the outyears which we would hope to use to demonstrate to the Omanis that we are embarked on a long-term relationship and one that is sensitive to their situation. All include the low-cost package starting in FY 1981. They all involve the possibility of \$25 million in ESF and \$25 million in Ex-Im financing for both FY 1982 and 1983.⁴

Option A: We would be *committed* to such financing⁵ with an understanding among ourselves that it would involve an *addition* to currently planned budget levels.

Option B: Is the same, but we would find the money *within* currently projected budget ceilings.

Option C: We would make *no real commitment* beyond the \$5 million annually for the low-cost package, but might indicate the order of magnitude of the economic assistance and private investment we might envision on the basis of the work of the Joint Economic Commission.

I know you find making commitments in outyears distasteful. However, I must point out the down side risks of Omani rejection coming on the heels of the Pakistani rejection.

In my judgment, access to the Omani facilities is our single most important initiative in underwriting your historic commitment to defense of our vital interests in this region, as outlined in your State of the Union message. Failure of the Oman negotiations would be a major international and, I believe, domestic political disaster.

Accordingly, I recommend we be prepared to go to Option A or B, if necessary this round. State, Defense and JCS believe we should go to Option A now. Henry Owen prefers Option C. OMB believes that Option C (or less) is adequate for the next round of negotiations since it meets Oman's basic need—which is for services, other than cash. OMB believes the substantial commitments of Options A and B are unrealistic and undesirable in the present or presently foreseeable budgetary circumstances, and doubts that the Congress will support ESF for Oman beyond that needed for the Joint Commission. Jim McIntyre will be sending you a memo separately.⁶

⁴ An unknown hand underlined the portion of the sentence beginning with "\$25 million" to the end.

⁵ An unknown hand placed parentheses around "such financing" and wrote a question mark above the words.

⁶ See Document 68.

However, the issue that Oman now poses for us is not only a budget one, since the sums are really small compared to what we are doing for Egypt and Israel. The issue is political and strategic, we cannot afford a major setback to our current efforts to shore up a vital area because we are not prepared to make a commitment regarding our longer-term intentions.

That is why I favor instructing our negotiator (who will meet next with the Omanis next Wednesday)⁷ to negotiate on the basis of Option C, but be empowered to fall back to Option A, if necessary, to avert a strategic and politically damaging rebuff.

*Your decision:*⁸

Option A _____

Option B _____

Option C _____

⁷ April 2. See Document 70.

⁸ Option B was checked and an unknown hand wrote “P’s decision” next to it. An unknown hand wrote “OMB is deciding what to do” in the margin below the options.

68. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (McIntyre) to President Carter¹

Washington, April 1, 1980

SUBJECT

Aid to Oman (U)

The maximum package of economic aid to Oman proposed by the SCC was \$105 million over the three fiscal years 1981–83 (composed of \$15 million ESF grants to fund the proposed Joint Commission, \$40 million ESF concessional loans, and \$50 million EXIM credits).² In the impending negotiations, Mr. Bartholomew is instructed to offer initially only the \$5 million ESF annually to support the Commission. This economic aid would be in addition to FMS credits you approved earlier (\$50 million over 1980–81) and US military construction benefiting Oman internally (over \$100 million in 1981, probably more in later years). (S)

Since Saturday,³ we have been exploring ways to reduce the ESF component, because it will be difficult to absorb within current budget planning levels and is more likely than EXIM credits to provoke criticism in Congress. Although EximBank's budget will be tight also, John Moore⁴ has told us the Bank could provide all of the maximum package in the two years 1982 and 1983, except for the \$5 million to be provided annually for the Joint Commission. Accordingly, it should be feasible to limit the ESF component to \$5 million grant aid in each of FY81, 82, and 83 (\$15 million total), plus \$10 million in ESF loans in each of FY82 and 83 (\$20 million total). (S)

It may be possible to avoid any increase in the ESF component beyond our minimum offer (\$5 million a year for the Commission): If the initial offer is not sufficient to conclude the negotiations successfully, Mr. Bartholomew should (and now plans to) seek agreement on

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 58, Oman: 4-9/80. Secret. Sent for information. Aaron initialed for Brzezinski and sent the memorandum to Carter under an April 1 memorandum that recommended Carter approve the approach outlined in the memorandum, noting that "Jim McIntyre supports this package." An unknown hand circled that sentence and noted Carter's approval. Carter initialed the memorandum. The memorandum was in response to a March 31 handwritten note in which Carter noted: "I understood Sat. that Oman package would be ≈\$20 mil in '82 and '83. Get with Jim & give me a complete picture of what is proposed." (Ibid.)

² See Document 66.

³ March 29. See Document 67.

⁴ Chairman of the Export-Import Bank.

amounts less than envisaged in our full package before offering that package. This will be reinforced in a cable that we will send instructing him to limit our ESF offer to a total of \$15 million per year or, in a more positive tone, to indicate that EXIM credits would make up at least 70% of our maximum package.⁵ (S)

The complete package of offers, including the \$50 million in FMS credits you approved earlier for 1980–81, would be as follows:

	(\$ millions)			
	1980	1981	1982	1983
Initial Offer				
FMS	25	25	*	*
ESF Grant	—	5	5	5
A Possible Middle Outcome				
FMS	25	25	*	*
ESF Grant	—	5	5	5
EXIM	—	—	25–35	25–35
Maximum Offer				
FMS	25	25	*	*
ESF Grant	—	5	5	5
ESF Loan	—	—	10	10
EXIM	—	—	35	35

*No commitment has been made beyond 1981, but State will want to continue FMS at the 1980–81 level and Oman will expect some continuing FMS.

In addition to economic and military aid, Oman will receive a substantial further injection of funds into its economy from our military construction expenditures (over \$100 million in 1981 but likely to be several times this eventually). This will provide jobs and other economic stimulus; and we will be building facilities (improved air strips, warehouses, water systems, roads, etc.) that will add to Oman's infrastructure. Mr. Bartholomew is instructed to emphasize these benefits in his negotiations. (S)

We recognize it is not easy to justify economic aid to Oman at any level. Oman is a relatively wealthy country (per capita income \$4,000) with excellent prospects for rapid future growth if oil prices continue to rise. Oman's current earning from oil exports are, in fact, so large that the government plans to create a special fund to sterilize its financial surpluses. Thus, providing ESF aid will be a major departure from past policy of focusing on the poor and middle income developing

⁵ Reference is likely to telegram 89463 to Muscat, April 5. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800169–1032)

countries (except Israel, which has had a lower per capita income than Oman). (S)

Nevertheless, a meaningful level of economic aid (mostly Exim-Bank, as indicated above) is likely to be necessary to develop our new security relationship with Oman. Oman's government has continually stressed the political requirement for an economic component that shows the Omani people, in the face of mounting hostile propaganda from Iraq and other sources, that they benefit directly from the relationship with the US. Moreover, Oman remains an underdeveloped country: Its relatively high per capita income is a phenomenon of very recent years, not yet reflected in its economic infrastructure or popular well-being. (S)

We will consult some Congressional staff and members informally today about the above, making clear that any commitment to provide economic aid to Oman would be absorbed within current planning levels. We will inform Mr. Bartholomew of the results of this consultation prior to his discussions in Oman. (S)

We believe the approach described above offers a good chance of successful negotiations, while holding the ESF offer within a range that we consider acceptable and that is below the level proposed by SCC.

69. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, April 1, 1980

SUBJECT

Strategic Review of Our Unified Command Structure

This memorandum responds to the questions you raised in your review of my proposal for adjustments in the Unified Command Structure.²

I. *How quickly could the RDJTF command take over in time of crisis?* In the event of a major near-term contingency in the Persian Gulf/Southwest Asia region, the RDJTF could be ready to deploy within hours and the advance elements would arrive with the first deploying units. This would be just about as fast as either EUCOM or PACOM could deploy a task force headquarters. (Initially, the RDJTF would employ the plans which have been developed by the theater CINCs. However, the new headquarters has already begun the process of refining these plans and developing additional plans tailored to the RDJTF concept.)

II. *How soon could we conduct such an exercise?* From April 10–15, 1980, the RDJTF will be deployed and commanding troops in the field (in North Carolina, not the Persian Gulf) as part of a JCS-directed training exercise. Follow-on exercises will further refine procedures and capabilities.

III. *Is it logical to exclude Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Sudan from the Persian Gulf region unified command?* A number of factors are involved here. In the case of Egypt and Israel, their relevance to our strategic position in the eastern half of the Mediterranean and their accessibility to Sixth Fleet units and forces from other bases in the Mediterranean area strongly supports retention in EUCOM's area of responsibility.

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 37, Serial Xs—[7/80–9/80]. Secret.

² See Document 61. In a March 20 handwritten note to Brown, Carter commented: "Harold—re Persian Gulf Unified Command. The latest proposal is obviously an improvement, but I have a couple of questions: A) How quickly could the RDJTF Command take over in time of crisis? How soon could we have such an exercise? B) Is it logical to exclude Israel & Egypt etc. from the Persian Gulf Region Unified Command? I think not. J.C." (Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 37, Serial Xs—[7/80–9/80]) Upon receiving Brown's April 1 reply, Brzezinski contended that it did not satisfy all of the questions and noted as much to Carter in an April 10 memorandum forwarding Brown's April 1 memorandum. In the margin of the April 10 memorandum, Carter wrote: "Zbig—Address your ?'s directly to Harold J." (Ibid.)

An even more compelling political consideration, in my view, is that placing Israel and the front line Arab states within the RDJTF commander's purview would impose on him highly visible collateral responsibilities involving possible Arab-Israeli conflict. This involvement would seriously undercut his ability to work smoothly with other (mostly Islamic) nations in his primary area of concern.

The case for excluding Sudan is similar, though less clearcut since it is not one of the major Arab confrontation states. However, neither is it likely to be a major player in the various national alignments that define the command's primary concerns: deterring Soviet penetration and protecting access to resources in the region. Therefore, in the absence of a strong contrary rationale, it would appear preferable to leave responsibility for Sudan unchanged.

Jordan and Syria are more borderline cases, but here too we would prefer not to overburden the RDJTF command with too many collateral responsibilities when we want it to focus primarily on extremely demanding PG/IO tasks.

However, I would emphasize that "exclusion" of these five nations from the boundaries of the command does not foreclose either their support or access to their facilities in a crisis (any more than including them would guarantee such support or access). Indeed, we can adjust the command boundaries later to include Egypt, Israel, or other areas, either for planning in peacetime or during the course of operations, if circumstances should change.

Harold Brown

70. Telegram From the Embassy in Oman to the Department of State¹

Muscat, April 4, 1980, 1330Z

890. For the Secretary from Bartholomew. Pass White House for Brzezinski and Aaron. Pass DOD for Komer, McGiffert and Jones. Subject: Oman Access.

1. (S-entire text).

2. Talks Wednesday and Thursday² were very positive in tone and substance and we have made considerable progress on all elements of our approach. President's letter³ (I gave Zawawi copy privately) and our construction and assistance memoranda⁴ strongly impressed Omanis.

(A) We already have agreement we sought on construction proposals (without having to commit to Musandam port)⁵ subject to further technical discussions.

(B) Omanis agreed to work out draft access agreement (which they had earlier rejected) and extensive discussion has substantially narrowed issues, though problems remain.

(C) Omanis have accepted FMS levels for FY 80 and 81, but want \$25 million per year commitment extended to FY 82 and FY 83 (to match construction period) and a commitment to IMET program.

(D) On economic assistance, Omanis have dropped push for grant aid now (but asserted "Oman will keep trying" in future) and reacted positively to joint commission, but are insisting that "core issue" is US commitment to specific level of "concessionary" financing for FY 1981–83, saying joint commission is useless without it.

(E) Omanis want all elements—construction; assistance; access—agreed at same time and linked through single covering agreement or note.

3. Believe we have good chance of resolving all of foregoing and leaving Oman with ad referendum agreement on all elements, or with only few questions of detail and form remaining. We are in any event solidly on track with Omanis. Major issues which could block overall agreement at this point are commitment on financing (para 2D) and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880026–0333. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis.

² April 2 and 3.

³ See footnote 2, Document 66.

⁴ See Document 72.

⁵ Reference is to the Port of Khasab, in the Musandam region of Oman, which sits on the Strait of Hormuz.

Omani desire for single agreement (para 2E). I see al-Alawi at 1900 this evening and leave for Salalah 0830 Saturday⁶ for meeting with Sultan and Zawawi to present President's letter (with a second possible meeting in Muscat Saturday evening) and plan wrap-up session with Zawawi on Sunday. Some highlights and how I plan to proceed follow below. Any guidance will need to reach me by 0700 Saturday.

4. On construction (para 2A) Omanis expressed concern about size and visibility of Seeb construction. They did not seek to alter list of projects, but asked that we emphasize Masirah and Thumrait. (Point was made on exercises as well.) They made special point that follow on technical discussions were important as we proceed and that their general agreement was subject to this continuing process, as stated in our memorandum. They want to know if we will pay share of O and M⁷ costs for common use facilities like runways, and US role in funding manpower costs of increased operations, particularly at unusual hours. I am told we can agree to do both as part of routine operations and do not need to include it in agreement. Please advise.

5. On access agreement (para 2B) Omanis (starting with Zawawi) balked hard on notion that they would only be "consulted" on exercises and major build-up and insisted on Omani agreement. We accepted point and are working formula (e.g. "consultations and joint decisions"). We have substantial agreement on major issues of use, duration, personnel status, visas, simplified clearances, and construction but some problems remain (e.g., landing fees because of Omani law and commercial control of airports).

6. I recommend I be authorized to extend \$25 million FMS credit commitment to FY 82 and FY 83 (para 2C). Though Omanis could still press for more when time comes, fact they pressed for this level and we acceded could be used to hold to that level in effect making it ceiling as well as floor for future. On IMET, I think there are problems in funding, but al-Ghazali made special point of this relating it to Omanization which is obviously a major benefit he sees in American connection. Please advise.

7. On specific financing commitment (para 2E) Omanis had Senior Economic Advisor Sharif Lutfy present to make pitch. After long wrangle, Omanis agreed to set issue aside for further consideration to permit us to get on to other questions. But they flatly stated this was "core issue" without which joint commission was useless leaving economic question unresolved. Since they want all elements agreed at once, if they hold firm this could stymie final agreement on other fronts. I plan

⁶ April 5.

⁷ Operation and Maintenance.

another hard run at it on Saturday to see if they flinch at this prospect. If they don't, I'll play fallback, starting with less than whole, to clinch deal and drive them off other issues that might remain. Even fallback may not have easy going because they have repeatedly said that they do not consider Ex-Im credit terms sufficiently attractive (and that they have better alternatives) and want "real" concessionary loans.

8. On form of agreement, Omanis would like single exchange of notes citing broad bilateral framework of cooperation and covering 3 agreed annexes—construction, assistance, access (based on our memoranda). They want to link the elements, give them equal status as commitments/agreements, and demonstrate broad relationship so focus is not just on access. As I understand it, this would create problems since construction and assistance proposals would become formal bilateral agreements containing out year budget commitments (which would have to be sent to Congress which looks askance at this). I intend to sound out al-Alawi tonight on following alternative: a) there would be no single umbrella agreement, but 3 separate papers: a construction aide-memoire; an economic and security assistance aide-memoire; the access note and implementing agreement; b) all three would begin with similar language citing our discussion on a bilateral framework for cooperation on economic development, defense capability, and joint development and use of Omani facilities. This would relate all three, but aides memoires would not be agreements which must be transmitted in Congress and would not prejudice question of congressional appropriations as they reflect only executive decision to seek funds.

9. Omanis remain very allergic to public discussion of these issues and of negotiations and publicity could prejudice outcome.

Wiley

71. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Oman¹

Washington, April 5, 1980, 0157Z

89463. For Bartholomew. Subject: Oman Access: Assistance Issues. Ref: Muscat 0890.²

1. (S-entire text).

2. In response to Omani desire for commitment for FY 82 and 83 FMS levels, you are authorized to inform Omanis that USG will seek an FMS financing program for Oman in FY 82 and 83. Because our budget planning for those years is still in process, we cannot commit to particular levels at this time. However, we would look forward to seeking in FY 82–83 levels similar to those in FY 80–81.

3. In regard to Omani request for IMET, funding problems are acute in both FY 80 and 81. However, we can offer small FY 80 program of \$20 thousand—considering timing, and fact that no course reservations or other administrative requirements have been accomplished, we believe best use of funds would be tour of US military training facilities to assist in defining Omani training requirements. An FY 81 program for Oman in excess of this amount has been included in the current interagency effort to reprogram IMET funds to meet Indian Ocean access requirements. FYI, we are seeking \$100 thousand for FY 81. End FYI.

4. Concur in your approach to economic issues (para 7 reftel), trying lesser fallback positions before resort to final position. Regarding Omani contention that EXIM bank credits are not attractive or are uncompetitive, following points might be made:

—EXIM Bank direct project loans are currently at 8¾ percent interest over a long term (up to 14 years depending on project). In today's inflationary environment this is highly concessional. Commercial interest rates are more than twice as high. US Treasury is borrowing currently at 12–16, depending on maturity. European and Japanese credit agencies are, like EXIM Bank bound to common-floor interest rates for various types of project credits to middle income countries such as Oman.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, General Program Country Files 1980–1984, Lot 86D371, Box 2, Indian Ocean Base Access Negotiations. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Douglas R. Keene (PM/SAS); cleared by Countryman and Jane E. Taylor (S/S-O), in DOD/ISA, NSC, and OMB, and in substance by Nimetz; approved by O'Donohue.

² See Document 70.

—We believe it unlikely that another industrial nation could offer substantial amounts of project financing to Oman from concessional aid funds in the next year or so. Even if others wish to do so for their own exports, Oman would still need means to finance its imports from the United States. For this purpose, we believe EXIM Bank credits are highly attractive.

Vance

72. Telegram From the Embassy in Oman to the Department of State and the Department of Defense¹

Muscat, April 8, 1980, 2030Z

927. From Bartholomew. DOD for ISA. Dept for PM—O'Donohue. Subject: US-Oman Facilities Negotiations: Economic and Security Assistance Aide Memoire.

1. (S-entire text).

2. Below is text of classified aide memoire on economic and security assistance. Both sides agreed to consult on public announcement of commission.

3. Two and a half hour meeting involving Foreign Minister Zawawi, Senior Economic Advisor Sharif Lufty and Omani Ambassador to US Suleiman focused almost entirely on question of levels of financing of joint commission projects. After extensive recapitulation by Zawawi of political and economic importance of "high level of concessionary loans" for FY 82 and 83 and long hassle, Bartholomew tabled total package of 25 million dollars per year for FY 82/83 composed of annual 5 million dollar ESF grant to support joint commission plus EXIM credits and ESF loans. Bartholomew related 25 million dollar level to 25 million dollar FMS level in FY 80 and 81. Omanis flatly rejected level as not enough to impress anyone and inconsistent with total relationship we were trying to build, especially since EXIM credits were not sufficiently concessionary. Omanis then countered with proposal for 50 million dollar annual ESF loan which Bartholomew said U.S. could not even approach. Fifty million dollar package annually for FY 82/83 (including annual 5 million ESF grant and EXIM and ESF

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, General Program Country Files 1980–1984, Lot 86D371, Box 2, Indian Ocean Base Access Negotiations. Secret; Niact Immediate; Limdis.

loans) was then tabled to close out issue. After Omanis pressed, they were informed that proportion of EXIM would be at least 70 percent (based on total 100 million dollar package), which set off another long wrangle. Omanis then countered with insistence that annual 50 million dollar commitment be open-ended and not tied to FY 82 and 83 alone. Omanis then asked for statement of US intent to seek to maintain levels and to increase ESF loan proportion. Omanis insisted that some prospect for the future was essential to settle for these levels for FY-82 and FY-83. Bartholomew agreed to consider point. Zawawi closed discussion by repeating importance Omanis attach from outset to economic dimension, and said this was absolutely vital concern for Oman.

4. Accordingly, seek Washington approval on following language for incorporation in aide memoire: "In implementation of such programs, and in support of the objectives of the Joint U.S.-Oman Commission, the United States Government is prepared, subject to congressional authorization and appropriation, to seek in FY's 82 and 83 a total of 90 million dollars consisting of Export-Import Bank long term credits on highly favorable terms, and Economic Support Fund concessional loans. Thereafter, again subject to congressional approval, the United States would look forward to seeking levels similar to those in FY 82-83 and to increase the proportion of ESF loans. Oman agrees to match the level of ESF loans in each year."

5. On security assistance portion of aide memoire, we plan to incorporate following language: "When an emergency exists in which an expedited transfer of defense articles to the Government of Oman is required, the United States Government is prepared to take such measures as are possible under U.S. law to effect the transfer and expedite delivery from available U.S. sources. In determining the availability of sources, we will give consideration to articles located at facilities being used by the United States Armed Forces in Oman." This is a response to long Omani argument for assured access to materials stored in U.S. facilities in Oman which we resisted on grounds of legal restraints and policy.

6. Aide memoire below incorporates changes in paras 4 and 5 above. Firm judgment here is that Omanis would balk at moving ahead without approved fallback on economics and this type of language on future as set forth in para 4. Zawawi stated several times that he regarded it as vital to Omani interests and to our overall relationship to have something respectable. With these changes, believe we can have assistance aide memoire and construction aide memoire (septel)²

² The Embassy sent the draft construction aide-mémoire in telegram 928 from Muscat, April 8. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800174-1081) The final text, accepted by the Omanis on April 9, was sent in telegram 975 from Muscat, April 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800179-1112)

wrapped up tomorrow, and can settle remaining questions concerning access agreement (septel)³ expeditiously. (Cover note to access agreement will be addressed tomorrow.)⁴

7. Action requested: approval of language in para 4.

8. Begin economic and security assistance aide memoire:

“Aide memoire draft 4/4/80.”⁵

I refer to the recent discussions between our two governments regarding a framework for bilateral cooperation relating to economic development and trade, defense equipment and training, and development and use of facilities in Oman, in order to enhance the ability of Oman to maintain its defense capability, independence and territorial integrity, and to promote peace and stability. As a result of these discussions and as part of this framework, I was authorized to confirm to the Government of Oman the following measures regarding the provision of security and economic assistance to the Government of Oman, subject to the annual authorization and appropriation of funds by the Congress and other United States laws.

The security assistance measures include:

—We are now taking the measures necessary to make available \$25 million in FMS financing to Oman for fiscal year 1980.

—Subject to congressional authorization and appropriation, we affirm our intention to make available an additional \$25 million in FMS financing to the Government of Oman in fiscal year 1981.

—These FY 80 and 81 actions will represent important first steps in establishing a longer term cooperative security assistance relationship. (The United States has also approached Saudi Arabia on the question of providing financial assistance to fund Omani acquisition of military equipment.)

³ The final text of the access agreement, granting the United States military aerial and sea facilities at Masirah, Khasab, Thumrait, and Raysut, was initialed by Bartholomew and Zawawi on April 9 and sent in telegram 971 from Muscat, April 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800179–0847)

⁴ The text of the cover note to the access agreement, addressed from Wiley to Zawawi, and agreed and initialed by Bartholomew and Zawawi on April 9, confirmed that, as a result of the U.S.-Omani negotiations, “agreement was reached on the use of certain facilities in Oman by the United States in accordance with and subject to implementing arrangements as may be agreed from time to time by our two governments.” (Telegram 976 from Muscat, April 10; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800179–1098)

⁵ The Embassy sent the final text of the aide-mémoire, accepted by the Omanis on April 9, in telegram 974 from Muscat, April 10. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800179–1045)

On equipment, the United States is prepared to respond quickly to Omani requests for information on any items recommended by the defense requirements survey.

When an emergency exists in which an expedited transfer of defense articles to the Government of Oman is required, the United States Government is prepared to take such measures as are possible under U.S. law to effect the transfer and expedite delivery from available U.S. sources. In determining the availability of sources, consideration shall be given to articles located at facilities being used by the United States armed forces in Oman.

With regard to the specific questions raised during the visit of the Foreign Minister to the United States,⁶ I am pleased to confirm that my government has moved quickly to respond to the concern of the Government of Oman and has agreed to the following:

- The sale of C-130 or L-100 aircraft
- The sale of Sidewinder missiles, of which 60 are to be delivered within 6 months
- The sale of the DSU-31/B fuse for the Sidewinder
- The sale of 6 M-60 tanks, with delivery by November
- Expedited delivery of TOW missiles and launchers, with 10 launchers and 220 missiles to be delivered in July, 1980, and 10 launchers and 220 missiles in December, 1980

I also confirm that the United States recognizes the heavy stress Oman places on economic cooperation and that:

—The United States is prepared to institute and participate in a Joint US-Oman Commission on economic and technical cooperation. The Joint Commission would be located in Oman and operate under the co-chairmanship of the appropriate Omani (official) and the U.S. Ambassador to Oman.

—United States Government technical personnel would be stationed in Oman with the Joint Commission to work with their Omani counterparts as an integrated Joint Commission staff.

—We are prepared to provide up to \$5 million in grant Economic Support Funds annually beginning in fiscal year 1981 and subject to congressional approval, as our contribution to the operation of the Commission. As was stated during the recent discussions, the Government of Oman agrees it will also contribute to the Commission's operation.

—The role of the Commission would be to serve as a central point for developing economic and commercial ties between the U.S. and

⁶ See Document 60.

Oman, with particular emphasis on the transfer of U.S. technology to foster Oman's development.

—As appropriate, the Commission would draw on the resources of AID, the Export-Import Bank, OPIC, and U.S. agencies with international technical or development roles (e.g., the Departments of Health and Welfare, Agriculture, Transportation, and US Corps of Engineers) to develop the coordinated programs to enhance the development of Oman and to strengthen economic and commercial ties between the two countries.

—In implementation of such programs, and in support of the objectives of the Joint U.S.-Oman Commission, the United States Government is prepared, subject to congressional authorization and appropriation, to seek in FY's 82 and 83 a total of 90 million dollars consisting of Export-Import Bank long term credits on highly favorable terms, and Economic Support Fund concessional loans. Thereafter, again subject to congressional approval, the United States would look forward to seeking levels similar to those in FY 82–83 and to increase the proportion of ESF loans. Oman agrees to match the level of ESF loans in each year.

—The Commission would also seek to draw on private U.S. sources of technology and on private business as well as foundations and educational institutions.

—Within the framework of this Joint Commission, the US Government will be prepared to work with the Government of Oman in identifying possible economic development projects for joint financing, drawing on the resources described above. Such projects could include:

- (A) Rural area irrigation and water catchment
- (B) Crop diversification
- (C) Health services
- (D) Basic vocational and technical education
- (E) Coastal and deepsea fishing
- (F) light industry (based upon labor availability and work force intensification guidelines approved by Omanis)
- (G) Highway and road network development
- (H) Maritime service industries
- (I) Air service industries
- (J) Mining
- (K) Telecommunications

The United States confirms its proposal that a special USG team visit Oman to discuss formation of the Joint Commission and to begin initial discussions to identify possible projects and programs for consideration, if the Government of Oman wishes.

With further respect to Oman's economic needs, it is the view of the U.S. Government that its contemplated military construction

program is substantial, and will have a significant positive impact on the Omani economy.

As stated in our recent discussions, the United States has also made approaches to other friends and allies to urge their political and economic support for Oman and will keep Oman informed of the results of these approaches.

American Embassy, Muscat
April , 1980"

Wiley

73. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, April 14, 1980, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

SUBJECT

Followup on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—VIII

PARTICIPANTS

State

Deputy Secretary
Warren Christopher
Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary
Near Eastern & South Asian
Affairs
Lannon Walker, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for African Affairs
Reginald Bartholomew, Director of
Political/Military Affairs

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown
David McGiffert, Assistant Secretary
for International & Security
Affairs

JCS

Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Deputy Director Frank Carlucci
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East &
South Asia

Energy

Secretary Charles Duncan
Mr. Les Goldman, Assistant Secretary
for International Affairs

OMB

Randy Jayne, Associate Director

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

NSC

Colonel William E. Odom
General Jasper Welch
Thomas Thornton

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 112, SCC 302, 4/14/80, Security Framework. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. An unknown hand wrote "Original given to Les Denend 4/25/80" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by listing the three agenda items for today's meeting.² First, how to proceed with basing access in Somalia in lieu of the Defense basing paper. Second, Pakistani issues relating to the security framework. Finally, a brief review of the Afghanistan insurgency. (S)

Somalia

Dr. Brzezinski proposed to review our approach to Somalia on basing in light of the Ogaden.³ He stated three options:

—Continue with our present position but with added caution in light of fighting in the Ogaden.

—Slow the process down, allowing it to drag out for several months or more.

—Reconsider the need for basing access in Somalia in light of progress with Oman and Kenya. (S)

Christopher led off by rejecting the third option. He suggested a merging of the first and second. We should not add "sweeteners" to our offer to Siad, and we should stay on a deliberate course. There is the risk, of course, that an all out conflict in the Ogaden could create dangers for us. However, we are not acquiring a "base" but rather access to the facilities. Christopher, therefore, expressed an inclination to move ahead unless Siad insists on asking for a higher price. (S)

Bartholomew reported that "the ball is in their court." They are preparing a counter draft. We should go back to Siad with MilCon proposals and at the same time hit him hard on the Ogaden. (S)

Brown described his position as close to Christopher's. We need more bases in the area so that we are less dependent on any single base. Thus we should move ahead as rapidly as feasible. We should not "sweeten the pot," but we should answer any Somali technical questions, and we should reaffirm our position on the Ogaden. Brown added that we need to act within two weeks because Congress is working on MilCon legislation. We must show some movement or we

² Dodson sent the agenda for the meeting to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Duncan, McIntyre, Jones, and Turner under an April 8 covering memorandum. Dodson sent all of the background papers produced for this meeting under an April 10 covering memorandum to the same recipients. All of these are *ibid.* In an April 14 memorandum to Brzezinski, Odom reported that a planned paper from the Department of Defense on "overall basing needs or on a rear base in Egypt" would not be considered at the meeting. "Komer," Odom added, "decided against it. Apparently the costs frightened him, and worries at State about overloading Sadat deterred him." (*Ibid.*) In a separate April 14 memorandum, Odom informed Brzezinski that Brown "will try to add three questions to the agenda discussion this morning. 1. U.S. role in Saudi security. 2. Saudi participation in U.S. regional security. 3. Third country contributions that the Saudis can make." (*Ibid.*)

³ Documentation on the continuing conflict in Ethiopia's Ogaden desert is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVII, Part 1, Horn of Africa.

may find ourselves with no funding for the Somali facilities. Within the Executive Branch we should also go ahead on an ESF and FMS package, looking for the funds from other programs of a lower priority. Finally, Brown strongly emphasized that we cannot let this effort fail because regional political costs are too high. Sadat needs our tie to Somalia. It will help avoid Sadat's increasing isolation. It will also please the Saudis. (S)

Lt. General Pustay, speaking for the JCS, expressed strong preference for the first option. Somalia offers both air and sea facilities. These are very important for U.S. surge capabilities in the region. He also emphasized the timing matter with MilCon legislation and the Congress as a reason for acting rapidly. (S)

Christopher expressed agreement with Harold Brown's line of argument. As a small caveat, Christopher said that we should be alert to doubts in the Congress about this relationship with Somalia. (S)

It was agreed that we go forward with technical proposals to Siad Barre and also reaffirm our position on the Ogaden. The technical proposals will not include "pot sweeteners." This should be done within two weeks for both political reasons in the region and Congressional hearings on MilCon. Finally, work should begin on the ESF/FMS potential package but without discussion with the Congress at this time. (S)

Pakistan

1. *Pakistan relation to the security of the Persian Gulf.* Dr. Brzezinski next raised the question of how US/Pakistani relations affect our position and the security of the region. He noted that Sadat favors a strong US/Pakistani relationship and that a stronger one is necessary for sustaining the Afghanistan insurgency. (S)

Harold Brown emphasized that Pakistan's tie to the Islamic countries is most important. While he and others would favor a strong tie to India instead of Pakistan, if India could perform the same services for our interests in the Persian Gulf, the geographical and political facts are such that it cannot. Therefore, there is little choice but to seek strong US/Pakistani relations from the view point of security for the Persian Gulf. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski summed up the various reactions to Brown's remarks with the following three points about US/Pakistani relations:

- They are extremely important for the security of the Persian Gulf.
- They can affect our evolving relations with Iran because of the special Pakistani ties to that country.
- They will affect the scope and duration of the Afghanistan resistance. (S)

[Omitted here is material on bilateral relations with Pakistan and the situation in Afghanistan.]

74. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, April 23, 1980, 4–4:50 p.m.

SUBJECT

Followup on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—IX

PARTICIPANTS

State

Deputy Secretary

Warren Christopher

Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary

Near Eastern & South Asian
Affairs

Reginald Bartholomew, Director of
Political/Military Affairs

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown

Deputy Secretary

W. Graham Claytor, Jr.

Robert Komer, Under Secretary for
Policy

David McGiffert, Assistant Secretary
for International & Security
Affairs

JCS

Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Director Stansfield Turner

Robert Ames, NIO for Near East &
South Asia

Charles Cogan, Chief, Near East

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

NSC

Colonel William E. Odom

General Jasper Welch

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting with some remarks on the inadequate condition of some of the papers² and recommended that they be redone for next week. (C)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 112, SCC 305, 4/23/80, Security Framework Followup [I]. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

² Dodson forwarded all of the background papers for this meeting to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Jones, and Turner under an April 22 covering memorandum. (Ibid.)

Basing

Harold Brown declared that his basing paper is sufficient for the decisions he wants today.³ The facilities we have acquired in Oman and Kenya provide ASW capabilities and forward air basing for some contingencies, but they are inadequate for major ground forces rear staging, and they are also inadequate as forward bases for contingencies to the north. Our needs, therefore, include *forward* basing in Saudi Arabia or other Gulf states and *rear* basing preferably in Egypt. (S)

Discussion focused on the wisdom of following up Sadat's offer of a joint facility at Ras Banas. State argued that we may overload Sadat by moving too quickly on this issue. Defense made a strong case for retaining Wadi Kena and investigating Ras Banas. Dr. Brzezinski asked what the effect would be on our relations with the Saudis and Israelis if we moved, even slowly, toward acquiring Ras Banas. Most agreed that the Saudis will complain and the Israelis will ask why we don't use their bases instead, but Brown believes neither concern is paramount for our decision. (S)

Specifically, Brown proposed that (a) we begin talks in the next month, (b) consider the budgetary implications for FY 1982, and (c) send a survey team to Ras Banas late this summer in order to have accurate data for the FY 1982 budget item. (S)

Christopher expressed general agreement with Brown's approach as long as we do not move too rapidly. Brown argued that the schedule he proposes is indeed slow, much slower than the Egyptians desire. (S)

It was agreed to follow Brown's schedule. An NSC working group will clear instructions for McGiffert's discussions with the Egyptians in the next couple of weeks.⁴ (S)

Harold Brown interjected a related issue, Defense's plan for enhanced sea lift through purchase of SL-7 class transport ships. He made a strong case for their utility. We now can deliver an airborne division into the region during the first week, a Marine amphibious force in the second week, and a mechanized Army division during the third week *if* we acquire the additional sea lift. (S)

All agreed with the desirability of this acquisition, in particular because it means a real increase in capability this summer, not a year or two from now as in the case of forward bases we are now building. (S)

³ See footnote 2, Document 73.

⁴ Carter drew an arrow to this paragraph and wrote in the left-hand margin: "First, let me have an estimate of cost."

Brown said that we can purchase the ships within his present budget. The only holdup is a report to the President that the SCC favors the purchase and OMB concurs. (S)

It was agreed to recommend favorably to the President on the utility of the additional sea lift and to clear the issue with OMB.⁵ (S)

Military Deployments and Exercise Schedules

The papers on this topic by Defense were not adequate for decisions. They will be redone for the next SCC. (C)

There was discussion on deployments and schedules which highlighted at least three issues that need SCC attention:

—Whether to take forces from the Pacific or from Europe to build up our presence in the Persian Gulf. (S)

—When the first Tac Air deployments should go to Oman. (S)

—Tac Air deployments to Egypt. (S)

They will be treated next week. (C)

State and Defense Papers on What the Allies have Contributed to Our Persian Gulf Security Framework

Dr. Brzezinski directed that the two papers be integrated by State to answer the following questions:

—What are the current national efforts of our allies, both European and Asian, in the region? (S)

—What do we believe they should be doing beyond their current efforts? (S)

—How do we propose to initiate bilateral discussions to achieve these objectives? (S)

[Omitted here is material on Pakistan and Afghanistan.]

⁵ Carter underlined “clear the issue with OMB” and wrote in the left-hand margin: “ok, but.”

75. Memorandum From William Odom of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)¹

Washington, April 27, 1980

SUBJECT

Oman Threat to Back Out of Base Access Agreement

Ambassador Wiley's cable (attached) reports the Omani reaction to learning about Oman's support role in the rescue mission² after the fact.³ Zawawi puts the matter sharply: his government is now not prepared to sign the initialled text and is reconsidering the whole matter.

Wiley recommends that we send a Presidential letter at once explaining the rescue mission in its larger context and soliciting the Sultan's own views and advice on the regional situation. Wiley hopes that this will serve as the basis to begin a damage-limiting dialogue.

Gary Sick recommends that we do much more, specifically that the President send a personal emissary for two reasons. First, it will reconfirm for the Sultan the special and personal relationship he seeks. That is, it might change the subjective mood, which being left in the dark on the rescue mission has created in Oman. Second, it will give the Omanis a clear report on the details of the rescue mission, their role, and the larger strategic problems.

Gary also argues that such an emissary should go without publicity, that is, secretly, at least until the mission is complete.

The candidates for such a mission are:

1. *Brzezinski*. You obviously would perform both functions, being close to the President and also knowledgeable of the region and the details of the rescue mission.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 8, Oman: 4-8/80. Secret. Odom added Aaron's name by hand to the addressee line.

² Reference is to the unsuccessful attempt to rescue the American hostages in Tehran. Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XI, Iran: Hostage Crisis, November 1979-January 1981.

³ Not attached. In telegram 1171 from Muscat, April 27, the Embassy noted that Zawawi "said our action has undermined basis for facilities access agreement and Oman-Gov not now prepared to sign." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880025-0924)

2. *Hamilton Jordan*. He apparently is highly regarded by the Sultan and would be very welcome. He might need some one to go along with the details of the rescue mission and a strategy briefing.

3. *Charles Kirbo*. He would have most of Jordan's advantages but not carry the same level of prestige as Hamilton.

4. *The Harold Brown trio*. Brown is supposed to go to Oman in the next few weeks, but his visit is different in character from what Sick recommends. In fact, without an earlier visit by a Presidential emissary, Brown mig [omission in the original]

5. *David Aaron*. David would carry some of the advantages that you have but in a lower key.

Other actions that should be considered:

—Ask British intelligence to be helpful in getting our relationship with Oman back on track. The British are clearly jealous of our entry onto the scene there. The consistently advise the Omanis to suspect US intentions.

—The Saudis should perhaps be informed, but Sick argues that they will not be helpful. The Saudis, however, might be helpful in holding down criticism of Oman by Islamic states.

—Egyptian and Pakistani intelligence might also help us damage-limit for the Omanis.

76. Letter From President Carter to Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman¹

Washington, April 30, 1980

Your Majesty:

In the aftermath of our attempt to rescue our hostages in Iran, I want to restate the gratitude of my government and the American people for your having made available facilities crucial to the conduct of the mission.² I also want to reiterate the assurances on security conveyed in my letter of March 29, 1980.³ These assurances were

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 8, Oman: 4-8/80. No classification marking.

² An unknown hand put brackets around the phrase "I want to restate the gratitude of my government and the American people for your having made available facilities crucial to the conduct of the mission."

³ See footnote 2, Document 66.

designed specifically to assist you in limiting adverse consequences to Oman from the rescue mission.⁴ I encourage your Foreign Minister to consult with my Ambassador about steps we might take for this purpose. We will work with you and with other friendly leaders in the region to help blunt any political attacks against Oman inspired by Iran and encouraged by the Soviet Union.

The rescue mission, had it succeeded, would have soon reduced dramatically the tensions between the United States and Iran, and it would have allowed Iranians and other peoples in the region to focus more clearly on the serious threat to the region created by the projection of Soviet power and influence. The potential benefits of such a mission were far too great to allow me not to take the risks it entailed. Your country and others in the region would have benefited from the increased stability and reduction of tension. Because the mission did not succeed, however, we must work together to limit the adverse consequences and to persevere toward our larger common objective.

As you are doubtless aware, your country was not the only one which was transited by American aircraft in an effort to carry out this humanitarian rescue mission. I had to consider the operational security of our forces above all. To assure that responsibility for the mission would be seen to rest solely on the United States, my government engaged in no prior consultations with any of its closest friends and allies at any level about it. This was a unique situation arising from extraordinary circumstances. It is no reflection upon the trust and confidence I hold in you. Indeed, my government has shared with you the fact of our recent activities with regard to Afghanistan, and it is my hope that collaboration between our governments on that project can go forward.

If you believe it would be useful, I am prepared to send a personal emissary to elaborate further my commitment to our relationship, to consult you on steps to advance it, and to explain the details of the rescue mission.⁵

I realize the heavy burden which I have forced you to share with me in seeking greater prospects for peace and security in the region. A relationship of trust and the closest cooperation between us continue to be of the highest importance to me.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

⁴ An unknown hand put brackets around this sentence.

⁵ Carter selected Habib as his personal envoy to the Sultan "in order to elaborate further his commitment to our relationship, to consult on steps to advance it, and to explain the background to the rescue mission." (Telegram 121049 to Muscat, May 8; Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 58, Oman: 4-9/80)

77. Memorandum From William E. Odom of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, May 8, 1980

SUBJECT

More on a Mid East Command

Talking with OSD and JCS staffers yesterday, I was told that more questions to Brown won't produce results.² Defense wants to be told by the White House to make the change. That takes the heat off Jones and Brown.

In checking on the quality of the two Defense papers for the next framework SCC,³ one on a deployment schedule and one on an exercise schedule, I learned that the absence of a command structure for the Persian Gulf is a major obstacle to both papers. The JCS cannot produce an exercise schedule without exercise funds. They must take funds from EUCOM and PACOM, neither of which wants to spend a penny in the Persian Gulf if it can be kept for exercises in Europe and the Pacific respectively. The same obstacle confronts maintenance of our force levels in the region, i.e. the deployment schedule paper.⁴

I have also learned that the arguments about a new command structure costing more money are not valid. The REDCOM (Readiness Command in Florida) can be used for and/or moved to the Middle East/Persian Gulf. At present it is a remarkably unused unified

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 63, Persian Gulf: Military Facilities in Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, 3–8/80. Secret. Outside the System. Sent for information. A stamped notation on the memorandum reads: "ZB has seen."

² On May 6, Odom sent Brzezinski a memorandum on the Persian Gulf Security Framework in which he discussed the Mid East Command. Odom indicated that he had Brzezinski's signed memorandum "asking the two questions of Brown for the President." (See footnote 2, Document 69.) Odom urged Brzezinski to "strike quickly on this one. Time is running out for us to get either the operational advantage or the political advantage of the command change." Brzezinski wrote in the left-hand margin next to this: "OK. I will send it. Where is it?" (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 63, Persian Gulf: Military Facilities in Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, 3–8/80)

³ These papers were part of a package of background briefing materials for the scheduled May 12 SCC meeting on the Security Framework that Dodson sent to Mondale, Muskie, Brown, Jones, and Turner on May 9. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 11, Security Framework: 5/80)

⁴ An unknown hand wrote "ZB per our discussion this morning" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

command. Mobilization functions, given to it last year to keep it busy, could be as effectively performed by the military services.

Perhaps you recall that the RDF still has no complete list of forces. In other words, it is in large part notional. The Army element has specific troop lists although some units are NATO contingency forces, leaving their mission and their type of training ambiguous. The Air Force designated units for a command post exercise, but specific squadrons and support elements are not clearly assigned to General Kelly. The Navy would not so much as provide force lists for the CPX. Thus, we have not the slightest idea what naval forces to train for deployment in the region or to count on for contingency planning. The Navy says they will let us know when the conflict starts.

For your further frustration, let me briefly explain an emerging problem for air support in the Persian Gulf region. Brown recommended to the SCC that we keep the equivalent of two carriers in the region. When one of the carriers is not in the Indian Ocean, he intends to substitute for it land based air in Egypt, Oman, or elsewhere. This is a very sensible way to achieve the desired military presence level, but it always depends on at least one carrier projecting air power over land on the Arabian Sea littoral. In every exercise, however, once potential Soviet intervention is part of the scenario, the Navy adamantly demands that their carriers move out of BACKFIRE range. That pushes Indian Ocean carrier deployments down around Diego Garcia and makes them of no value as support for ground forces in the region. With the present command arrangements, Admiral Long in PACOM can order a carrier south notwithstanding General Kelly's demands and needs. We may never get the Navy close enough to provide proper air cover, but a Mid East unified commander could make it a court-martial offense if they abandon him. This may seem too hypothetical to be significant, but it is of sufficient importance to cause at least one unified commander to write an extremely indicting letter to Harold Brown on the matter and to hint at retirement and public protest. The President's question about when an exercise can be run in the region has frightened a number of senior officers who believe they may end up looking silly in the event because the command arrangements make an effective execution most unlikely.

78. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, May 13, 1980, 4–5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Follow up on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—X

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for
Political Affairs

Matthew Nimetz, Under Secretary
for Security Assistance, Science
and Technology

Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Near Eastern and
South Asian Affairs

David Gompert, Deputy Director,
Bureau of Politico-Military
Affairs

Defense

W. Graham Claytor, Deputy
Secretary

Frank Kramer, Principal Deputy
Assistant Secretary for
International Security Affairs

JCS

Admiral Thomas Hayward, Acting
Chairman

Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Admiral Stansfield Turner, Director
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asia

Chuck Cogan, Chief of Near East
Division

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

David Aaron

NSC

William E. Odom

Jasper Welch

Gary Sick

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by adding one issue to the agenda, Somalia base access (S)

Defense Deployment Schedule

Defense was tasked to produce for this meeting a schedule of deployments in the region which will meet the “presence level” recom-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 44, Security Framework: 5/1–15/80. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote “Zbig C” in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Attached but not printed is a May 14 memorandum from Odom to Brzezinski recommending that Brzezinski send the Summary of Conclusions to Carter. Odom noted: “I could compress the Summary of Conclusions, but I believe the President might profit from exposure to a more textured account of State’s and Defense’s reluctance to implement his military presence decision. Also, I believe it is important to get the five points on a division of labor with the allies spelled out and endorsed.”

mended by Harold Brown earlier this spring for the remainder of the year. That level includes (a) ground forces of at least a battalion size, (b) at least two aircraft carriers, or some land based air equivalent, and (c) the present surface combatant level of naval forces. (S)

Claytor recommended a reduction. The Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) now in the Indian Ocean is departing in the next few days. Claytor proposed not to replace it until June 25. As a revised "presence level," he recommended ground forces in the region only 70 percent of the time. He asked that we emphasize to the President that the new MPS (Maritime Pre-positioning Ships) will be in the Indian Ocean by late June. That will allow us to deploy a mechanized brigade, 12,000 men strong, on 12 days notice. As an additional reason for not replacing the MAU, Claytor noted that it cannot exercise in the region. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski and David Aaron asked why Defense was not proceeding with a MAU exercise. It was pointed out that not only have we made a "presence level" decision but the JCS has earlier recommended, and the President has approved, a gradual series of port calls leading to ground forces exercises later this year. (S)

Moreover, the Soviets are, for the first time ever, conducting a small amphibious exercise on South Yemen's island of Socotra. While the Soviets are doing this, we will be taking our amphibious forces out of the Indian Ocean. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that this is the wrong signal at the wrong time which undercuts the U.S. credibility in the region and the President's credibility in general. (S)

Nimetz argued that it is not a drawdown but a temporary gap until June 25. Defense argued that we do not exercise the MAU because of political problems. The JCS also talked about the risks of taking forces away from the Pacific and Mediterranean. At present, Libya is a problem for the Sixth Fleet. Dr. Brzezinski agreed that a gap in our MAU deployment may be acceptable if its reappearance in June is accompanied by an exercise. State agreed to look into the possibilities in Kenya² although reluctantly. (S)

It was agreed that a cable would be drafted for clearance, inquiring about exercise possibilities in Kenya this summer. *It was also agreed* to recommend a gap in the MAU or ground forces deployment until June 25th on a one-time basis. (S)

Exercise Schedule

Defense presented its exercise schedule, generally describing the BEACON COMPASS scheme for involving U.S., British, French, and

² Carter underlined "Kenya" and drew an arrow to a note he wrote in the left-hand margin that reads: "Exercises in Egypt?"

Australian naval forces in exercises in the Arabian Sea. This is an old and well established series which also includes Oman and Kenya. The Army and Air Force will have to wait and see what exercise options open up. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked about exercises with Jordan. Defense reported that the issue has been discussed with Bin Shaker and that both the U.S. and Jordan have follow-up work to do for some extremely modest combined activities. (S)

Next, Dr. Brzezinski asked State about getting Habib to explore an exercise with Oman. State has serious doubts that Oman will accept. (S)

Newsom asked what the purpose of the military exercise schedule is. It was explained that the initial NSC tasking had been for an exercise schedule with a military rationale to improve our contingency operation capabilities and at the same time to support a political strategy of building confidence in our security commitments to the region. The Defense paper³ provides neither. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski tasked State to develop a political strategy for the Defense exercise schedule. (S)

Allied Efforts to Support the Security Framework

State presented a paper with a comprehensive listing of each NATO country's military, economic, and foreign policy activities in the Persian Gulf. Based on this activity and our own policies for the region, State recommended that we encourage a division of labor with our allies according to the following priorities:

1. Most important is that our allies increase their commitments to NATO's defense. This is the greatest contribution they can make while the U.S. is building a security system for the Persian Gulf region. (S)

2. Facilitating U.S. enroute access for military contingencies in the region is the next most helpful thing the allies can contribute. They should be pressed to provide that access. (S)

3. On military exercises and deployments we should encourage our allies to go through with those they have already planned but not to do more at this time. (S)

4. We should encourage the British, French, and Australians to improve their rapid deployment capabilities, but we should not encourage them to go beyond their current plan. (S)

5. We should encourage the allies to expand their security assistance to key regional countries, particularly Turkey, but also Oman, Somalia,

³ For the papers discussed at this meeting, see footnote 3, Document 77.

Djibouti, and Sudan. We should encourage them to maintain at least the same level of economic aid to Egypt, Turkey, and Pakistan and to expand economic relationships with the smaller countries in the region. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked what the major problem is with the allies with respect to this division of labor. State answered that it is getting them to take up the slack. It was also pointed out that the Europeans may not clearly understand this division of labor. Defense responded that Harold Brown will be briefing on it at the DPC in NATO. There were no dissenting views on the State paper. *It was agreed*, therefore, to adhere to this division of labor for the foreseeable future in asking the allies for support in the Persian Gulf. (S)

Saudi Financing and Security Assistance in the Region

State provided a review of Saudi financing for security assistance for countries in the region. The most striking conclusion was that of eight countries where we have asked for Saudi assistance, only one, North Yemen, has actually received aid. For all other cases the Saudis have dragged their feet and failed to give tangible support. This is true even for Morocco where the Saudis were pressing the U.S. to act. Nimetz argued that we must face this issue squarely and take it to the Saudis. Newsom suggested, while it may be in part explained by Saudi bureaucratic ineptness, it may also indicate a Saudi reluctance to provide direct security assistance and a preference to provide only economic assistance. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked if it would not be useful to produce a set of talking points, setting forth the comprehensive review of Saudi and U.S. security assistance to the region, and discuss it with the Saudis. Nimetz strongly supported this proposal. He argued that until we have a dialogue, we will get nowhere. We tend to sit in our offices and assume that the Saudis will assist if we ask them, but we never press them in a vigorous and persistent fashion. Newsom agreed that it might be useful for Ambassador West to approach the Saudis on this matter. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski tasked State to produce a draft set of talking points for the next SCC. They should:

- Explain the U.S. security assistance to the region.
- Provide a view of the threat.
- Offer a plan for collaboration.
- List specific Saudi failures.⁴ (S)

⁴ Carter wrote “ok” in the left-hand margin next to these suggested talking points.

The SCC will review these talking points at the next meeting and consider Ambassador West as a channel for proposing them and a possible follow-up by Harold Brown in a meeting with Saudi Defense Minister Sultan, perhaps in June. (S)

Somalia Basing Access

State presented briefly two conflicting reports we have on Somali changing attitudes about granting U.S. military access to facilities in Somalia. First, there is the report from Mogadishu that the Somali Politburo has reached a decision setting aside the economic aid level for the present and making a U.S. security pledge far more important. This seems to be a green light for proceeding with our access agreement with Somalia. The Somali Ambassador in Washington, however, reported to Bartholomew yesterday that the Politburo decision is a ruse by Siad. The assistance level remains important. (S)

Aaron suggested that we respond to Siad by offering the same security pledge that we previously tabled and also offering to conduct an amphibious exercise in Somalia some time in June as a demonstration of our security commitment. This might resolve two problems at once: an agreement with Somalia and our need for an exercise site in the region for the MAU. There were no dissenting views expressed on this proposal. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski, therefore, tasked State to review this approach and to bring to the next SCC a proposed message to Siad making these two offers. A recommendation to the President on the matter will not be made until the SCC has reviewed that draft message.

79. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, May 16, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

President's Review of the Persian Gulf Security Framework SCC—X (S)

The President has reviewed the Summary of Conclusions of the SCC meeting on the Persian Gulf Security Framework, held on May 13.² His reaction and instructions are:

1. That we consider Egypt as a potential location for exercises as well as Kenya and Somalia. The Department of Defense should prepare a paper outlining an exercise proposal. The Department of State should comment and recommend an approach to Egypt.

2. Approval of the SCC recommendation of a direct approach to Saudi Arabia in an effort to increase Saudi financial support for regional security assistance and to coordinate it with our own.

3. Endorsement of the division of labor concept for coordinating U.S. and allied contributions to the security of the Persian Gulf region.

4. Approval of the gap until late June 1980 in our ground forces presence in the Indian Ocean on a one-time-only basis. (S)

These instructions are in addition to the NSC tasking memorandum of May 14.³

Zbigniew Brzezinski

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, David D. Newsom Subject Files, Lot 81D154, Box 14, President's Responses to SCC, 1980. Secret; Sensitive; Exdis.

² See Document 78.

³ Reference is to a May 14 tasking memorandum that Dodson sent to Muskie and Brown. (Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00401R, Subject Files of the Presidential Briefing Coordinator for DCI (1977–81), Box 13, Folder 6, SCC Meeting ME Security (No. 11))

80. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, May 16, 1980

SUBJECT

NSC Weekly Report #141

1. Status Report on the Security Framework for the Persian Gulf.

I have chaired eleven SCC meetings on security framework issues for the Persian Gulf. Getting results is like pulling teeth. The complicated interests and issues make progress difficult; bureaucratic resistance makes it more so. State is fearful of military power projected into the region. Defense is unable to act expeditiously, lacks funds, especially for operations and exercises, and cannot break through service rivalries to build a command structure for the region. Nonetheless, progress has been made. You should get more political and international credit for it. This memorandum, therefore, is a status report. (S)

The Strategic and Political Context

In your State of the Union Address,² you declared the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia to be the third strategic zone for western security, interrelated to Europe and Asia because our allies have vital interests there. At the same time, you set three goals for us for the year:

1. To make the Soviets pay a price for invading Afghanistan.
2. To get the allies to help us make the Soviets pay a price.
3. To build a security framework to protect our vital interests in the Persian Gulf region. (S)

It is frequently asserted that we have no concept or strategy for the Persian Gulf security framework. Although we have not publicly spelled it out, I have been developing one in the course of the SCCs. It is truly cross-cutting in its implications, but its four basic components and their sub-categories make a solid analytical structure and also tend to fit the division of bureaucratic responsibilities in the interagency arena. They are:

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 42, Weekly Reports [To the President] 136–150: [4/80–8/80]. Secret. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand margin of the page: “Zbig—This is good. I would like *brief* State, DoD & OMB comments—J.”

² See Document 45.

I. *Military Issues*—Defense Leading: This includes U.S. force capabilities; local defense capabilities, interrelation between U.S. force projection and local defense; and NATO force implications. (S)

II. *Foreign Policy Issues*—State Leading: This includes the Middle East peace process; the northern Tier—Pakistan and Turkey; the Arabian Peninsula; the Horn of Africa. (S)

III. *Economic Issues*—State, Energy, and Treasury sharing: This includes oil; Western economic assistance; Saudi financing; Western energy policy; international monetary policy. (S)

IV. *Intelligence Issues*—The DCI leads: We have a number of programs under way which you are aware of. CIA is developing a regional approach to integrate the several pieces. (S)

Status Report

To provide you with as succinct a summary of progress as possible, I have arrayed the SCC results for each of the security framework components in chart form at Tab A.³ You will find things very compact there. If you desire more detail, you can review the tabular forms at Tab B. For a dynamic sense of where we would like to go, you should review the charts at Tab C. They show timing for various issues, both past and future. The future projections are for planning guidance. Meeting the schedule for each, of course, is highly problematical. (S)

Further Goals

In order to provide concrete and compelling answers to the questions about a security framework for the Persian Gulf which flow from your State of the Union Address, I have set the following to be attained by fall. Some of them will not be easy, but I want to put them before you to help give you a sense of direction related to possible concrete actions:

I. Military Issues.

—A unified command structure for the region.

—Ground forces exercises in the region, demonstrating the viability of the RDF.

—More basing access (rear basing in Egypt, forward basing in the Persian Gulf).

—Institutionalized military and internal stability ties with Saudi Arabia. (S)

³ None of the tabs was found.

II. *Foreign Policy Issues.*

- Progress in the autonomy talks.
- Improved relations with Pakistan to the point that a Pakistani deal with Moscow is out of the question.
- Firmer relations with Oman and Somalia.
- Diffusion or elimination of the hostage problem. (S)

III. *Economic Issues.*

- A larger economic and security assistance commitment by both the U.S. and our allies to key states in the region. Pakistan is most critical.
- More influence over Saudi aid within the region.
- Progress on the energy conservation front and stability in the oil market. (S)

IV. *Intelligence Issues.*

- Viable programs in Afghanistan, Iran, PDRY, and the Horn. (S)

Possible Next Steps

There are a number of ways which might gain you more credit for these security framework activities. First, you might let Defense and State know that you are following their performance. Second, you could issue a Presidential Directive based on the concept. It could give a sense of direction and policy perseverance to our allies in Europe, to friendly states in the Persian Gulf region, and to foreign policy pundits in the U.S. (S)

2. *National Security Affairs Calendar* (attached at Tab D)

81. Telegram From the Embassy in Oman to the Department of State¹

Muscat, May 23, 1980, 0601Z

1484. Department for PM. Subject: Habib Mission: 22 May Discussions. Ref: (A) Muscat 1480,² (B) State 131748,³ (C) State 129143.⁴

1. (S-entire text).

2. Summary: In May 22 meeting with Habib Omanis agreed to signature of Access to Facilities Agreement and exchange of related documents June 3, noting that mutually acceptable press guidance would need to be agreed upon. Next steps for Joint Commission as outlined ref C acceptable. Omanis suggest first Joint Commission team arrive after June 15. Corps of Engineers team arrival welcome any time between June 15 and 20. Speeded up military equipment deliveries welcome with early arrival military training team for tanks top Omani priority. In response Zawawi's expression of concern at Israeli settlements policy Habib answered further questions on State Middle East peace efforts and reiterated our commitment to CDA peace process. Zawawi said he hoped Secretary Muskie could visit Oman during any forthcoming trip to the Middle East. End summary.

3. On May 22 Habib team, accompanied by Ambassador Wiley and DCM Buck, met with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zawawi, MFA Under Secretary al-Alawi, Palace Office Director Suwaidan, MOD Under Secretary Ghazali and Zawawi's Office Director Mohammed Nasser. In cordial and productive discussions agreement was reached on next steps regarding access and related agreements. Results follow.

4. Access agreements. Zawawi agreed to early signature of Access to Facilities Agreement, covering unclassified exchange of letters and provision of the two aides memoire on military construction and economic and security cooperation.⁵ Because he will be out of Oman from

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800252-0830. Secret; Immediate; Exdis.

² In telegram 1480 from Muscat, May 22, the Embassy summarized the May 21 meeting between Habib and Sultan Qaboos, during which they discussed the failed Iranian hostage rescue mission and a number of regional and bilateral issues. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P880025-0881)

³ Telegram 131748 to Muscat, May 19, is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870143-0939.

⁴ In telegram 129143 to Muscat, May 17, the Department indicated that the ongoing Washington-based interagency meetings were in the process of working out "details for initiation of Joint Commission which will be focal point of our new economic assistance relationship with Oman." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800242-1035)

⁵ See Document 72.

May 26 to May 30 on a visit to Baghdad and al-Alawi will be out of the country at the same time on a visit to Cairo, Zawawi suggested signature between May 30 and June 5. (Zawawi said he would also be away June 5 through June 12.) The date of June 3 was tentatively agreed. Because the exchange of notes will be unclassified and because of the need to inform Congress, it was agreed that mutually acceptable press guidance would have to be agreed upon prior to signature.

5. Joint Economic Commission. Habib outlined next steps we envisaged for the Joint Commission as described ref C. Omanis posed no objection to fielding of 3 man initial team and follow-up team. Teams would come after signature of access agreement and after mutually agreed arrangements regarding announcement and first meeting of the Joint Commission. Zawawi said that Economic Commission teams should not arrive until after June 15, when Development Council Secretary General Dr. Sherif Lutfy returns from leave.

6. Corps of Engineers team. Habib emphasized that it was important to field this team early after agreement signing ceremony in order to meet congressional budgetary requirements. Zawawi and Ghazali agreed and said that Corps of Engineers team arrival anytime in the period June 15-20 would be welcome. Omani authorities would ensure that team could begin work on the day following their arrival.

7. Military equipment deliveries. Habib reiterated that we are moving ahead on the delivery of six M-60 tanks and three transporters plus provision of a military training team (MTT) in July. General Shutler had brought the LOA's for these items. On TOW, we had decided to accelerate delivery and provide all 20 launchers and 440 missiles in July rather than in July and December as originally envisaged. The letter of offer will be coming through Saudi Arabia. Also, Habib said we have now budgeted to provide a modest amount of military training for Oman using FY80 and 81 International Military Educational Training (IMET) funds. This would be for training primarily in the United States and over and above any training provided to Oman by military training teams in the country under LOA's such as for the tanks. Zawawi commented that Oman would prefer as much in-country training as possible. Ghazali added that while arrival of the tanks in July as promised would be appreciated, the key factor would be early arrival of the MTT's to provide the requisite training. Ghazali expressed interest in using training facilities in U.S., mentioning specifically staff college training.

8. Future military requirements. Referring to the Sultan's statement regarding future Omani military requirements (ref A), Zawawi indicated that they would be likely to be back to us with further details regarding possible requirements for fixed wing fighter aircraft, helicopter gun ships and more tanks. Habib replied that we had reported Sultan's interest.

9. Middle East peace. Elaborating in some detail on Sultan's comments on Middle East peace of the previous day, Zawawi emphasized Omani Government concern that the "momentum" of the Middle East peace negotiations should be maintained. He deplored the negative effects on the peace process of Israeli settlement policy. Oman would not like to see Egypt fail in its peace initiative because of Israeli stubbornness, Zawawi said. Habib reiterated USG opposition to Israeli settlement policy and commitment to the CDA peace process. Pointing out that USG does not favor the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, he emphasized that we were committed to continuation of a peace process leading to "full autonomy as well as a freely elected self-governing authority for the Palestinians" and "a resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects." Present interruption in peace talks was not an indication of failure but of the fact that we were getting down to the hard core issues. Omanis expressed concern that failure of Egyptian initiative in the face of Israeli intransigence would not only make Egypt more isolated in the Arab world but could affect Sadat's internal position and improve the Soviet position in the area. Zawawi emphasized that Sadat's success will ultimately depend on the degree of effective U.S. support. Habib emphasized U.S. determination to support present negotiations and our expectation that they would be resumed shortly.

10. Muskie visit. Zawawi said he wished to formally reiterate that his government's invitation to the Secretary stands. His government hopes that it will be possible for Secretary Muskie to visit Oman during any forthcoming visit to the Middle East. He also expressed on behalf of his government, the Omani people and His Majesty the Sultan, Oman's best wishes to President Carter and the hope that the agreements and arrangements we were about to enter would prove to be a solid and durable basis for close and cooperative relations between Oman and the United States for decades. Habib thanked the Minister, affirmed the U.S. desire for cooperative relations, and noted that His Majesty the Sultan had a standing invitation from President Carter to visit the United States at a mutually agreeable date.

11. Embassy comments will follow.

Wiley

82. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, May 29, 1980, 4–5:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

Follow up on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—XI

PARTICIPANTS

State
David Newsom, Under Secretary for
Political Affairs
Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Near Eastern and
South Asian Affairs
Reginald Bartholomew, Director
Bureau of Politico-Military
Affairs

Defense
W. Graham Claytor, Jr., Deputy
Secretary
Robert Komer, Under Secretary for
Policy

JCS
General David Jones, Chairman
Admiral James Lyons

CIA
Stansfield Turner, Director
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asia
Gray Cowan, NIO for Africa

White House
Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Mr. David Aaron

NSC
General William E. Odom
General Jasper Welch
Captain Gary Sick

Marine Amphibious Exercise

State presented a paper² recommending that our Ambassadors approach the Governments of Egypt and Kenya by June 1 to explore the possibility of a combined exercise with our amphibious force (the MAU) later this summer. Kenya as an exercise site occasioned no disagreements. Concerning Egypt, State asked that Defense list in priority all the requests for military activities with Egypt in the near future. If a MAU exercise is at the top of that list, then State supports the June 1st approach. If not, the exercise should be weighed against tother hings to avoid overloading Sadat politically with a U.S. military tie.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 45, Security Framework: 5/16–31/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes of the meeting are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote “Zbig J” on the first page. Carter also wrote: “We should be *cautious* about becoming involved in the Somalia/Ethiopia military actions now or future” above the first paragraph.

² Not found.

Defense replied that an F-4 deployment, a survey team for Ras Banas, and possibly a request for permission to send nuclear powered ships through the Suez Canal are the only military activities now planned, and Egypt desires all of them. This is a very short list, it was agreed, which should not rule out a MAU exercise.

Defense asked for some flexibility in getting a MAU into the Indian Ocean. It will not arrive precisely on June 25 but perhaps as late as mid-July. The delay is required to permit a MAU exercise in Spain in late June and in Tunisia July 6-11. No one objected to this delay, but two political questions were raised with respect to Spain.

First, Dr. Brzezinski asked if the MAU exercise in Spain could possibly cause embarrassment during the President's stopover in Madrid. Although Defense described it as a long-standing routine exercise, State was asked to review the matter and render a judgment about the political advisability of conducting it during the President's visit.

Second, the MAU exercise in Tunisia, Dr. Brzezinski pointed out, could be presented as part of our response to the recent Tunisian request for military aid. State was tasked to give the President a report on Tunisia early next week which will mention the MAU as part of a reply to the military aid request.

Somalia/Ethiopia

Because of recent reports of a possible Ethiopian attack, Somalia, as a possible MAU exercise site, was discussed separately. The reassessment of all the intelligence indicates no imminent attack, and a sixteen week period required for preparations before an offensive toward Hargeisa-Berbera would be feasible. Nonetheless, Dr. Brzezinski added, we need to ask:

- Do we go ahead with an agreement now?
- Drop the idea of an agreement?
- Go into Berbera with a MAU deployment in order to deter an Ethiopian offensive?

After considerable discussion and debate on these questions, it was decided that the issue must be put to the President. Furthermore, both Secretaries Muskie and Brown must be present for discussion of the issue before a recommendation can be made.

State argued that we should go ahead with the security agreement. When Ambassador Petterson is in town next week, we should prepare him to go back and seek completion of our access negotiations. At the same time, State argued repeatedly, a MAU exercise in Somalia is ill-advised before an agreement is signed. It would encourage Siad to believe he had us hooked and could, therefore, raise his price for an

agreement and at the same time do as he pleases in the Ogaden. A MAU exercise after an agreement would have some of the same undesirable consequences. It would also risk U.S. ground troops being involved against an Ethiopian offensive, a matter requiring consultations with Congress under the War Powers Resolution. State insisted that there is no significant new intelligence to alter our earlier assessment about an Ethiopian threat. It is, therefore, all right to sign an agreement because the risk of serious hostilities is not great.

Defense argued that we should go ahead with a MAU exercise as soon as possible, even before an agreement is signed. This would help us with MilCon legislation on the Hill.

Dr. Brzezinski argued that it makes no sense to conduct a MAU exercise before a security agreement is signed. Thereafter, we cannot, as State argues, refuse to conduct such exercises and to meet and defeat any Ethiopian incursion endangering U.S. facilities. If we will not meet the Ethiopian threat, then we cast serious doubt on our credibility for dealing with other threats in the region.

David Aaron recalled our cautious approach to the first Ogaden war in 1977. State opposed sending a carrier to Berbera because it might involve us in a war. Defense opposed it because they feared the carrier would prove vulnerable to attack. The consequence was an easy Ethiopian victory. We cannot repeat this performance. We can distinguish between military actions in the Ogaden and larger Ethiopian incursions into Somalia. Our criterion for responding militarily must be when a U.S. facility is in danger. Aaron also raised the possibility of a political settlement approach to the Ogaden.

Claytor and Dr. Brzezinski agreed that we can draw the line between actions in the Ogaden and Ethiopian attacks sufficiently large to threaten our interests in Somalia.

State noted that we had to take account of the Soviet naval activities in the Gulf of Aden if we decide to defend Berbera with air and/or ground forces. Dr. Brzezinski pointed out that this would be a rise in the threshold, calling into question our ability to deal with the Soviet threat anywhere in the world.

All agreed that the choices in this case are not easy, that the political consequences domestically, within the region, and vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, could be far-reaching, and that Muskie, Brown, and Brzezinski should discuss them with the President soon.

It was agreed that State will prepare materials for an SCC next week, when Ambassador Petterson is in town, about next steps in our security relationship with Somalia.

Saudi Regional Assistance Financing

State presented a draft cable for Ambassador West³ to use in approaching the Saudis on their overall assistance to regional military security. It is impressive because it shows that, contrary to a belief widely held, particularly in OMB, the Saudis contribute very little to security assistance. Dr. Brzezinski supported the State approach, but suggested a slightly revised presentation of the data, less detail on U.S. country-by-country commitments, greater emphasis on the overall U.S. figure, and a request to the Saudis for their country-by-country funding. Harold Brown, in his June meeting with Sultan, can review the issue again.⁴

Defense argued that the cable should not be sent; Harold Brown should raise the issue with Sultan first. Defense further argued that we are getting nowhere with our dialogue with the Saudis. We need to get past the details of F-15 fuel pods. Dr. Brzezinski responded that we are moving toward a more effective dialogue as evidenced by Secretary Duncan's energy talks and Secretary Miller's talks on monetary affairs. Harold Brown can now add the security dimension to the dialogue. Defense insisted that the Saudis' response will be to ask about the F-15 fuel pods and to chide us about how little money we put up for regional assistance.

All agreed that we must resolve the F-15 issue before we can expect significant progress on the overall security dialogue. It is, however, an issue with political dimensions that only the President can decide. Harold Brown will be raising it with the President soon.

Dr. Brzezinski tasked State, Defense, and the NSC Staff to revise the cable to Ambassador West.

Next SCC Agenda

Dr. Brzezinski prescribed next week's agenda as follows:

1. The Somali security agreement issue and instructions for Ambassador Petterson.
2. Follow-up on the F-15 issue with Saudi Arabia.

³ Under a May 28 memorandum that he signed for Tarnoff, Bremer sent a copy of this draft cable to Mondale, Brown, Jones, Turner, and Brzezinski. (National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, General Program Country Files 1980-1984, Lot 86D371, Box 2, Saudi Arabia 1980)

⁴ See Document 217.

83. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, June 2, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

SCC Decisions and Taskings (U)

The President has reviewed the notes from the May 29 meeting of the SCC on the Persian Gulf security framework² and has approved the following decisions and taskings:

Decisions

1. We will proceed with our efforts to conduct ground forces exercises in Kenya and Egypt.
2. The MAU may delay its return to the Indian Ocean until mid-July. (S)

Taskings

1. State is to review the timing of the MAU exercise in Spain.
2. State is to report to the President on the role a MAU landing in Tunisia can play as a part of our reply to the Tunisian military aid request.
3. State will prepare the discussion paper on our next steps in Somalia as part of the agenda for the next SCC. Papers dealing with the potential Ethiopian-Somali military confrontation will be prepared by Defense and CIA.
4. State, DOD, and the NSC Staff will revise the cable to Ambassador West on Saudi security assistance to regional states. (S)

Zbigniew Brzezinski

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Ermarth, Box 11, Security Framework: 6–9/80. Secret.

² See Document 82.

84. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, June 9, 1980, 10:30–11:20 a.m.

SUBJECT

Followup on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf XII

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>JCS</i>
David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs	Lt. General John Pustay
Matthew Nimetz, Under Secretary for Security Assistance, Science and Technology	<i>CIA</i>
Reginald Bartholomew, Director Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs	Director Stansfield Turner
Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs	Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and South Asia
Lannon Walker, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs	Gray Cowan, NIO for Africa
<i>Defense</i>	<i>White House</i>
Deputy Secretary	Zbigniew Brzezinski
W. Graham Claytor	David Aaron
Robert Komer, Under Secretary for Policy	<i>NSC</i>
	General William E. Odom
	General Jasper Welch
	Captain Gary Sick

Dr. Brzezinski opened the SCC with a brief discussion of F-15s for Saudi Arabia and then turned to a longer discussion of U.S. access to military facilities in Somalia. (S)

Saudi Arms Request

The Saudi F-15 issue was kept on the agenda in the event any follow-up discussion was needed. Komer reported that it is settled on our side. Brown will raise it with Sultan on June 26th in Europe. (S)

Somalia

Dr. Brzezinski announced that the PRC on Somalia will meet next week to review our broader policy toward Somalia. In the interim, however, we will pursue the present policy. Today, in the security

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 114, SCC 320, 6/9/80, Persian Gulf Security Framework. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

framework context, we need to consider the negotiations as they relate to three factors:

- our military need for a base at Berbera;
- the nature and likelihood of the Ethiopian and Ethiopian/Cuban military threat to Berbera;
- and U.S. ability to contain and reduce Soviet influence in the region as a whole. (S)

Newsom gave a brief update on the status of the negotiations. We have had mixed responses from Siad and from Ambassador Addou. The ball is now in our court. Newsom reassured the SCC that there has been no deviation from the present policy of seeking an agreement. We are still on that course. (S)

Claytor spoke in the context of Dr. Brzezinski's three factors, asserting that we need the base, and we also need to prevent it from falling into Soviet hands again. It is as important to preclude Soviet use of Berbera as it is to gain U.S. access. Claytor said that it would be a disaster for the U.S. to stand aside and let the Soviets take Berbera whether we have a security commitment to Somalia or not. Komer added that the Soviet position in the Horn, Dahlak Island, and Aden, places them in our rear area in the Persian Gulf region. If Berbera were added to the present group of Soviet facilities in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, our security position would be much worse. (S)

A second consideration for the U.S., Komer added, is the need to roll back the Soviets somewhere in the world. Why not in the Horn? Helmut Schmidt has encouraged us to do this. (S)

Newsom asked if U.S. access to Berbera will more likely deter or prompt an Ethiopian attack? Komer admitted that either effect could dominate but that the implications of not seeking access are much worse than risking an Ethiopian attack while we have access. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski elaborated the dilemma. The Ogaden insurgency will last, and Siad will feel freer to support the insurgency if we secure Berbera. If we don't, however, our passivity itself may prompt an Ethiopian attack. Therefore, U.S. policy to cope with the dilemma should be to seek access to bases while refusing any assurance or support of the Ogaden insurgency. That should confront the Soviets and the Cubans with greater risks in sponsoring an attack on Berbera. (S)

There was a brief review of our initial rationale for seeking military access in Somalia. In the beginning, Bartholomew argued, it was entirely military. Now an element of denial to the Soviets has crept in. David Aaron countered that the initial rationale had been redundancy, i.e. getting as many bases as possible so that we can absorb a loss more easily. There was also a political rationale asserted from the beginning

by the Vice President, that is, the political value of occupying a base which the Soviets have been forced to abandon. (S)

There was a brief discussion of the latest intelligence. The likelihood of a major offensive in the next few weeks is small. Some troop movement from Eritrea to the Ogaden, however, could be the beginning of a buildup for an offensive, but that buildup could not be completed before late July. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski queried Defense about our present capabilities in the region to deal with an Ethiopian, and possibly a Cuban, offensive. Although Defense was optimistic about our ability to handle a threat in the Horn, Komer admitted that our carriers can only provide air defense and limited air-ground support. Anti-tank ordnance for F-14s and A-7s is not available, a limiting factor in our capabilities. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski summed up the conclusion of the discussion as follows: An Ethiopian/Cuban occupation of Berbera, in the judgment of all present, would be a major setback for the U.S. policy in the region. We should, therefore, increase our safety margin slightly by getting into Berbera before an attack. If this proposition is valid, then we should stay on our present negotiating course, seeking access without giving in to Somali demands for greater security assurances. (S)

Komer added that we need to get other countries in the region to help us with Somalia's demands. After a discussion of Egyptian willingness to become involved (Sadat is more enthusiastic than the Egyptian military), Dr. Brzezinski instructed Defense to prepare talking points which can be used with Egyptian Minister of Defense Ali to request combined U.S./Egyptian contingency planning for Somalia. The talking points will be coordinated with State and presented to the PRC if that is still needed and appropriate.² (S)

² Carter wrote below this concluding paragraph: "Zbig—Make *no* plans or commitments to defend Somalia with US forces. We'll discuss Friday— J."

85. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, July 12, 1980

SUBJECT

Amphibious Forces for the Indian Ocean (U)

(S) On February 29, 1980, the SCC approved a force posture for the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf region which projected that “present levels be maintained” until the hostage crisis in Iran is resolved.² The force posture also included battalion-size-ground forces in the region, either sea- or land-based, thereafter. Since then, a gap in this land force presence has been authorized, to end later this month.

(S) Subsequent political developments have indicated that the hostage situation is unlikely to end soon, and we are unlikely for the foreseeable future to be invited to deploy battalion-size ground forces to the region. Furthermore, resolution of the hostage crisis will probably not improve the likelihood of our deploying land-based forces to the region. This would leave the burden of ground force presence entirely upon our amphibious forces. (In this connection, it is worth noting that at any point in time we can get a few hundred ground troops almost anywhere into the region by air faster than by landing the MAU—which is likely to be many hundreds, or even thousands, of miles away at sea.)

(S) Limited amphibious lift assets dictate that we could not maintain continuous presence of an Amphibious Ready Group with embarked Marine Amphibious Unit (ARG/MAU) in the Indian Ocean without seriously degrading either our Mediterranean and Pacific amphibious presence or our fleet turnaround (training, upkeep and overhaul) times in the U.S. Lack of or severe limitations on port visit and exercise opportunities in the Indian Ocean are a detriment to the training, materiel readiness and morale of the fighting force. Additionally, all of the above factors combine to exacerbate our already serious problem of retention of experienced sailors and Marines.

(S) Ideally, we would like to be able to maintain a continuous land force presence in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf region. As long as this presence is limited to amphibious forces, however, we are con-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 114, SCC 327, 7/15/80, Security Framework. Secret. A copy was sent to Muskie.

² See Documents 57 and 58.

strained by the major factors of amphibious lift assets, training exercises and port visits. So long as we continue a major fraction of our present amphibious commitments in other theaters, then our present lift assets would dictate that the maximum presence we can sustain over the long term in the Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and Pacific is 70, 65 and 60 percent respectively. Additional rationale for these figures and an illustrative schedule are included in the attachment.³ Actual achievement of maximum possible presence would depend in part on our ability to maintain the readiness of the force through exercises and port visits.

(S) The Special Coordination Committee is scheduled to discuss our Security Framework for the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean Region on July 15.⁴ Included on the agenda for this meeting is a DoD-proposed schedule for military deployments and unilateral and combined exercises in the region for the remainder of CY 1980. The optimum case would have amphibious forces in the area as much as possible with these forces conducting frequent training exercises and port visits in order to maintain their combat readiness. The exercise schedule before the SCC represents a point of departure toward the achievement of this objective. It is thus essential that amphibious presence in the Indian Ocean and our exercise and deployment program for the region be addressed in the same context.

(U) I would appreciate your serious consideration of this proposal. I also recommend that it be discussed at the July 15 meeting of the SCC so that a recommendation can be made to the President as soon as possible.

Harold Brown

³ Attached but not printed. The attachment described what would be needed to sustain a "near-continuous (70 percent) Indian Ocean ARG/MAU Deployment Schedule" and listed pros and cons for a 70 percent presence and a 100 percent presence.

⁴ See Document 86.

86. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, July 15, 1980, 3:30–4:40 p.m.

SUBJECT

Follow up on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—XIII

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>JCS</i>
David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs	Chairman General David Jones
Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern & South Asian Affairs	Lt. General John Pustay
David Gompert, Deputy Director, Bureau for Politico-Military Affairs	<i>CIA</i>
	Director Admiral Stansfield Turner
	Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and South Asia
	<i>White House</i>
<i>Defense</i>	Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Secretary Harold Brown	David Aaron
Deputy Secretary	<i>NSC</i>
W. Graham Claytor	General William E. Odom
Robert Komer, Under Secretary for Policy	General Jasper Welch
	Captain Gary Sick

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting with a brief preview of the agenda, exercise and deployment schedules, basing, Harold Brown's meeting with Saudi Defense Minister Sultan, and the DCI's paper on reactions to a possible shift of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf.² (S)

Exercises and Deployments

Defense presented an exercise schedule for the region for the remainder of 1980 and explained that we must have exercises both to train our forces and to support contingency planning in the region. Adjustments to meet the political constraints can be made. (S)

The JCS emphasized that the most important exercise is an RDJTF deployment with an Army unit in the region because it would signal a U.S. willingness to deploy the entire RDF, combining all Marine and Army divisions. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 45, Security Framework: 7/12–15/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Minutes of the meeting are *ibid.* Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the top right-hand corner of the page.

² Not found.

Dr. Brzezinski also underscored the political impact of an RDJTF exercise and proposed to advance it to November or earlier if possible. (S)

State raised a number of questions about the priority list of military activities in Egypt which puts the RDJTF exercise quite low. Does this mean we will have to revise the priority list? Will we be asking for another location later for a second such exercise? (S)

Defense explained that the Egyptian priority list could be modified in this case, and that its rationale is different than our concerns for the RDJTF in the region. Furthermore, if we can establish an exercise pattern in Egypt and quietly repeat it, we will do that. (S)

The only other exercise issue concerned Kenya. We cannot meet the Kenyan request that a MAU exercise there be completely secret. Defense and Dr. Brzezinski suggested that we should ask Kenya once more for the exercise and explain to them that they are not the only country in the region which is hosting U.S. forces deployments. (S)

It was agreed that State will query Egypt on the acceptability of a MAU exercise and an RDJTF exercise this fall giving priority to the RDJTF exercise. If Egypt accepts, that information will be used in another request to the Kenyans for a MAU exercise in August.³ (S)

Defense next requested that we reduce the "military presence" requirement for ground forces in the region from 100 percent of the time to 70 percent. Both funds and available units, particularly Marine Amphibious Units (MAU), are strained by the 100 percent requirement. (S)

All agreed to support Defense's recommendation to the President for a change in our battalion-size ground force presence from 100 percent to 70 percent of the time in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf region. That "presence" may be either a MAU or an Army battalion-size element deployed within the region.⁴ (S)

Defense Basing Paper

Defense explained the rationale of the basing paper⁵ as a presentation of overall access in the region needed to meet the range of threat contingencies which the Soviet Union might pose. It includes four kinds of access:

1. Enroute access (the Atlantic/Mediterranean route as well as the Pacific/Indian Ocean littoral route).
2. Indian Ocean littoral access to support peacetime presence, TacAir, and sea control (Oman, Kenya, and possibly Somalia).

³ Carter checked the Approve option and initialed "J" in the right-hand margin.

⁴ Carter checked the Approve option and initialed "J" in the right-hand margin.

⁵ Not found.

3. Rear staging areas beyond the range of Soviet Tac Air which can support surges of more than a division of ground forces (Ras Banas in Egypt).

4. Forward basing access required for defense deployments of the oil producing areas (the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula and, in some contingencies, in southern Iran). (S)

Defense next explained that early access in the forward areas is critical for military success in the whole range of Soviet threats. Forward access admittedly stretches our resources, but it is better to have them stretched than relaxed by less ambitious access requirements. Our present approach to basing in the four categories is the minimum required for any substantial involvement in the region. Forward basing in the Arabian Peninsula is not possible or wise to acquire now; but it is possible to proceed on Ras Banas. (S)

State was reluctant on the general approach and asked for a study of our purposes in the areas before proceeding on basing and forces issues. (S)

Defense disagreed. We need far more military analyses by the JCS for dealing with the Soviet threat. The basing paper only asks for approval to continue with Ras Banas. Perhaps a strategy study would be appropriate by the end of the year but not now. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski replied that a study will not necessarily resolve the issues State raised, but that we can deal with them as they arise, step-by-step, in going forward on the Defense basing approach. (S)

It was agreed to recommend to the President that we ask for access in Ras Banas.⁶

If approved, Defense and State will work out a negotiating strategy. In the meanwhile, Defense was tasked to submit a paper on MilCon funds for Ras Banas, showing where they will come from. Defense will also prepare a paper addressing the remaining recommendations in the basing paper. State will comment on these papers in light of the political dilemmas raised today. (S)

There was very brief discussion of Harold Brown's meeting with Sultan in Geneva. The "Joint Security Commission" proposal was accepted by Sultan, and the first meeting is to be held this fall, preferably in the U.S. or Europe, and before the election if possible to avoid discussion of F-15 equipment.⁷ (S)

⁶ Carter checked the Approve option and wrote "Subject to approval of assessment below" in the margin, bracketed the right-hand side of the next paragraph, and drew an arrow from his handwritten comment to the bracket.

⁷ See Document 217.

Defense was tasked to submit an agenda and proposed date for NSC review. (C)

[*less than 1 line not declassified*] *Reactions to a Possible Shift of U.S. Forces to the Persian Gulf Region*. Harold Brown said that he has found West European leaders less concerned and more willing to accept our reallocation of Defense resources to the Persian Gulf region⁸ [*2 lines not declassified*]. (S)

⁸ On July 1, Brown met with Giscard in Paris for two hours “to brief him on U.S. plans to beef up rapid deployment forces and to acquire Indian Ocean facilities in Kenya, Oman, and possibly Somalia.” In response, the French Government was reportedly “seriously considering a call for demilitarization of the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf that would exclude the United States and the Soviet Union from the region.” Moreover, Giscard was also said to be “studying the idea of an international conference on the subject.” (Ronald Koven, “France Considering Call to Demilitarize Persian Gulf Region,” *The Washington Post*, July 6, 1980, p. A14)

87. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, July 22, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

July 15 SCC on the Persian Gulf Security Framework (C)

The President has reviewed the results of the July 15 SCC meeting on the Security Framework for the Persian Gulf² and directed the following:

—*Ras Banas*. Access to Ras Banas is approved. State and DOD will develop a negotiating strategy for obtaining access. DOD will also prepare a paper on MilCon funds for Ras Banas, showing where they

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Shoemaker, Box 123, Persian Gulf Security Framework: 7/80. Secret.

² See Document 86.

will come from. Both papers will be submitted to the President for his approval prior to the beginning of negotiations.³ (S)

—*Ground Forces Presence*. The Defense Department request to reduce our ground forces presence in the Indian Ocean area from 100% to 70% of the time is granted. These forces may either be a land-based battalion or a MAU. (S)

—*Ground Forces Exercises in Egypt and Kenya*. DOD will conduct an RDJTF exercise in Egypt and a MAU exercise in Kenya by the end of the year. In addition, a MAU exercise in Egypt should be pursued, either this year or early in 1981. State will query Egypt on the acceptability of both exercises, giving priority to the RDJTF. Based upon Egypt's response, State will then query Kenya again on the MAU exercise, pointing out that Kenya is not alone in hosting such an exercise. (S)

State and Defense will coordinate necessary adjustments in the military exercise schedule in light of these decisions. Defense will also prepare a paper addressing as appropriate the remaining recommendations in the basing paper for further consideration by the SCC. (C)

Zbigniew Brzezinski

³ A July 31 memorandum from Brown to Muskie setting forth a proposed negotiating strategy for a facility at Ras Banas is printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 395.

88. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, August 4, 1980

(S) Following additional JCS review of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) concept, I have just approved two further important steps toward streamlining the planning and command relationships involved. As you know, these issues have proved among the most controversial of all those involved in the development of a credible

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 37, Serial Xs—[7/80–9/80]. Secret. Carter wrote “cc Harold J” in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

deterrence/defense posture in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean (PG/IO) area.

(S) Originally HQ RDJTF was charged with responsibility for planning and executing operations in several areas of the world. In practice, however, it has had to focus almost exclusively on the PG/IO because of the urgent nature of the potential demands on us in this vital area. Therefore, on JCS advice, I have approved narrowing the mission of HQ RDJTF to coping with the threat in the key area. For the foreseeable future, the range of threats in Southwest Asia seems likely to present the greatest challenges, and it appears prudent to dedicate HQ RDJTF exclusively to preparing to meet them.

(S) As foreshadowed in my March 6 memorandum to you,² I have also approved the JCS recommendation to transfer responsibility for all Southwest Asia contingency planning to HQ RDJTF. This step will further clarify planning responsibilities, although close coordination will be maintained with EUCOM and PACOM planners, because both EUCOM and PACOM must for the foreseeable future be major supporting commands for any sizable contingency in that region.

(S) However, I agree with the JCS that HQ RDJTF should remain under the operational command of REDCOM, principally because REDCOM is in a better position to deal with other unified commands than HQ RDJTF, and because this ensures a close relationship with the REDCOM elements that would have to deploy to support HQ RDJTF in a contingency. The Commandant of the Marine Corps was the only dissenter from this JCS recommendation, preferring that HQ RDJTF report directly through the JCS. However, I agree with the Chairman and other three Chiefs that this would not be a viable course of action, unless the JCS organization were modified to provide the indispensable support to HQ RDJTF that REDCOM already can. Such a change in OJCS would require considerable and expensive duplicative staffing.

(S) I view the above measures as additional steps in the evolutionary process of developing the optimum command and control capability to meet new needs in the critical Southwest Asia Area—a process which may eventually lead to certain changes in the Unified Command Plan. Ultimately it may become more feasible to establish a separate unified command somewhere in the region.³ For the time being no appropriate locale is available; establishing a new unified command without a land location would in my judgment both call attention to and exacerbate the political problems connected with too high a U.S.

² See Document 61.

³ Carter underlined "a separate unified command" and drew a line in the left-hand margin with two arrows pointing to it to highlight the sentence.

military profile. Moreover, so long as the great bulk of the ground and air forces earmarked for the RDJTF are located here in the United States, there are strong operational as well as training reasons for keeping HQ RDJTF here as well.⁴

Harold Brown

⁴ Under Brown’s signature, Carter wrote: “Harold—ok, if you and the JCS insist. I still have the belief that in a real crisis we would have to initiate a different and simpler command structure. J.C.”

89. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, August 4, 1980, 9:30–10:20 a.m.

SUBJECT

Follow up on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—XIV

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>CIA</i>
David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs	[2 names not declassified]
Reginald Bartholomew, Director, Bureau for Politico-Military Affairs	<i>OMB</i>
	Edward G. Sanders, Associate Director, for National Security and International Affairs
<i>Defense</i>	<i>White House</i>
Robert Komer, Under Secretary for Policy	Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Frank Kramer, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for ISA	<i>NSC</i>
	Brig. General William E. Odom
<i>JCS</i>	Major General Jasper Welch
Chairman, General David Jones	
Lt. General John Pustay	

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 45, Security Framework: 8/1–21/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter added the following notation in the top right-hand corner of the first page: “Zbig—Keep OMB involved in this. J.”

Dr. Brzezinski chaired the meeting which dealt with four agenda items: (1) how to proceed on Ras Banas in Egypt; (2) additional Defense basing recommendations; (3) enroute access negotiations; and (4) the role of indigenous forces in the region. (C)

1. *Follow-up on Negotiations and MILCON for Ras Banas*

a. *A Negotiating Approach*—Mubarak has come back to McGiffert's initial approach on Ras Banas access with recommended language for a letter of understanding. State recommends that Atherton go back to Mubarak and propose combining a public letter of understanding with a more precise secret access agreement, a formula we used with Oman. This will meet the Congress's requirements for an agreement as a precondition for funds. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski proposed that a Working Group draft instructions for Atherton which will serve as an initial negotiating position with the Egyptians. As soon thereafter as the Egyptians will accept it, a technical team should go to Egypt to develop more fully constructions plans. (S)

Komer proposed that we get the Egyptians to accept the local currency costs of the construction. Although this may reduce our outlays in principle, JCS and State expressed serious doubt that the Egyptians either can or will provide a great deal in local currency construction costs. (S)

It was agreed to recommend to the President that as a negotiating strategy we follow up Mubarak's proposed wording for a public letter with the public letter/secret access agreement formula we used in Oman. A joint State/Defense negotiating team will proceed to Egypt as soon as appropriate for access discussions.² (S)

b. *MILCON for Ras Banas*—The FY 1982–86 funding is not a problem. Defense can include that in out-year planning. The troublesome issue is finding \$10 to \$12 million P&D funds for FY 1981. Defense proposed to take the necessary money from either Oman/Somalia/Kenya programs or from Diego Garcia. Both Dr. Brzezinski and State argued that the political significance of endangering our MILCON commitments to Oman/Somalia/Kenya is too great to risk although the amount of money is relatively small. They suggested that Defense reprogram the money from elsewhere. State showed some flexibility on funds for Oman and Somalia but warned that we must be extremely careful. (S)

General Jones underscored that our entire basing effort is very modest. Phase I promises no significant results before 1983. The strategic significance of skimping in FY 1981 is great and risky. (S)

² Carter checked the Approve option.

All agreed that we should pursue Ras Banas construction with the utmost speed but not at risk to our agreements with Oman, Somalia and Kenya. Defense will provide a paper on MILCON funding for P&D in FY 1981 which shows sources of reprogramming in light of the constraints imposed by our commitments to Oman, Somalia and Kenya. (S)

2. Defense Paper on Other Basing Recommendations

State expressed concern at the lack of an overall political rationale for Defense efforts. When we are vague about our purposes in the region, our efforts to deal with the Soviet threat are believed by some in the region to be a cover for interference in the internal affairs of states in the region. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski agreed that this is a valid point and, therefore, tasked State to provide a paper giving specific comments to Defense on the eleven recommendations and also providing a general policy paper which clarifies our intentions toward the region. It should articulate the Carter doctrine for Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf in a manner that removes doubt about our concern over the Soviet threat. It can also be used to explain our security framework policy in NATO. (S)

3. Enroute Access and Overflight Agreements

The basic issue on this topic is whether to pursue agreements more vigorously or to continue State's more cautious approach of only sensitizing governments to our contingency needs rather than seeking memoranda of understandings. *A consensus emerged for a more active enroute access policy.*

Further, *it was agreed:*

—To proceed with the Portuguese and to clear up the Lajes and other enroute access issues.

—To make our next deployment through Spain a politically non-controversial one and then approach the Spanish for more specific understandings for Persian Gulf contingencies.

—To seek memoranda of understandings with the UK, FRG, France, and Italy and to instruct our ambassadors to raise the issue with Thailand and Singapore.

—To seek more information about the condition of bases in Morocco through [*less than 1 line not declassified*] overt sources of information rather than raise the issue formally with the Moroccan Government.³ (S)

³ Carter checked the Approve option and initialed "J" in the margin.

4. *Defense Status Report on the Role of Local Forces in our Strategy for the Region*

Defense explained that this effort is on-going and that it will be complete in a few weeks. State expressed doubt that any local forces make much difference for U.S. strategy. Defense explained that there are rather significant advantages for us through local procurement of air defense equipment. There are also four Jordanian divisions, and under some circumstances several Iraqi divisions which could help us enormously with the Soviet threat. (S)

90. **Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter**¹

Washington, September 2, 1980

SUBJECT

Persian Gulf Security Framework

Because significant progress has been made in our Security Framework for the Persian Gulf since my last status report,² I want to give you an update. (C)

In my earlier memorandum (Tab A), I suggested specific goals which we should try to attain by fall. Goals were chosen in each of the four major components of the Security Framework structure. What follows is the status of progress toward these goals. A more comprehensive summary of our actions in chart form is at Tab B.³ *Underlined in red* on the charts are improvements since June 3. (S)

Status of Progress Toward Security Framework Goals

A. Military Component

—*Command Arrangements.* We do not yet have a separate unified command for the region. DOD is still struggling with this controversial, yet critical, issue.⁴ (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 22, SCC Meeting: #337 Held 9/2/80, 8–9/80. Secret. Sent for information. Carter initialed the memorandum.

² That memorandum, attached at Tab A, is printed as Document 80.

³ Not attached.

⁴ Carter wrote "little progress" in the left-hand margin next to this point.

—*RDF Exercises in the Region*. You have approved a comprehensive exercises plan for the region which includes the RDJTF.⁵ We have received approval from Egypt to conduct an RDJTF battalion-sized exercise there in November. A pre-deployment team will begin coordination with the Egyptians in mid-September. (S)

—*Basing Access*. We have completed formal agreements with Oman, Kenya, and Somalia.⁶ We have agreed in principle with the Egyptians to develop and use Ras Banas. A negotiating team will travel to Cairo within the next several weeks. We have opened the subject of access and overbuilding with Saudi Arabia. (S)

—*Institutionalized Security Ties with Saudi Arabia*. We have proposed, and the Saudis have accepted, the concept of establishing a Joint Military Commission.⁷ David Jones will discuss the details during his visit to Saudi Arabia this month. The initial meeting of the JMC will probably take place in mid-November. (S)

B. Foreign Policy Component

—*The Autonomy Negotiations*. We are making no progress here, although we are keeping the talks alive.⁸ (C)

—*Improved Relations with Pakistan*. These ties remain tenuous, although it appears that Zia is not prepared to strike a deal with Moscow. Pak-Saudi cooperation is improving, providing us with an indirect hedge against Zia's drifting toward the Soviet Union. We continue to stand ready to provide equipment to Pakistan, and there has been some informal interest in Islamabad.⁹ (S)

—*Better Relations with Oman and Somalia*. We have formally initiated the Joint Economic Commission with Oman and are preparing to begin the upgrading of Omani facilities, in accordance with our access agreement.¹⁰ We have signed an access agreement with Somalia, and the Somalis have withdrawn their regulars from the Ogaden as a gesture to us. We continue to move cautiously but positively in our relations with both states. (S)

⁵ See Documents 86 and 87.

⁶ The access agreement with Kenya was signed on June 26, and on August 22, the Department of State announced the exchange of diplomatic notes that incorporated an agreement for increased access to the port and air facilities in Somalia. (Department of State *Bulletin*, October 1980, p. 19)

⁷ See Document 217.

⁸ Carter wrote "no progress" in the left-hand margin next to this point.

⁹ Carter wrote "surprisingly courageous" in the left-hand margin next to this point.

¹⁰ See Document 81.

—*The Hostage Problem*. This obviously remains unresolved, although we have successfully shifted our focus to the greater danger of Soviet aggression against Iran. (S)

C. Economic Component

—*Security Assistance*. We have not made progress in expanding our aggregate security assistance program in the region. DOD, State, the DCI, and the NSC all agree that this is a crucial aspect of our security policy and must be expanded. (S)

—*Influence over Saudi Aid*. We have discussed the distribution of Saudi aid with the Saudi leadership. The JMC will provide us with an institutionalized forum for pressing this issue. We are, separately, encouraging more Saudi assistance to Somalia. (S)

—*Oil*. The oil outlook continues to improve. Prices are stable, OECD reserves are at record levels, and consumption in the West is down. We have begun to fill the strategic petroleum reserve. The Venice Summit¹¹ and actions by the IEA have helped convince oil producers that we are serious about our energy policies and have helped stabilize the oil market.¹² (S)

D. Intelligence Component

—*Comprehensive Regional Program*. We continue to press ahead to integrate our intelligence efforts throughout the region. (S)

Since I last reported to you on the Security Framework, much has been accomplished. However, much more remains to be done. Recent intelligence about the Soviet buildup along the Iranian border has heightened our awareness of our near-term military vulnerabilities in the region. The effect on the JCS has been more galvanizing than anything that has happened since Afghanistan. (S)

On balance, however, we have made substantial progress in improving our ability to implement your State of the Union Address.¹³ You may wish, at some point over the next several weeks, to make a public statement on the security framework in order both to show the progress we have made and to tie together various security framework initiatives which have been independently reported in the press. This is important for two reasons. First, it can show the Allies that you have developed a clear concept and made considerable progress toward the

¹¹ Reference is to the G-7 Economic Summit which took place in Venice, Italy, June 22-23. Documentation on the Summit is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. III, Foreign Economic Policy.

¹² Carter wrote "all good" in the left-hand margin next to this point.

¹³ See Document 45.

task you set in January. Second, it should have a similar effect with the Congress and the public.¹⁴ (S)

¹⁴ Carter wrote “Begin drafting—I may do it” in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph.

91. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, September 2, 1980, 10–11:25 a.m.

SUBJECT

Follow up on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—XVI

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>CIA</i>
Secretary Edmund Muskie	Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner
Deputy Secretary	Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and South Asia
Warren Christopher	
David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs	<i>OMB</i>
	Director, James McIntyre
<i>Defense</i>	Deputy Director, John White
Secretary Harold Brown	<i>White House</i>
Deputy Secretary	Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
W. Graham Claytor	David Aaron
Under Secretary for Policy,	<i>NSC</i>
Robert Komer	General William E. Odom
<i>JCS</i>	General Jasper Welch
Chairman, General David Jones	Captain Gary Sick
General Paul F. Gorman, Director, Plans and Policy	

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by listing two major agenda items: (a) the JCS paper on defense of the Persian Gulf and Iran,² and (b) possible Muskie/Gromyko talking points. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 48, Security Framework: Minutes of Meeting: 9/80. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

² Not found.

The JCS Strategy Paper

Brown pointed out that the three strategies, (1) defense on the Soviet/Iranian border, (2) defense of southern Iran, and (3) defense of the Persian Gulf, are not mutually exclusive. As our capabilities increase, each becomes more feasible. (S)

General Jones emphasized that "deterrence" is the substance of the JCS paper. None of our three defense options can stop a Soviet invasion of the 16–20 divisions. Our upper level of force projection would be about two divisions in the region. We cannot sustain more with our present water, POL, and other logistical capabilities. The JCS paper is unambiguous in its assertion that we cannot defend Iran on any line today against a determined Soviet attack. We simply do not have the forces. (TS)

The remainder of the discussion on the JCS paper concerned how to deter even though we lack the capabilities to defend if deterrence fails. In spreading the conflict geographically, i.e. "horizontal escalation" as opposed to "vertical escalation" with nuclear weapons, it was agreed that the Soviets have nothing abroad that we could take which equals in importance to them what Iran and the oil producing regions in the Gulf are to the U.S. and its allies. The problem of deterrence in Iran was also likened to NATO's defense of Western Europe in the early 1950s when we did not have the military capabilities. (TS)

Dr. Brzezinski suggested that Defense should work on a list of "horizontal escalation" options even if they do not look promising at present. (TS)

Muskie interpreted the Defense paper and the deterrence actions it suggests as a formula for moving toward World War III. He said that limited options and "signaling" simply are not credible. The French see Iran only as a "regional" matter. Neither they nor the Germans are worried about a Soviet invasion of Iran. If we are to deter, we must achieve that before the Soviets invade. The signaling steps recommended, in Muskie's view, are only likely to frighten the Saudis who are already sufficiently frightened, but uncooperative. Our actions, unlike the secret Soviet contingency exercises, can be seen publicly in the region. We may look provocative and provide a basis for precisely the Soviet intervention we want to deter. (TS)

There were differing opinions on the extent to which the Europeans appreciate the implications of Soviet military and political hegemony in the Persian Gulf and whether they would be willing or have the capabilities to do anything militarily to defend Iran. All agreed that if the Soviets succeed in the Persian Gulf region, Western Europe's freedom from the Soviet Union would be lost. The enormity of the strategic stakes, however, may not be clear to Europeans. (TS)

Dr. Brzezinski expressed the view that we must communicate directly to the Soviet leadership that their entry into Iran will create a direct U.S./Soviet military conflict. We can do this privately without provoking the reactions that the “signaling” moves in the region might create. Muskie indicated that two opportunities for such a communication are before us: first, the Gromyko letter, and second the Muskie/Gromyko meeting up in New York.³ (TS)

There was lengthy discussion of this proposal, including doubts about its credibility and the alternative of trying to raise Western Europe’s concern to a level appropriate with the enormity of strategy implications. In the end there was agreement to develop an approach to the Soviets for review at the next SCC. (S)

Defense’s List of Possible Actions

A brief discussion of Defense’s list of possible signaling actions led to the conclusion that none be recommended for decision today. Those will be pulled out for review at the next SCC which we could well do within our present security framework efforts in any case.⁴ (S)

In response to a question by Dr. Brzezinski, General Jones said that we could test Turkish feeling about TacAir deployed to Incirlik. The Turks are asking us about increased Soviet activity in the Transcaucasus. (TS)

McIntyre expressed concern about the shortages of O&M funds for any increased exercises or preparatory activities in the region. Defense, he said, will need this in particular if the list of actions includes TacAir deployments to Turkey and a RDJTF headquarters deployment to the region this fall. (TS)

Dr. Brzezinski summed up the meeting by making the following points:

1. CIA and DIA will provide a briefing at the next SCC on what we might tell our allies in Europe and the region about the Soviet threat. (TS)

2. The Aaron/Komer/Newsom/Carlucci group will: (a) develop talking points for Muskie to communicate our concerns over Iran to Gromyko, (b) draft a short non-paper which might be given to Gromyko,⁵ and (c) scrub the Defense action list. (TS)

³ No letter from Gromyko was found. He and Muskie met in New York on September 25. For a memorandum of conversation of their meeting, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 302.

⁴ The Summary of Conclusions of the September 5 SCC meeting is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XI, Iran: Hostage Crisis, November 1979–January 1981.

⁵ Not found. Muskie read the “non-paper” to Gromyko during their September 25 meeting.

3. A selected list of Defense actions will be recommended for the SCC on Friday, and Defense will report on horizontal escalation possibilities. (TS)

92. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, October 28, 1980, 4–5:45 p.m.

SUBJECT

Security Assistance for Southwest Asia

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

Matthew Nimetz, Under Secretary for Science, Technology, & Security Assistance

Reginald Bartholomew, Director of Politico-Military Affairs

Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near East & South Asian Affairs

Defense

Ambassador Robert Komer, Under Secretary for Policy

Erich vonMarbod, Deputy Director Defense Security Agency

JCS

Lt. General John Pustay, Assistant to the Chairman

Brig. General David Palmer, Deputy Director for Politico-Military Affairs

CIA

Robert Ames, National Intelligence Officer for Near East & South Asia

OMB

Edward Sanders, Associate Director for National Security and International Affairs

White House

David Aaron

NSC

Major General Jasper Welch

Brig. General William Odom

Captain Gary Sick

Major Christopher Shoemaker

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 124, SCM 151, 10/28/80, Mini SCC, Security Framework. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Odom sent the Summary of Conclusions to Brzezinski and Aaron under an October 29 memorandum, noting: "In sum, the Mini-SCC was unusually productive: what promised to be a Defense-State debate turned into a cooperative effort to address the toughest issue: resources." (Ibid.)

DOD Security Assistance Paper

David Aaron stated that the purpose of the meeting was to examine the security assistance implications of our Persian Gulf security framework. (S)

Komer said that we had not adequately addressed our security assistance requirements in the region. We are spending \$25–30 billion on improving our own capabilities but recommending only a ten percent increase in security assistance for the region. Yet, regional cooperation and capabilities are critical. The DOD paper² represents a first-cut at what we really need to spend and the figures presented are probably low. SecDef and the JCS are both solidly behind the paper. (S)

David Aaron asked how these figures could fit into the ZBB process. (S)

Komer responded that these are additive requirements and cannot substitute for any existing program within the DOD budget. However, the security assistance recommendation can substitute for add-on U.S. requirements which would be needed to support an effective Persian Gulf strategy. The marginal security assistance dollar is probably worth more than the marginal defense dollar. Moreover, the amounts recommended in the DOD paper involve relatively modest outlays. The MAP recommendations simply face up to the facts of life in the region in that many states are simply unable to pay for their security needs. (S)

Nimetz opined that DOD and State have already prepared our FY 1982 security assistance budget and have recommended modest increases, but OMB is opposing this. The budget process will certainly oppose the new additions unless the pay-offs of such additions are clearly defined. Nimetz was also concerned with the skewing of our security assistance in favor of the Middle East-Persian Gulf area. (S)

Komer said that he recognizes the budget problems and that is why DOD suggested the SCC route. Security assistance is a policy issue and the SCC ought to raise it to the President. (S)

Bartholomew argued that insufficient analysis had been done on what it is we want security assistance to do for us and whether or not additional security assistance would help us achieve our security objectives. (S)

² The October 23 Department of Defense overview paper, prepared in Komer's office, sought to "(1) Identify the most useful potential indigenous military contributions; and (2) Maximize the range of our military assistance programs so that they can be used optimally to enhance indigenous capabilities which in turn will enhance the collective deterrent/defense effort." (Ibid.)

Nimetz and Komer argued that we can't provide assurances on this score until negotiations are joined which in turn requires that money be in the budget early. (S)

David Aaron suggested that we need to look at security assistance in relation to the DOD budget and that some sense of ranking of security assistance programs in an overall national security budget be developed. All agreed that would be useful. (S)

Sanders said the best budgetary approach was to prepare alternative packages which would be put into the budget presentation. The President could then decide which of several large chunks to add to his basic budget. (S)

Newsom added that the President may want to present the package to Congress as a major supplemental. (S)

Komer suggested that he and Nimetz work together to create a joint State-Defense issues paper for the budget presentation. (S)

Nimetz suggested that the paper be limited to recommendations on security assistance and not include the more general foreign affairs budget. (S)

David Aaron agreed and instructed State and DOD to complete the paper by November 7. (C)

Newsom urged that we develop a Congressional strategy to show the role that security assistance has in our overall security posture. (S)

Komer agreed and suggested that we should pursue Persian Gulf initiatives first and at a later time go for a more global expansion. (S)

David Aaron then turned the discussion to MAP, pointing out that the President has stood firm on his decision to eliminate MAP and will need strong justification to change his mind. (S)

Nimetz then argued that concessional credits may be an alternative to MAP. He did not agree that "forgiveness" for states other than Israel was practical. (S)

FMS to Saudi Arabia

The discussion then turned to supply military equipment to Saudi Arabia. David Aaron made a strong argument that we are allowing ourselves to become hostage to equipment requests from Saudi Arabia and other oil producers. He said that we should have stood firm in denying additional F15 equipment to the Saudis from the outset. (S)

Newsom pointed out that the Saudis and others can turn to alternative sources for equipment and this limits our control of their arms acquisitions. (S)

David Aaron urged that we look at military balance implications for each arms sale. (S)

Komer argued that what we need to do is have close military relationship with the Saudis so that we can better focus their equipment requests. (S)

[Omitted here is material on India.]

93. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, November 5, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Secretary of the Treasury
The Secretary of Energy
The Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Persian Gulf Security Framework (U)

My memorandum of June 3 outlined the basic structure of our security framework for the Persian Gulf and laid out some near-term goals.² Since then, we have made considerable progress in a number of areas. Much more, however, remains to be done. This memorandum provides a summary of our current efforts, which the President has reviewed, to achieve the near-term goals presented in the June 3 memorandum. It also outlines the direction the security framework should take in the future. (U)

Current Status of Goals

A. Military Component

—*Command Arrangements.* Notwithstanding notable progress, improvements are still needed. The goal is one command for both the

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870008–0297. Secret.

² On June 3, Brzezinski sent a memorandum to these same addressees summarizing the military issues, foreign policy issues, economic issues, intelligence issues, and future goals for the Persian Gulf security framework. (Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00112R, Subject Files, Box 16, Folder 32: (SCC) Middle East Security Framework)

RDF and all other military activities in the region, including military assistance. (S)

—*RDF Exercises in the Region.* The President approved a comprehensive CY 1980 exercises plan for the region which includes the RDF. We will conduct an RDJTF battalion-sized exercise in Egypt this month. A plan for CY 1981 needs to be developed for interagency review. (S)

—*Basing Access.* We have completed formal agreements with Oman, Kenya, and Somalia. We have agreed in principle with Egypt to use Ras Banas. We must continue our efforts to obtain an access agreement acceptable to both Egypt and the Congress. We also need to continue discussions with Saudi Arabia on overbuilding and prepositioning. (S)

—*Institutionalized Security Ties with Saudi Arabia.* We have reached agreement in principle to establish a Joint Military Commission with Saudi Arabia.³ Less formal consultations are underway now which we should use as the basis for the initiation of the JMC. (S)

B. Foreign Policy Component

—*The Autonomy Negotiations.* Little progress is evident, although we are keeping the talks alive. (U)

—*Improved Relations with Pakistan.* These ties remain tenuous, although it appears that Zia is not prepared to strike a deal with Moscow. Pakistani-Saudi cooperation is improving, providing us with an indirect hedge against Zia yielding to Soviet pressures. The Zia meeting with the President helped reaffirm U.S.-Pakistani relations.⁴ (S)

—*Better Relations with Oman and Somalia.* We have formally initiated the Joint Economic Commission with Oman and are preparing to begin upgrading Omani facilities, in accordance with our access agreement.⁵ We have signed an access agreement with Somalia, and the Somalis claim to have withdrawn their regulars from the Ogaden, although our intelligence does not confirm this. We continue to move cautiously but positively in our relations with both states. (S)

—*The Hostage Problem.* A solution may be forthcoming. (U)

C. Economic Component

—*Security Assistance.* We have not made progress in expanding our aggregate security assistance program in the region. DOD, State,

³ See Document 217.

⁴ A memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XIX, South Asia.

⁵ See Document 81.

and the DCI all agree that this is a crucial aspect of our security policy. (C)

—*Influence Over Saudi Aid.* We have discussed the distribution of Saudi aid with the Saudi leadership. The JMC will provide us with an institutionalized forum for pressing this issue. We are separately encouraging more Saudi assistance for Somalia. (S)

—*Oil.* The oil outlook is generally favorable, although the impact of the loss of Iraqi oil is yet to be felt. Saudi Arabia and others are helping make up for the Iraqi shortfall. Prices are stable and consumption in the West is down. We have begun to fill the strategic petroleum reserve. The Venice Summit and actions by the IEA have helped convince oil producers that we are serious about our energy policies and have helped stabilize the oil market. (S)

D. Intelligence Component

Progress is being made in this area. (C)

Goals for the Future

In addition to the areas outlined above where much remains to be done, we should develop analysis and come to decisions in the following areas in the near future:

A. Military Component

—*Budget Issues.* We now need to address the budget implications of the third strategic zone. (C)

—*Relations with Saudi Arabia.* We need to ensure that the close ties developed over the course of the Iran-Iraq war⁶ carry over after the conflict. We also need to determine a course of action to help us overcome the F-15 issue. (S)

B. Foreign Policy Component

—*Autonomy Negotiations.* It is time to rethink our basic approaches and develop a more effective scheme. (C)

—*Post-hostage Iran.* Once the hostages have been released we will need to review our overall policy toward Iran. (U)

—*Iraq-Iran War.* We need to review our policies toward the war in light of its stagnation and any resolution of the hostage issue. (C)

—*Turkey and Pakistan.* We need to devote special attention to improving ties with Turkey and Pakistan. Continued fear of Soviet

⁶ On September 22, war between Iran and Iraq commenced with ground and air attacks on Iranian territory by Iraqi forces.

incursions in Pakistan, and the new government in Turkey may provide opportunities for new initiatives. (S)

C. Economic Component

—*Economic Assistance.* We need to seek greater U.S. economic and security assistance to the region. We also should encourage our allies to contribute more for both economic and military aid. (C)

—*Oil.* Continued progress on oil pricing, availability, and conservation is critical. (U)

—*Saudi Regional Assistance.* We should continue to seek to influence Saudi aid in the region in support of our security framework. (C)

—*General Economic Issues.* We should review trade and financial relations with states in the region and recommend policy changes that seem appropriate in light of our regional security concerns. (U)

D. Intelligence Component

We should continue to integrate our intelligence efforts throughout the region into a region-wide program. (C)

These issue areas have been selected to help build on the progress we have made to date. I invite your comments on these near-term goals and your suggestions of other areas requiring attention by the SCC on the Security Framework. They should be submitted by November 14.⁷ (U)

Zbigniew Brzezinski

⁷ The State and Defense Department responses are Documents 95 and 96. Turner responded to Brzezinski on November 18, noting that “the Agency’s views concerning most of the foreign policy and economic components have already appeared in various artforms but may bear selective restatement during SCC discussions.” (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 63, Military Facilities in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, 9–12/80) Other agency responses are summarized in Document 97.

94. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, November 7, 1980, 9–10 a.m.

SUBJECT

Security Framework for the Persian Gulf—XVIII

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

Matthew Nimetz, Under Secretary for Science, Technology, & Security Assistance

Daniel O'Donohue, Deputy Director for Politico-Military Affairs

Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near East & South Asian Affairs

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown

Deputy Secretary

Graham Claytor, Jr.

Ambassador Robert Komer, Under Secretary for Policy

Frank Kramer, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs

JCS

Chairman General David Jones

Lt. General John Pustay, Assistant to the Chairman

CIA

Bruce Clark, Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

Lt. Colonel John Mattingly, Assistant, National Intelligence Officer for Near East & South Asia

Treasury

Deputy Secretary Robert Carswell

Clyde Crosswhite, Foreign Affairs Officer

OMB

John White, Deputy Director

Edward Sanders, Associate Director for National Security & International Affairs

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

David Aaron

NSC

Brig. General William E. Odom

Captain Gary Sick

Major Christopher Shoemaker

Dr. Brzezinski began the meeting outlining the two basic issues at hand: the need for increased security assistance programs in Southwest Asia and agreement for our advisory efforts. (S)

Harold Brown then gave a general review of the security assistance issue stating that we do not have sufficient resources to counter Soviet moves in all parts of the world. Since we have conceded the initiative to the Soviets, they are better able to concentrate their forces, putting us at a disadvantage. The forces of regional states, particularly in South-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 47, Security Framework: Directives: 7/80–1/81. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote “Zbig C” and “encl B cc McIn” in the upper right-hand corner of the page.

west Asia, have to be ready to carry more of the security load. This cannot happen, however, without a more extensive security assistance program including grant military aid. Moreover, the absence of such a program will carry great political penalties. Therefore, the President should support the proposed package to increase our security assistance for the region. We have to reverse the attitudes within our own government that security assistance is a burden. (S)

David Newsom supported the need for security assistance with particular emphasis on grant military assistance because of the economic realities within recipient countries. (S)

Robert Carswell pointed out that most of the countries in question have debt problems, and we need to avoid adding to their debt burden. He also pointed out that Congress may not be receptive to major new increases in economic assistance. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski then argued the basic underpinnings of the requirement. The region is of vital interest to the U.S. and is facing a highly unstable future. This calls for a sustained security effort such as we developed in Europe in the late 1940's and in the Far East in the early 1950's and the investment of U.S. resources. (C)

Matt Nimetz pointed out that the real problem is within the budget. The State Department proposal for security assistance prepared in the normal budget cycle represented increases above budget levels, and State is already subject to criticism from OMB. The enhanced package now being discussed would clearly not fit into the budget. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski agreed and said that the issue should be shown to the President with the recommendation that the budget be increased to accommodate our new security requirements in Southwest Asia. We simply must devote more resources to this critical area. (S)

John White argued that we should take the recommendations contained in the DOD paper² and add them to the State program already submitted and then proceed in the normal way. (C)

All disagreed with White's view, and the meeting developed into vigorous exchange over this issue. (C)

Matt Nimetz said that State will not be able to accommodate the increases within its current budget, and if a lump sum addition were made to the State Department budget, it would be subjected to conflicting priorities within the State Department. (S)

David Newsom stressed that the President needs to look at this as an add-on above current budget ceilings. (C)

² See footnote 2, Document 92.

Dr. Brzezinski urged that we go to the President with the position that the SCC has agreed on the need for the enhanced security assistance program for Southwest Asia costing up to \$2 billion (\$1B in budget obligations). The President should then be given the choice of adding this to the budget or forcing it into current budget ceilings. Dr. Brzezinski pointed out that, with the change in administrations, this budget will be viewed as both an historical legacy and a road map for the future. It is therefore important that the former position be adopted. This will establish a clear marker of the importance of Southwest Asia and the commitment of this administration to its defense. (S)

John White argued that we need to give the President a sense of the priority this enhanced program enjoys vis-a-vis other budget issues. (C)

Harold Brown agreed that some priority is needed, but because we have a new strategic zone, we need a new largely additive program. To go the other way is to guarantee that the program is smothered at birth. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski stressed that an add-on package would represent recognition of the new historical responsibilities. He further argued that, by adopting the add-on view, we will provide our best guidance to the next administration. (C)

Harold Brown and Robert Komer agreed and emphasized that the security assistance enhancement program must be specifically identified as such. (S)

John White then argued that we should do two things:

—Provide the President with both the baseline security assistance budget figure developed by the State Department and the enhancement package proposed by State and Defense. (S)

—Put this enhancement program in the context of other budget enhancement programs and then the President can choose among them. (S)

Bob Komer stressed again that if we incorporate the enhancement program into the normal security assistance program figures, it will push more items below the line and will be lost. (S)

John White countered by saying the solution would be to increase the budget total. (S)

David Newsom said that State Department does not support this view. We need to submit it as a specific add-on package to support our vital interest in Southwest Asia. (S)

All eventually agreed that if the President approves the enhancement package, it will have to be largely an add-on to the current budget. (S)

Harold Brown said that the ZBB process does not just work on this kind of major new policy issue. (C)

Matt Nimetz agreed and said we never present policy issues as such, but we need to do it in this case. If the President approves of the enhancement package, then we can aggregate items later. (S)

John White said that this presents the President with a “take it or leave it” position on the enhancement package. (S)

Harold Brown agreed, but said there may be some flexibility in the numbers and in the handling of the budget issue. (S)

John White then said that the President has a lot of budget problems. He needs this issue presented in a manner which allows him to choose among several budget add-ons within the context of a large deficit. (S)

Harold Brown pointed out that the outlays involved are really quite small. (C)

Robert Komer argued that we have never been able to break through the budget problems for Southwest Asia. We must now seize upon our opportunity to do so. Decisions on this package are central to the President’s political legacy. (S)

David Aaron suggested that we establish a functional ranking of major programs so that the President could see where this security assistance enhancement program would fit in. (S)

John White said that we can work out such a functional array. Then priorities can be listed and the President can pick among them. (S)

Matt Nimetz stressed that the President has to understand the program is an add-on. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski then suggested that we go to the President with a brief memo laying out the issue for his decision. He then appointed a group of four to draft a memo for submission to the President by November 8. (C)

David Jones pointed out that grant military assistance is a key aspect of the enhancement package, and policy decisions will need to be made. (S)

All agreed to defer this until the President’s guidance is obtained on the enhanced security assistance concept. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski, DOD, and State all agreed on the need for the enhanced security assistance package. (S)

95. **Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)**¹

Washington, undated

SUBJECT

Southwest Asian Security Framework

The Department of State welcomes the opportunity to comment upon your memorandum of November 5,² which outlines progress in constructing a security framework for the Persian Gulf and charts a course for the future.

Current Status of Goals

A. Military Component

—Command Arrangements

—Consideration of a regional military command should be undertaken with indigenous country attitudes and our interests in mind. Most regional states would refuse to accept a US headquarters, and some might object to our creating a regional command, especially if our action were highly publicized. The location of such a headquarters in the US with perhaps an advance element afloat might be the best alternative. If centralization occurs, the emphasis should be on an RDF for worldwide deployment, rather than a specific SWA command.

—Security assistance must continue to be closely coordinated with political initiatives, economic assistance and other policy aspects, regionally and with individual countries. Thus it is essential that military assistance establishments continue to operate under the direct control of the ambassadors. Centralizing DoD security assistance responsibilities within any one military command presents no problem as long as the ambassador/MAAG/ODC relationship is maintained. Centralization of military construction activities under a single command also should be considered.

—*RDF Exercises in the Region.* State believes that the tentative CY 1981 exercise plan needs to be reviewed in light of the Iraqi-Iranian war and our efforts at cooperation with regional and Allied countries during that war.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870008–0277. Secret; Nodis. A copy was sent to Komer. Under cover of a November 18 memorandum, Bartholomew forwarded the Department of State response to Tarnoff.

² See Document 93.

—*Basing Access*. Our ability to follow through on facilities improvements promised in connection with the access agreements with Oman, Kenya, and Somalia will be an important determinant of the course of our future security cooperation with those countries. Accordingly, funding of those improvements should receive high priority. If we reach similar agreements with Egypt, we should recognize that additional funds will have to be made available for construction there.

—*Institutionalized Security Ties with Saudi Arabia*. Overbuilding and overstocking are important goals in achieving our present concept of force projection. However, the recent interruption at Saudi initiative of the talks on security cooperation vividly demonstrates the fragility and complexity of our security relationship.³ Though military equipment requests underlie current strains in our relationship, the latter will continue to be complicated by Arab-Israeli considerations, Saudi reluctance to be seen as a U.S. client, and increased Saudi concern about security in the Persian Gulf region. Our ability to strengthen US-Saudi security ties depends upon how far we are willing and able to go in meeting Saudi objectives in these areas.

—In addition, since we may never achieve Saudi agreement to all of our support requests, we need to analyze and prioritize our requirements. An interagency analysis should be conducted of (1) which overbuilding/overstocking programs are most important to the RDF and (2) which are likely to be most useful and acceptable to the Saudis, so that we can develop a comprehensive strategy for approaching them on this subject.

B. Foreign Policy Component

One additional aspect of the foreign policy component deserves mention:

—The *Iraqi-Iranian war* highlights Iraq's aspirations to regional dominance and the continuing threat of political instability in Iran.

C. Economic Component

—*Security Assistance (ESF)*. Increased levels for SWA countries were proposed during the FY 1982 budget process in addition to some reprogramming for FY 1980 and 1981. We also considered ESF elements in the enhancement exercise.

—*Influence over Saudi Aid*. Saudi economic assistance to Somalia should be encouraged, but we must avoid increasing Somali military resources that could lead either to renewed hostilities with Ethiopia or to an increase of tensions between Somalia and Kenya. We need to

³ See Document 227.

recognize that the Saudi response to our urgings of aid to other countries will be influenced by how much we are willing to contribute.

—*Oil*. State believes that the paper's treatment of the oil issue is overly optimistic. Unless strong actions are taken soon, the protraction of the Iran-Iraqi conflict is likely to cause a repeat of the 1979 events, when market panic turned a small shortfall into a 140% increase in oil prices. Saudi Arabia has no present surge capacity to use in moderating prices and the disarray in OPEC undermines price unification efforts. The present IEA policy of encouraging stock drawdowns and avoiding abnormal spot market purchases can be successful only so long as market participants believe that a resumption of oil supplies from Iran and Iraq will occur at the latest during the first quarter of 1981. As that belief fades, many companies and governments suffering shortfalls will enter the spot market and drive up prices; this is already beginning, and, in fact, Somalia has been seriously affected by the Iran-Iraq war.

—*Turkey/Portugal*. We have been doing our best to obtain alternate supplies for Turkey and Portugal, both severely affected by the Iran/Iraq cutoff. Our informal efforts via the major oil companies have not yet been successful. Turkey has been able to replace less than one quarter of its needs, Portugal somewhat more.

—*Refugees*. The influx of refugees into Somalia from the Ogaden is causing a problem of economic and political concern. The number of refugees is approaching one million. The US contributions to refugee programs in Somalia are now at \$50 million annually and rising. Politically, the refugee problem could cause greater tensions in Somalia as the country struggles to meet its own economic needs while managing this enormous relief effort. Stemming this flow of refugees and enabling their return to the Ogaden would relieve this enormous drain on our resources and prevent what could be serious political consequences for the Siad Government.

Goals for the Future

A. Military Component

—*Relations with Saudi Arabia*. As noted above, our present inability to meet Saudi defense procurement requests has limited the extent of US-Saudi defense cooperation. It is likely to do so in the future as well.

—*Better Relations with Oman and Somalia*. We would note that, although we have concluded an agreement with Somalia, we still have a long way to go. Congressional apprehensions over Siad's continuing activities in the Ogaden present a serious obstacle to further progress.

A revised memo might address two additional subjects:

—*Role of Indigenous States*. A few indigenous states, such as Egypt, Turkey, and Pakistan, might be able to contribute significant military

capabilities to the defense of Southwest Asia if the political situation at the time permits. The other regional states could probably not generate significant offensive capabilities, but with the proper assistance they could become capable of limited self-defense and could, in some cases, provide important combat support services. We need to study the roles of indigenous forces more closely and to coordinate the conclusions of our study with our military assistance activities and political realities. We should not fall into the trap of looking at regional capabilities solely in terms of how they contribute to our ability to respond to an external or Soviet threat. There are other roles that indigenous forces can play.

—*Gulf States.* We need to think further about our relations with the Gulf States, seeking to define better how the military element of our strategy can contribute to Gulf State security, while not increasing the security risks for the Gulf States in cooperating with the US militarily.

B. Foreign Policy Component

—*Turkey and Pakistan.* State concurs that highest priority should be given to improving ties with Turkey and Pakistan. In the case of Pakistan, a major improvement in our development and security assistance program (e.g., an offer to sell, possibly with FMS credits, high performance aircraft) may be a necessary step both in improving our security relations with Pakistan and in deterring Soviet adventurism in the region. In Turkey, the role of our Allies in providing supporting assistance will continue to be vital.

Several other points should also be discussed here:

—*Egypt.* To promote Egyptian political stability, we should closely monitor the level of our security cooperation and should ensure that the accumulation of cooperative arrangements does not become a threat to President Sadat's ability to govern.

—*The Horn.* We should, in cooperation with our European allies and such interested states as Sudan, pursue opportunities to reduce tensions on the Horn. This will help in our relations with Kenya, permit greater cooperation with Somalia, and help overcome the increasingly volatile refugee situation. Our efforts in this regard will also lessen concern among our allies, in Kenya, and elsewhere in Africa that our access agreement is emboldening Somalia to take more aggressive action against its neighbors.

—*African Influence on Kenya, Somalia and the Indian Ocean Countries.* Other African countries, through the OAU or the UN, could be pivotal in providing or withholding international support to African countries providing access and other means of cooperation to the U.S. This includes not only Kenya and Somalia, but also Djibouti, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Kenya, as the incoming President of the OAU, may be

the most sensitive to the attitudes of other African countries. We might think about ways in which we can help Kenya in its role of OAU President in dealing with major disputes in Africa, e.g., the Horn, Western Sahara, Chad, Southern Africa, so as to lessen any perceived conflict between its public non-aligned role and its desire to cooperate with the U.S. on security matters.

C. Economic Component

—*Economic Assistance.* Within the context of increasing development and security assistance, we need to pay closer attention to ordering priorities and to defining linkages between policy goals and assistance activities. In addition to Turkey and Pakistan, the case of Egypt, which has requested increased development assistance and more favorable terms for its security assistance, is particularly urgent.

—*Oil.* We need, on an urgent basis, to develop a response to oil market pressures caused by the continuing Iran/Iraq conflict. Particularly within the IEA, we need to examine ways to trigger the sharing system either generally and selectively, and ways to impose binding ceilings to ensure that oil will be available to countries and companies experiencing serious shortfalls, and to reduce demand pressure on the oil market. Any actions we take internationally in the IEA context would necessarily require strong domestic action as well.

—*General Economic Issues.* The review of trade and financial relations, with which State concurs, should pay particular regard to those policies, both US and foreign, which impact negatively upon US exports and limit our ability to influence developments in the region. Here, the Arab boycott of Israel and our reaction thereto should be considered.

Peter Tarnoff⁴

Executive Secretary

⁴ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

96. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, November 21, 1980

SUBJECT

Persian Gulf Security Framework (S)

(S) Here is my response to your memorandum of 5 November 1980² to review where we stand in our Persian Gulf Security Framework discussions. While we cannot hope—nor should we try—in the last weeks of this Administration to shape long-term policy or take new initiatives, it is imperative that the interagency work begun earlier and the momentum gained towards establishing a viable strategy for the region be carried forward. I hope that the following comments will assist in reviewing the status of the security framework and help lay the groundwork for additional progress by the new Administration.

(U) *CURRENT STATUS OF GOALS*

A. Military Component

—*Command Arrangements.* (S) The current command arrangements meet the Joint Chiefs' objective of developing an organizational structure that provides sufficient flexibility for meeting the day-to-day requirements of normal operations, logistics and intelligence through the existing CINCs and at the same time permitting the efficient and timely support of rapid deployment forces should their employment be required. Should our involvement in the region become enough greater, we would effect a transition of responsibility by introducing the Headquarters, Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) into the area to command all forces in the region in accordance with the RDJTF command relationships approved this summer. Accordingly, we intend not to restructure further at this time, but recognize that further evolutionary development is desirable.

—*US Military Peacetime Presence.* (S) The President approved an SCC recommendation³ that for at least the duration of the hostage crisis the US military peacetime presence in the Persian Gulf/Indian

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Defense/Security, Shoemaker, Box 123, Persian Gulf Security Framework: 11–12/80. Secret.

² See Document 93.

³ Scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. XI, Iran: Hostage Crisis, November 1979–January 1981.

Ocean region be enhanced to include two battle groups, an expanded MIDEASTFOR (from three to five ships), an embarked Marine Amphibious Unit in the region approximately 70% of the time and frequent TACAIR deployments to the area. (There is in this connection an urgent requirement for an amphibious training area in the western Indian Ocean.) This enhanced level of presence has remained on station throughout the hostage problem, the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and the Iran-Iraq war. The optimum level of US presence will require periodic review, and will require special attention in the aftermath of the hostage crisis. In the meantime, money is being requested in an FY81 Amendment or Supplemental to fund a second battle group in the Indian Ocean through 1981.

—Our AWACS and related deployments have provided us lessons which cut two ways. On the one hand, our relationship with the Saudis seems stronger because we demonstrated our reliability in a crisis and the Saudis demonstrated their willingness to accept a limited US military presence, and indeed to request it relatively early. On the other hand, the fact of the F-15 imbroglio even in the face of the continuing Iran-Iraq conflict has shown that these and other dimensions of our evolving relationship are tenuous and subject to continuing Saudi reservations. Given the continuing threat, and the possible political implications of terminating the deployment, we should maintain the AWACS presence in Saudi Arabia as long as it is mutually acceptable.

—*RDF Exercises in the Region.* (S) In the past year, we have conducted a number of RDJTF-related exercises, both in CONUS and overseas, to increase our readiness, rapid deployment capabilities and familiarization with the region. Planning is now underway by the Joint Staff to develop an SWA exercise plan for CY 1981. Three items already approved in principle for the 1980 schedule, but which were postponed for various reasons, will be carried over to 1981. (These consist of two platoon exchanges involving Egypt and Saudi Arabia and a one-time B-52 mission from Diego Garcia. In addition, we still need to reschedule the communications exercise with Oman which was supposed to take place early this fall.) Ongoing bilateral US-Saudi Arabian initiatives should provide opportunities for joint training as part of the CY 1981 program. Egypt has hosted two major exercises in the past year (PROUD PHANTOM and BRIGHT STAR, the latter of which is still underway) and will most likely be agreeable to more in the future. The focus of an exercise program should be an orderly development of our defense concept and should provide useful training, not just large, costly and unproductive troop movements. Once the plan for calendar year 1981 is approved by the JCS, it will be forwarded for interagency review.

—*Basing Access.* (S) We cannot emphasize strongly enough the crucial importance of adequate and accessible facilities in the area to

credible deterrence/defense. An overall basing strategy was developed for en route access and facilities requirements. A paper prepared by DoD outlines the strategic basing concept for both pre-hostility deployment and initial defense/reinforcement of the Persian Gulf region. It includes an assessment of the capacities, availability and usefulness (to our strategy) of facilities on the Arabian Peninsula and in Egypt. Assured access to improved facilities in Saudi Arabia and Egypt in particular is central to our ability to surge into the area in timely fashion.

—We need to continue developing our requirements for Saudi overbuild and pre-positioning. However, before we can discuss specific military requirements with Saudi Arabia, we must first gain Saudi acceptance of our strategic concept for the region (including a mutual understanding of the threat), their agreement to burdensharing and HNS (particularly POL), and their recognition of the need for US access to their facilities in the early stages of a crisis. Mutual resolution of the F-15 issue is critical to the realistic prospect of accomplishing these objectives.

—Once we can reach an arrangement with Egypt, we should begin construction of a major rear-staging facility at Ras Banas and increase fuel storage at Cairo International. Also, we should ensure that our access to Oman, Kenya and Somalia is not threatened by failure to carry out most of the MILCON projects as outlined in our aide-memoire.

—We should use the next few months to explore the new possibilities of increased access to facilities in Bahrain and UAE. Also, we should not be reluctant to seize new access opportunities that might arise with key countries such as Turkey, Pakistan and the Sudan. In particular with regard to Turkey, we should continue to pursue the prospect of creating a “threat-in-being” with US TACAIR deployments into eastern Turkey.

—Progress has been made toward gaining a better understanding by key states, principally the UK and Portugal, in the area of en route access and overflight rights. Nevertheless, en route access and overflight rights are far from assured. It is imperative that we continue to develop alternative access options with Spain, the FRG, Morocco and countries along the Pacific route to meet our transit requirements in the event that approval for the primary routes is not granted.

—However, it must be underlined that both local force contributions and US access to adequate facilities in all but the oil-rich countries are critically dependent on substantial added security assistance—much of it on concessionary terms. This is especially the case with key nations like Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt, which face severe economic difficulties.

—*Support Requirements.* (S) Considerable work has been done to analyze logistic requirements, especially the need for POL and water,

to support the surge of US rapid deployment forces to SWA. When completed, these studies will serve as the basis for our approach to regional states for Host Nation Support. In addition, we are studying other requirements (ammunition, spare parts, medical support, etc.) which would be needed to support an expanded, 6+ division RDF.

—*Mobility.* (S) Adequate strategic mobility is also indispensable to permit credible deterrence/defense. We have undertaken a number of initiatives that will improve (or have already improved) our ability to project forces rapidly to the region. But they are far short of foreseeable needs. Still underway in DoD is a mobility study (mandated by Congress in connection with the development of the C–X) which will be a determination of the optimum mix of mobility assets and pre-positioning required to support our overall lift requirements, including those for Southwest Asia.

—To increase the capacity of the Navy’s sealift assets, the President approved a program to acquire and modify eight high-speed SL–7 container ships. The decision was made as well to acquire specially designed Maritime Pre-positioning Ships to store equipment and supplies for three Marine Amphibious Brigades.⁴ We must ensure that adequate funding is requested from Congress for both programs.

—Seven Near-Term Pre-positioning Ships were placed on station at Diego Garcia in July 1980. These ships carry two-weeks equivalent of airlift by all transport aircraft (MAC and CRAF II). We now need to complete follow-on programs for Indian Ocean prepositioning which identify seaports of debarkation, plans for pre-positioning materiel handling equipment and offload sites for periodic maintenance requirements.

—*Local Defense Capabilities.* (S) The SCC reviewed a DoD analysis of the potential contributions (excluding facilities) which PG/SWA countries could provide to complement US military force capabilities in countering a Soviet attack in the region, particularly in Iran.⁵ Such a division of labor is perceived as vital (1) to the execution of a defense plan for the PG/SWA; (2) to maximizing the access and subsequent use of regional facilities and infrastructure; and (3) to signal clearly, for deterrence purposes, the resolve of the regional countries vis-a-vis the Soviet threat.

—The analysis underscores the early critical need for security assistance to improve as soon as possible the military force capabilities of selected regional states.

⁴ See Document 55.

⁵ See footnote 2, Document 92.

—More specifically, our regional planning requires an overall security assistance program for the region (calling for approximately \$5.5B in FY82) which: (1) carefully balances increased security assistance programs for regional states to their absorptive capacities and our strategic needs; (2) ensures that adequate training is an essential part of the program; and (3) expands joint exercise requirements with the regional states.

—Until the fruits of such an effort in enhancing indigenous capabilities are realized, contingency planning for US assumption of some or part of the indigenous tasks needs to be considered.

—*Allied Cooperation.* (S) Considerable efforts have been made to get our NATO allies and Japan to shoulder more European and North-east Asian regional defense responsibilities while the US accepts the major burden for defense in the Persian Gulf. Presentations by US officials have emphasized the Persian Gulf threat to NATO interests, likely US responses, force implications for NATO of a new theater and the need for Allies to contribute to this effort. (The recent British and French support on the Strait of Hormuz patrol were good signs, but the allied backsliding on the 3% commitment has been a bad omen.) We underscored, with varying degrees of success, the requirement that they meet a 3% budget commitment, implement the Long Term Defense Plan, and accelerate other shorter term programs. We should continue to press the Allies in these areas. We should continue to explore the feasibility of a coordinated, US-led defense strategy, with limited Allied force contributions, to deal with future Persian Gulf contingencies.

B. Foreign Policy Component

—*Better Relations with Oman, Kenya and Somalia.* (S)

—In order to be better prepared to respond to contingencies and demonstrate our seriousness to Oman and other regional states, we should continue efforts to expedite construction at Masirah and on the Musandam Peninsula.

—We must work hard to overcome Kenyan fears of our improving relations with Somalia. This should include keeping the Kenyans well informed so that their fears do not become divorced from realities.

—Funding is available to support most military construction plans in Somalia (i.e., improvements for airfield and seaport facilities at Berbera). Our security assistance program remains constrained, however, by Congressional requirements for guarantees concerning Somali activities in the Ogaden region. The latter requires early resolution in 1981.

C. Economic Component

—*Security Assistance.* (S) We need to continue to pursue vigorously our new initiatives to link increased security assistance with enhancing

regional states' ability to assist US forces during a deployment. For this reason, security assistance budget decisions for FY82 should take into account our overall security framework.

—*Oil.* (S) On this subject your memorandum appears to be too sanguine. The oil outlook remains uncertain. Only reduced Western demand (in part owing to low economic growth) has prevented the Iran-Iraq war from dramatically tightening the international oil market. Large consumers such as Japan have so far shown great restraint in not entering the spot market, but spot prices have ballooned to \$40 a barrel in some instances. Supplies remain very susceptible to cutbacks by several producers, attacks on Gulf facilities, an attempt to close the Strait, production problems or cutbacks elsewhere (Libya is in a good position to squeeze the West), the collapse of Western restraint, more troubles sustaining high Saudi production rates, or any combination of the above. Even a continuation of the Iran-Iraq war into next year at a level that prevents their oil exports from rising above their present low level would presage a major escalation in fuel prices next year.

D. [1 section (2 paragraphs) not declassified]

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

A. Military Component

—*Budget Issues.* (S) “Addressing the budgetary implications of the third strategic zone” will not only require a large commitment of resources to mobility and sustainability programs, but will also involve considerably more SWA-specific spending in such areas as military construction, pre-positioning, additional C3I, and special equipment relating to local fuel, water and logistic needs. This is important given our long-term intention to support an expanded RDF of at least six divisions. Meeting these requirements will necessitate several billion dollars in FY81 amendment or supplemental legislation, as well as an even greater sustained annual commitment of resources over FYDP 82–86.

—*Security Assistance.* (S) In addition, US security assistance levels for regional countries for FY82 should grow some \$1.8B over initial projections, or to approximately \$5.5B for FY82. Among other things, we want countries in the area to develop sufficient local air defense capabilities so as to protect RDF facilities and reduce the air defense requirement on deploying US forces.

—*Facilities Access.* (S) It is strategically imperative that we achieve assured access to improve Saudi, Turkish and Egyptian facilities in particular on a far broader basis than at present.

—*Strategic Mobility.* (S) Added fast air and sealift is equally indispensable to our deterrent strategy.

—*Host Nation Support*. (S) We must seek expanded HNS from key area states, including provision of POL and potable water as well as logistic support.

B. *Foreign Policy Component*

—*Post-hostage Iran*. (S) We should begin now to review our overall policy toward Iran for when the hostages are released. In doing so, we must recognize that we will be making decisions during the hostage negotiations that will set limits on our relations with Iran and will also affect directly our relations with key Gulf states (and with Saudi Arabia and Iraq, in particular) and, indirectly, how we are perceived throughout the world. Iran probably will still not be at all easy to deal with after the hostages are released. Our review must therefore be based on a very complex set of calculations and may very well take place in a vacuum of non-reciprocation from Iran. Accordingly, we may not want to change much if Iran is not willing to reciprocate.

—*Iran-Iraq War*. (S) The military and political lessons of the Iran-Iraq conflict are valuable inputs to the development of US military strategy for the PG/SWA region. We have undertaken a review of the events of the war in order to discern these implications and to verify or revise earlier assumptions which led to the formulation of the current strategy.

C. *Economic Component*

—*Saudi Regional Assistance*. (S) We expect much of the Saudis in many areas—oil price and production levels, various aspects of security cooperation, restrained position on the Iran-Iraq and Arab-Israeli conflicts and oil revenue recycling to name a few. Each of these issues is favored and pressed strongly by a particular USG agency. We should take care that these issues, as well as others such as Saudi assistance to regional states, are addressed within a coordinated framework of USG priorities for our relationship with Saudi Arabia.

—*Oil*. (S) We should increase the priority of oil production facility security as a military objective in the context of RDJTF and other military planning in Southwest Asia. This may entail some adjustment of force capabilities to ensure that the unique problems of securing oil facilities—including anti-terrorist measures, damage control and emergency repairs—can be dealt with.

D. [1 section, 2 paragraphs (7 lines) not declassified]

(U) Looking back, I think we have accomplished a great deal over the past year. This said, you, more than anyone, realize how much more there is to be done. Anything we can do before 20 January (or

afterwards for that matter) that would be of assistance in providing for a smooth transition and continued momentum in this area should be encouraged.

Harold Brown

97. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, December 16, 1980, 3:30–4:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Persian Gulf Security Framework—XIX

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for
Political Affairs

Reginald Bartholomew, Director,
Bureau of Politico-Military
Affairs

Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Near Eastern and
South Asian Affairs

Defense

W. Graham Claytor, Jr., Deputy
Secretary

Robert Komer, Under Secretary for
Policy

JCS

General David Jones, Chairman
Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Stansfield Turner, Director
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asia

Treasury

William Miller, Secretary
Robert Carswell, Deputy Secretary

Energy

Charles Duncan, Secretary
Les Goldman, Assistant Secretary for
International Affairs

OMB

Edward Sanders, Associate Director
for National Security and
International Affairs

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

General William E. Odom
General Jasper Welch
Captain Gary Sick

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 117, SCC 355, 12/16/80, Security Framework. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter initialed the first page, indicating that he saw it. Odom sent the Summary of Conclusions to Brzezinski under a December 17 memorandum, indicating that he would collate responses to the draft PD that evening. (Ibid.)

Dr. Brzezinski asked that the meeting address two items. First, it should review agency responses to his memorandum of November 5² in so far as they concern short-term actions which need to be taken. Second, the meeting should discuss a draft Presidential Directive as possible guidance for the next administration and as a legacy of President Carter's major effort in building a security framework for the Persian Gulf region. (S)

A. Short-term actions and responses to Dr. Brzezinski's memorandum of November 5, 1980.

Treasury

Secretary Miller asked for no short-term actions but observed that economic and security assistance do impact on the stability and viability of regimes in the region, depending on their ability to absorb it. Second, he raised the question of our efforts to deal with some issues through the Joint Military Commission which really should be handled by the Joint Economic Commission. Third, he commented that a number of our dealings with Saudi Arabia are through different and not always coordinated channels. (S)

Newsom observed that we should press the Saudis to contribute more to UNRRA than traditionally is the Saudi practice. (S)

*Energy*³

Duncan noted three items: the Saudi decision to raise its oil prices; late intelligence that Iraqi pipelines through Syria and Turkey have both been cut by bombing; and that the OPEC deliberations in Bali indicate an upward move in oil prices. These developments are likely to make the spot market very active. We may face a difficult period in the next month as the spot market prices move to new highs. In explaining the longer-term economic impact he cited Charles Schultze's paper which estimates that a \$10 increase in the price of a barrel of oil will push the CPI up by two to three percent and take about \$10 billion⁴ out of OECD country incomes. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked what short-term action we might take. Duncan enumerated the steps that we have taken with the IEA and in other channels to constrain undesired price activity. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski asked if Iran is exporting oil now. Duncan reported that two tankers departed Karg Island last week and that the Iran

² See Document 93.

³ For the Department of Energy response to Brzezinski's November 5 memorandum, see *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 288.

⁴ Carter circled "\$10 billion."

export level is about 200,000 barrels per day. Minister Yamani, Duncan said, reports that Iraqi production is about one million b/d and might go above that. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked when the Iraqi pipelines would be repaired. Duncan estimated that it would be the end of this month. The French are helping them with the repairs. (S)

Finally, Duncan noted that the oil inventories by April 1, 1981 will be approximately where they were on April 1, 1979 with the attendant summer gas shortages entirely possible. Those difficulties can be mitigated if distribution is managed well. (C)

*State*⁵

Newsom raised three short-term issues. First, the FY 1982 budget reflects no MILCON money for Somalia. In the case of Kenya it has been reduced from the promised \$36 million to \$17 million. Our diplomatic credibility with Somalia is at stake if we do not restore some MILCON funds for FY 1982. Second, on Ras Banas, our negotiations with the last Congress indicate that they will tolerate MILCON funding without a written agreement with Egypt. Should we approach the new Congress in early January to reaffirm this or leave it for the next Administration? Third, a Somali request for air defense equipment makes it imperative that we provide an intelligence report about the Ogaden to Congressman Solarz. We would like the DCI to make that ready by January 1st. (S)

On Somalia MILCON funds, Komer agreed that some addition for FY 1982 is necessary, but we can't give as much as promised to Somalia or to Kenya. Dr. Brzezinski asked Defense to let us know about how they manage the shifts in MILCON funds to meet this credibility requirement. On negotiations with the new Congress about Ras Banas all agreed that State and Defense should open discussions at the first opportunity in January. The DCI was tasked to render a report on the Ogaden for State by January 1st. (S)

*Defense*⁶

Komer raised two issues. First, he proposed that the President send Sadat a letter on nuclear powered war ships through the Suez Canal. Dr. Brzezinski asked Defense to provide a text for such a letter because it is consistent with what the President recently told Vice President Moubarek. (S)

⁵ See Document 95.

⁶ See Document 96.

Second, Komer underscored the inadequacies of our security assistance in the short-term for the Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf region. He implored the SCC to make one more effort with the President in behalf of the Southwest Asian add-on package with particular emphasis on Turkey, Egypt, and Pakistan. There is no way to have a credible deterrent with the RDJTF if it has no facilities access in the region. OMB has cut back the original add-on, but Defense is willing to absorb about \$300 million in FY 1982 in order to launch a \$911 million security assistance program for the out years. Komer argued that not only must this be proposed once more, but there must be more flexibility in our security assistance funding if the security framework effort is to succeed. (S)

David Aaron noted that the President was for a security assistance package but on the basis that it be taken from the Defense budget. Dr. Brzezinski asked how we should relate this issue to the President. Komer suggested that the SCC should endorse it, and the details should go by a separate memo which is now in progress. (S)

When Dr. Brzezinski asked who supports this proposal, all agencies voiced strong support except Bill Miller who initially expressed uncertainty about the details. In a brief post-SCC clarification between Miller and Komer, Treasury agreed with Defense while noting that the additional proposal of \$200 million in economic assistance for Turkey is equally important as security assistance. Defense and State agreed that we need both, particularly in the Turkish case. (S)

State made the reservation that the additional security assistance will not necessarily buy military access immediately but that it is crucial, if we are to have access in the future, that we do this now. (S)

General Jones intervened to report on his recent discussions with the Turkish military where he learned of Turkey's enormous energy dependence on oil from Iran. He also added that close relations with Saudi Arabia are absolutely critical if our military capability for the region is to be effective. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski raised an additional topic, the Iran-Iraqi war. Should we remain passive as we are doing at present? Is our response adequate? What are the implications—economic, military, and political—of our passiveness? Should U.S. policy toward this war be kept hostage to the hostage issue with Iran? (S)

Komer said that Defense had studied ways to prevent the Soviet tilt toward Iran but had not found one. A second tactic would be to seek ways to get both sides from destroying oil production facilities. His staff had not come up with promised suggestions. (S)

Duncan reported that the French and the Saudis say that the Soviets are supplying considerable oil to Iran and spare parts to Iraq. (S)

Newsom declared that there is no such intelligence available from U.S. sources. He also added that three diplomatic issues have been taken on without success thus far: (1) the Islamic Conference initiative, (2) the Cuban initiative, and (3) the UN initiative by Waldheim. Muskie will see Waldheim this Thursday about reviving his initiative. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski directed that a mini-SCC be held tomorrow to review our options and to provide support for Muskie when he sees Waldheim on Thursday. (C)

B. Passing the Security Framework to the next Administration

Dr. Brzezinski distributed a draft Presidential Directive which repeats the President's State of the Union commitment to the region and briefly outlines our strategy for building a security framework.⁷ It then repeats the four components structure and identifies objectives under each. Dr. Brzezinski described the PD as stating briefly but explicitly what the President's policy has been for the security framework in the region and providing a series of beacons under each of the four components for the successor administration. He then asked for comments and reactions. (S)

Newsom expressed concern that listing countries, as the PD might, should not be made public. He also asked if it might not be better to render a report to the next administration rather than a belated PD by the President. Muskie would not object to a summary but would have his own reservations about a PD. Dr. Brzezinski replied that the President would have his own historic interests in a PD which transcends Muskie's views and concerns. (S)

OMB supported the PD idea and added that it needs to make the point about coordination of our many efforts with Saudi Arabia. (C)

Miller asked if a PD might not be a red flag to the next administration. Dr. Brzezinski responded that we could produce a report, but that it would only be one of hundreds of memoranda passed on to the next administration. But a PD for codification of the structure and process is what is needed. A PD could summarize and codify what this President has been identified with in the region in the post-Afghanistan period. (S)

Both Claytor and Komer spoke very strongly on behalf of a PD. Claytor found no downside to this approach. Komer argued that if it is a reasonably brief document like the draft at hand, not a list of our accomplishments, it is more likely to survive and to affect the policy of the next administration significantly. (S)

⁷ Not found. The final version of PD/NSC-63 is printed as Document 98.

There was further discussion as to whether the PD should not list more of the administration's actions since last January. State seemed to favor this, supported by Treasury. Defense and OMB did not. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked how each agency stands on the long versus the short version PD. Komer repeated his case for a short version, and Aaron pointed out that most of State's concerns could be taken care of with a short preamble. (C)

Dr. Brzezinski closed the meeting asking that each agency return with its comments on the PD to be scheduled for tomorrow afternoon. (C)

98. Presidential Directive/NSC-63¹

Washington, January 15, 1981

TO

The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of The Treasury
The Secretary of Defense
The Secretary of Commerce
The Secretary of Energy
The Director, Office of Management & Budget
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Persian Gulf Security Framework (U)

In my State of the Union Address to the Congress in January 1980,² I called special attention to our interests in the Southwest Asia and Persian Gulf region. Furthermore, in light of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, I declared that:

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 24, PD/NSC-63. Secret. Carter signed at the top of the first page. Under cover of a January 16 memorandum to Muskie, Brown, Jones, and Turner, Brzezinski transmitted a series of summary sheets "which provide updates on the various components of the Security Framework." He also indicated that the summary sheets could be passed along to successors, as appropriate. (Ibid.)

² See Document 45.

“An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States. It will be repelled by the use of any means necessary, including military force.” (U)

Subsequently, I have directed action to protect the Strait of Hormuz and strengthen our key friends in the region in the face of risks stemming from the Iran/Iraq war. It is U.S. strategy to meet these commitments and to defend our vital interests in the region as a whole by:

- building up our own capabilities to project force into the region while maintaining a credible presence there;

- developing a broad range of military and related response options in and outside the region against the Soviet Union, including U.S. force projection into the region, to compensate for the current Soviet regional advantage in conventional forces;

- making the Soviet Union aware that it will also face a wide range of economic and diplomatic sanctions on a worldwide basis if it intervenes in the region;

- assisting countries in the region: to deter and diminish internal and external threats to stability; and to contribute to deterring and resisting Soviet penetration—political, economic, or military;

- diminishing radical influences in the region and enhancing US security by working for progress toward a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement;

- improving access to facilities in the region while remaining sensitive to the special historical experience of the region and not placing in jeopardy our relationships or the internal stability of the countries concerned by insisting on formal basing arrangements;

- taking a regional approach to securing our economic and political interests rather than basing their defense wholly on drawing a line to protect specific countries in the region. (S)

There has been considerable progress in improving our security posture in the region and in shaping an effective security framework. To ensure that this trend continues, I direct that the Persian Gulf Security Framework be pursued as follows: (C)

I. The Military Component

The Department of Defense has principal responsibility for initiatives in this area consistent with the responsibility of the Department of State. This component will include greater effort in the following areas:

- A. U.S. Force Capabilities*, including forces, lift, facilities access, overbuilding and prepositioning of supplies, exercises, and presence in the region. (S)

- B. Local Defense Capabilities*, improved through security assistance, advisory programs and enhancement of local facilities and military

capabilities in order to support U.S. force projection and local defense developed by joint planning, combined exercises, consultations, and other appropriate means. (S)

C. *Getting our Allies to Carry More of the Burden* of coalition deterrence/defense in Europe and Northeast Asia, as part of a rational division of labor, to offset greater allocation of U.S. resources to the security of the Persian Gulf. (S)

II. *The Foreign Policy Component*

The Department of State has principal responsibility for this component, which will be carried out in terms of:

A. *The Middle East Peace Process* in which progress must be achieved as rapidly as feasible. (S)

B. *Turkey and Pakistan* with which improved security relations are the objective. (S)

C. *The Arabian Peninsula* in which we will assist the countries concerned to enhance their internal stability and counter Soviet influence. (S)

D. *The Horn of Africa*, where we seek improved ties with Somalia and Djibouti and, when possible, with Ethiopia. (S)

E. *The Allies*, in Europe and Asia, from whom we seek diplomatic, military, economic, and political assistance in meeting our mutual security objectives in the Persian Gulf region. An early focus of effort with these Allies and with regional powers will be establishing relationships to help assure quick and positive processing of overflight, refueling and staging clearances required for the U.S. to project and sustain forces in Southwest Asia. (S)

III. *Economic Issues*

The Department of the Treasury, State, and Energy will share responsibility in this area. Economic subcomponents are:

A. *Oil Policy*, to ensure availability of oil at reasonable prices and to reduce Western dependence on Gulf oil. (S)

B. *Western Economic Assistance*, in which our goal will be to help address economic problems in the region through multilateral and unilateral efforts. (S)

C. *Saudi and Other Gulf States Cooperation in Financing of Regional Security Needs* in which we seek a more comprehensive, region-wide use of Saudi and other peninsular capabilities to meet regional security needs. (S)

D. *Economic Stability* which is crucial to both the internal and external security and to the political stability of states in the region. It should be an integral component of the security review process and taken into

account in any U.S. decisions concerning military and/or economic assistance. (S)

IV. Intelligence Issues

The Director of Central Intelligence has the principal responsibility for developing an effective regionally integrated intelligence program which is fully supportive of the tasks and objectives in the military, diplomatic, and economic components. (S)

Resources Considerations

Each agency will be responsible for and will identify the programs in its area which are required for implementing this directive. In addition, each agency will propose appropriate priority for these programs. (C)

The Office of Management and Budget will monitor agency programs in support of this directive, will insure that such programs are identifiable, and will insure that they are receiving an appropriately high priority in all agencies. (C)

Coordination

Interagency coordination for the security framework shall continue to be accomplished by the Special Coordination Committee. (C)

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Indian Ocean

99. Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC 25¹

Washington, April 7, 1977

TO

The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense

ALSO

The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Arms Control in the Indian Ocean Area

The President has directed that the Special Coordination Committee review U.S. policy with regard to possible arms control measures in the Indian Ocean area preparatory to the meeting of the U.S.-Soviet working group on this issue.²

The initial study of this issue will be prepared by a working group of the SCC, under the chairmanship of the NSC Staff. The study should be completed for SCC review by April 29, 1977, and should:

1. Review past policy studies, summarizing U.S. security interests and objectives in the Indian Ocean area.
2. Identify alternative negotiating strategies available to the United States, with specific options for an initial negotiating position.
3. Make recommendations concerning the composition of a U.S. team to conduct discussions with the USSR and the establishment of a working group to support its efforts.

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330-80-0017, Indian Ocean 092 (Jan-Jul) 1977 2. Secret. Brown initialed at the top of the page and wrote "4/8" above his initials.

² Vance visited Moscow March 27-30 and discussed demilitarization of the Indian Ocean with Gromyko during a March 29 meeting. In telegram Secto 3033 from Moscow, March 29, Vance indicated that he had "set forth our interest in a serious exploration of their views, especially on question of eliminating bases, limiting numbers of ship-days for warships and defining the precise area to be covered." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840076-0315). For a memorandum of conversation of the March 29 meeting, see *Foreign Relations* 1977-1980, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 20. Vance and Gromyko agreed to set up working groups on several issues, including Indian Ocean demilitarization. (Department of State *Bulletin*, April 25, 1977, p. 401)

4. Propose consultative mechanisms to ensure that the views and interests of U.S. friends and allies are adequately represented in the preparation and conduct of bilateral discussions with the USSR.

In examining alternative negotiating strategies available to the United States, the study should identify the principal tradeoffs (facilities, force levels, operating patterns) which will have to be considered in substantive discussions of this issue with the USSR. Each alternative should be evaluated in terms of its implications for:

- U.S.-Soviet rivalry in the region;
- Regional military and political developments;
- U.S. and Soviet objectives and capabilities in other areas;
- U.S. relations with Allies and other concerned states; and
- Crisis management in the Indian Ocean area.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

100. Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Staff¹

Washington, undated

RESPONSE TO PRM/NSC-25 INDIAN OCEAN ARMS CONTROL

Before the agreed US-Soviet Working Group on Indian Ocean arms control is convened, the US must decide:

—What it would seek to achieve, substantively, in an initial arms control agreement with the Soviet Union, and

—How the Working Group can best be used to further this goal.

This paper briefly summarizes the major considerations which the SCC will need to consider in making these choices. It describes the general historical background and comparative military presence of the various powers in the Indian Ocean. It examines the political implications of arms control in the area and identifies the major elements which will have to be considered in any US-USSR negotiations.

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330-80-0017, Indian Ocean 092 (Jan-Jul) 1977 2. Secret. Acting NSC Staff Secretary Michael Hornblow sent copies of the response to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Warnke, Jones, and Turner under an April 29 memorandum that indicated the SCC would discuss the response at the May 4 SCC meeting. See Document 102.

Three broad alternative arms control objectives are outlined: (1) Demilitarization; (2) Limitations short of demilitarization; and (3) A freeze at approximately current levels. Even if demilitarization is accepted as our ultimate objective, it may be necessary to consider something less as a proximate objective for the first round of discussions with the USSR. SCC guidance on this issue will be necessary to prepare a negotiating strategy.

The proposed composition of the US Working Group is discussed, and four alternative approaches for the first meeting are described: (1) A general exchange of views on possible elements of an agreement; (2) An exchange of views plus a US proposal for immediate adoption of some confidence building measures; (3) Seek agreement on the general principles to guide future negotiations; or (4) Use the meeting as the first round of a formal negotiating process, tabling a US draft outline of a bilateral agreement. The SCC decision on this issue will determine the nature of our opening tactics.

Annexes include more detailed discussion of the negotiating elements and military tradeoffs (A) and a discussion of consultative procedures (B).²

I. BACKGROUND

A. *The Setting*

Since 1949, the US has maintained a limited military presence in the Indian Ocean area in the form of a flagship and two destroyers of Middle East force stationed at Bahrain. [1 line not declassified] Although a policy of increased naval deployments was announced in 1964, it was never fully implemented due to the military requirements and pressures of Vietnam.

Recognition of pending UK withdrawal from the area, growing nationalism, and the probable future lack of access to military facilities in the area, led to US promotion of the concept of a British Indian Ocean Territory composed of a number of strategic islands which could be used as required for base facilities in the future. The BIOT was created in 1965 by the British with indirect US financial support, and a treaty permitting joint defense use was signed in 1966.³

The establishment of a naval facility on Diego Garcia was proposed in the late 1960's but was defeated by Congress in 1969.⁴ Following

² Annexes A and B are attached but not printed.

³ See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. XXI, Near East Region; Arabian Peninsula, Document 42; and *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969–1972; Jordan, September 1970, footnote 2, Document 37.

⁴ See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969–1972; Jordan, September 1970, Document 39.

the British withdrawal from the area, a scaled-down version consisting primarily of a communications station and an 8,000-foot supporting airfield was approved by Congress in 1971,⁵ and became operational in early 1973.

Soviet military activity in the Indian Ocean began in 1968 and increased to the extent that by 1974 they regularly deployed about 19 ships on a daily basis, eight or nine of which were combat vessels. Their force presence has since stabilized at somewhat reduced levels, but Soviet capabilities have increased as a result of the expansion of support facilities at Berbera, and the recent addition of maritime air patrols operating from airfields in Somalia. Soviet-built facilities at Berbera include a communications station, port and fuel storage facilities, an airfield large enough to accommodate any aircraft in the Soviet inventory, and a cruise missile storage and handling facility. The growth of Soviet facilities was tied to a large scale military assistance program, and the continuation of the Soviet presence remains dependent on the state of Soviet-Somali relations, which are currently under strain.

In October 1973, the United States announced a "return to a policy of more frequent and more regular" US naval deployments to the Indian Ocean, following the partial Arab blockade of the Red Sea during the Arab-Israel war and in view of the Soviet military buildup in the area.⁶ Since that time, we have deployed an average of three or four task groups each year into the Indian Ocean from the Pacific Fleet, in addition to the three ships of Middle East Force which remain in the area on a permanent basis.

This change of policy was accompanied by a request for the expansion of naval facilities on Diego Garcia. Despite prolonged Congressional opposition, the Diego Garcia expansion program was finally approved in July 1975, and construction work has been going on since the spring of 1976.

The principal facilities currently in existence or planned for Diego Garcia include a 12,000-foot runway, petroleum storage facilities, a dredged basin within the lagoon large enough to accommodate a carrier task group, a deep-water pier for loading and off-loading oil and other supplies, a naval communications station, billeting for about 800 per-

⁵ See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969–1972; Jordan, September 1970, Document 44.

⁶ On October 29, 1973, as a result of the worldwide alert of U.S. forces in the wake of the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the Department of Defense announced the re-deployment of the aircraft carrier USS *Hancock*, along with its supporting carrier group, from the Philippine Sea to the Indian Ocean. (Michael Getler, "U.S. Aircraft Carrier Sent to Indian Ocean," *The Washington Post*, October 30, 1973, p. A1)

sonnel, limited storage facilities, and miscellaneous associated construction for a total of about \$40 million worth of new construction.

B. Current Attitudes Toward Arms Control

The possibility of arms limitations in the area has been discussed since 1970, when Sri Lanka initiated a proposal for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace. This proposal has been discussed in the UN General Assembly every year since that time, and an ad hoc committee composed of Indian Ocean littoral states has been established to deal with this issue. The objection of most maritime nations (including the US and USSR) to the Peace Zone proposal is its implication that littoral nations have the right to impose restrictions on the use of adjacent waters, contrary to customary international laws on freedom of use of the high seas.

Neither the US nor the Soviet Union has taken an actively positive attitude towards Indian Ocean arms control. In 1971 the Soviets asked if we would be interested in a joint declaration on arms restraint. We replied that we agreed in principle and asked for more elaboration of Soviet views. Moscow never responded and there have not been any other direct bilateral exchanges until the current US initiative.

Recently the Soviets have adopted a new public approach to the Peace Zone issue. This was indicated in Brezhnev's speech to the 25th Party Congress in February 1976, and in Gromyko's address to the UN General Assembly last fall.⁷ Moscow views with understanding the desire of the littoral nations to establish a Peace Zone in the area; however, in the Soviet view the first step should be the dismantling of foreign military bases in the region (and the Soviets deny that they have any bases in the area). Moscow would then be willing to discuss a reduction in the military activities of non-littoral nations. The Soviet response to our March 1977 approach in Moscow gave no indication of movement beyond their public position.⁸

Based on Soviet statements to date, it appears that the USSR might prevent serious discussion of Indian Ocean arms limitations by demanding the elimination of US "bases" such as Diego Garcia, Masirah and Northwest Cape, while insisting that the Berbera facility

⁷ In telegram 4005 from USUN, September 28, 1976, the Mission referenced Gromyko's address to the General Assembly and noted that the Soviet delegation had released a "Memorandum of the Soviet Union on Questions of Ending the Arms Race and Disarmament." The memorandum's highlights included Soviet "willingness to explore with other powers reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760366-0640) Telegram 4005 is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. E-14, Part 2, Documents on Arms Control, 1973-1976.

⁸ See footnote 2, Document 100.

belongs to Somalia and is therefore not in the same category. They might also insist that the talks be broadened to include some or all of the littoral states, or they might insist that any agreement insure military “parity” between their own forces on the one hand and the combined forces of the US and its allies on the other. In short, if the Soviet Union chose to exploit the discussions solely for propaganda purposes, there will be opportunities to do so.

On the other hand, the Soviets might consider that their long-term interests would be served by negotiating seriously. In informal and unofficial conversations, various Soviets have indicated that discussions could include their use of support facilities at Berbera. The Soviets may be interested in limiting naval competition in the belief that the advantages of such a competition might accrue to the US. They may be unsure of their position in Somalia, which is subject to political changes, and may see advantages in trying to negotiate limitations on US facilities at Diego Garcia, on deployments of aircraft carriers and amphibious forces and a ban on the deployment of SSBN’s in the Indian Ocean. They have also been put on the propaganda defensive by President Carter’s stated goal of Indian Ocean demilitarization⁹ and may come to feel compelled to demonstrate more specifically than in the past their commitment to forestalling big power military rivalry in the Indian Ocean.

C. Comparative Military Presence

The level of military deployments to the Indian Ocean by the US, the USSR and other external powers over the past several years are shown in Figures 1–3.¹⁰ It will be noted that US and Soviet deployments peaked in 1974. Soviet presence subsequently stabilized at a somewhat lower level and US presence has declined. The British presence has ceased to be significant following their well publicized withdrawal in the early 1970’s, but the French presence (measured in ship-days) is presently greater than that of either superpower.

Although the Soviets regularly have more ships in the Indian Ocean than we do, they cannot match the firepower of a US carrier task group when deployed to the area (currently only once a year). The limited underway replenishment capability of the Soviet fleet limits its capacity for sustained combat, and the lengthy deployment periods of their ships make access to ports such as Berbera attractive as a convenient

⁹ Carter publicly stated that the United States would seek Soviet agreement to “mutual military restraint” in the Indian Ocean in his March 17 address before the UN General Assembly. For the full text of his address, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. I, Foundations of Foreign Policy, Document 29.

¹⁰ Figures 2–3 are attached but not printed.

location for resupply and repair. The heavy reliance of the Soviet Navy on shore facilities, especially for air support, makes the evolution of their political relations with Somalia particularly significant.

With the Suez Canal open, the Soviet Union enjoys a marginal advantage in surge capability since their relatively large fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean could deploy to the Arabian Sea in less than five days, while the US could not match them in numbers or firepower since US attack carriers today cannot pass through the Canal. The United States can deploy a carrier task group from the Pacific Fleet to the Arabian Sea in about [less than 1 line not declassified] approximately [less than 1 line not declassified] Soviet units could arrive from their Pacific bases. British and French forces would require two to three weeks to deploy forces to the Indian Ocean with the Canal open, or more than a month if it were closed.

Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union has stationed ground combat forces in countries on the Indian Ocean littoral, and neither has military aircraft permanently stationed in the area. The USSR has conducted occasional TU-95 surveillance flights into the area from bases in the southern USSR, overflying Iran. In addition, since April 1975 the USSR has begun sending IL-38 surveillance aircraft to Somalia with increasing frequency (44 deployment days in 1975, 103 in 1976, and 118 in the first four months of 1977). [5 lines not declassified]

D. Future US-USSR Military Presence

Current US planning does not call for any increase in the present level of military deployments to the Indian Ocean for the foreseeable future. Given current naval force levels, any increase in Indian Ocean activity requires a comparable reduction in naval presence in other areas, particularly in the Pacific where we have only two carriers available on permanent deployment. The current expansion of Diego Garcia is primarily intended to provide independent contingency support for US forces in conditions when littoral facilities might be closed to us. However, the facilities on Diego Garcia would be valuable for support of a larger US presence if that were decided at some future date.

Bahrain has reconsidered its request that we terminate our Middle East Force basing arrangement this June, and has agreed in principle to a continued, reduced, presence.¹¹ We have also begun discussions with the Government of Oman regarding continued air access to the former UK base on Masirah Island;¹² no US personnel would be stationed there, and fueling and over-night billeting would be provided

¹¹ See Documents 4 and 5.

¹² See footnote 5, Document 20.

by the Omanis for up to [*less than 1 line not declassified*]. We also maintain a small space tracking facility in the Seychelles.

The best indicator of long-range Soviet military intentions in the Indian Ocean is the construction of support facilities in Somalia, and particularly at Berbera where they have built a large airfield and a cruise missile storage and handling facility which could provide missile support for ships, aircraft and submarines. Of particular concern is the possible future deployment of Soviet missile-armed aircraft in the region. This would represent a significant change in the combat capabilities of the Soviet naval units operating in the area and would be the single development most likely to affect the relative US–USSR military balance in the near future. The future development of Soviet military capabilities in the area will depend heavily on the evolution of their relations with the Somali Government.

E. Implications for US and Soviet Regional Interests

The one essential US interest in the Indian Ocean area is to insure continued access to the oil of the Persian Gulf region. The US is also concerned that the states in the area develop economically and politically, free from external pressure. Current US deployments and facilities in the area are intended to serve these purposes by demonstrating US interest in the area, symbolizing support for our Allies and friends and by offsetting the Soviet presence. If Soviet presence should increase, the US would have to seriously consider the military, political, and budgetary costs of increasing military presence in the area or risk the political and economic consequences of permitting a perceived increase in Soviet influence in the area.

In addition to a general desire to project its presence and influence overseas, the Soviet Union has some particular interests in the Indian Ocean region. Geographically, the nations of the Persian Gulf and Indian Sub-Continent lie immediately to the south of the Soviet border. An important sea route between European Russia and the Soviet Far East lies through the Suez Canal and Indian Ocean. Soviet rivalry with China will continue to be a major factor in Soviet policy toward this area for the foreseeable future. The range of geographical and political interests which have sustained a 20-year courtship of India suggests that the Soviet leadership will continue to devote political, economic, and military resources toward the achievement of their objectives in the region. As the Soviet Navy improves its blue water capabilities, the Soviets may consider the Indian Ocean to be a lucrative area in which to exploit these capabilities for their political purposes, particularly if they sense a US reluctance to meet such a challenge.

US-Soviet arms control arrangements in the Indian Ocean area could serve US interests if it:

- Prevented a US-Soviet military presence competition with the costs this would entail;
- Prevented the introduction of Soviet strike aircraft in the area;
- Reassured our Allies and friends by reducing the possibility of Soviet military predominance in the area;
- Improved the US political image by demonstrating responsiveness to the desires of the littoral states to prevent great power military competition in their area; and
- Possibly if it reduced the military resources which the US would commit to the area.

There are, however, limits on what arms control arrangements could be expected to contribute to stability. Even stringent limits on military and naval forces would have little effect on the Soviet ability to provide support to dissident political movements in Africa or elsewhere in the area. Arms control arrangements based on parity might require the US to surrender some advantages it currently enjoys, such as a politically secure base and the deployment of carrier forces. The Soviet Union is geographically proximate to the area and, in spite of overflight problems, would be better able to bring air power or air transported forces directly to bear from its own territory. Limits on US force presence in the area would also reduce capabilities for the US to respond to threats not involving the Soviets, such as another Arab blockade in the Red Sea area or evacuation of US citizens. Arms control arrangements in the Indian Ocean might set undesirable precedents for freedom of the seas, for arms control arrangements in ocean areas more vital to US security such as the Mediterranean, and for a Soviet attempt to impose global parity on sea power, an arrangement which would be consistent with greater US dependence on seapower to protect its interests and Allies overseas.

In any case, for the U.S. it will be essential to maintain close and continuing consultations with Allies such as Australia and the UK prior to and during the negotiating process. Background discussions with other friendly nations will also be important. This is discussed in more detail in Annex B.

II. NEGOTIATING ELEMENTS

Cutting across all alternative arms control packages are some basic negotiating elements which must be considered before presenting a proposal. These are discussed in detail in Annex A.

A. General Elements

The Area. The scope of an acceptable definition of the Indian Ocean is limited by customary usage; but a fundamental question is whether bases and forces other than on the coasts of littoral countries should be included and, if so, to what extent.

Types of Forces. We can focus our arms control measures on just maritime forces and facilities, or we can choose the greater risks involved in extending arms control to land-based air and ground forces and inland facilities and activities. Extension of coverage to land-based forces and facilities would place at risk US installations in such countries as Iran, the Seychelles and Australia. It could also prevent US naval and air participation in CENTO exercises.

Bilateral versus Multilateral. While we have proposed US/USSR talks, the Soviets might want to argue that the UK and France should also participate or their forces be counted against the US presence. US military presence in the Indian Ocean is keyed in part to our contribution to collective security alliances (ANZUS, CENTO). The Soviets could argue that we should disengage from these alliances or refrain from military deployments which support them.

[1 paragraph (7 lines) not declassified]

Nature of Military Presence. Transiting forces should probably not be included in an agreement, because naval operations outside the area would be affected. Transits should be pre-announced and defined by duration and number of allowed port calls.

Crisis Escape Clause. The agreement should contain provisions which would permit deployments to the area in excess of treaty limits under certain extreme contingencies.

B. Elements Related to Limitations

Surface Ships. Surface ship deployments could be limited by a variety of means:

- Surface combatants could be limited.

- Naval auxiliaries could be included as well. While this limit would not directly control military capability, it could impair Soviet operations because of their greater reliance on auxiliaries. On the other hand, Soviet use of naval associated merchant ships would be unrestricted. For this reason, DOD feels that auxiliaries and merchant ships used to support a naval presence in the area should be included in any limits.

- If naval associated merchant ships were to be included, this could inhibit our ability to supply the 7th fleet with oil from the Persian Gulf.

- The duration of deployment could be limited to prevent permanent presence such as the US MIDEASTFOR and to inhibit current Soviet practice of long-term forward deployments.

- The number of ship-days per year could be limited.

- The average daily level of ship tonnage (over a year's period) could be limited.

- Some formula could be derived to value ships according to their tonnage and the resultant figure of merit could be limited.

Because of the differing character of US and Soviet deployments—the US deploys fewer, but larger, combatants than the Soviets—two ceilings appear the simplest and fairest approach: a ceiling on the number of combatants would constrain the Soviets more heavily while a limit on combatant tonnage would constrain the US more heavily. For example, ceilings at about half current levels would permit each side a daily average of about five combatants and about 25,000 tons.

—This approach would lower the number of Soviet combatants, but the mix would remain unchanged.

—The US could send about the same number of ships as at present, but carrier deployments would have to be curtailed; or carriers deployed and the number of ships reduced.

[1 paragraph (10 lines) not declassified]

Bases (Support Facilities). Again various types of limits are possible:

—The number of facilities or the type of service performed by facilities under US or Soviet control could be limited or banned.

—Access to other bases could be limited by, for example, the number and duration of port calls or aircraft visits.

—Both powers might be barred from making use of facilities for routine maintenance, resupply, or rearmament. (This would not rule out “voyage repairs” necessary for safe transit to the next port of call.) This provision would deny Soviet use of the missile handling and repair facilities in Berbera.

—We probably would not want to restrict communications capabilities. This would allow the US to remain in Northwest Cape and continue to maintain the communication station on Diego Garcia and for the Soviets to retain their communications station in Berbera. Airfields needed to support communication facilities and verification would be permitted. Use of these fields for other uses might be restricted.

Military Aircraft. Aircraft present the most complex limitation problem, one that is the least well developed: there are varied types of military aircraft, ranging from transports through strike aircraft; aircraft deployments can take many forms—on carriers, permanent deployment at ground bases, periodic deployment, and overflights.

—Only particular types of aircraft could be limited: e.g. armed aircraft might be limited, but reconnaissance, surveillance and transport aircraft unrestricted. An agreement to ban the introduction of land-based combat aircraft would probably have to be balanced by a ban on US carrier-based aircraft to be negotiable.

—The number of “aircraft days” could be limited. This would be complex, however; it might therefore be better to either ban aircraft or leave them alone.

—If aircraft limits included *[1 line not declassified]* third world countries would be impaired. On the other hand, restrictions on Soviet

deployment of land-based strike aircraft would be valuable since such deployments could alter the military balance in the area.

Ground Combat Forces. Since no ground combat forces are deployed in the littoral areas and are rarely deployed afloat, we could consider a ban. By banning just combat units, we would exclude security assistance personnel from restrictions. A Soviet commitment on this principle would be especially important in view of Soviet contiguity with the littoral states. However, the Soviets would probably insist on extending such a ban to afloat combat forces.

[1 paragraph (5 lines) not declassified]

III. ALTERNATIVE ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVES

The section describes three general alternative negotiating objectives for SCC consideration: (1) total demilitarization; (2) limitation of military presence below current levels; and (3) a freeze or cap near current levels. These could be viewed as either long term objectives or as outlines for a near term treaty with the USSR. A freeze, reductions of force levels, and demilitarization can also be viewed as progressive signs in an extended negotiating strategy. In any event, the alternatives would require further technical development before they could be presented to the Soviets. SCC guidance on the general outline of the agreement we seek is needed before detailed negotiating packages can be developed.

A. *Alternative 1—Demilitarization*

Demilitarization would include:

Ship deployment

—Neither side could deploy combatants, either surface or submarine, to the area; auxiliaries and naval associated merchant ships might also be banned.

—Pre-announced transit through the Indian Ocean would be permitted.

—The US MIDEASTFOR would be disbanded and its ships withdrawn.

—Periodic US deployment of task groups and participation in naval exercises with littoral nations (e.g. CENTO and ANZUS) would not be permitted.

—The US would forego the option of deploying SSBN's to the area.

—The USSR would have to terminate its naval presence in the region.

Bases

—Neither side would be permitted to maintain military facilities in the area though communications facilities might be permitted for verification purposes.

—Neither side would be allowed to make use of indigenous naval facilities except for brief port calls in connection with transit.

—The US would be obligated to close its military facilities at Bahrain and Diego Garcia, though communication might remain.

—The Soviets would not be allowed to make use of their facilities in Somalia and would be barred from the development of similar facilities elsewhere.

Aircraft

—Neither side could introduce land-based or sea-borne aircraft into the area, though unarmed transports or surveillance aircraft might be allowed. This would prohibit Soviet use of the military airfield they have constructed in Somalia. Our aircraft carriers would be permitted into the area only during transit.

Ground Combat Forces

—Neither side could introduce military personnel in unit formations into the region, at sea or in the littoral countries.

Discussion

In a post-agreement environment, both sides would be expected to continue to use means other than military forces—political, economic, arms supply—to further their interests in the area. The use of surrogate military forces is possible: the Soviets have employed this strategy in Angola; and the Soviets would likely charge that French forces were a surrogate for the US. The Soviets, and some littoral states, would probably pressure France to accede to the agreement or at least respect its terms. France would probably resist such pressures.

To agree to this option both sides would have to feel confident that there were no indigenous or external threats to its interests in the area (aside from the military capabilities of the other) that would necessitate maintaining forces in the region. One of our major interests is protection of our essential Sea Lines of Communications (SLOC), especially in view of Western and Japanese dependence on the oil resources of the Persian Gulf. In a wartime environment, in which the treaty would be abrogated, the major immediate Soviet threat to the SLOC would be aircraft from the USSR.

A threat to US interests from other sources in a demilitarized Indian Ocean would clearly be difficult to deal with unless we were willing to invoke a crisis escape clause. Such threats could include interruption of access to or transit of oil, military action against a friendly state, or situations endangering the lives of Americans in the region. Threats apart from Soviet forces could include littoral states or sub-national groupings, e.g., political terrorists dramatizing a cause.

US interests also include a peacetime display of US concern with the political future of the Indian Ocean area. With demilitarization, we (and the Soviets) would forego the display of immediate military power (peacetime presence) for this purpose. This would underline the importance of France and the major littoral naval powers—Iran, India, Australia and South Africa. Although it is not clearly evident that the present US and Soviet naval presence has a major influence on the relationship between these states and their neighbors, some littoral states might feel threatened by US and USSR withdrawal and actively seek to increase their armaments. However, this is only one of a variety of political and economic factors that would influence this decision.

Publicly the reaction of the littoral states to US–USSR demilitarization would be almost uniformly favorable, especially among the non-aligned states. Some states such as Iran, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia might express private concern and would require reassurance that the US was not lessening its opposition to the spread of Soviet influence and would remain supportive of their interests through other means. Australian reaction would depend on the status of Northwest Cape and the effect on our obligations under the ANZUS treaty.¹³

[6 lines not declassified] are on record as supporting bilateral US–USSR arms restraint in the Indian Ocean, but would have a direct concern in the fate of Diego Garcia. The French would be principally concerned about the effects on their own deployments.

We expect that the above political reactions would be reflected, albeit to a lesser degree, in the subsequent, less ambitious, alternatives.

Pros

—This would be a serious step indicating our firm commitment to arms control and disarmament. It would present the Soviet Union with the option of either agreeing or bearing the clear responsibility for blocking progress.

—It would probably be applauded by all non-aligned littoral nations.

—It would reduce the possibility of confrontation.

¹³ Reference is to the 1951 ANZUS Treaty for a military alliance among the United States, New Zealand, and Australia.

—There are no apparent immediate military threats to our interests in the region that require a US presence; some could develop, however. Our influence and position in the area is dependent on a mix of political, economic and other factors not only on US military capability.

—Seventh Fleet ships now periodically deployed to the Indian Ocean would be available for utilization elsewhere. In any emergency situation, we normally have adequate military resources stationed in the Pacific area to respond.

—The USSR would be prohibited from developing additional basing facilities in Mozambique or elsewhere in the area.

Cons

—By pressing for the very ambitious goal of demilitarization from the start, we may risk losing the opportunity to conclude a meaningful arms control agreement.

—This step would be a significant departure from the traditional US position favoring freedom of use of the high seas.

—It would limit the political usage of the US Navy.

—Our friends in the region might see this as a major step towards abandoning our interests and our commitments to them.

—The Soviet Union would continue to attempt to influence events in the region and might well use surrogates to intervene, as it did in Angola, or pressure littoral states with which it is contiguous.

—In a wartime situation, the USSR would enjoy a geographical advantage for the rapid introduction of air forces from their bases in the southern USSR.

—It could leave the field open for an arms race among littoral states.

—A trade of Diego Garcia for Berbera would relinquish US access to a politically secure facility in return for Soviet access to a facility that is politically insecure.

—Unfriendly littoral states or terrorist groups might feel encouraged to threaten some of our vital interests such as the free flow of oil from the Persian Gulf.

—Demilitarization could result in demands that other regions be similarly demilitarized, for instance the Mediterranean.

—It could mean the loss of communications stations, such as [3 lines not declassified].

B. Alternative 2—Limitation of Military Presence Below Current Levels

Owing to the numerous types of US and Soviet military presence and the various ways in which presence could be limited, limitation

agreements (either in this alternative or in a freeze, as in Alternative 3) could take a myriad of forms. In the event the SCC chooses this approach, more detailed and complete packages will be developed for subsequent consideration and analysis.

Reductions options could become attractive for a variety of reasons:

—Demilitarization may be too major a step to be accomplished in one stage. A gradual process of reductions may be necessary to achieve the long term demilitarization objective.

—Demilitarization may prove unattainable. The Soviets might make some demand that is unacceptable to us.

—A freeze (Alternative 3) may not be negotiable with the Soviet Union; it might insist on some decrease in the capability of our facility on Diego Garcia.

—The US may wish to go beyond a freeze and to propose significant reductions in the US and Soviet presence while not accepting all of the costs that would be involved in demilitarization.

Given that the agreement necessarily will involve reductions of some form, both sides will seek certain objectives. For example the Soviets could be expected to seek:

—To limit or prohibit deployments of US carriers to the region.

—To prohibit the deployment of US SSBN's to the area.

—To limit deployment of afloat ground combat forces to eliminate or place restrictions on US facilities in Diego Garcia and elsewhere.

—To prohibit the presence of nuclear weapons in the area.

The US might seek to:

—Prevent the forward basing of Soviet aircraft to the region.

—Reduce or eliminate the potential submarine threat to US naval forces and SLOC's.

—Establish limits on the numbers and capabilities of Soviet surface ship deployments and their supporting infrastructure.

—Preclude the introduction of Soviet ground combat forces in the littoral states.

Reduction options must account for many variables: ship deployments, military facilities, military aircraft, ground combat forces, etc. Not all of these factors would necessarily be restricted in every reduction package. However, there is no single, obvious trade-off or series of trade-offs for an intently attractive package arrangement. The range of asymmetries on virtually every aspect of present and projected super power military presence in the Indian Ocean insures that any attempt to negotiate a limitation agreement will be complex. For this reason discrete packages are not presented here. But should the SCC recommend this alternative, a set of packages will be developed.

Final selection of a limitations package will require resolution of many of the problems discussed in Section II: (1) should limits encompass ground based air and land forces in the interiors of littoral states; (2) what types of surface ships should be covered and by how much should current deployments be reduced; (3) how should military bases be restricted; (4) should submarines be banned, included in the ship limits or left unrestricted; (5) which types of aircraft should be limited and to what extent; and (6) should ground forces be banned.

C. Alternative 3—Freeze or Cap Near Current Level

Description

—*Ship Deployments.* For example, based on recent experience, the level of naval activity could be restricted to an average daily deployment (including auxiliaries) of 18 ships and a combined displacement of 80,000 tons averaged over one year.

—*Military Facilities.* Both sides could continue to utilize existing facilities in the region, but would be barred from constructing new facilities or expanding the capabilities of current facilities. To overcome Soviet insistence that they do not control any facilities in the region, this limitation would also apply to the “use” of indigenous facilities by the ships or aircraft of either party for more than X days per year.

—*Military Aircraft.* Both sides could deploy aircraft of current types at current levels at current bases.

—*Ground Combat Personnel.* Neither side could introduce ground combat personnel in unit formations ashore or afloat.

—*Submarines.* Submarines could be excluded from restrictions on the grounds that they are difficult to verify, or included in the ship deployment limits.

Discussion

This alternative represents the minimum that would be required for a formal agreement to cap our respective military presence. [2 lines not declassified] The Soviets would continue to have the use of facilities in Somalia. Both sides could continue with approximately current deployment pattern. The Soviets would probably continue to maintain more ships in the area than the US, but our periodic task group deployments would exceed the capabilities of Soviet forces. Our participation in Allied naval exercises would not be affected.

This step would probably please those Allies, such as Australia, that have expressed concern at the possible effects of US moves towards Indian Ocean arms control. The moderate states which have pressed for an end to the super power presence in the Indian Ocean might welcome this type of agreement as a first step towards this goal. We

could expect them to press for actual reductions in the great power presence. The most radical of the states would criticize this agreement as legitimizing the continuing great power presence in the area and we should expect that the US would be under continuing criticism in meetings of the non-aligned. A freeze would not have any major effect on existing relations among the littoral states.

Pros

—Demonstrates to the world some degree of restraint and could be the first step toward demilitarization.

—Would prevent the possibility of a competitive arms race developing in the Indian Ocean.

—Would permit US freedom to deploy forces at current levels. Judicious use of the limitation on ship day/tonnage would give us the freedom to increase our forces in the area in an emergency situation.

—Would not harm our bilateral relations with the states of the Indian Ocean littoral. We would continue to be able to cooperate militarily with our friends and Allies.

Cons

—Even this alternative contravenes the principle of freedom of the seas and could set a precedent that might cause us serious difficulties in the future.

—Friendly states might see the agreement as a weakening of our will to defend both our own and their interests in the region.

—If we lose access to facilities in Bahrain, the approach would result in MIDEASTFOR remaining permanently without a home.

—A freeze option may not be negotiable, given Soviet public statements that the first step in any Indian Ocean arms control agreement must be the elimination of US bases.

IV. *ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO INITIAL WORKING GROUP MEETING*

This section focuses on what we hope to accomplish at the initial meeting. Four options are presented: (1) a general exchange of views; (2) an attempt to reach agreement on a confidence building measure; (3) a preliminary negotiation to reach agreement on principles to guide future negotiations; and (4) the first round of a formal negotiation.

Before the meeting, it would be important to have guidance on which of the objectives discussed in section III we seek to achieve in an initial arms control agreement with the Soviets. But only for Option 4 would this guidance be imperative.

The final choice among these options will also influence the composition of our working group. As options 1, 2 and 3 are only preliminary

steps, the working group could consist of representatives from the various US agencies; for example the head of the working group could be the Director of the Political-Military Bureau of the Department of State, with representatives from ACDA, OSD, JCS, NSC and CIA. Because Option 4 would raise the status of the meeting to a negotiation, it might be appropriate to appoint a special representative empowered to negotiate a formal arms control agreement.

Finally, the choice among these options will govern the extent to which we must consult with Allies and others in advance of the first meeting (discussed in Annex B).

A. Option 1

General exchange of views concentrating on possible elements of an arms control agreement.

We would view this as an exploratory meeting, avoid making any specific proposals, but probe Soviet views on a range of issues. These might include:

- Bilateral nature of any agreement;
- Definition of the geographic area to be covered;
- What types of military activities might be covered, e.g., ship deployments, military facilities, military aircraft, submarines, ground personnel;
- Verification procedures.

Discussion

At present we do not have a clear picture of Soviet views. Before formulating our own position on the scope of an Indian Ocean arms control agreement, we need to consider the basic elements of a package. This approach would attempt to determine if the Soviets are seriously interested in some form of arms limitations agreement and are not simply posturing for propaganda purposes. By helping to ascertain the extent of Soviet demands, this approach could also help us tailor our ultimate package; it has the advantage of not requiring the US to delineate a specific negotiating package at this time.

B. Option 2

General exchange of view plus US proposal for some form of confidence building measure.

In addition to the discussion of elements of a possible package, the US would propose that both sides agree to an initial measure which would indicate they are seriously interested in preventing military competition in the Indian Ocean.

Such a confidence building measure might entail:

- Pre-notification of naval transits and deployments;
- Agreement for advance notification of significant changes in deployment levels;
- A declaration that both intend to exercise mutual restraint in their military activities in the region;
- Agreement that neither side will significantly increase its forces in the area while discussions are underway.

Discussion

Proposing agreement on a confidence building measure would be a further test of serious Soviet interest in moving towards an arms control agreement. Agreement on such a measure could be expressed in a communique either at the conclusion of the working group meeting or at a summit meeting.

C. Option 3

Seek agreement on general principles to guide future negotiations on the specific elements of an agreement.

In this approach, we would indicate to the Soviets that we wish to conclude an Indian Ocean arms control agreement. Before undertaking detailed discussions on the elements of an agreement, we believe it best to agree on several general principles:

—The purpose of the negotiations is to restrain or reduce US-Soviet military competition in the Indian Ocean and to reduce the possibility of conflict;

—An agreement should not adversely affect the security interests of either party or of the littoral states;

—All states should have unrestricted commercial and maritime access to the Indian Ocean region.

Discussion

This option parallels the initial approach taken in the MBFR negotiations. It has the advantage of setting general guidelines which we could cite to support our position in later talks. [2 lines not declassified] Agreement on these or other similar principles would be essential for the ultimate success of later negotiations.

On the other hand it may be tactically advantageous to seek initial discussion of the elements of a package. Agreement on general principles could be deferred to subsequent meetings.

D. Option 4

Use this meeting as the first round of a formal negotiating process. We would be prepared to table a draft outline of a bilateral Indian Ocean arms control agreement. This outline would address:

- Area to be covered;
- Definition and scope of military activities to be covered; e.g., surface ships, submarines, support facilities, land-based aircraft, ground forces;
- Method of implementation and possible follow-on measure.

The substance of this outline would be the result of SCC recommendations on the objectives discussed in Section III of this paper and further development of detailed negotiating packages to support our objective.

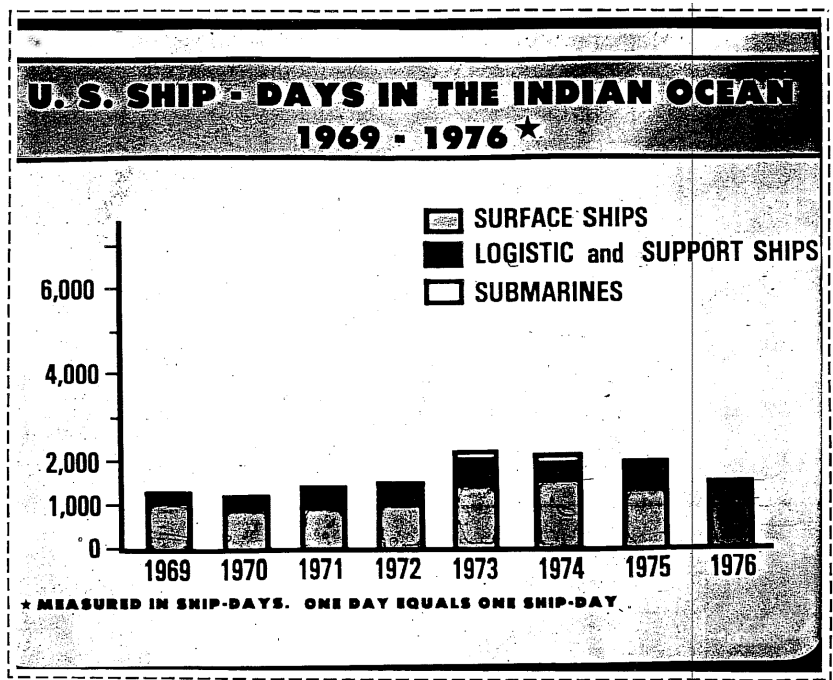
Discussion

This approach has the advantage of presenting the Soviets a concrete proposal which requires their reaction. Tactically, it avoids what might be a lengthy, inconclusive exchange of views on various elements in a package. It is the clearest signal we can give of what we are prepared to achieve in the negotiating process. We would retain the initiative.

On the other hand this approach would require difficult US decisions on the specific elements of an arms control package. We would have to decide our position before any meaningful US-Soviet discussions had occurred. There is also the danger that this approach goes too far, too fast, and the Soviets would conclude we were only seeking propaganda advantage by offering a package we knew they could not accept. This might adversely affect the chances of reaching any meaningful arms control agreement.

Figure 1

Chart¹⁴



¹⁴ Secret.

101. Memorandum From Gary Sick and James Thomson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, May 2, 1977

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on PRM/NSC-25

You are chairing an SCC Meeting at 9:30–11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 4, to discuss the US approach to Indian Ocean Arms Control and to the initial working group meetings with the Soviets. The interagency response to PRM-25 is at Tab B.² At Tab A is a briefing paper which summarizes what we believe are the key points in the interagency paper.³

Background

We believe that three issues should be resolved at the meeting: (1) what are our objectives in an agreement with USSR; (2) how should we use the first working group meetings to further those objectives; (3) how should the first meeting be organized—that is, when will it occur and who will represent the US.

Arms Control Objectives. The President has stated that “demilitarization” is his objective. Will this be our objective for an initial agreement with the USSR or will we seek something less ambitious? In Section III, the PRM response suggests three alternatives: (1) demilitarization; (2) limitations short of demilitarization; (3) a freeze at roughly current levels. The last two alternatives could be initial steps toward demilitarization.

The Initial Working Group Meeting. In Section IV, the PRM response proposes four options for our approach to the first meeting: (1) a general exchange of views; (2) a general exchange of views plus some proposals for confidence building measures (pre-announcement of deployment, etc.); (3) a preliminary meeting to set agreed ground rules for a subsequent formal negotiation; (4) the first round of a formal negotiation. Only for the last option would we need a detailed arms control proposal before the meeting; but clearly we must have a good idea of our objective before we begin any Working Group meeting.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 85, SCC 012, 05/04/77, Indian Ocean. Secret. Sent for action. Brackets are in the original.

² Attached; printed as Document 100.

³ Attached but not printed.

Organization. The PRM response proposes that, except for Option 4 above, our working group could be chaired by the Director of Political-Military Affairs in State (Les Gelb), with representatives from CIA, NSC, OSD, JCS and ACDA. It is proposed that for Option 4 (formal negotiations), the President appoint a special representative. This working group should have the responsibility not only for meeting the Soviets but also for carrying out preparations for the first meeting. The group should, therefore, be established immediately. The SCC should also discuss the date for the first meeting that we will propose to the Soviets; this date will determine the pace of our consultations with allies.

What Do We Hope to Achieve in the SCC?

The fundamental policy question which needs to be resolved at this time is: *Is demilitarization of the Indian Ocean a sufficiently realistic goal to justify proceeding with concrete proposals at this time, or should we instead regard it as a long-term goal and focus our initial efforts at sounding out Soviet views on various definitional issues?* Once this question is resolved, the subsidiary issues of organization and approach to the initial meeting largely take care of themselves.

We have prepared *two draft Presidential Decisions*⁴ which spell out these two alternatives in terms of concrete proposals. *PD #1 identifies demilitarization as the eventual goal of US policy and would begin a cautious long-term process to achieve that goal.*

PD #1 calls for the first Working Group meeting to be devoted to *seeking Soviet views* on (1) a draft mutual declaration of restraint while discussions are in progress; and (2) a series of proposed definitional issues which will necessarily arise in the context of any eventual arms control agreement.

—PD #3 recognizes that the Soviets are reluctant to move very fast on this issue, and it provides an opportunity to sound them out on a number of the most controversial elements of an arms control package.

—At least at the working level, this is the preferred approach of State, Defense and ACDA.

—This approach sets the stage for a systematic series of discussions, probably extending over a considerable period of time, which would seek to define areas of mutual agreement between ourselves and the Soviets.

—It would also allow time for the various bureaucracies to examine in greater detail the potential tradeoffs involved in any arms control agreement and to test these views against Soviet reactions at each step.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

—The proponents of this view (which include the overwhelming majority of those who prepared the basic study) believe that complete demilitarization of the Indian Ocean is an unrealistic near-term policy goal: they are concerned that demilitarization will unduly restrict our military flexibility; they believe that pushing the Soviets too hard too fast would result in nothing but a flat rejection by the USSR and a hollow propaganda victory for the US.

PD #2 takes the view that the President is serious about his call for demilitarization of the Indian Ocean and that the only way to achieve that objective in view of Soviet reluctance is by making a strong initiative ourselves.

—By focusing on the outcome of the negotiations and the steps required to achieve it, the PD attempts to structure the discussions with the USSR toward specific objectives rather than generalized discussions of controversial issues.

—This approach reflects the views of a distinct minority that the difficulties and risks involved in complete demilitarization of the Indian Ocean have been overstated and that it is primarily a political, as opposed to a military problem.

—It is recognized, however, that there is a risk that the Soviets would react to a comprehensive proposal of this nature as a propaganda ploy intended to place them on the defensive and that they might reject it out of hand. At a minimum, it would be necessary to make our initial approach on a private and confidential basis as a working proposal, not as an ultimatum, and indicate to the USSR that all aspects of the proposal would be negotiable.

—If the Soviets agree to pursue this option, it will probably be necessary to appoint an Ambassador to conduct the actual negotiations, though the proposed Indian Ocean Panel should be adequate to make the initial presentation.

Structure of the Meeting

We recommend that you begin the meeting by identifying the fundamental policy question outlined above. *The two draft PD's have not been circulated to other agencies.* We prepared them in order to structure our own thinking and to specify what a feasible outcome of the SCC meeting might be. However, you might wish to *summarize the main points of each approach* during your introductory remarks in order to sharpen the focus of the meeting and to serve as the target for comments around the table. We anticipate reactions along the following lines:

State/ACDA

—A comprehensive proposal calling for complete demilitarization is too big a bite to take at once, and the Soviets would probably choke on it.

—The Soviets have not been particularly forthcoming on this issue to date, and it would be better to ease into the problem with an initial exploration designed to elicit general areas of mutual agreement.

—The specific elements of a negotiating package (ship levels, bases, aircraft, etc.) involve complex tradeoffs which should be examined in much greater detail within the USG before committing ourselves to a comprehensive negotiating strategy.

Defense/CIA(?)

—Our presence in the Indian Ocean relates to our overall interests in the area and predates the Soviet presence by 20 years; we should not relinquish our military flexibility to respond to contingencies by tying our force presence too closely to the Soviets.

—Our interests revolve primarily about access to oil and support of our defense commitments in the area (CENTO, ANZUS). We should not risk losing our ability to defend these interests by giving up the right to employ military forces in the region.

—The Soviet Union has a significant geopolitical advantage in the area since Soviet strike aircraft can operate directly from bases in the USSR. Demilitarization would reduce our ability to respond to a direct Soviet threat.

—No arms race is currently going on in the Indian Ocean; both the US and USSR have reduced the level of their military presence over the past two years. Demilitarization is an extreme response which is unwarranted under the circumstances.

—Demilitarization would establish precedents which might be used against us in other areas, e.g. the Mediterranean where our interests are much greater. By agreeing to “parity” in this area, we would be leaving ourselves open to a Soviet effort to establish naval parity world-wide, despite our vital reliance on sea lanes for trade and the defense of our interests—as compared to the USSR which is essentially a land power.

—The structure of the Soviet military presence in the Indian Ocean is essentially different from our own: they keep a large permanent presence, we deploy in force only periodically; they do not have carriers, we do; their “base” facilities in Somalia are politically insecure, while ours are based on a 50-year agreement with the UK. Consequently, tradeoffs between the two forces will necessarily be asymmetrical and could cause us to give up considerably more than the Soviets with no realistic opportunity to regain a position (e.g. access to Bahrain and Diego Garcia) once we have relinquished it.

Evaluation

The above objections present only one side of the case:

—Although there is no arms race underway today, our main concern is the possibility of a significant Soviet buildup in the not-too-

distant future (i.e. missile-armed aircraft staging from Berbera) which would face us with the choice of significantly increasing our own force presence.

—Our forces for responding to such a challenge are extremely slim: two carriers in the entire Western Pacific for the foreseeable future. Consequently, it is in our favor to prevent a new stage of military rivalry by stopping it before it starts. Who else is in a position to threaten us?

—Although a comprehensive package is a lot for the Soviets to swallow at once, we should remember that this is our initiative and they will be looking to us for concrete proposals. If we do not seize the initiative, we could bog down indefinitely trying to work out abstract definitions with the USSR, e.g. measurement of naval presence, what constitutes a base, etc. [This has been the fate of all previous US studies on this subject.]

—Although the interests of the US and USSR are different, the real question is whether our interests would be more or less secure in the absence of Soviet forces. We cannot do anything about the geographical position of the USSR, but we can raise the political threshold of intervention through an agreement.

—The President has identified demilitarization as our goal. By proposing a comprehensive demilitarization agreement from the beginning, we are more likely to get a direct reading of Soviet attitudes than if we nibble away at the edges of the problem. We could always negotiate a less comprehensive agreement in the face of Soviet objections, but in the meantime we would be on record in favor of a comprehensive arms control arrangement and would keep Soviet feet to the fire.

—A proposal for demilitarization underlines the changes of political attitudes of this Administration in responding to Third World concerns and could serve to bolster our relations with these nations in other areas.

Other Issues

The answers to the remaining questions largely flow from the discussion above:

Should an interagency panel be formed under the chairmanship of the Director of the Political-Military Bureau at State to make the initial presentation to the USSR? We anticipate full agreement.

Should our initial presentation be aimed at an exploration of views or presentation of concrete proposals? Depends on the answer to the fundamental issue raised above.

When and where should our first meeting with the USSR take place? We recommend early June in Washington.

102. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, May 4, 1977, 9:30–10:20 a.m.

SUBJECT

PRM/NSC–25, Arms Control in the Indian Ocean

PARTICIPANTS

State

Warren Christopher
Leslie Gelb

ACDA

Paul Warnke
John Newhouse

Defense

Charles W. Duncan
Gen. George S. Brown, JCS
Lt. Gen. William Smith, JCS
Lynn E. Davis

NSC

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
William G. Hyland
Gary Sick
James Thomson

CIA

Adm. Stansfield Turner
[name not declassified]

Three basic issues were discussed:

1. *What are the US negotiating objectives in conducting talks with the USSR?* All agreed that the concept of demilitarization needed to be spelled out more fully. JCS and CIA felt that the paper² did not adequately identify the security risks involved, and they agreed to provide follow-on papers³ discussing this more fully. It was agreed that the Working Group would conduct a more systematic evaluation of the three options (demilitarization, limitation, freeze), including the political and military risks and benefits of each.

2. *What tactics should the United States adopt in the first meeting with the Soviets?* It was agreed that the initial talks should be of an exploratory nature. State and Defense felt that this should be combined with the possible adoption of some confidence-building measures. ACDA felt

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 85, SCC 012, 05/04/77, Indian Ocean. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Brzezinski sent the Summary of Conclusions under cover of a May 14 memorandum to Christopher, Brown, Warnke, and Turner. Under cover of a May 12 memorandum, Brzezinski sent it to Carter with notes of the meeting for his approval. Brzezinski noted in the memorandum: "The meeting left unresolved the question of whether our basic negotiating objective should be complete demilitarization, a reduced version of demilitarization which would permit some deployments, or whether we should aim for a freeze or limitation on deployments to the area." Carter approved both the Summary of Conclusions and the notes. (Ibid.)

² See Document 100.

³ For the CIA follow-on paper, see Document 103.

that confidence-building measures were not particularly important in the Indian Ocean context and would prefer initial discussion of some general negotiating principles. It was agreed that all leaned toward the first option of initial exploratory talks, with some latitude, taking into account the implications of confidence-building measures as possibly legitimizing the Soviet presence in Somalia.

3. *How will we organize our ongoing effort within the US bureaucracy?* All agreed that a working group should be formed under the chairmanship of the Director of the Political-Military Bureau at State. This group would examine more fully the risks and benefits of each of the major negotiating objectives in preparation for a subsequent SCC meeting following talks with the Soviets in Moscow on June 8. The group should also consider the consultative process with US allies and other concerned nations.

The following issues were left unresolved:

- Should our negotiating objective be complete demilitarization?
- Should “demilitarization” be defined in some truncated fashion to permit some US deployments to the area?
- Should our objective be a freeze on deployments or some form of limitations short of demilitarization?

These will be considered further in the SCC after additional analysis in the Working Group and initial discussions with the USSR.

103. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

Washington, undated

SUBJECT

Objectives and Risks of Arms Control in the Indian Ocean

I. Interests and Military Presence: US and USSR

A. The US

Ensuring continued access to the oil of the Persian Gulf area for ourselves and our allies is a vital interest to the US. The main dangers

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330-80-0017, Indian Ocean 092 (Jan-Jul) 1977, 2. Secret. Turner sent the memorandum to Duncan under a May 26 covering memorandum. In it, Turner noted: “At the SCC meeting on PRM/NSC-25 on 4 May, I undertook to provide a further assessment of risks for the President’s consideration. Here it is.”

to this access lie in the possibilities of an Arab embargo or an attempt by a hostile power, great or small, to interdict the flow. This interest is so vital that it has been the basis for the maintenance of military capabilities in the Indian Ocean for possible use in this contingency.

The US also has an interest in ensuring that the states in the area develop independently of external, particularly Soviet, influence. This requires, in the military sphere, that the US at least balance Soviet strength.

Lastly, the US has an interest in being able to influence events in the littoral nations, either to protect American citizens or to try to counter adverse internal shifts. This interest produces a military requirement for a visible capacity to project power ashore, including amphibious, tactical air, and shore bombardment capabilities.

In response to these requirements, the US maintains a small naval force in the Persian Gulf and, more importantly, deploys three or four task groups per year from the Seventh Fleet. Overall Western strength includes small British and relatively large French forces.

B. The USSR

The Soviet Union has no interest in the Indian Ocean of comparable importance to the US interest in oil supplies. Perhaps its most important interest stems from its desire to demonstrate a global naval presence. More specifically, the area lies near the USSR's southern border; through it runs an important sea route between European Russia and the Soviet Far East; and it figures in the USSR's rivalry with China and close relationship with India, and its efforts to enhance its influence in the littoral states.

From these interests flow a Soviet military requirement to demonstrate presence and to be able to counter US forces. In response to this requirement, the USSR maintains a continuous naval presence, mainly in the northwestern part of the Indian Ocean.

C. Trends in Capabilities

Neither the US nor the USSR has been expanding its naval force in the Indian Ocean in the last few years. Both are modernizing their navies and, as part of that process, reducing the total of combatants. Because of higher priorities elsewhere, neither is likely to increase its deployments in the Indian Ocean, unless the situation changes. One development that could substantially affect the relative military balance in the near future would be the basing of Soviet long-range strike aircraft in Somalia; up to now such aircraft have been sent to the Indian Ocean only infrequently, and only from home bases in the USSR. Basing these aircraft in Somalia would substantially increase the USSR's ability to conduct military operations in the area. Another possible change is

US deployment of ballistic missile submarines to the Indian Ocean, an option that the US has held open but not exercised, since such deployment has thus far been considered of marginal value.

II. Objectives and Risks of Arms Control

The objectives and risks to the US of Indian Ocean arms control arrangements will depend greatly, of course, on the specific terms of those arrangements which might range from a freeze through partial limitations to demilitarization. In general, however, the following objectives and risks are involved.

A. Possible Objectives

—to ensure against a US-Soviet arms race in the region. The likelihood of such a race is not high, but even a freeze could block the deployment of Soviet strike aircraft to Somali bases. An agreement that excluded submarines would be militarily useful in keeping out Soviet attack submarines, although it would foreclose the option of US SSBN deployments, and verification problems would be severe.

—to reduce the chances of a direct military confrontation with the USSR, which is unlikely but not impossible.

—to block or impede future Soviet possibilities of acquiring bases or rights to facilities, e.g. in Mozambique (see map for facilities now used by the US and the USSR).²

—to contribute to the general US goal of arms control and reduction.

An agreement would please certain littoral states that want to constrain or exclude superpower presence. India in particular professes this view, probably because it would see its relative power enhanced thereby.

B. Risks

The most important risk of arms control arrangements is that, depending on the degree of limitation, they would tend to reduce or eliminate US military capabilities to bring military power to bear in situations where vital national interests are involved. Chief among these interests is oil supplies, which could be threatened by a producer embargo, third parties, or, less likely, Soviet action. A less critical but more probable case would be the protection of US nationals or property within any of the countries in the area, e.g. Uganda, from hostile actions by the local government or terrorist groups. For these purposes, the US now has capabilities not only for combat at sea but also for the projection of power ashore; the USSR presently lacks the latter capabil-

² Not found.

ity. Even if arms control arrangements included an escape clause, they would still increase the political obstacles to our threatened or actual use of force in any but the gravest of crises.

Arms control in the Indian Ocean might also give the impression of a US withdrawal of interest and commitment from Asia and Africa, supplementing in this respect impressions created by the US withdrawal from Vietnam, withdrawal of ground forces from South Korea, and inaction in Angola. This perception would dismay certain littoral states that look to the US for support or understanding, such as Australia, Pakistan, the Gulf states, and South Africa.

Such arrangements might set troublesome precedents concerning freedom of the seas and arms control in more vital areas like the Mediterranean.

In general, these factors suggest that, given the disparity of interests and capabilities, a Soviet-US arrangement based on parity would have an unequal impact. The US and Western need for secure access to oil is so tangible and crucial that reductions in military capabilities would put a vital Western interest at risk to a degree not paralleled on the Soviet side. These effects would increase with the severity of the arms control constraints. In addition, the analysis suggests that many of the objectives are political in nature and could be served, in some degree, by limited measures, whereas many of the risks are military in nature and would be least if these measures were limited. Furthermore, arms control in the Indian Ocean would have little or no effect upon the major Soviet instrument for advancing its interests in littoral states, namely, military assistance to revolutionary movements or communist-leaning governments.

104. Memorandum From Gary Sick and James Thomson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, June 11, 1977

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on Indian Ocean—Tuesday, June 14, 1977 at 9:30 a.m.

At its earlier meeting, the SCC recommended our initial approach to the USSR on Indian Ocean arms control would be exploratory in nature.² Based on that guidance, the State-chaired Working Group has prepared a strategy paper for the initial June 22 meeting with the Soviets. The paper (without backup position papers) is at Tab B.³

Your two main *objectives* in this meeting are:

1. To *review the strategy paper*, highlighting the key decisions taken by the Working Group, and to *get SCC approval* or modification on the paper as an agreed approach which the delegation will adopt in Moscow.

2. To consider *possible Soviet strategies*, including the possibility that they might try to seize the initiative on this issue, and what we can do to forestall it.

In addition:

3. You will want to invite State at some point to brief the SCC on the results of the *consultations* with allies which have taken place thus far.

4. You will want to ask Mr. Warnke to give a brief rundown on the *composition of the delegation* and any problems he foresees as Chairman.

Tactics

We anticipate very little controversy. Each of the agencies has been over this ground thoroughly at the working level, and there are very few points of dispute. We see discussion focusing chiefly on the two main objectives above, with some time at the end devoted to the two secondary objectives.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 25, Indian Ocean: SCC 6/14/77 on Arms Limitation (PRM-25): 6/77. Secret. Sent for action. All brackets except those that indicate text not declassified are in the original.

² See Document 102.

³ Attached but not printed is the undated paper entitled "First Meeting of US-USSR Indian Ocean Working Group: Strategy and Objectives."

We suggest that you open the meeting with a brief *review of the strategy paper*, stressing the key decision points, and then ask for comments, starting with State.

—The SCC meeting of May 4 examined the response to PRM–25 on the Indian Ocean.⁴ It was decided that we should defer a decision on our ultimate objective (demilitarization or some form of limitations short of demilitarization) and that our initial approach to the Soviets should be exploratory in nature. We would then address the issue of ultimate objectives after the initial meeting with the Soviets.

—Since then, the Working Group, chaired by PM (Reggie Bartholomew, Gelb's deputy), has prepared a strategy paper with backup position papers for use in Moscow next week (June 22).

—The paper is a little thin on substance, but that was inevitable since we decided to keep the first meeting exploratory.

—Nevertheless, in order to have something to say in Moscow, the Working Group made a few key decisions, which need to be identified and considered:

(1) The talks would be *bilateral* only. We will resist any Soviet attempt to include discussion of the British or French presence in the Indian Ocean or any attempt to divert the discussions into multilateral channels involving the littoral states or the UN Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean.

(2) We plan to raise only three substantive elements, which would ultimately be addressed in any agreement: definition of the area; naval ship deployments; and naval facilities. The paper recommends that we not raise the issues of *land-based strike aircraft and ground combat forces*, although we would be willing to take them up later if raised by the Soviets. This is probably the *most far-reaching decision in the paper*, since everyone agrees that Soviet introduction of strike aircraft is the single event most likely to upset the military balance in the Indian Ocean. [If there is no contention on this issue, you may want to raise it yourself during the discussion. Our evaluation of the problem is at Tab A.]⁵

(3) We plan to table *no draft agreements* at this meeting, and if the Soviets should present a draft or raise the possibility of a mutual declaration of restraint, we would take it under advisement with the understanding that any agreement should be preceded by substantive discussion of the various elements of a possible arms limitation agreement.

⁴ See Document 100.

⁵ Attached but not printed is the undated paper entitled "Ground and Air Forces."

Although the paper concludes that we should propose only preliminary views on substantive elements, it was nevertheless necessary to make some specific choices:

(4) On definition of the area, the paper recommends that we propose the *exclusion of the confrontation countries in the Middle East* (Egypt, Israel and Jordan) from the Indian Ocean question. However, it intentionally avoids spelling out just how this could be accomplished. At this point we are primarily interested in getting Soviet approval of the basic principle, not for specific language or concrete solutions. [See map next page.]⁶

(5) On limitations of naval ship deployments, the paper recommends that we propose *ship-days* as the measure of naval presence to be limited, since that is the measure most favorable to us. However, we are willing to consider a mix of *ship-days and tonnage* (less favorable to us) as a measure if the Soviets reject ship-days as anticipated.

(6) [1 paragraph (9 lines) not declassified]

—Having reviewed these points you could invite comments on the points you have raised or other comments on the strategy paper.

The *second general topic* for discussion is the possible Soviet strategy and how we can prepare for it.

—The Soviets have nominated a very senior diplomat, Mendelevich, as the leader of their delegation, assisted by the Deputy Commander of the Soviet Navy, Admiral Amel'ko. [Bios at Tab C]⁷ Moreover, Dobrynin suggested reserving two weeks for the talks, whereas we are thinking of two or three days.

—Is this merely standard operating procedure by the Soviets, who have nominated high level delegations for other working groups and who tend to proceed rather leisurely with such meetings, or should we see this as a signal that they may intend to seize the initiative by tabling a formal proposal of their own as they did at the opening of the formal MBFR talks?

—We could take some of the steam out of a possible Soviet attempt to preempt us by telling them in advance that we see these initial talks as a necessary exchange of views on the fundamental elements of a possible arms control agreement and that we believe such an exchange is necessary before getting into formal negotiations or actual drafting of agreements. We could either relay this to the Soviet Embassy here or through our Embassy in Moscow. At the same time, we could propose an agenda for the discussions on the basis of our strategy

⁶ Not found.

⁷ Attached but not printed.

paper. [We expect no controversy on this point, and if approved, the Working Group can have an agreed paper by COB after the meeting.]

—The Soviets may also attempt to embarrass us during the meeting by drawing attention to the relative disparity of US and Soviet forces in the Indian Ocean at the present time. The Soviets may have deliberately drawn down their forces in anticipation of the talks. At the present time they have *one diesel submarine and two surface combatants* (light frigates with no missile armament) in the area. They would normally have one heavy combatant with missile armament in addition to this. They have a minesweeper and an LST, and one missile patrol boat is under tow on an apparent transfer to the Pacific Fleet. With support ships, *their total presence is 14 ships, as opposed to the normal 20*. They have two IL–38s deployed to Somalia.

—The US presence includes the two destroyers and the flagship of Middle East Force plus a task force from the Pacific composed of a guided missile cruiser, a destroyer, a frigate and an oiler. P–3 flights are being conducted from Diego Garcia in support of the task group. The presence of the task group was planned more than a year ago and is a routine part of our periodic deployment pattern. However, it means that *our combatant ship presence will be far higher* than the Soviets when we meet in Moscow.

—In addition, on June 22 the Air Force will have just completed a *bilateral air exercise with the Iranians* which involved 18 F–14s deploying from Europe, air-to-air refueling by US and Iranian tankers, and 170 sorties in Iran, including dropping of live ordnance. [This exercise was considered “non-significant” by the JCS and we learned about it only a few days before it began, when cancellation would have caused extreme embarrassment with the Iranians. The NSC Staff is currently reexamining the exercise notification NSAM as a direct result of this.]

—*We should watch the Soviet presence carefully, and if they maintain a low level, we should consider reducing the level of our own deployments as a tacit demonstration of restraint*. However, we should expect to take some propaganda lumps in Moscow on this issue.

With the two main topics complete, you could then conclude the meeting by asking State to review the results of *consultations* with allies and asking Paul Warnke to discuss the *composition of the delegation* [i.e. do we have an Admiral to match their Admiral?] and any problems he foresees in the talks.

105. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, June 14, 1977, 9:30–10:45 a.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean

PARTICIPANTS

State

Warren Christopher
Reginald Bartholomew

Defense

Charles W. Duncan
Lynn Davis
Lt. General William Smith (JCS)
Admiral Thomas Hayward (JCS)

ACDA

Paul Warnke
John Newhouse

NSC

Zbigniew Brzezinski
Gary Sick
James Thomson

CIA

Robert Bowie

In preparation for the departure of the U.S. delegation for discussions in Moscow with the Soviets on Indian Ocean arms limitations for June 22, 1977,² the SCC reviewed the following issues:

1. *Aims.* There was significant disagreement about our objectives in these talks with the Soviets. State, Defense, ACDA, and the JCS all indicated their belief that our objective should be to keep the situation about where it is today. They noted that the President continues to use the word “demilitarization” and they felt that demilitarization would work to our disadvantage, because we have more to lose than the Soviets. Dr. Brzezinski noted that U.S. policy as stated by the President is demilitarization, and that necessarily involves more than simply freezing the situation where it is now. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that stabilization of the status quo could be a first step involving significant reductions. If there is serious dissent with this policy, it should be registered formally for the President to consider.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 86, SCC 016, 6/14/77, Indian Ocean. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Brzezinski sent the Summary of Conclusions to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Warnke, and Turner under a June 17 memorandum that indicated Carter had seen and approved it. Brzezinski also attached a tentative schedule for a 3-year phased program of Indian Ocean demilitarization, indicating that it was prepared by the NSC Staff and approved by Carter. (Ibid.)

² See Document 108.

2. *Scope of Moscow Talks.* There was no disagreement that these initial talks would be exploratory in nature. However, there was a lack of consensus on precisely what should be raised with the Soviets.

—Should the U.S. raise the question of limiting strike aircraft and deployment of ground combat forces into the area? All agreed that the possible introduction of strike aircraft by the USSR would be the single event most likely to upset the military balance. However, most agencies argued that the present situation is favorable to us, and discussion of this issue could lead to expansion of the definition of the area to include land-based facilities, it could require us to give up carrier deployments in exchange, and it could complicate our participation in exercises with our allies in the region. On the other hand, Dr. Brzezinski argued, the question of support facilities must be discussed and that will necessarily lead to a discussion of airfields and land-based air.

—Should we indicate a willingness to give up Diego Garcia as part of demilitarization? Most of the participants (and the allies we have consulted) felt that the exchange of Diego Garcia for an insecure base at Berbera would be a poor trade. It was suggested that we not foreclose the possibility of giving up Diego Garcia but leave the question open to see how the negotiations proceed.

—How do we respond to a Soviet question about what we mean by “demilitarization”? It was suggested that we explain to the Soviets that we see these talks as a dynamic process, starting with some of the basic or less controversial issues and gradually expanding to cover other areas. Demilitarization would represent the end of the process and would involve at least significant reductions in U.S. and Soviet military presence in the region, though probably not an end to all military activities by littoral states.

106. Memorandum for the Record¹

Washington, June 17, 1977, 11–11:20 a.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting with the President on Indian Ocean Arms Control

PARTICIPANTS

The President
Paul Warnke, Director ACDA
Zbigniew Brzezinski
Gary Sick

The President asked Mr. Warnke for a progress report on the CTB negotiations with the Soviets.² He noted that his “most important” objective in the foreign policy field was to overcome the perception that he had failed to produce movement toward agreements with the Soviet Union and that detente was being undermined.

Mr. Warnke asked for the President’s views on what we should attempt to achieve in our meetings with Soviets. *The President* said he was uncertain about exactly what would come out of the talks, but he felt that we should work for a freeze of the present situation at least and seek Soviet views about whether some retrogression in military force presence would be possible. He would be willing to accept pre-notification of naval visits to the Indian Ocean. *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that the President had initialled the notes of the SCC meeting of June 14³ and that those notes would provide written guidance for the talks in Moscow. *The President* agreed and indicated that it was his understanding that the US military had no objection to a freeze of the present situation. All agreed, though *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that the JCS objected to the word “freeze” and would prefer “hold” or “stabilization.” *Mr. Warnke* said the JCS would prefer to use annual averages of ship-days in order to be able to mass forces in the event of a crisis.

The President indicated that he believed Diego Garcia was of minimal strategic importance. However, before we give it away he would like to know what the *quid* will be on the Soviet side. *Mr. Warnke* mentioned that some believe the Soviets may propose a trade of Berbera

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 25, Indian Ocean: SCC 8/24/77, 8/77. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the Oval Office.

² Reference is to negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union aimed at an agreement on a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The Partial Test Ban Treaty, signed in 1963, banned testing in the atmosphere, under water, and in space.

³ See Document 105.

for Diego Garcia, since their presence in Berbera is now rather tenuous, and this would be an uneven exchange. *The President* suggested that we might agree that there are some weapons which will not be sent to Diego Garcia.

Commander Sick noted that the greatest threat to the military balance in the Indian Ocean was the prospect of Soviet introduction of land-based strike aircraft. The Soviets have built an airfield and missile facility at Berbera capable of handling such aircraft, though it has not been used for that purpose to date. It would be useful if a freeze could be defined to include strike aircraft. *The President* agreed. *Mr. Warnke* pointed out that this might require us to accept restrictions on carrier deployments. *Dr. Brzezinski* noted that any complete withdrawal of military forces by the US and USSR would require us to withdraw more than the Soviets. However, we would be left in a better position in the end than the Soviets because of our friends in the area. *The President* agreed, noting that Australia, Iran and even India were basically friendly to us rather than the Soviets.

[4 lines not declassified] *The President* suggested that we might be able to agree on an exclusion for communications. He would have no objection to Soviet communications, and since we want to continue to be able to send US ships through the Indian Ocean, we should be able to communicate with them.

107. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, June 22, 1977, noon

PARTICIPANTS

U.S.

President Jimmy Carter

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Philip Alston, U.S. Ambassador to Australia

Jody Powell, Press Secretary

Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs

Michael Armacost, NSC Staff Member

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 23, Indian Ocean: 1–12/77. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Cabinet Room.

Australia

Prime Minister J. Malcolm Fraser

Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock

Alan Philip Renouf, Australian Ambassador to the U.S.

A.T. Carmody, Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Sir Arthur Tange, Secretary, Department of Defense

N.F. Parkinson, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs

David Barnett, Press Secretary

President Carter: I would like to repeat what I said during the arrival ceremony about my gratitude to you for visiting the United States, and to affirm the importance of our historical ties. In all my travels, Australia has been one nation about whom I never have heard an adverse word. As an old submariner, I might add that I know how much our naval officers loved to stop off in your country. I regret that I never had the chance, but I hope to.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Indian Ocean.]

President Carter: There is one other issue we might discuss before lunch; namely, the Indian Ocean. We are meeting with the Soviet Union now in Moscow on this question. Paul Warnke's instructions are to go no further than to stabilize the current situation before going on to consider any mutual reductions.² We would hate to see the Soviets build up their naval strength in the Indian Ocean. For example, we don't want them to introduce attack aircraft into the region. This is a subject we don't know very well yet. We will be cautious in our discussions with the Soviets. We will take your views into account in formulating our policy.

Prime Minister Fraser: As you know, we are opposed to any arms race in the Indian Ocean. But we are also against any arrangements that would leave the USSR in a dominant position. We want close consultations with you on this subject. Beyond this, we are anxious to avoid any arrangements which might conceivably make it difficult for you to exercise your obligations under the ANZUS Treaty as a result of an Indian Ocean arms control agreement with the Soviet Union.

As I understand it, the French are actively engaged in the Indian Ocean and interested in this subject. Are their deployments in the Indian Ocean to be considered separately?

President Carter: I discussed this question with Giscard. In recent correspondence I suggested that he might wish to raise this issue with Brezhnev. I have no inclination to advise him, but it is a relevant subject for their discussion. Incidentally, the other question I raised was the comprehensive test ban. In any event I can assure you that we will be

² An unknown hand underlined this sentence beginning with "to go no further" to the end and drew a vertical line in the right-hand margin to highlight the paragraph.

adequately cautious in our dealings with the Russians on this issue and we will see that we go over the precise language of any agreement with you before anything is signed.³

Over the past four years, the Soviets have been making progress with propaganda ploys on disarmament, Indian Oceans arms control, and human rights in the past. We have tried to take these issues away from them in a sincere way. When Cy Vance went to Moscow in March, we agreed to discuss this and a number of other issues with them seriously and we agreed to meet them halfway.⁴ We don't know precisely what Soviet motivations are in raising Indian Ocean arms limitation.⁵

Prime Minister Fraser: There is no great difference between us on this question, provided we consult closely.

Zbigniew Brzezinski: Generally, I believe it is better not to get the French involved in these discussions, because the Soviets in that case would wish a trade-off between themselves and *all* others. It would be better for the trade-off to be strictly between these two major powers.

Secretary Vance: We will have a much better feel for this question after this week of talks. The Soviets have a very competent man heading their delegation.

Zbigniew Brzezinski: For starters, they have described Berbera as a "watering spot".

Prime Minister Fraser: The Soviet Ambassador in Canberra told me that Berbera did not even exist.

President Carter: The Somalians have also said this. We have great concern about the entire Horn area of Africa. The situation there is apparently deteriorating. The Yugoslavs enjoy constructive ties with Ethiopia, and have been quite helpful. But the most hopeful change in recent months has been the more assertive and more constructive attitudes taken by the Saudis. They obviously have a great stake in peace, since in any serious disturbance they stand to lose the most. They have been very cooperative.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Indian Ocean.]

³ An unknown hand underlined this sentence beginning with "we will be adequately" to the end.

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 99.

⁵ An unknown hand drew parentheses in the left- and right-hand margins next to this sentence.

108. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, June 29, 1977

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Talks

We had five meetings with the Soviet delegation, including one restricted session in the office of Ambassador Mendelevich which lasted more than five hours and involved a comprehensive review of every significant issue.² In each case, the meetings were positive in tone and conducted in a serious, businesslike manner without polemics. Ambassador Mendelevich, who has been the Soviet Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN and the chief negotiator for CSCE, has been assigned *full-time* to the Indian Ocean negotiations. The apparent relish with which he approached his task belies the earlier report that this assignment may have been a punishment for his performance at CSCE. He was meticulously prepared, and the voluminous notes to which he referred had been written out in his own hand.

The initial Soviet suggestion that the talks last two weeks was clearly a measure of the importance they ascribe to these talks, as well as a practical evaluation of the volume of material to be covered (it was a frantic week). They were miffed at our insistence that the talks be limited to a single week, and the experienced Soviet-watchers in the delegation detected evidence of their pique in small gestures, e.g. as the lack of refreshments at the circus and ballet and a poorly organized and lunchless trip to the countryside. (The signals were totally lost on the rest of us, who considered the hospitality lavish.)

There was substantial agreement on a number of issues and technical questions, including the bilateral nature of these talks, their confi-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 26, Indian Ocean Talks: Round I Moscow: 6-7/77. Secret. Sent for information. Brzezinski wrote "good ZB" at the top of the page.

² The discussions with the Soviets took place in Moscow June 22-27. The initial session on June 22 was summarized in telegram 8997 from Moscow, June 22. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770223-0299) The second meeting, a restricted session held June 23, was summarized in telegram 9055 from Moscow, June 23. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770225-0144) Telegram 9157 from Moscow, June 25, summarized the third meeting, and telegram 157305 to USUN, July 7, summarized the fourth and fifth sessions. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770228-0235 and D770240-0999, respectively) Telegram 156073 to Moscow, July 5, covered Warnke's June 27 briefing to the North Atlantic Council on the negotiations. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770238-1287)

dentiality, coordination on any report to the UN, possible prenotification, need to preserve freedom of navigation and scientific activities, the nature of transits, and the definition of ship-days and ton-days as possible measures of naval presence. Differences were greater on the definition of the area (the Soviets want to include the waters north and south of Australia), what type of ships should be included as auxiliaries, and whether support facilities can be defined in terms of usage. On the latter point, the Soviets insisted that control of a base was the key factor and minimized their usage of Berbera to such a degree that Mr. Warnke was led to remark that he was happy to learn that Berbera was used only for “rest and recreation for tired fishermen.”³

Soviet Position

The Soviet position as presented in the course of the talks can be summarized as follows:

—Both the US and USSR have legitimate interests in the Indian Ocean, theirs to protect the transit route connecting the eastern and western USSR, ours to protect the oil shipping lanes.

—However, the US presence today (attack carriers) exceeds our legitimate needs, and we appear to be laying the groundwork for the deployment of strategic forces (B-52 bombers and SSBNs) into the Indian Ocean which could directly threaten the USSR.

—The asymmetries in the US-USSR position in the Indian Ocean favor the US in four ways: (1) Our strategic forces can strike the USSR from there, while the reverse is not true; (2) We have operational control over our base (Diego Garcia) while they must rely on facilities which belong to other nations (Berbera); (3) The US has forces and access to facilities in areas adjacent to the Indian Ocean (Subic Bay and Simonstown) which permit rapid buildup of a military presence, while Soviet bases are “thousands of miles away;” and (4) The US has allies (France and the UK) which operate military forces in the Indian Ocean, while the USSR has none.

—Consequently, they strongly implied that the US should be prepared to give up more than the USSR in any agreement, specifically: (1) Dismantle all bases as a first step; (2) Ban outright the deployment of carriers, SSBNs and strategic bombers; and (3) “Take into account” the presence of our allies and adjacent facilities, presumably by accepting deeper cuts in force presence than the Soviets.

Mendelevich made it clear that he was aware of the maximalist nature of this position and he indicated a willingness to exercise flexibil-

³ Brzezinski placed a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to this sentence beginning with “such a degree” to the end.

ity in seeking an agreement. For example, on the demand that the US unilaterally dismantle Diego Garcia as a first step, he commented: "I realize that is not what you have in mind, and we will give your statement careful consideration."

Elements of a Possible Agreement

The basic Soviet objective in these talks is to prohibit the deployment of "strategic" US systems (Carriers, SSBNs and B-52s). In return, they are prepared to accept some limitations on their own force levels and on usage of regional facilities, e.g. Berbera.

The key issue which will have to be addressed in the September meeting⁴ with the Soviets (whether here or in Moscow) will be what is meant by "stabilization." In particular, the Soviets will want to know whether stabilization will mean stopping the runway expansion on Diego Garcia and whether "strategic" systems will be prohibited.

My own view (which is not widely shared at State, DoD or ACDA),⁵ is that we have the ingredients for an effective package which could meet most of the Soviet concerns while significantly limiting Soviet military capabilities in the Indian Ocean for now and the future. This package would be composed of three interrelated elements:

1. A ban on *all* submarine deployments to the Indian Ocean except for transits. We would give up a future option of deploying SSBNs while the Soviets would give up an integral part of their naval presence (submarines) which constitute a significant potential threat to our sea lanes.

2. A ban on deployment of all land-based strike aircraft involving flights over the waters of the Indian Ocean. We would give up the future option of B-52 deployments (and exercise deployments of combat aircraft to Iran) while they would give up the option of missile-armed strike aircraft to support their naval forces.

3. Limits on at least combatant naval deployments by both sides at approximately the level of 1976, expressed in a combination of ship-days and ton-days, and limitations on the use of support facilities.

We would insist on retaining the right to deploy carriers, but might accept a fall-back position that we would not send carriers into the Persian Gulf (where the aircraft could reach the USSR).

Next Steps

The Working Group should analyze the results of the Moscow talks and prepare specific options for US strategy and objectives, to be

⁴ Brzezinski underlined the words "in the September meeting."

⁵ Brzezinski underlined the words "My own" and "not widely shared."

considered by the SCC in the second half of July.⁶ The choices in that meeting are likely to revolve about a “high” option, consisting of a US initiative such as I have outlined above, and a “low” option, which would either attempt to negotiate a generalized declaration of mutual restraint or simply to focus on technical data at the next meeting, responding to whatever the USSR may propose.⁷

In any event, I believe *no action should be taken until Mr. Warnke has had an opportunity to report his own impressions of the Moscow talks to the President.*⁸

⁶ Brzezinski underlined the words “second half of July.”

⁷ Brzezinski drew a vertical line in the right-hand margin next to this entire paragraph.

⁸ Inderfurth added a handwritten note following this last paragraph: “Gary is going to prepare a brief summary of this report for possible inclusion in this week’s W[EEKLY] R[EPORT]. Rick.”

109. Memorandum From the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, July 11, 1977

SUBJECT

Meeting with Paul Warnke

You are scheduled to meet with Paul Warnke at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, July 11, 1977, for 15 minutes to discuss the results of the Moscow talks on the Indian Ocean. Other participants in the meeting will be myself and Gary Sick, who was the NSC representative at the talks.

Mr. Warnke requested the meeting as an expression of continued high-level U.S. interest in these talks. He suggested a brief statement from you indicating your satisfaction in the serious character of the

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 86, SCC 016, 6/14/77, Indian Ocean. Secret. Sent for action. Carter wrote at the top of the page: “Zbig & Paul. Keep our negotiation positions highly confidential. I see good prospect for a good agreement—even if we have to yield on a few points. I don’t want this yielding to be the news—J.C.”

initial talks. A draft announcement is attached.² Mr. Warnke also intends to raise with you the comprehensive test ban talks which will resume shortly in Geneva. A proposed letter of instructions on the CTB talks is being forwarded to you under a separate memo.³

The Moscow talks succeeded in defining more clearly the nature of the tradeoffs which would be required for any U.S.-Soviet agreement on the Indian Ocean. Essentially, the Soviets want us to forego certain strategic options (deployment of SSBN's, strategic bombers and carriers which could attack Soviet territory). In return, they are prepared to accept restrictions on their own naval activities. In addition, they will press us to "take into account" the presence of allied forces and base facilities adjacent to the Indian Ocean in setting limitations on our own forces.

The elements of a bargain are there: (1) a ban on *all* submarine deployments; (2) A ban on the operation of all land-based strike aircraft in the Indian Ocean area; (3) A freeze on surface ship deployments and use of regional support facilities at approximately the level of 1976. This arrangement would respond to Soviet concerns about deployment of strategic systems while placing severe limitations on their own naval capabilities in the area by depriving them of air cover and submarine support. Both sides would pay a price, but the prospects of an escalating arms race in the region would be significantly reduced.

On the other hand, PRM-10,⁴ our net assessment, has identified the Persian Gulf as being a primary U.S. interest and a potential conflict area in which the Soviet Union would enjoy considerable advantages because of its geographic proximity. Moreover, the Soviet focus on our SSBN's raises questions as to why they would wish to circumscribe our options to maintain SSBN survivability. Each of these issues deserves careful consideration.⁵

² Attached but not printed. The draft noted that Warnke had met with Carter to report the results of the discussions: "The President expressed his satisfaction that these initial talks were conducted in a serious atmosphere, without polemics, and he was encouraged at the prospects of working out an arms control arrangement in the Indian Ocean which would recognize the legitimate interests of both parties while avoiding an escalating arms race in the region."

³ Not found. An unknown hand wrote "Done by D.A. [David Aaron]" in the right-hand margin next to this paragraph.

⁴ PRM 10, "Comprehensive Net Assessment and Military Force Posture Review," issued February 18, is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. IV, National Security Policy.

⁵ Carter and Warnke met from 1 to 1:25 p.m. Mondale, Aaron, and Sick also attended. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials, President's Daily Diary)

110. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, July 14, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

ALSO

The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean: Next Steps

The President has discussed with Mr. Warnke the results of the initial Indian Ocean talks in Moscow, June 22–27.² The President expressed his satisfaction with the seriousness shown by the Soviets and his encouragement at the prospect for further progress on arms control arrangements in this area.

The President has directed that the SCC proceed to develop a proposal on Indian Ocean arms control which can be presented to the Soviets in September. The Indian Ocean working group, under the chairmanship of the Department of State, should prepare a discussion paper outlining alternative proposals which the United States could table in September. This paper should concisely identify in each case the elements of a U.S. presentation to the Soviets, consider the likely Soviet response, and discuss fully the potential risks and benefits of each approach in terms of its ramifications for U.S. political and security interests.

The paper should be available for the NSC Staff for distribution no later than August 1 for an SCC meeting tentatively scheduled for August 4, 1977.³

Zbigniew Brzezinski

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 23, Indian Ocean: 1–12/77. Secret.

² See Documents 108 and 109.

³ The SCC met on August 24 to discuss Indian Ocean arms control. See Document 111.

111. Summary of Conclusions of a Meeting of the Special Coordination Committee¹

Washington, August 24, 1977, 9–10:05 a.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Arms Control

PARTICIPANTS

State

Warren Christopher
Reginald Bartholomew

Defense

Harold Brown
Lynn E. Davis

JCS

General George Brown
Vice Admiral Patrick Hannifin

ACDA

Paul Warnke
John Twombly

NSC

Zbigniew Brzezinski (Chairman)
Gary Sick (notetaker)
James Thomson

CIA

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Robert Bowie

The purpose of the meeting was to define more precisely the U.S. position to be presented to the Soviets in the next round of Indian Ocean talks. The following issues were discussed:

Objectives. All agreed that our arms limitations objectives in the Indian Ocean remain as they were stated in our opening position to the Soviets in Moscow, i.e., that the process is aimed in the first instance at stabilizing the present level of U.S. and Soviet military presence in the Indian Ocean and, if that is achieved, to further consider reductions. General Brown stressed the importance of being able to bring our forces to bear in the Persian Gulf or other trouble spots in the future.

Working Group Recommendations. The SCC endorsed recommendations by the Working Group that: (1) the U.S. will not raise the question of possible limitations on ground combat forces in the next round with the Soviets; (2) the U.S. will not agree to compensate the USSR for the presence of our allies in the area or for bases in adjacent areas; and (3) the U.S. will not agree to ban aircraft carrier operations in the Indian Ocean. The Working Group was further instructed to continue its work

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 88, SCC 026, 8/24/77, Indian Ocean. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Sick sent the Summary of Conclusions to Brzezinski under an August 25 memorandum. (Ibid.) Papers prepared for the meeting are *ibid.*

on definition of the geographic area, on the possible exchange of information with the Soviets, and on a definition of transits.

Types of Surface Ships. All agreed that combatants and auxiliaries would be counted, in separate categories, for purposes of limitations, subject to the development and acceptance of a definition of auxiliaries. The Working Group was instructed to develop such a definition.

Levels of Surface Ship Presence. All agreed that the Working Group should reexamine the entire question of numerical limits more systematically for consideration at the next meeting.

Submarines. No agreement was reached on how submarines should be handled in the context of an arms limitations agreement. This issue will be referred to the President by separate memorandum for decision.

Time Limit. It was agreed that the question of the duration of any agreement needed to be examined.

Facilities. Several alternatives proposed by the Working Group were eliminated, and the Working Group was instructed to examine possible combinations of the remaining alternatives for consideration at the next meeting. These alternatives limiting facilities in the Indian Ocean should be presented in the form of tables comparable to those used in SALT with particular emphasis on relative effects of different alternatives for the U.S. and the USSR.

Aircraft. Limitations on land-based strike aircraft were discussed briefly, and the range of alternatives was narrowed. Decision was deferred until the next meeting, after additional Working Group analysis.

Timing. It was reported that the timing of the next meeting with the Soviets in Washington was still under discussion with the USSR. We had tentatively proposed the week of September 19, but that could be changed if it imposed too tight a time limit. A follow-on SCC would be held during the next week to consider the remaining issues and to look at the package as a whole in terms of its negotiability.

112. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, September 14, 1977, 10–11:30 a.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Arms Control

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>ACDA</i>
Warren Christopher	Paul Warnke
Reginald Bartholomew	John Newhouse
Leslie Gelb	<i>NSC</i>
<i>Defense</i>	Zbigniew Brzezinski (Chairman)
Harold Brown	David Aaron
Charles Duncan	Gary Sick (notetaker)
Walter Slocomb	<i>CIA</i>
<i>JCS</i>	Robert Bowie
Gen. William Smith	

The purpose of this meeting was to develop a proposal to be presented to the Soviet side in the next round of discussions in Washington, beginning September 26.

Working Group Recommendations. The SCC approved the recommendations of the working group on definition of combatants and auxiliaries, transit, force majeure and the crisis escape clause, and further agreed that current data would not be exchanged in the next round of discussions with the Soviets.

*Options.*²

The Joint Chiefs of Staff preferred Option I as stabilizing the situation in the Indian Ocean while avoiding U.S. assurances about deployment of strategic systems and preserving maximum flexibility for U.S. operations in the future. We should preserve our ability to get to the Middle East via the Indian Ocean. Other agencies believed that Option I was too ambiguous to assure stabilization, was inconsistent with the

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 89, SCC 030, 9/14/77, Indian Ocean. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Sick sent the Summary of Conclusions to Brzezinski under a September 15 memorandum, requesting that Brzezinski approve it. Aaron initialed the approval line for Brzezinski. (Ibid.) Copies were sent to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Young, Warnke, General Brown, and Turner. Papers prepared for the meeting are *ibid.*

² Brzezinski summarized the options for the President in a September 19 memorandum; see Document 113.

presentation we made to the Soviets in Moscow in June and would not be negotiable.

The Director, ACDA, supported Option IV as the only option which was truly negotiable and which best fulfilled the requirement of stabilization which we had proposed to the USSR as our initial objective. The Secretary of Defense and the JCS believed that the submarine ban in Option IV went beyond stabilization and would constitute a strategic concession to the USSR which would not be in the U.S. interest.

The Secretary of Defense and the Department of State supported Option II as providing assurances to the Soviets that we did not intend to turn the Indian Ocean into a major deployment area for strategic systems while avoiding the difficulties of trying to negotiate specific numerical limits. Also, by being less explicit, this option would provide greater latitude in structuring U.S. deployments and could avoid the necessity of invoking a supreme interests clause in the event our interests in the area were threatened. Option II, in their view, would permit us to gain some experience in managing an agreement of this nature before attempting to establish more explicit limitations. The JCS believe that Option II goes too far in providing assurances on strategic systems and would constrain U.S. operations too severely. ACDA believes that Option II does not meet the basic Soviet concerns and would not be negotiable; moreover, its ambiguity would make acceptance in Congress very difficult.

The Secretary of Defense, the Department of State and ACDA all indicated that they could accept some form of Option III, although it was not their preferred option. The JCS strongly opposed Option III as too restrictive and too explicit in its assurances on strategic systems.

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence indicated that Options I and II were the most easily verifiable, while Options III and IV were [4 lines not declassified].

The Secretary of Defense and the Department of State indicated that they would be willing to open with Option II, with the understanding that we could later go on to Option III. ACDA, while continuing to prefer Option IV, believed that it would be preferable to open with Option III, retaining Option II as a fallback position if agreement could not be reached on specific limitations. The JCS representative thought it might be acceptable to open with Option I, reserving Option II and perhaps Option III for future negotiation.

It was pointed out that the nature of the U.S. proposal depended on the interpretation of "stabilization." On one hand, if we intend simply to prevent the Indian Ocean from becoming a major arena of U.S.-Soviet confrontation, then a generalized option (e.g. as I or II) would suffice. If, however, our objective is to prevent any upward change in either the quantitative or qualitative level of military deploy-

ments to the Indian Ocean, then explicit limits (e.g. Options III or IV) would be required.

Examination of Key Issues

A. Land-Based Strike Aircraft

The JCS preferred no limitations of any kind. State and ACDA supported the first alternative (no deployments to littoral states where there have been no previous deployments). Defense preferred the second alternative permitting deployments to the littoral states but restricting operations over the Indian Ocean. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that we could open with alternative 1 since it is more restrictive on the Soviets.

B. Submarines. To be referred to the President for decision as agreed at the last meeting.

C. Facilities. [2 lines not declassified] (alternative 4). State and Defense supported a combination of alternatives 2, 3, and 4. ACDA supported 1, 2, and 4 and would also accept 3 if there were no submarine ban as they propose. The DCI representative pointed out that there would be verification problems with alternatives 2 and 3. The consensus of the SCC (except the JCS) was to support alternatives 2, 3, and 4, perhaps with the implicit acceptance of the first alternatives as a later step.

D. Surface Ships. The SCC agreed that our initial proposal should be 14 million annual ton-days for combatants. All except the JCS agreed that we could go down to at least 13 million tons in the course of negotiations, recognizing that this could place some constraints on possible future deployments. There was no discussion or disagreement about the proposed levels of ship-days for combatants (2800) and limits on auxiliaries (3500 ship-days and 33 million ton-days per year).

Other Unresolved Issues

A. Definition of the Area. It was agreed that we would maintain the same position that we proposed in Moscow.

B. Exchange of Information. It was agreed not to press this issue in the forthcoming round. We would listen to what the Soviets have to say.

Additional Steps

It was agreed that each agency would promptly prepare a brief summary of its views on the preferred option and possible combination of options for submission to the President.

113. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, September 19, 1977

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Talks

The Soviet delegation arrives September 26 for the second round of discussions on Indian Ocean arms limitations. A decision is required on the nature and extent of the proposal which we will present to them.

The SCC has met twice in the past month to examine the issues. There is disagreement on every major issue. Before summarizing the options and the nature of the disagreements, a brief background would be useful.

Background

At the present time, we have a military advantage in the Indian Ocean. Diego Garcia is politically secure, while Soviet use of facilities at Berbera is politically tenuous. We are able to deploy aircraft carriers into the area and have established a pattern of exercise deployments of land-based aircraft to certain littoral states in conjunction with CENTO and ANZUS exercises, while the Soviets have never deployed land-based strike aircraft to the region and lack air support for their naval forces. The present levels of Soviet naval deployments do not constitute a significant threat to the oil lanes, and, in a crisis, we could surge substantial forces into the area more rapidly than the USSR. Thus, an agreement which effectively stabilizes² the current situation would formalize a situation which favors us,³ both politically and militarily.

There is no basis to assume that the present situation will necessarily continue in the future. Soviet construction of a major runway and missile storage and handling facilities at Berbera, plus the periodic introduction of naval reconnaissance aircraft into Somalia, must prudently be interpreted as a signal of Soviet intentions to develop a more capable military presence at the mouth of the Red Sea. This interpretation is strengthened by the history of Soviet port construction

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 89, SCC 030, 9/14/77, Indian Ocean. Top Secret; Sensitive. Sent for action. Sick sent the memorandum to Brzezinski under a September 17 memorandum requesting that Brzezinski sign it. All brackets except those that indicate text not declassified are in the original.

² Carter underlined the word "stabilizes."

³ Carter underlined the words "favors us."

and military association with North Yemen in the 1950s, South Yemen in the 1960s, and the extensive use of anchorages in international waters before Berbera became available in 1972.

Likewise, the Soviets have expressed considerable concern about the possible future U.S. deployment of B-52s and SSBNs into the Indian Ocean capable of striking the Soviet Union from the south. Consequently, the basis for any agreement limiting military activities in the region must rest on an exchange of assurances regarding future activities. [2 lines not declassified]

The SCC agreed to reject Soviet requests to establish specific limits on the operations of U.S. carriers (except in the context of general limitations on ship deployments) and to reject their argument that we should "take into account" the presence of our allies and U.S. bases in adjacent areas.

Basic Options and Positions

[Each agency has provided brief written statements of its positions on the options and the desirability of a submarine ban, at Tab B.]⁴

Option I

General Declaration of
Restraint:

JCS supports.

Neither side will
substantially alter recent
levels of military presence
without due cause; avoid
any inference that SSBNs
and B-52s would not be
deployed there.

Option II

General Declaration of
Restraint:

State/DoD support.

Ships limited to
approximately current
levels; [3 lines not
declassified];⁵ Soviets will
not deploy land-based
aircraft to region.

⁴ Not attached.

⁵ Carter underlined the preceding phrase and wrote in the right-hand margin: "ok J.C."

Option III

Explicit Agreement:
Numerical limits on naval ships [4 lines not declassified]; use of facilities constructed in the future limited to routine port calls; specific restrictions on deployment of land-based strike aircraft (including B–52s); SSBNs permitted under numerical ship limits.

State/DoD would accept as a follow-on to successful negotiation of Option II. ACDA would accept as opening position if Option IV is rejected, with Option II as a fallback.

Option IV

Explicit Agreement:
Essentially the same as Option III with the addition of a ban on submarines and quantitative limits on use of port facilities.

ACDA supports.

Comment

In the SCC discussion, I was able to get agreement from State and Defense that they could accept an approach based on Option II as the initial objective of our negotiations, with Option III as the ultimate goal. ACDA strongly favors a submarine ban (Option IV), but if that is not approved would “uncomfortably” be willing to accept Option III as our opening position, with Option II as a fallback. JCS was unwilling to budge from Option I. My own view is that the JCS position simply represents a rejection of the concept itself. The issues have been aired extensively, and further narrowing of differences would require an NSC meeting.

I believe that an approach based on Option II, then moving to Option III, would be the best of the alternatives available to us. I attach at Tab A a proposed guidance paper on those lines, with one further modification designed to bridge the gap between ACDA’s position on submarines and the JCS concern about specific assurances on strategic systems. Option II calls for [4 lines not declassified].

[The working group discussion paper is attached at Tab C⁶ if you wish to refer to the specifics of each option; however, you do not need to read it.]

⁶ Not attached.

RECOMMENDATION: That you approve the draft guidance at Tab A.

_____ Approve.⁷

_____ As amended.

_____ Should be considered by the NSC.

⁷ Carter checked this option and initialed. Below the options, he wrote: "Will be willing to hear arguments if necessary. J." The draft at Tab A, not printed, is identical to the final guidance printed as Document 114.

114. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, September 20, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State

The Secretary of Defense

Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

ALSO

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Arms Control

The President has determined that, for the next round of discussions with the Soviet Union on Indian Ocean arms limitations, the United States should table a proposed agreement in the form of a mutual declaration of restraint, with the objective of stabilizing the military situation in the Indian Ocean. This declaration should seek at a minimum to insure that, during an agreed period of about five years, deployment of naval units into the Indian Ocean would be limited to

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 26, Indian Ocean Talks: Round II Washington: 9/20-25/77. Secret; Sensitive. Sick sent the memorandum to Brzezinski under a September 20 covering memorandum, noting that it incorporated the "guidance for the next round approved by the President."

approximately current levels on each side. The following guidelines should be observed in the negotiating process:

1. We should be prepared to inform the Soviet Union that, for the duration of the agreement, we do not intend to substantially alter our current pattern of submarine operations in the Indian Ocean. In return, we would expect a statement that the Soviet Union would not substantially alter its own recent pattern of submarine deployments. To this end, we should seek agreement that neither side will establish, maintain, deploy or utilize facilities in the region, ashore or afloat, that have the primary function or are dedicated to the forward support of deployed submarines.

2. We should inform the Soviets that we do not intend to deploy B-52 aircraft to the area during the period of the agreement. In return, we should seek a Soviet statement that they will not deploy land-based strike aircraft to the region.

3. We should seek agreement that neither side will initiate construction of new facilities in the region for its own use beyond those currently programmed. Facilities constructed by or for littoral states with the assistance of either party could be used only for occasional routine port visits of limited duration.

4. While favoring a generalized declaration of restraint, we should not preclude the possibility of a more detailed agreement at some future date.

5. We should inform the Soviet Union that we will be prepared, once agreement is reached on stabilization, to move promptly to consideration of possible mutual reductions.

6. The recommendations of the working group, as agreed by the SCC, are approved for use in the forthcoming round as appropriate.

The Secretary of Defense should monitor closely the pace of construction at Diego Garcia and inform the SCC well in advance of developments which could have a significant impact on the negotiating process, e.g. commencement of construction on ammunition storage facilities and extension of the runway beyond 10,500 feet.

The U.S. delegation should proceed to develop position papers for the next round of discussions with the USSR on the basis of the Presidential guidance above. A further SCC meeting will be called if required to resolve major areas of disagreement.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

115. Memorandum From the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (Warnke) to President Carter¹

Geneva, October 10, 1977

SUBJECT

The Second Round of Talks on Indian Ocean Arms Control,
September 26–30, 1977

The second round of talks on Indian Ocean arms control was held in Washington September 26–30.² Pursuant to your instructions,³ the US Delegation tabled a draft agreement on declarations of mutual restraint. A copy of the US draft is attached.⁴

After a week of intensive discussions, it is clear that the Soviets are receptive to the approach we presented, which would involve immediate stabilization followed promptly by consideration of possible mutual reductions. Most of the discussion after the first day concerned clarification of the US draft, and an exchange of views on the status quo that would be frozen under the initial stabilization agreement. While our draft agreement is very general in nature, in accordance with your guidance we supplemented it with undetailed statements about our current level and pattern of ship activities and our programmed construction at Diego Garcia; we also indicated our willingness to forego deployment of strategic bombers in the area under conditions of stabilization; and we proposed a ban on the establishment or use of facilities for the support of submarines.

The Soviets replied by indicating, *inter alia*, that they would not introduce strike aircraft into the area under a stabilization agreement. They provided a general description of their deployments and presence, tailoring it carefully to fit the framework we had used in describing our activities. Their description of naval and air deployments was accurate, and they told us a little more than they had before about their use of Berbera. There is thus a basis for reaching understanding on the meaning of “stabilization” for each side.

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–80–0017, Indian Ocean 092 (Aug–Dec) 1977. Secret. Copies were sent to Vance, Brown, Brzezinski, Turner, and Jones. Brown wrote “10/15 HB” in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum.

² The first round of talks took place in Moscow June 22–27. See Document 108.

³ See Document 114.

⁴ Attached but not printed is the September 26 draft.

I believe that we have made good progress in our discussions with the Soviets on the Indian Ocean. However, a number of problems remain:

—The Soviets persist in seeking to ban all strategic systems, including SSBNs, from the Indian Ocean area, although they clearly take our indirect assurances on SSBNs seriously. In this regard we have told them that we do not intend to alter our current pattern of submarine operations in the Indian Ocean, or establish forward support for submarines.

—The Soviets have attempted to draw a distinction between aircraft carriers with “strike” capabilities, which they would like to ban, and other carriers, which would be permitted. We have told them that all our carriers are multi-purpose ships, and that it is not possible to distinguish them according to particular warfare capabilities.

—The Soviets have not agreed to ban the establishment and use of support facilities for all submarines, agreeing only to ban facilities for SSBNs. We are pressing for a ban on facilities for all submarines.

—The Soviets continued to argue that any agreement must take into account the forces and bases of US Allies in the area and US forces and bases in the adjacent areas, although there is some reason to think they will not let an otherwise acceptable agreement founder on these points. In a private conversation, Mendelevich asked me if we couldn’t check informally with the French and tell the Soviets, without commitment, that the French plan no big buildup in the area. I did not respond. We have continued to take the position that these issues are outside the scope of the negotiations and that any agreement would apply only to US and Soviet forces in the Indian Ocean itself.

—The Soviets, so far, appear unwilling to agree that the US should be permitted to complete its construction program on Diego Garcia, arguing that to do so would be inconsistent with stabilization. We argue that completion of programmed construction would have no qualitative effect and should be permitted.

—The Soviets want to ban construction of communication facilities in the Indian Ocean area which “control” submarines deployed there. Our position is that communication facilities should be kept outside the scope of the agreement, since they cannot be distinguished either as to function or as to geographic application.

—The Soviets seem to prefer an exchange of detailed numerical information as a basis for limitations on naval presence. We have taken the position that detailed data are unnecessary in the context of a general stabilization agreement.

—The Soviets have proposed that the overall annual number of port visits by each side should remain the same; but they wish to

have the right to reallocate this number among the ports. This idea is designed to permit them to make large-scale use of another port if they are forced to leave Berbera. We have agreed to study this proposal.

—The differences on definition of the area that surfaced in Moscow primarily regarding the waters north and south of Australia still remain to be resolved. The Soviets have tabled a map showing their definition of the Indian Ocean and we have agreed to study it.

—For our part, we must decide what reductions we would be prepared to accept in the follow-on negotiations to which we would be committed by the stabilization agreement.

I believe that in our third round of talks, which will be held in the beginning of December, probably in Vienna, we may be able to resolve many of these issues.⁵ The next round may very well become a drafting session, which would result in a narrowing and clarification of the differences between the two sides.

I am concerned, however, about the eventual form and effect of the statements both sides are making to describe the recent level and pattern of military activity in the region and which each indicated it would not exceed or significantly alter under a stabilization agreement. In my view, these statements should constitute legally binding written commitments. This approach would avoid future misunderstandings with the Soviet Union and would help to assure Congress that both signatories have the same understanding of the agreement and that the entire agreement is subject to Congressional approval. We have had recent experience with Congressional sensitivities on this score. I will be making recommendations to the SCC on this matter.

Paul C. Warnke

⁵ For information on the December talks, see Document 117.

116. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, November 9, 1977, 3–4 p.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Arms Control

PARTICIPANTS

State
Warren Christopher
Jerome Kahan

Defense
David McGiffert
Lynn Davis

JCS
Lt. Gen. William Smith

ACDA
Paul Warnke
John Newhouse

CIA
Robert Bowie
John Hibbits

White House
Zbigniew Brzezinski (Chairman)

NSC
Reginald Bartholomew
James Thomson
Gary Sick (Notetaker)

In preparation for the third round of discussions with the USSR on Indian Ocean arms limitations scheduled for December 1–10, 1977, in Bern, Switzerland, the SCC reviewed the following issues:

1. *US Objective in the Next Round.* Mr. Warnke felt that the best we could expect from this round would be a bracketed text of a draft agreement, with a further round required to achieve agreement. He could foresee the following round might be in February. Dr. Brzezinski noted that it may not be in our interest to push too fast. All agreed.

2. *Working Group Recommendations.* The working group recommended positions on Allies and Adjacent Areas, Aircraft Carriers, Communications Facilities, Facilities on the Seabed, Soviet Air Capable Ships, and Soviet Reaction to the Presence of US carriers were accepted by the SCC. The position on SSBNs was changed to read as follows: “We have determined that we will not specifically ban SSBNs from the area.” It was agreed in any event that SSBN transits would be permitted as a minimum.

3. *Form of the Agreement.* State, JCS and Defense supported Option A, the exchange of unilateral statements of past activities in the Indian

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 89, SCC 040, 11/09/77, Indian Ocean. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Brzezinski initialed at the bottom of the last page. Carter initialed and wrote “ok” on a November 15 memorandum from Brzezinski describing the results of the meeting. (Ibid.)

Ocean as supplement to the General Declaration. Mr. Warnke argued that there was no substantial difference between Options A and B. Whether we decide on past tense or future tense, unilateral statements or a protocol, signed or unsigned, in fact the effect is to create future obligations which are binding. Mr. Warnke was concerned that some latitude be left to conclude joint protocols on at least certain issues, such as definition of the area. Several members noted that a joint protocol would require both sides to accept statements about bases that might be unacceptable. Others noted that a Soviet statement that they have never operated any bases in the Indian Ocean would be unacceptable, even in a unilateral statement, since we would still have to agree to it and answer to Congress. Dr. Brzezinski stated that any appended statement should say what is precluded by the agreement, rather than what has happened in the past. All agreed that we should remain flexible on this issue for the next round.

4. *Level of Port Activity.* All agreed, after considerable discussion, that the US should continue to insist on distinguishing between "usage" and "port visits" in order to prevent the USSR from expanding the type of operations they now conduct at Berbera to a number of other ports on the littoral. However, it was also agreed that the Soviets should be able to shift their Berbera operations to a different port in the event they lose access to Somali facilities. They should not, however, be permitted to construct new facilities for the primary use of their own forces. The delegation has latitude in the next round to develop workable definitional distinctions between "usage" and "port visits."

5. *Supreme Interest Clause.* All agreed that the US should continue to insist that either side may invoke supreme national interest to withdraw from the agreement without any advance notification period. Mr. Warnke noted that this agreement is qualitatively different from SALT and other agreements where we have accepted a period of advance notification. However, the lack of notification will be difficult to negotiate and will make the Soviets place additional emphasis on the importance of US activities in adjacent areas.

6. *Submarine Support Facilities.* All agreed that the US should press for a ban on all submarine support activities and construction in the Indian Ocean area, including sub tenders. Mr. Warnke felt that we might have to fall back on this at some point. Mr. Christopher agreed, and noted that this provision would force the Soviets to change their present pattern of deploying sub tenders to the area. He was particularly concerned that this might lead the Soviets to request a comparable cutback on our part, e.g. our carrier deployments, which would be a bad trade. Dr. Brzezinski noted that we would have time to review the issue again in the event we had to fall back to a lesser option.

7. *Definition of the Area.* All agreed to hold to the previous US position. Dr. Brzezinski suggested exploring the possibility of a com-

promise position on the waters south of Australia at approximately 130 degrees longitude, which would include additional ocean area but no significant Australian ports.

8. *Construction at Diego Garcia.* All agreed to hold to the previous US position that stabilization would include the completion of planned construction. It was recalled that the Presidential Directive issued prior to the last round called for the SCC to be notified by DoD well in advance of developments on Diego Garcia which could have a significant impact on the negotiating process.² Defense noted that the runway is being constructed in successive longitudinal strips and that one of these was already in place for the entire 12,000 foot length. Defense will continue to keep the SCC informed.

9. *Linkage Between Stabilization and Negotiations on Reductions.* All agreed that we should be prepared to begin negotiations on reductions within three months after a stabilization agreement comes into effect.

10. *Carrier Deployments.* Mr. Warnke noted that the present wording of our assurance on carrier deployments would permit a carrier to accompany all three task force deployments. In fact, we have in the past deployed two, but not three, carriers in a single year. He proposed that our statement be revised to indicate that our past pattern of task group deployments has included at least one carrier and as many as two in any one year. All agreed.

² See Document 114.

117. Memorandum From the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (Warnke) to President Carter¹

Geneva, December 15, 1977

SUBJECT

The Third Round of Talks on Indian Ocean Arms Control, December 6–10, 1977

The third U.S.-Soviet meeting on Indian Ocean arms control was held in Bern, Switzerland, on December 6–10. As in previous rounds, I led the U.S. delegation and Ambassador Mendelevich headed the Soviet delegation.

The Soviets owed us a response from the last round, held in Washington in September, at which we had tabled a draft agreement.² Soviet expulsion from Somalia and their consequent loss of access to Berbera had, however, introduced uncertainties into the question of base facilities in the Indian Ocean.³ We therefore approached the round with caution, prepared to listen rather than to put forward any new U.S. positions. I felt personally that there was a good chance that this round would not turn out to be a particularly significant one.

Somewhat surprisingly, however, substantial progress was made during the round, both in establishing a common framework for seeking a stabilization agreement and in further identifying similarities and differences between the two sides' positions. It now appears that the Soviets are prepared to work seriously toward an agreement based on our proposal that both sides essentially freeze forces and facilities at present levels.

The Soviet delegation tabled their own draft,⁴ in response to the U.S. draft tabled at the last round. Their draft represented a serious effort on their part to work within the scope of our stabilization concept, though they would go further in linking stabilization to a reduction phase than we would. Soviet positions, while still firm and at variance with ours on some key issues, showed real movement in some areas, as well as a potential for further modification.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 27, Indian Ocean Talks: Round III Bern: 12/77. Secret. Sent under cover of a December 27 memorandum from Brzezinski to Carter in which Brzezinski highlighted three points Warnke's memorandum raised. Carter initialed both the covering memorandum and Warnke's memorandum.

² See Document 115.

³ On November 13, the Somali Government renounced its Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union and ended Soviet use of naval facilities at Berbera.

⁴ An unofficial translation of the Soviet draft is in telegram 5726 from Bern, December 6. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770454–0133)

The Soviets made only brief reference to their expulsion from Somalia, and did so by way of reinforcing their earlier insistence that they have no “bases” in the Indian Ocean. It may be that the weakening of their position in the Indian Ocean lies behind their increased interest in early agreement and their movement toward the U.S. position on several specific issues.

Ambassador Mendelevich pressed for establishing a semi-permanent Indian Ocean negotiation in Bern, apparently to be conducted along lines similar to the SALT and MBFR negotiations. We rejected this approach as unnecessary and as impractical for the U.S. side. We agreed, however, to a target date of February 1 for a fourth round of talks.⁵

While important differences remain between the Soviet and U.S. positions, I believe the next round could result in a “joint draft text” of a stabilization agreement, with unresolved issues shown by bracketed language. One or two additional rounds would then probably be needed before full accord could be achieved.

If a stabilization agreement along the lines we are developing can be concluded, I believe it would advance our security objectives in the Indian Ocean area, support our political objectives in the littoral states, and give impetus to other bilateral arms control efforts. It would also lead to U.S.-Soviet discussions on possible arms reductions in the area. It might be possible to have an Indian Ocean stabilization agreement completed and ready for signature within the next six months, perhaps at a summit meeting.

For any such schedule to be maintained, the Soviets will have to take some major steps toward us in the next rounds, since the fundamental elements of our position cannot be altered. However, we must be prepared to be flexible on a few issues, while holding to our basic position.

The following is a brief summary of the current state of play on the major remaining issues between ourselves and the Soviets:

1. *Form of Agreement.* The Soviets seemed prepared to consider our approach of a general stabilization agreement, supplemented by agreed documents, which would be incorporated into the agreement by reference, describing each side’s recent military activities in the Indian Ocean area. But they pressed for such statements to be more specific and quantitative than seems to me to be necessary or desirable for a stabilization agreement. They have also suggested some criteria for measuring military activity in the area which would tend to operate to U.S. disadvantage.

⁵ For information on the February 1978 talks, see Document 120.

2. *Commitment to Reductions.* While accepting the concept of stabilization, the Soviets continued to seek a commitment, in the agreement itself, to reductions. We took the position that we were prepared to commit ourselves to consider mutual reductions in follow-on negotiations, but that we could not agree in advance either that there would be such reductions or what form they might take.

3. *Strategic Systems.* The Soviets dropped their insistence on any sort of special limitations on aircraft carriers or carrier-based strike aircraft; they seemed content with our position that we would not deploy strategic aircraft to the area under stabilization. They continued to press for a specific ban on SSBNs, which I firmly rejected. In response to our earlier proposal that all submarine support facilities be banned from the area, they continued to argue that only SSBN facilities should be banned and that they should have the right to deploy a conventional submarine tender.

4. *Definition of the Area.* We agreed that a definition should be part of the agreement, but continued to disagree about its eastern boundary—particularly about the waters to the north and south of Australia. In the next round we will work toward a definition which is mutually acceptable for purposes of arms control in the Indian Ocean area.

5. *Allies and Adjacent Areas.* The Soviets sought to deal with our refusal to have allied forces in the area taken into account by proposing a “compensation” formula, which would allow increases by one side to offset increases by an ally of the other side. We rejected this notion as unnecessary and destabilizing, and argued instead that a “supreme national interest” withdrawal clause requiring no prior notice would provide an adequate safety valve. It may be that we will be able to deal with Soviet concerns over allied forces in the Indian Ocean and our forces in adjacent areas through a general non-circumvention clause.

6. *Facilities.* The Soviets, alluding to their loss of Berbera, reaffirmed their position that they have no land-based support facilities in the area. They said they must, therefore, be free to move their floating support units to other ports around the littoral. We stressed the need to make a distinction between utilization of facilities and routine port calls, and the importance of preventing a proliferation of facilities that could be inconsistent with stabilization.

I am sending copies of this memorandum to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director, Central Intelligence Agency.

Paul C. Warnke

118. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, January 27, 1978

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on Indian Ocean, January 24, 1978

The SCC on the Indian Ocean met on January 24th² to develop guidance for the next round of talks with the Soviets, currently scheduled for February 7–17 in Bern, Switzerland.³ The JCS argued strongly that the meeting should be postponed. However, I concur with the majority view that we should proceed with the somewhat abbreviated talks as currently scheduled, with the understanding that Paul Warnke would use the occasion to deliver a stiff message of U.S. concern about Soviet activities in the Horn of Africa.

All the members of the SCC agreed that the U.S. delegation should table in this round a revised draft text of an agreement setting forth the U.S. position. The new text makes no new concessions to the Soviets, but simply represents a more effective statement of our position on a number of issues.

The JCS and DOD believe that the text of any agreement [*1 line not declassified*] since this would establish an undesirable precedent and limit our future flexibility. [*3 lines not declassified*] However, they would be willing to forego inclusion of such a phrase in our position for this round, and I believe this would be consistent with our strategy of taking a very tough line in the forthcoming talks.

With regard to the deployment of land-based aircraft, all agreed that we should continue to press the Soviets to provide a description of their past deployments of bombers, fighter-bombers, and interceptors to the Indian Ocean area which is as restrictive as possible.

During the last round we suggested to the Soviets that it might be useful to have a clause in the agreement permitting exceptions to restrictions in the event of evacuation of nationals or natural disasters. State and ACDA would like to table this clause with our draft text.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 91, SCC 054, 1/24/78, Indian Ocean—Arms Control Negotiations. Secret. Sent for action. An earlier version of the memorandum, including draft guidance for the next round of talks, is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 26, Indian Ocean: SCC 1/24/78: 1/78.

² No minutes or Summary of Conclusions of this meeting have been found.

³ For a summary of the talks, see Document 120. For a summary of the previous round, see Document 117.

The JCS and DOD are nervous about the size of the loophole that would be created and prefer to wait until the Soviets have given us their considered view of the idea. I see no harm in waiting for the Soviet reply before tabling our text.

In the last round we proposed that both sides ban all submarine support facilities from the Indian Ocean. The Soviets objected on the grounds that they have had a tender present in the past and it is essential to support their non-ballistic submarines. The SCC agreed that our present position is inconsistent with the notion of "stabilization." Paul Warnke would like authority to concede this point in the forthcoming talks. The JCS and DOD believe that we should delay in conceding this point until we can use it to get an appropriate quid. In view of the tough line we are taking in this round, my recommendation is not to concede the point at this stage.

Nine other recommendations by the Working Group were essentially technical in nature and not controversial. They were unanimously accepted by the SCC, including the use of the phrase "heavy bombers" in place of "strategic aircraft" to bring our draft text in line with the wording of the SALT agreement.

If you concur, I will issue guidance to the U.S. delegation in accordance with the recommendations I have made above.⁴

⁴ Carter checked the Approve option and initialed below the options.

119. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, January 30, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR

The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

ALSO

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Arms Control

The President has determined that the U.S. delegation should proceed with plans to conduct discussions with the Soviet Union on Indian Ocean arms limitations in Bern, Switzerland, on February 7–17. However, the U.S. representative should deliver to the Soviet negotiator in their first private meeting a strong statement of the U.S. position with regard to Soviet activities in the Horn of Africa and the related buildup of Soviet military presence as not conducive to international stability and efforts to improve relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is inconsistent with the concepts of stabilization and mutual restraint which underlie our efforts to reach an agreement. The Soviet side should clearly understand that these activities are a serious impediment to early agreement on Indian Ocean arms limitations. These concerns should also be reflected in the record of the plenary sessions. (S)

The U.S. delegation should table in this round a revised draft text of an agreement setting forth the U.S. position, without the appended supplementary statement of military activities. In discussing the various elements of a draft agreement and supplementary statement with the Soviets, the following guidance should be observed: (S)

1. *SSBNs*. During this round, we should omit any reference to U.S. deployment of *SSBNs* in the Indian Ocean from the proposed text of our supplementary statement, while reaffirming the verbal assurances we have provided in the past. The advisability of providing written assurances on *SSBNs* will be reviewed prior to any subsequent rounds. (TS)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 91, SCC 054, 1/24/78, Indian Ocean—Arms Negotiations. Top Secret.

2. *Facilities*. We should press the Soviets to accept our distinction between a "routine port call of limited duration" and "utilization" of a facility. (C)

3. *Land-Based Aircraft*. We should continue to press the Soviets to provide a description of their past deployments of bombers, fighter-bombers and interceptors to the Indian Ocean area which is as restrictive as possible. At the same time, we should begin consultations with Australia and other friendly nations as appropriate, seeking their views on how best to deal with this issue in light of its possible implications for enlarging the geographical scope of the agreement beyond the water's edge. (TS)

4. *Exception for Humanitarian Purposes*. The delegation is authorized to introduce the U.S. draft text of such a clause at its discretion after receiving a Soviet response to our suggestion in the last round. (C)

5. *Submarine Support*. The occasional presence of a Soviet submarine tender in the Indian Ocean is consistent with the concept of stabilization. However, this point should not be conceded at this stage. (TS)

6. *Other Issues*. The recommendations of the Working Group, as accepted by the SCC meeting of January 24,² are approved, including the use of the phrase "heavy bombers" in place of "strategic aircraft." (C)

Zbigniew Brzezinski

² See Document 118.

120. Memorandum From the Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (Warnke) to President Carter¹

Washington, March 2, 1978

SUBJECT

The Fourth Round of Talks on Indian Ocean Arms Control, February 7–17, 1978

The fourth round of talks on Indian Ocean arms control was held in Bern, Switzerland February 7–17, 1978. In view of the current Soviet activity in the Horn of Africa, we did not expect any major progress

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 27, Indian Ocean Talks: Round IV Bern: 3–4/78. Secret.

during this round. This proved to be the case, but there are indications that, if we elect to pursue the negotiations, solutions may be found to the principal outstanding problems.²

In addition to continuing the negotiations directed toward obtaining a stabilization agreement, our aim was to make it unmistakably clear that the United States considers current Soviet activity in the Horn of Africa and the related increase in Soviet naval forces to be inconsistent with the substance and spirit of our talks.

There is no question that the Soviet Delegation took the point, although they argued that, based on their estimate of their own naval deployments in recent years, the current activity is consistent with previous levels. They stated also that outside events of a largely political nature should not be injected into these negotiations and that they could cite U.S. activities in Africa or elsewhere which they regard as improper.

Unless mediation can bring about an early settlement, the situation in the Horn will continue to present us with some difficult decisions as we proceed with these negotiations. At the beginning of these talks, the United States decided to confine any agreement to naval and air presence because we were unwilling to accept restrictions on our ability to supply military equipment and to provide military advisors to littoral states. We wanted also to retain the ability to surge into the area at a time of political crisis affecting American security interests.

However, we have told the Soviets that their use of naval forces to influence developments in littoral states is incompatible with the substance of a stabilization agreement and their large-scale supply of military assistance to Ethiopia inconsistent with the spirit of these negotiations. At the same time, we wish to retain flexibility in the way we will use our naval forces in the future. Therefore, we need to consider carefully how far we should go in linking these types of activities to the continuation of arms control negotiations.

Also, I do not believe that our disapproval of current Soviet military assistance to Ethiopia should lead us to link these talks in any way to mutual restrictions on military assistance to the littoral states. Any agreement that would inhibit our freedom to provide military assistance to the littoral states should be the result of separate negotiations and understandings.

Another issue that may merit reconsideration is the question of limitations on land-based aircraft. Because the Soviets have not in the past deployed strike aircraft in the Indian Ocean area, it has been our

² An unknown hand underlined the portion of the sentence beginning with "if we elect" to the end.

thought that restrictions on possible future deployment would be in our interest and indeed become a major U.S. goal in the talks. It now appears, however, that Australian sensitivity about the way in which an Indian Ocean agreement will apply to Australian territory may cause us serious political problems. We will be consulting closely with the Australians on this issue, but should decide whether the effort to obtain limits on future Soviet aircraft deployments is of sufficient importance to warrant potential difficulties with Australia arising from the possible impact on U.S. aircraft operating from Indian Ocean littoral states.

None of the major issues have been resolved. These include Soviet insistence on barring U.S. strategic forces from the Indian Ocean, the nature of restrictions on use of Indian Ocean ports and facilities, Soviet demands that the agreement include some recognition of the presence of American allies and U.S. forces in adjacent areas, the format and methodology for describing recent military activity which is to be stabilized, and the definition of the Indian Ocean boundaries. On some of these issues, the head of the Soviet Delegation, Ambassador Mendele-levich, indicated in heads of delegations meetings that compromise is possible. For example, he suggested dealing with the issue of strategic forces in the preamble and describing the existing situation as a factor contributing to the stabilization of military activity. On the question of allied forces, he hinted that a joint appeal for restraint might be feasible. On Indian Ocean boundaries, he asserted that compromise between our position and theirs could be worked out, presumably minimizing the waters off the Australian coast to be included.

From the beginning of these talks, we have felt that an agreement of the kind under consideration would be in our interest. It would prevent an accelerated military competition in the area and prevent any significant increase in Soviet offensive naval capabilities there. Stabilization would formalize existing U.S. advantages. What we would be foregoing is any significant future deployment of U.S. strategic forces, that is, heavy bombers and ballistic missile submarines, while the agreement continues. Such deployments have not been made in the past.

Accordingly, we see no reason to disagree with the most recent SCC assessment³ that negotiating a stabilization agreement, along the lines we have proposed, is in our best interests, both politically and militarily.

³ See Document 118.

In accordance with our instructions, the time and place of a fifth round of talks was left open for future determination by the governments.

I am sending copies of this memorandum to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director, Central Intelligence Agency.

Paul C. Warnke

Attachment

Paper⁴

Washington, undated

SUMMARY OF STATUS OF MAJOR ISSUES

Supplemental Statements

The Soviets have said that they are prepared in principle to agree to the U.S. suggestion for supplemental statements, but that their final position would depend on the content of the statements. During meetings of the experts' group, there was a useful discussion on how the presence of naval forces should be expressed. Both sides have agreed to study the technical issues involved, and their different approaches to exchange of information, i.e., our preference for broad descriptions and the Soviets' for a detailed quantitative description.

Facilities

The Soviets agreed to consider the U.S. preference for an agreed definition of a routine port call and took note of the U.S. view that the agreement should limit both afloat and ashore facilities. They continue to maintain that they have not had any ashore facilities, but do agree that their afloat auxiliary ships provide support to their combatants. Both sides agreed to consider how the utilization of support facilities, either ashore or afloat, should be limited in the agreement and reflected in the supplemental statement.

Strategic Forces

The Soviets suggested a possible compromise that would move the reference to strategic forces from the operative text of the agreement to the preamble. Our reaction to this will depend on whether or not

⁴ Secret.

the Soviets are prepared to agree to preambular language that does not state there has been a total absence of all strategic forces, including SSBNs. The Soviet definition of strategic forces is not yet entirely clear.

Auxiliaries

Both sides agree on the definition of a naval auxiliary with regard to this agreement. The U.S. stated that all naval auxiliaries should be included in the limitations of the agreement. The Soviet position is that all auxiliaries should be exempt from the agreement. The Soviets dropped their previous insistence on a distinction between those auxiliaries with stationary armaments and those without.

Transit

Both sides agree that ships in transit should not be counted as part of the naval presence in the Indian Ocean. The Soviets suggested that ships in transit be permitted 90 days to complete the crossing; the U.S. suggested 30 days. The experts' group considered this issue and the Soviets are prepared to work for a compromise on this question, as is the U.S.

Definition of the Area

The U.S. explained to the Soviets that our problem with the Soviet proposal to include the waters north and south of Australia in the agreement stems from the objections of the Australians, who are concerned that this agreement not adversely impact on their security interests. The Soviets recognized this as a political problem, but did not fall off their previous position, although they did state that some compromise was possible.

Diego Garcia

The Soviets again argued that continued construction on Diego Garcia would be inconsistent with stabilization. We reiterated our position that completing the modest construction program on Diego Garcia and agreeing not to go beyond this program would be consistent with stabilization.

Allied and Adjacent Areas

The Soviets again stated that the presence of U.S. Allies and U.S. forces and bases in adjacent areas must somehow be taken into account. We stated that we considered these talks to concern only U.S. and Soviet forces in the Indian Ocean.

121. Memorandum From Gary Sick and Reginald Bartholomew of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, February 21, 1978

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean—Next Steps

Aside from delivering the political message about our views on the Horn, the two-week session on the Indian Ocean in Bern produced almost nothing.² There was clarification of some points, and minor progress on a few marginal issues, but nothing of substance. This is likely to remain true until the Horn situation settles down. The Indian Ocean negotiations are now at a point where the peripheral issues have largely been cleared away and only the tough central issues remain. Further progress on these issues requires a sense of mutual purpose and mutual accommodation that will be impossible to achieve so long as the Soviet intervention in the Horn is actively in progress.

Moreover, additional “study” of these questions, when removed from the pressure of forward progress in the negotiations, is likely to inspire the worst in bureaucratic in-fighting and hair-splitting to the detriment of our position. In the absence of any deadline, each agency will lack the incentive to compromise and instead will devote itself to constructing rationales in support of its chosen position. By the time we get back to real negotiations, this could simply make it more difficult to lever the hardliners out of their entrenched positions.

RECOMMENDATION: Consequently, I believe that the entire Indian Ocean issue should be put on the back burner until things begin to clear up in the Horn. I suggest that we resist any calls for additional SCC meetings or extensive interagency study for the time being. If you concur, I can easily discourage any new initiatives in this area until things begin to look up.

_____ Yes. Back burner.³

_____ Other.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 23, Indian Ocean: 1–4/78. Secret. Sent for action. Inderfurth also initialed the memorandum.

² See Document 120.

³ Brzezinski checked this option, and Aaron wrote “I agree DA” and drew an arrow pointing toward it.

122. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, April 14, 1978

SUBJECT

Talks with Australians on Indian Ocean

A high-level delegation of the Australian Ministry of Defense spent three days in Washington this week for comprehensive talks about Indian Ocean arms limitations. The basic Australian concern relates to internal political problems and particularly the concern that, by accepting limitations on Indian Ocean activities, the United States will in effect relegate the western coast of Australian—the Indian Ocean coastal area—to a lesser security status than the eastern part of the country. (S)

This is a hot political issue, and even the appearance of somehow treating the westerners differently than the easterners for security purposes, i.e. for purposes of exercises or implementation of the ANZUS treaty, would be internal dynamite. In addition, the present Government opposed the previous Whitlam Government's support of Indian Ocean arms control,² and the distaste of at least their representatives at these meetings for any US-Soviet agreement was quite apparent. They raised a number of fundamental questions about any potential agreement:

—Since stabilization appears to favor the U.S. rather dramatically, why are the Soviets willing to go along? (We are offering to forego certain strategic options in the future which the Soviets obviously find desirable.)

—If both parties can deploy forces within the context of a stabilization agreement, will there not still be competition and possible conflict even with an agreement? (A stabilization agreement is not intended to settle every possible difference in the area, but it should at a minimum reduce the potential level of confrontation.)

—Since there appears to be no present cause for anxiety about the Soviet presence following the loss of Berbera, does this issue need to

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 23, Indian Ocean: 1-4/78. Secret. Sent for information. Quandt initialed the memorandum in the upper right-hand corner. A copy was sent to Armacost.

² Reference is to Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's 1972-1975 Labor Party government.

be addressed at this time? (At least until the recent episode in the Horn, the apparent stability in force levels offered a good opportunity for negotiations, rather than a time of crisis or escalation.)

Les Gelb responded to all of these points, and in three days of official and private meetings the US delegation gave a candid and complete picture of our own policy viewpoint, including those areas where we have no ready answers, e.g. the best method for limiting land-based strike aircraft. (S)

Although they wavered on occasion, the Australians were not prepared to be persuaded. It was clear to me, particularly in private conversations, that they could appreciate some of the military advantages for us—and even potentially for them—in such an agreement with the Soviets. But these advantages were too abstract or too distant to compensate them for the immediate domestic political pain which they anticipate and for which they have no easy remedy. They readily agreed that their job of explanation would be made much simpler if the Soviets were showing signs of getting military access to Gan Island or some other facility closer to their west coast. Ethiopia is just too far away to seem a real threat to Premier Court of Western Australia,³ who comes through in their comments as a peculiarly Australian combination of Ronald Reagan and Bella Abzug. (S)

We ended with the following points of agreement:

—We will look closely at possible compensatory moves we could take, e.g. ship visits to Western Australia, possible exercises, or other evidence that we are not abandoning western Australia.

—We will continue to consult very closely through diplomatic channels, and at some point we recognize the possible value of a return visit by a US delegation to Canberra.

—We will consider their suggestion that the Vice President might consider a stop in Western Australia during his forthcoming trip⁴ (no commitment was made, of course). (S)

³ Reference is to Charles Court, Premier of Western Australia from 1974 until 1982.

⁴ Mondale traveled to the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand April 29–May 10. On May 10, Mondale summarized his trip in an address delivered in Honolulu at the East-West Center. For the text of the address, see the Department of State *Bulletin*, July 1978, pp. 22–25.

123. Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (McGiffert) to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)¹

Washington, June 2, 1979

SUBJECT

Implications of the Interagency Review of US Presence in the Middle East/
Persian Gulf for Resumption of the Indian Ocean Arms Control Talks

When the Indian Ocean Arms Control negotiations were suspended indefinitely in February, 1978,² the parties had agreed in principle to stabilize their respective naval presence in the Indian Ocean at the 'levels of the recent past.' Although the details had not been worked out, the proposed agreement would also place limits on deployments of land-based strike air to the littoral states and on the utilization of naval support facilities in the littoral states for other than routine port visits. In September, 1977 the US described its past presence in the Indian Ocean as: the three ship MIDEAST Force maintained in the area on a continuing, year-round basis; periodic deployment on a yearly basis of three task groups, at least one of which has included an aircraft carrier; and additionally, units of the US Navy occasionally enter the area enroute to making routine port calls in Australia.³

A series of events since September, 1977 have altered the strategic situation in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf and have prompted a review of the level of US presence in the region which is necessary to maintain US influence and to protect US interests from military threats. In the past two years, the Soviets have sponsored Cuban surrogates in Ethiopia, engineered a coup in Afghanistan, and have increased their influence in PDRY. US policy toward the region changed dramatically with the overthrow of the Shah. The US can no longer count on Iran to serve as a regional policeman. Moreover, the moderate Persian Gulf states criticized the US for failing to take action to support the Shah and expressed their concern that the US lacks the commitment and resolve to oppose Soviet inroads in the region. Finally, initially in response to the unrest in Iran and later to the PDRY invasion of the YAR, the US maintained an augmented naval presence in the region from October, 1978 to June, 1979.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 24, Indian Ocean: 4-9/79. Secret. An unknown hand wrote "DA has seen, send to staff for info" in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum.

² See Document 121.

³ See Document 115.

Given these changed circumstances and the dependence of the West on Persian Gulf oil, DoD is currently studying options for future US military presence in the Middle East/Persian Gulf.⁴ These options range from no change in the previous deployment pattern up to permanently deploying carrier or Marine task groups to the region. A key issue is whether a stabilization ceiling based on past deployment patterns is adequate to protect US interests in light of recent events. Under the three task force deployment per year pattern, the MIDEAST Force would be the only force which the US would have in the region to respond to contingencies for roughly half the year. The MIDEAST Force, however, has only limited capabilities to respond effectively to crises ashore. More importantly, the proposed ceiling would restrict US flexibility to surge forces into the region and to keep them there for the duration of a crisis. The Soviets, however, would still be able to threaten US interests in the littoral states through the use of arms transfers, subversion, and surrogate forces without violating the agreement.

The PRC on June 13 will center on the issue of what level of US military presence is required to protect US interests in the Middle East/Persian Gulf.⁵ This meeting may conclude that the US must increase its naval presence above past levels and that various measures should be taken to improve US capabilities to rapidly surge forces into the region. Obviously, a decision to increase US presence in the Indian Ocean would be inconsistent with the previous US negotiating position and the joint draft treaty. Such a decision would not necessarily terminate all prospects for an Indian Ocean Arms Control Agreement, but it would require that the US negotiating position be changed and that the stabilization ceilings be re-negotiated. The Soviets, however, may not be willing to accept fundamental changes to the proposed agreement. Moreover, the value of an agreement from the standpoint of arms control would diminish if the ceilings on routine presence were lifted and if caveats were introduced to permit forces to be surged into the area for prolonged periods.

Given the fact that no agreement has been reached within the US government on the desired level of US presence in the Indian Ocean, it would be premature to propose that the Indian Ocean talks be resumed immediately after the summit.⁶ An unconditional offer to resume negotiations would imply that the US were willing to take up the talks where they left off—that is, with a stabilization ceiling based on past presence. On the other hand, extending an offer to resume the negotia-

⁴ See Document 24.

⁵ The PRC convened June 21–22 to discuss the defense of U.S. interests in the Middle East/Persian Gulf. See Document 26.

⁶ Carter and Brezhnev met in Vienna June 16–18 to sign the SALT II treaty.

tions conditioned on a re-negotiation of the stabilization ceilings could alienate the Soviets and disrupt the summit. In any event, it would not appear to be in the US interest to agree to resume the negotiations until a decision is made concerning the nature and level of US presence which is required to protect US interests in light of the changed circumstances in the region. Although this issue will be addressed at the PRC on 13 June, a final decision on the matter probably will not be made until after the summit is concluded.

David E. McGiffert

*Assistant Secretary of Defense
International Security Affairs*

124. Summary of Conclusions of a Policy Review Committee Meeting¹

Washington, July 18, 1979, 4:30–5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean (U)

PARTICIPANTS

State

Warren Christopher (chairman), Deputy Secretary
Reginald Bartholomew, Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs
Peter Constable, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

OSD

David McGiffert, Assistant Secretary, International Security Affairs

JCS

Lt General John Pustay, Assistant to the Chairman

DCI

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Art Begelman, Analyst, Office of Strategic Research

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 26, Indian Ocean Talks: Policy Review Committee 7/18/79 Meeting: 7/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Dodson sent copies of the Summary of Conclusions to Vance, Brown, Warnke, Jones, and Turner under a July 23 covering memorandum. In a July 17 memorandum to Brzezinski, Sick provided background information for the PRC meeting, noting that the participants needed "to agree on what is to be said to Mendelevich this week and to examine the posture we should take regarding the longer term future of these talks." (Ibid.)

ACDA

George Seignious, Director

John Newhouse, Assistant Director, International Security Programs Bureau

Amb Ralph Earle, U.S. Ambassador to SALT Delegation

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski

NSC

Marshall Brement

Gary Sick

The PRC examined the question of how the U.S. delegation should respond to Soviet Ambassador Mendelevich on July 20 concerning possible resumption of the Indian Ocean arms limitations talks. General Seignious recommended some talking points for Ambassador Earle to use with Mendelevich along the following lines:

(1) although the original talks had shown some progress, they had been deferred due to turmoil in the region;

(2) some of that turmoil related to Soviet deployment levels at the time of the fighting in the Horn of Africa;

(3) other turmoil, not necessarily of Soviet direct responsibility (Iran, Afghanistan), had altered the situation in the region and had given rise to perceptions of significant differences between the U.S. and USSR;

(4) our efforts to narrow differences with the Soviets at the Summit concerning regional conflicts were not successful, which argues for a cautious approach toward renewing the talks; and,

(5) we remain committed to the talks and hope that a more stable situation will emerge which would permit resumption; in the meantime we would be willing for the heads of our respective delegations to meet this fall to reassess whether circumstances were more favorable to resumption.

The PRC agreed with this approach. ACDA will circulate talking points for review. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that Ambassador Earle review the presentation which the President made to Brezhnev in Vienna concerning regional issues and make the same points to Mendelevich in his discussion.² All agreed.³ (S)

² Carter and Brezhnev discussed international and regional issues on June 17. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 204.

³ Below this paragraph, Carter wrote: "ok JC."

125. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, July 20, 1979

SUBJECT

Indian Ocean Talks

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Ralph Earle II
Chairman, U.S. Indian Ocean Delegation

Colonel Joel McKean, Executive Secretary
Ambassador Lev Mendelevich, Chairman, Soviet Union Indian Ocean Delegation
Mr. Neverov, Secretary, Ambassador Mendelevich

After brief introductory remarks, Earle, pursuant to decisions reached at the meeting of the PRC on July 18, 1979,² and in accordance with the attached talking points,³ presented the U.S. position regarding resumption of the talks on Indian Ocean Arms Control.

Mendelevich referred to the Vienna Communiqué⁴ and, after quoting it, stated that the commitment therein was not being fulfilled. Earle responded that our meeting had been prompt and not inconsistent with the Communiqué. He had stated the reasons for U.S. caution and cited the reasons that the immediate resumption of the talks would not be appropriate. Earle repeated that he would consider a meeting in the fall to discuss the situation further.

Mendelevich said he had come prepared to discuss dates for resumption but would not do so since the U.S. side was not prepared to address this subject; Mendelevich would discuss the situation from the Soviet perspective. Citing some progress, he listed agreement on such things as objectives, military presence, initiating of the talks regarding reduction once the first agreement is achieved, and principles, and indicated that the drafting stage could have continued if talks had resumed. He added that at the end of the fourth round the UN

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 24, Indian Ocean: 4-9/79. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Colonel Joel M. McKean. Copies were sent to Sick, Bartholomew, McGiffert, Seignious, Pustay, and Turner.

² See Document 124.

³ Not attached.

⁴ The Vienna Communiqué, released following the signing of the SALT II Treaty in Vienna on June 18, stated, in part, that the United States and the Soviet Union "agreed that their respective representatives will meet promptly to discuss the resumption of the talks on questions concerning arms limitation measures in the Indian Ocean." (*Public Papers: Carter, 1979, Book I, p. 1085*)

was informed of substantive progress and that this progress was ready to be translated into treaty language.

Mendelevich wanted to emphasize that there were mostly positive aspects and only one negative, the inability to establish a date for the next round. He referred to a discussion between Vance and Gromyko in September, 1978, in which Vance said that the American side was soon to fix a date for the resumption of the talks.⁵ However, time passed and no date was established. This was the formal side of the Soviet perception according to Mendelevich and he then proceeded to give what he called the substantive side.

Mendelevich was aware of things such as the perception by the U.S. side of the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. He said this U.S. perception was wrong, this was not the case. There had been no increase in Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. However, even if it were the case, there could be no U.S. argument since there had been no agreement on a freeze. Additionally, the increased level would not matter since both sides had talked about averages for the proposed freeze level. Finally, if there had been an increase in Soviet presence, Mendelevich rhetorically asked, why had that round of talks been the most fruitful?

Mendelevich suggested that the U.S. presence had increased but that this did not pose an obstacle for negotiations in the Soviet view.

Referring to the littoral and hinterland states, Mendelevich stated that our negotiations should not be a reason for their suspicions. In fact he perceived that the littoral and hinterland states' suspicions had subsided over the period of the talks thus far. He referred to a first meeting of the littoral and hinterland states on this issue in July 1979 in which they proposed the translation of principles reached thus far into a binding agreement.⁶ The littoral and hinterland states also referred to the Vienna Communiqué as a positive indication that the talks would be resumed. Mendelevich said that littoral and hinterland states expect a response. The Soviet side is ready to give a response, the U.S. side is not. Mendelevich held that nothing should be done about this delicate situation without the sides informing each other before any action was taken. One possibility would be for the Soviet side to announce dates that would be acceptable to them, such as September or October of this year, and that the U.S. side was not prepared to renew the talks. According to Mendelevich agreement is within reach. The Soviet side supports the major elements of the approach and would agree to a step-by-step process. He concluded by

⁵ See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 148.

⁶ The meeting of the Littoral and Hinterland States of the Indian Ocean took place at the United Nations in New York July 2–13. For a summary of the Final Document of the meeting, see *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1979, pp. 49–50.

stating that if talks do not continue in the near term, the Soviet side would not feel bound by anything.

Earle said that he understood what had been said by Mendelevich. More importantly, he was concerned about the potential for sliding backwards in what Mendelevich had called a “delicate subject” through unnecessary Soviet actions. He raised the question of whether we would want to bring to the UN and to the general public the situation regarding the delay in the talks. Mendelevich interrupted to indicate that this was not a USSR position but rather what he would recommend to his government.

Earle pointed out that a statement of Soviet rationale would, in his view, probably necessitate an answer by the U.S. as to why the U.S. was not prepared to renew the discussions at this time. He did not see how such an exchange would be helpful.

Mendelevich expressed a concern that the fall meeting Earle had suggested could be interpreted as simply a delaying tactic. Earle assured him that if we were to schedule a meeting it would be for a useful purpose. Mendelevich said that the next action was up to the U.S. and that he would await word from Earle.

After a brief informal discussion regarding channels of communications, the meeting was adjourned.

126. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to Secretary of State Vance and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, November 3, 1979

SUBJECT

Diego Garcia

You will recall our discussion at lunch on October 25 of further upgrading of the facilities at Diego Garcia.² As part of DoD's FY 81

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 24, Indian Ocean: 10-12/79. Secret. Brzezinski added the following notation for Sick: “GS, revision for V-B-B? ZB.”

² At the Vance-Brown-Brzezinski luncheon on October 25, the principals decided that a tentative go-ahead for upgrading would be given; the Department of Defense was tasked with preparing a package to review. (Memorandum from Robert Gates to Jake Stewart, October 25; Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 68, Middle East: Security: 9-12/79)

budget and FY 81–85 FYDP, at some level of priority there will be a program/budget item for funds for such an upgrade to increase our capability to respond rapidly to an emergency in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean region. It was specifically added in response to my request to my staff for suggested initiatives to improve our Rapid Deployment Forces.

The funding profile (in millions of FYDP dollars) that I envisage is along these lines:

<u>FY 81</u>	<u>FY 82</u>	<u>FY 83</u>	<u>FY 84</u>	<u>FY 85</u>	<u>Total</u>
10	40	40	10	0	100

The primary purpose of the recommended construction would be to increase the airlift and sealift throughput capability of the island. The specific projects include adding to the existing aircraft fuel storage capacity and ramp space, building a pier capable of supporting roll-on/roll-off ships, constructing a taxiway parallel to the runway and improving the airfield's refueling facilities.

The Diego Garcia initiative is especially important because the USMC maritime prepositioning program will require moving Pacific-based Marines and their tactical aircraft long distances to link up with the equipment on RO/RO ships. Early in a crisis, we might find countries in the region equivocating about granting staging rights. The ability to use Diego Garcia for tankers and some transiting tactical aircraft would then be essential for a speedy U.S. response.

We are obligated under the terms of the US–UK Diego Garcia Agreement signed in 1976³ to consult with the British on any changes we desire to make to the capabilities and use of the base. Since the nature of the improvements listed above are consistent with the island's generally recognized purpose, the UK probably would not object.

Other foreign policy consequences of the changes are predictable. The radical Islamic states and the non-aligned countries such as India, Sri Lanka and some of the small island nations, are likely to react negatively. Countries looking for visible signs of U.S. commitment and presence in the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf region would react favorably. Diego Garcia is far enough from the Gulf for such an upgrade not to cause embarrassment to our friends there. The U.S. position in the Indian Ocean talks with the Soviets is in such a state of flux that modest further changes to Diego Garcia probably do not matter.

³ The U.S.–U.K. Diego Garcia Agreement was signed in London on February 25, 1976. (Telegram 2945 from London, February 25, 1976; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760070–1152) Also see footnote 6, Document 26.

We must also anticipate Congressional reaction. While a few senators have voiced objections in the past to any further expansion on Diego Garcia, it is unclear what the reaction of the Congress as a whole would be. Before the FY 81 budget is released we should consult with the appropriate Congressional leaders about whatever it contains on Diego Garcia. We should also consult with the UK in accordance with our agreement.

Harold Brown

127. Letter From Secretary of State Vance to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

Washington, November 23, 1979

Dear Harold:

In line with our luncheon discussion on October 25th,² I wanted to give you my thoughts on the proposed upgrade of facilities at Diego Garcia which were described in your memorandum of November 3rd.³

We are aware of the limited capacity of Diego Garcia to sustain the increased requirement for logistics and airlift support of our Indian Ocean military operations. Consequently the Department of State supports the FY 81 and FY 81–85 FYDP airfield and port construction at Diego Garcia.

We believe we should move forward quickly to consult with the British and key Congressional leaders before the FY 81 budget is released. Previous hearings on Diego Garcia suggest that the Congress will show a lively interest in our rationale for expanding our facilities and will reopen earlier questions such as whether improvements to the airfield will enable its use by B–52s.

While we support the construction of a pier capable of accommodating the RO/RO ships, we would like to receive more details about

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P790177–0259. Secret. Drafted by Robert Burke (PM/ISO) on November 19; cleared by Robert C. Houdek (AF/I), Woolf Gross (NEA/RA), David Gompert (PM), George Churchill (PM/ISO), and Lake. Churchill initialed the letter; Burke initialed on behalf of the other clearing officials. A copy was sent to Brzezinski.

² See footnote 2, Document 126.

³ See Document 126.

plans for actually prepositioning USMC equipment on such ships at Diego Garcia.

My staff is ready to work with you to prepare approaches to the British and to the Hill.

Sincerely,

Cy

128. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 27, 1980, 9–10:10 a.m.

SUBJECT

Iran and Afghanistan

PARTICIPANTS

State
Harold Saunders
Reginald Bartholomew
Charles W. Maynes
OSD
David McGiffert
JCS
Lt. Gen. John Pustay
CIA
Bruce Clarke
Office of the Vice President
Denis Clift

White House
David Aaron
Joseph Onek*
Jody Powell*
NSC
Gary Sick
Thomas Thornton
Marshall Brement
Alfred Friendly, Jr.*

* Present only for Item 1.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to the Indian Ocean.]

2. *U.S. Participation in the UN Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace.* State summarized the background of the issue. A UN Resolution was voted in 1971² and reaffirmed each subsequent year

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 111, SCC 294, 3/27/80, Iran/Afghanistan. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote “Zbig J” in the upper right-hand corner of the first page. Under a March 26 memorandum, Dodson sent Mondale, Vance, Brown, Jones, and Turner a meeting agenda. (Ibid.)

² Reference is to UN General Assembly Resolution 2832, adopted December 16, 1971, which called for the establishment of a “zone of peace” in the Indian Ocean.

calling for the elimination of all bases, military installations, logistical supply facilities and any other "manifestation of great power military presence in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of great power rivalry." An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to deal with the resolution.³ We have resisted all participation in the Committee in the past on the grounds that we do not accept the legitimacy of any group of littoral states defining conditions restricting the use of the high seas. Several things have changed in the past year. First, the USSR has formally joined the Committee and clearly intends to use it as a propaganda platform against us. The Soviets bitterly attacked U.S. naval presence and buildup at the last meeting of the Committee.⁴ Second, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the UN vote condemning it provides the basis for directing the efforts of the Committee away from the purely naval aspects to a consideration of the land threat posed by the Soviet Union to the nations of the area. Third, the Committee has now assumed the responsibility of a preparatory committee to prepare the agenda and terms of reference for a major conference on the Indian Ocean which is to take place in 1981. A number of our friends—including Oman, Somalia and Kenya who are providing us with military facilities—are represented on the Committee and will probably be subject to attack by the Soviets and others for their cooperation with us. We have discovered in the past that none of the Western or other nations sympathetic to our views is willing to stand up to the Soviets unless we lead the way. The question at this time is whether we want to change our position and join the work of the Preparatory Committee in order to defend our own interests. (S)

The SCC unanimously recommended that the U.S. join the Ad Hoc Committee with the intention of: (1) making a strong statement disassociating ourselves with the principle of littoral states imposing any regime on the high seas; (2) drawing attention to the fundamental change in circumstances created by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; and (3) opposing the convening of an IOZP conference. All agreed that the U.S. delegation to the Committee should be a strong one which is prepared to press vigorously for the U.S. position. (S)

³ UN General Assembly Resolution 2992, adopted December 5, 1972, established the Ad Hoc Committee.

⁴ The Ad Hoc Committee held both formal and informal meetings between February 4 and October 20.

_____ Approve⁵

_____ Disapprove. Do *not* join the Committee.

⁵ Carter checked this option and initialed in the right-hand margin next to it.

129. Briefing Memorandum From the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Bartholomew) to Secretary of State Muskie¹

Washington, June 30, 1980

Diego Garcia

In Ankara, my British counterpart and I formalized a new side understanding (to the 1976 US–UK Agreement)² on the use of Diego Garcia (attached).³ The previous understanding required us to seek British approval of practically any out-of-the-ordinary use of the Island. Under the new understanding we need British approval only to place *nuclear weapons* there or to use the facilities to support actual *combat operations*.

HMG made a hard push to include *non-combat operations* against third countries on the list of uses requiring their approval. This was too restrictive for us, but we did give the British a formal assurance that we would continue our practice of *prior consultation* with them (not approval) on any politically sensitive use of Diego. It's clear they consider another Iran rescue mission in this category.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P800109–1201. Secret. Drafted by David C. Gompert (PM) and Bartholomew. A notation on the memorandum indicates that Muskie saw it. Wisner also initialed the memorandum, indicating that it was received in S/S on June 30.

² See footnote 3, Document 126.

³ Attached but not printed is a June 13 memorandum of conversation detailing Bartholomew's discussions with Patrick Moberly, Assistant Under Secretary, British Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The officials stated that their respective governments shared the view that the uses of Diego Garcia that required joint decision included the "installation or storage of nuclear weapons," and "combat operations." Bartholomew and Moberly "agreed that established procedures governing US intelligence flights from British territory also apply to Diego Garcia." Bartholomew "also affirmed that the USG will continue the practice of consulting HMG prior to any politically sensitive use of Diego Garcia not covered" in the discussions.

This new understanding was critical to our plans for expanding our reliance and capabilities on Diego. Without this substantially expanded flexibility to operate, we would have had trouble justifying to ourselves, let alone Congress, the \$1 billion expansion program DOD has developed. Nor could we count on Diego as the main support base for the Rapid Deployment Force, should we have to surge it into the Indian Ocean.

While the temptation is great (especially in DOD) to do some chest-thumping about our success on Diego, we've got to let the word out very gradually. The Thatcher Government is insistent on this because they would face major criticism if we get much press play about our massive expansion plans and HMG's relinquishment of much of their control over our operations.

Another recent factor that will add to British concern is the July 4 decision of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to seek the return of Diego Garcia to independent Mauritius. Reportedly, return of Diego Garcia has been a previously stated political goal of Mauritius. Mauritian Prime Minister Ramgoolan was to have made a demand of the British Government during talks in London on July 7. We doubt, however, that the OAU interest and Ramgoolan's demarche will create a significant problem for either the British or ourselves.

Iraq

130. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, February 24, 1977

SUBJECT

U.S. Relations with Libya and Iraq

In response to a recent memorandum from the Secretary of State,² you asked why we should not initiate proposals for normalizing relations with Iraq and Libya.

We maintain active commercial relations with both nations, and Libya has recently indicated its interest in establishing normal diplomatic relations. Iraq is rapidly assuming a more important role in the economic and political activities of the Persian Gulf area and has resolved, at least for the moment, the border dispute and the Kurdish issue which had been a major source of irritation in its relations with Iran.

In both cases, I believe that we should be alert for opportunities to develop more normal relations. The timing, however, of any U.S. unilateral move in this direction will be extremely important since it will be interpreted by other Middle Eastern states as a signal of our intentions and could have major implications for the success of our efforts to promote an Arab-Israel settlement. Both Libya and Iraq are viewed as pariahs by their neighbors. Thus, I would recommend that any move on our part toward closer ties be carefully prepared in advance through consultations with our friends in the area, particularly the Egyptians and the Saudis, and I believe we should avoid any new

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Chron File, Box 130, Quandt: 2/23-28/77. Secret. Sent for information. Attached but not printed is a February 25 covering memorandum from Inderfurth to Quandt that reads: "The attached is for your information. What are your thoughts?" Also attached to Inderfurth's memorandum is a February 23 memorandum from Quandt and Sick to Brzezinski forwarding an earlier version of the February 24 memorandum to Carter.

² Reference is to a February 14 memorandum from Vance to Carter concerning U.S. relations with Libya and Iraq. In regard to Iraq, Vance noted that the nation had broken off relations with the United States during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war "on the grounds that the U.S. had directly assisted Israel militarily during that conflict." He stated that the Iraqi position concerning the reestablishment of relations derived from "the memory of U.S. support for the Kurds (indirectly through Iran) in the last stages of their insurrection ending in 1975." Vance explained that U.S. policy "since the 1967 break has remained that we are prepared to resume relations whenever the Iraqis so suggest, and without conditions." (Ibid.)

moves in that direction while our Middle East negotiations are in their present delicate state.³

³ In the margin below the paragraph Carter wrote: "ok, but *moves* to normalize relations may keep Iraq & Libya from trying to disrupt Mid E efforts. How can/could we move?"

131. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, April 15, 1977

SUBJECT

Improving Relations with Other Nations

On April 5 you asked me to explore ways of improving relations with Angola, Mozambique, Somalia and Iraq.² I gave you a preliminary report on April 6 of our present thinking on bettering relations with these countries and promised to follow up with more complete proposals.³ This memorandum offers some further thinking on steps we are considering or undertaking in pursuit of improved relations with these four nations.

[Omitted here are sections on Angola, Mozambique, and Somalia.]

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 46, Iraq: 12/76-5/77. Secret. Carter wrote "cc Cy J" in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum. Attached but not printed is an April 28 covering memorandum from Acting NSC Staff Secretary Michael Hornblow to Tarnoff returning the memorandum with Carter's marginal notes for Vance's information. Under an April 19 memorandum, Thornton sent Brzezinski Vance's memorandum and recommended that Brzezinski sign an attached covering memorandum to Carter. Brzezinski approved the April 21 covering memorandum and forwarded it and Vance's memorandum to Carter. (Ibid.)

² Reference is to an April 5 handwritten note from Carter to Vance and Brzezinski. Carter wrote: "To Cy and Zbig, We should move without further delay to probe for better relations with countries like Somalia, Iraq & even Mozambique & Angola. Let's meet soon, inventory our opportunities & obstacles, & decide on action. J.C." (Ibid.)

³ In the April 6 report, Vance told Carter that he had "sent word to the Iraqi Foreign Minister that we would be interested in having discussions with them. We have not heard back from that feeler." Vance also noted that he had endorsed a proposal to meet with the Iraqi Foreign Minister, but that: "We will have to be careful to consult the Syrians, whose animosity towards the Iraqis runs deep." (Ibid.)

Iraq

Iraq for some time has been seeking to re-orient its economy away from the Soviet Union and toward the West and generally to reduce its isolation in the Arab world. Since your election, certain Iraqi officials—including the Foreign Minister—have indicated to private American citizens interest in improving the U.S./Iraqi relationship, but have stopped short of suggesting a restoration of diplomatic relations. These messages have been conveyed to me at the suggestion of their Foreign Minister. As I have told you, we have responded both through U.S. sources and through Foreign Minister Fahmy of Egypt.⁴

Should matters develop satisfactorily, we will tell Baghdad that: (1) we remain prepared to resume diplomatic relations without conditions; (2) if the Iraqis believe this is premature, we would be prepared to have a dialogue on more senior, policy-making levels and would in this connection welcome the assignment of a more senior Iraqi diplomat in Washington; (3) Iraq might consider sending a special representative to Washington to discuss our relationship; and (4) I would be ready to talk privately with the Foreign Minister at the upcoming U.N. General Assembly, or at any other convenient occasion.

At the same time, we will make clear to the Iraqis that the U.S. will not support Kurdish resistance activities wherever and whenever they occur. Memories of our involvement in the last stage of the Kurdish rebellion against the Iraqi Government remain fresh, and the Iraqi Foreign Minister has given this as a reason for not restoring diplomatic relations.

Any highly visible move on our part to improve relations with Iraq could arouse Iranian and Saudi suspicions and complicate our increasingly warm relationship with Syria. Iraq has been doing its best to bring down Asad. We would want to consult with Asad, the Saudis, and the Shah and probably keep Israel informed, should we move to improve relations with Iraq. We might also have problems in justifying publicly in the U.S. a move toward warmer relations with Iraq at a time when Baghdad has been lending active support to international terrorist activities and has a poor record on human rights.⁵

⁴ Carter wrote in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph: "Why not ask Iran, Saudi A.—Syria, Israel—or tell them we need to improve relations with Iraq—to avoid disruption of peace efforts—."

⁵ Carter wrote in the margin below this paragraph: "Cy—Let's also monitor endangered relations with others—Pakistan, Brazil, Philippines, Indonesia, Peru, etc & let me help if necessary—J.C."

132. Telegram From the United States Interests Section in Baghdad to the Department of State¹

Baghdad, May 18, 1977, 0912Z

842. Subject: Under Secretary Habib Meets With Iraqi Foreign Minister.

1. Summary: Under Secretary Habib had two hour meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Hammadi on May 16. Habib expressed USG interest in normalizing US-Iraqi relations and explained USG views on a Middle East settlement. Hammadi expressed skepticism concerning possibility of achieving a settlement and said GOI not yet ready to resume diplomatic relations. Before doing so it would need evidence that USG not interfering in Iraqi internal affairs and that USG had altered in a significant way its policies of hostility toward the Arabs on Arab-Israeli issues. Habib gave assurance that USG does not and will not interfere in Iraqi internal affairs. He said that USG policies were not hostile to the Arabs and were consistent with Arab development and legitimate aspirations. End summary.

2. In response to our approach, USINT was informed by Foreign Ministry on May 15 that Under Secretary Habib would be welcome in Iraq. Habib arrived in Baghdad that same evening. On morning of May 16 Foreign Ministry Chief of Protocol arranged meeting between Habib and Foreign Minister Hammadi at noon. Habib and USINT Principal Officer Wiley attended meeting along with two note takers from the Foreign Ministry. Foreign Ministry arranged for TV photographers to film opening of meeting.

3. After opening courtesies, Habib delivered Presidential letter to Hammadi for delivery to President Bakr.² Habib said that he was prepared to discuss bilateral relations between Iraq and the United States and also to have an exchange of views on larger international issues such as the Arab-Israeli dispute. He emphasized that he was in Baghdad to listen to Iraqi views as well as to explain USG positions.

4. During conversation Habib repeated several times that USG is interested in improving relations with the Government of Iraq. It would be ten years next month since the Government of Iraq had broken diplomatic relations and USG believed the time had come to restore normal relations. Habib said USG is flexible on the modalities and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770176-0815. Secret; Immediate; Exdis.

² In telegram Tosec 40264/108992 to Vance in Tehran, May 13, the Department transmitted the text of Carter's letter to Bakr. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 46, Iraq: 12/76-5/77)

would be willing to proceed on the Algerian model where the United States and Algeria had agreed in principle to resume relations with specific dates to be mutually agreed at a later time. USG is also ready for immediate resumption should the GOI so desire.

5. Habib then said that we were aware that the GOI had some concerns over the history of the Kurdish situation. He said that he wished to give unequivocal assurances to the Government of Iraq that the USG is not now and will not in the future support any dissident activities against the Government of Iraq. This should no longer be an element that affects our bilateral relations.

6. Habib then gave a detailed explanation of the steps the USG had undertaken to play a useful role in bringing about an Arab-Israeli settlement. He said the USG hopes that it will be possible to convene the Geneva Conference in the fall of 1977 but recognizes that it will be necessary to lay some groundwork in advance if the conference is to be successful. He emphasized that the USG is encouraged by the fact that all parties to the conflict now seem to believe that a peaceful settlement would be in their interests and also by the fact that all seem to believe that the USG can play a useful role in bringing about a successful outcome.

7. Foreign Minister Hammadi thanked Habib for his presentation and said that the Government of Iraq also believes that the exchange of views can be useful and is always interested in listening to what the USG has to say on these important issues. He then said that the Kurdish problem is not a “terrifying” issue to Iraq and that the GOI would do whatever is necessary to face and solve the problem. He made the point that he thought the Soviet Union would be both more willing and more able to exploit minority problems in the Middle East than the United States. Habib asked if there was any indication that the Soviets were doing that now, and Hammadi replied that there were no such indications. Hammadi then said that our assurances on the Kurdish question represented a welcome change of moral and political attitude on the part of the United States and was welcomed by the Government of Iraq.

8. Hammadi said that the important question in the minds of the Iraqis was whether the new United States administration has adopted a new policy on the Palestine issue. Habib replied that the USG policy towards this issue is evolving but depends to a large extent on the views and attitudes of the concerned parties. He noted PLO refusal to accept the right of Israel to exist. There should be no doubt that the US will continue to support the existence of Israel as a state. Regarding Hammadi’s question on Palestine, the President has said that there should be a homeland for the Palestinians but we cannot define this further until the modalities of a settlement become clearer.

9. Hammadi then asked a series of questions concerning the policies of the concerned Arab states towards a settlement and seemed particularly interested in whether they had reached agreement among themselves. Habib explained that the positions of all parties are still evolving and there are differences in emphasis and on some issues there were differences of view.

10. Hammadi expressed skepticism that a settlement would be possible in view of the major differences between the Arab and Israeli point of view. Habib agreed that there were substantial differences but said USG was encouraged by the fact that all parties had accepted the settlement process which is now underway and welcomed the US effort to facilitate a settlement. All parties to the conflict now seemed to understand that a renewed outbreak of war would not serve their interests. Hammadi continued to express skepticism that the present process could in fact lead to a settlement. He said that Israel being militarily the stronger party would insist on conditions which, if accepted by the Arab governments, would lead to their downfall.

11. After considerable discussion of this issue, Habib returned to the subject of bilateral relations and said that he was pleased by the intellectual curiosity Hammadi displayed in discussing these issues and that it would be in the interests of both the US and Iraq to normalize relations so that we would have better access to each other's points of view and could continue this type of discussion on a more regular basis. Before replying directly Hammadi brought up the subject of Gulf security and said that the GOI believes that the US must somehow be involved in current efforts to negotiate a collective security agreement for the Gulf. Iraq believes that a collective security pact would only create a new military bloc and that would in turn generate counter blocs and lead to further conflict. Habib said that the USG was in no way involved in efforts to negotiate a collective security package in the Gulf, but that he would look into this subject further after he returned to Washington.

12. Hammadi then returned to the subject of bilateral relations and said that Iraq believes the US was the main supporter of Israel and that its creation and support of the state of Israel was an act of hostility towards the Arabs. He said that the United States had acted absolutely contrary to the basic interest of the Arab world by creating an alien state and colonizing it on the Arab homeland. The GOI did not expect the US to completely reverse its policy of support for Israel, but it was still waiting for evidence of a significant change in the US policy of hostility towards the Arabs. Iraq also wanted evidence that the USG had ceased its policy of interference in Iraqi internal affairs. At this point Habib interrupted to say that he was giving flat assurances both personally and officially that the USG was not interfering and would

not interfere in Iraq's internal affairs. As for the other conditions, the USG was endeavoring to assist the countries of the area to find a just and durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict that would respect the interests and concerns of all sides. The USG cannot accept the charge that it has been hostile towards the Arab nation nor that USG policies are inconsistent with the development and aspirations of the Arab world.

13. Habib said that we will remain ready to take steps to normalize relations whenever the Iraqis wish to do so, and in the meantime would continue to assign a senior officer as principal officer of the United States Interests Section in Baghdad. We would hope the Iraqis would do the same in their Interests Section in Washington. Hammadi said that he would be interested in meeting with Secretary Vance at a mutually convenient time and place. Habib asked if he would be in Paris for the CIEC Conference at the end of May and Hammadi said he would not because the Minister of Oil was responsible for these negotiations. Hammadi also said he would probably not be in the United States until the United Nations General Assembly in September but he would look forward to meeting Secretary Vance at that time if there was no convenient opportunity prior to then. Hammadi said that Vice Chairman Saddam Hussein would like to thank the USG for its help in providing medical assistance for his recent back problems and Habib said that we were pleased to have been of service.³ Earlier in the conversation Hammadi made a point of noting that Saddam Hussein was not able to meet with Habib because he is at home convalescing from his recent illness.

14. Comment: The meeting was not marked by any substantial progress, but the polemics were limited and the atmosphere cordial. The ice was broken and there is no doubt that the Iraqi Government wishes to maintain a political dialogue. They are cautious, but we did not expect any dramatic response from Hammadi. We have indicated our willingness for improving relations. We need to let it be considered thoroughly by the leadership and then follow up in appropriate fashion.

Wiley

³ At the request of the Iraqi Government, a team of American doctors visited Iraq to diagnose and treat Saddam Hussein's back problems. The doctors concluded that he did not need back surgery at the time. (Telegram 742 from Baghdad, May 4; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770156–0339)

133. Telegram From the Department of State to the United States Interests Section in Baghdad¹

Washington, October 13, 1977, 0100Z

245535. Subject: Secretary's Bilateral With Iraqi Foreign Minister.

1. Secretary, accompanied by Under Secretary Habib and Baghdad PO Peck, had 45-minute meeting with Foreign Minister Hammadi and Iraqi delegation, including UN PermRep Shahafi, in lounge of UN on Oct 3. (FYI: This was only bilateral which did not take place in Secretary's suite at One UN Plaza, and was held on neutral ground at Iraqi insistence. A translator was also present at Iraqi request, but he only translated Hammadi's remarks from Arabic to English. End FYI).

2. Meeting was reasonably cordial but restrained, with Iraqis focusing almost exclusively on their perception of principal obstacles to improved relations: American support for Israel, the question of a Palestinian homeland, and the issue of refugees. The Secretary underlined continued U.S. commitment to existence and security of Israel, but pointed out that we are working hard to resolve the Middle East problem in a manner acceptable to all the parties, thereby creating the conditions for a just and lasting peace in the area.

3. The Secretary pointed to the U.S.-Soviet joint statement² as an indication of the effort being put forth, and the recognition of the necessity to provide answers to the complicated question of Palestinian rights and a Palestinian homeland. He told Hammadi, who pressed for details, that our views are well known to the parties concerned, who must themselves make the final decisions at Geneva.³

4. Other issues of significance were Iraqi request for assurances that the U.S. was not involved in internal affairs or in activities related to formation of blocs in the Gulf area—assurances which were crisply and categorically given. The session was inconclusive so far as any movement toward renewing relations is concerned. Hammadi said there so far had been insufficient change in U.S. policy to justify renewal but indicated an Iraqi willingness to meet again, in the U.S. or in

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770372-0929. Confidential; Immediate. Drafted by Peck (NEA); cleared by Leo Reddy (S/S) and Frank Wisner (S/S); approved by Atherton. Sent for information to USUN, Kuwait, Sana, Jidda, Damascus, Amman, Cairo, and Tel Aviv.

² Released on October 1; see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978, Document 120.

³ Reference is to the Geneva Middle East Peace Conference.

Baghdad. The Secretary pointed out that Mr. Peck was being sent there in order to permit the dialogue to continue.

5. Copy of memcon being pouched.

Vance

134. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RPM 78–10407

Washington, October 31, 1978

Government In Iraq

PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

In the ten years the Baath Party has ruled Iraq,² it has brought a relative measure of stability and unity to a country long known for its instability, disunity, and high level of political violence. There are elaborate institutional mechanisms which ostensibly represent the divergent ethnic and political groups in Iraqi society and politics, but real power lies with President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, Revolutionary Command Council Deputy Chairman Saddam Husayn, and a few close advisers.

—Bakr and Saddam Husayn are in firm control of the country. They use economic and political carrots-and-sticks to create an impression of national solidarity and widespread support for the government, but their power is dependent on their control of the party and the state security and intelligence organizations, and on the acquiescence of the military.

—The relationship between Bakr and Saddam is one marked more by consensus on major issues than conflict over who wields power. They share close family ties and a common perception of the direction Iraq's policies should take. Their primary concerns are the stability of the regime, the unity of the country, and military and economic independence.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A, Production Case Files (1978), Box 4, Folder 47, Government in Iraq. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared in the Office of Regional and Political Analysis of the National Foreign Assessment Center.

² Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Bitar founded the Ba'ath Party in Syria in 1946 to pursue Arab nationalist and socialist agendas. The 1968 coup in Iraq brought the Ba'ath Party to power.

—Saddam's position has been strengthened considerably in the past four years. The ailing President Bakr apparently has willingly relinquished much of the conduct of government to the younger and healthier Saddam. Saddam, in turn, has orchestrated major governmental and party reorganizations which have consolidated his hold on both institutions and virtually assure his succession to the presidency.

—Institutions like the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), once the dominant governmental body, and the Baath Party's Regional Command, the party's policy-making body, have only a limited input in the decision-making process. They have symbolic importance, however, and could play a decisive role in any succession crisis.

—The party and the government are dominated, for the most part, by the country's Sunni Arab minority. Promotions and awards are frequently dependent more on family and village ties and personal loyalty than on party service.

—Although Communists and Kurds are represented in the Cabinet and the National Front, their presence is essentially cosmetic. There is no power-sharing and no room for political dissent.

—Saddam Husayn appears to rely on a half-dozen advisers, including Defense Minister Talfah, his brother-in-law, for advice on economic planning, military reorganization, and oil affairs. He seems to have no special consultant on foreign affairs and has developed no discernible relations of trust with anyone in either the government or the party.

—Bakr and Saddam Husayn have few rivals for power. The opposition—be it Communist, Kurd, rival Baathist, or military—seems to be in disarray, unable to mount an effective challenge to Saddam or alter the present governmental or political structure.

[Omitted here is the body of the Intelligence Memorandum.]

135. Action Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Saunders) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Newsom)¹

Washington, January 2, 1979

SUBJ

Improving Relations with Iraq

Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein has clearly indicated, in response to probes and questions by both the Italian² and Turkish Prime Ministers,³ that he is readier than ever before to resume diplomatic relations with the United States at some future moment. With Ecevit, Saddam Hussein laid down two conditions for resumption: that the United States not meddle in internal Iraqi affairs (while acknowledging that the U.S. has not been involved with the Kurds since 1975) and that relations be restored at a time when Iraq would not appear to others to be under U.S. pressure to do so.

This latest initiative comes at a time when Iraq gradually has been moving away from its heavy dependence on the USSR to a more balanced, less hostile position both within the Arab world and in its relations with the West. Iraq has shown a sense of responsibility in its continuing support for the Shah during this difficult period in Iran.

The President showed a keen interest in responding positively to these apparent Iraqi initiatives. In accord with a discussion you had with Draper before you went on vacation, we recommended to the Secretary the kind of statement we might pass on to Iraqi strongman Saddam Hussein. The Secretary decided that, rather than using Ecevit as an intermediary to convey our message, you should get in touch either with the Iraqi UN Ambassador in New York or with the head of the Iraqi Interests Section here. We subsequently recommended to the Secretary that the contact be with the Iraqi Interests Section head, since we know him to be a reliable reporter and a high Ba'ath Party official. The Iraqi representative in New York is in bad odor with

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P860132-0005. Secret; Nodis Attachment. Drafted by Draper; cleared by Alan H. Flanigan (EUR/SE). A "P" was handwritten at the top of the page, indicating that Newsom saw the memorandum.

² Not found.

³ In telegram 8823 from Ankara, December 11, 1978, Spiers described a meeting between Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit and Saddam Hussein wherein Saddam "reportedly indicated a desire to resume diplomatic relations with the U.S." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 46, Iraq: 6/77-12/78)

Saddam Hussein, having challenged his leadership some years ago, and is also poor in English.

After the foregoing decisions were made, we consulted with Hermann Eilts in Cairo as to Sadat's likely reactions to the response we would make. Hermann sensed that Sadat would be disturbed, but believed any U.S. response to the Iraqis could be explained as a cautious effort on our part to respond to Iraqi signals with a view to putting us in a better position to influence the Iraqis in various spheres, including in the peace process. He did recommend, however, that we inform Sadat in advance of your getting in touch with the Iraqis here and that we also make clear that we intend to make use of any dialogue that results from our exchanges with the Iraqis to encourage them to eschew terrorism and assassination.

Attached (Tab 1) is a cable instructing Eilts to inform Sadat of our planned response to the Iraqis and also giving instructions to Ankara, Rome, and Amman.⁴ At Tab 2 are talking points approved by the Secretary which you would use during your meeting with Mr. al-Khateeb in Washington.⁵ Since Hermann may have trouble getting in touch with Sadat in the next few days, we suggest you meet with Khateeb. Later this week. We will work with your office to set this up.

⁴ Attached but not printed. The telegram to Cairo at Tab 1 reads in part: "We recently received signals of Iraqi interest in restoration of U.S.-Iraq diplomatic relations. Consistent with our past policy, we would like to encourage Iraqi interest in this matter. Although the signals have come to us through intermediaries, we intend to respond directly." A handwritten note at the top of the first page indicates the telegram was sent on January 2.

⁵ The talking points at Tab 2 read in part: "The U.S. is prepared to resume diplomatic relations with Iraq whenever Iraq is ready to do so. We would welcome such a step." Mouhyi al-Khateeb was the head of the Iraqi Interests Section in Washington.

136. Telegram From the Department of State to the United States Interests Section in Baghdad¹

Washington, March 24, 1979, 2126Z

73833. Subject: Iraq: An Anglo-American Perspective.

1. Summary: During the recently concluded Anglo-American talks on the Persian Gulf,² the participants noted Iraq's efforts to be perceived within the rest of the Arab world as something other than a Soviet puppet. Within the last month or so, the GOI has made overtures to the British about warming relations and over the past six months has been taking a more adroit and active diplomatic role in Arab fora (e.g., the Baghdad Summit,³ mediatory efforts in Yemen).⁴ The GOI is, in British eyes "formidable and relatively efficient." Iraq is the country most likely to be affected by events in Iran, given its large Kurdish and Shi'a populations. The Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty appears to have cost Sadat and Egyptians much of the support they had among Arab intellectuals. The Iraqis seem to be consciously trying to fill this void. In the process they seem to have outmaneuvered Saudi Arabia and other Arab moderates. End summary.

2. Iraq and its policy in the Arab world was one of the principal topics discussed during the recently concluded Anglo-American talks on the Persian Gulf. During the last six months Iraq has become active diplomatically in an effort to improve its standing in the Arab world. Iraq's adept management of the Baghdad Summit Conference, its present intention to push for prompt action to implement Summit sanctions against Sadat once a treaty has been signed, and its mediatory efforts in Yemen are examples of this effort, as is its bid for unity with Syria.⁵ Iraq's persistence and the apparently genuine nature of at least some aspects of the Iraqi/Syrian rapprochement cannot escape the attention

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790137–0930. Confidential; Priority. Drafted by Charles G. Currier (NEA/ARP); cleared by Wat T. Cluverius (NEA/ARN) and A. Peter Burleigh (NEA/ARP); approved by Crawford. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Algiers, Beijing, Cairo, Damascus, Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, London, Manama, Muscat, Paris, Rabat, Sana, Tehran, Amman, Moscow, Islamabad, New Delhi, Tel Aviv, and Tripoli.

² Held March 15–16, the Anglo-American talks addressed regional security threats. Crawford prepared a summary representing the consensus view of the participants in the talks, which was distributed in telegram 69172 to multiple posts, March 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790130–0863)

³ See footnote 6, Document 12.

⁴ See Document 274.

⁵ Saddam and Syrian President Asad held talks in late January to discuss unification of Iraq and Syria. (William Bramigin, "Events in Iran Spur Iraq-Syria Unification Plan," *The Washington Post*, January 30, 1979, p. A12)

of other Arab states. In the British view (with which the U.S. concurred), Iraq wants to be perceived as something other than a Russian puppet.

3. Complementing the increased tempo of Iraqi diplomatic activity in Arab circles have been its long-standing efforts to improve commercial ties with the West and, within the last three to four weeks, efforts to warm its diplomatic ties with the British. Sir Anthony Parsons of the F.C.O. noted that the U.K.'s Foreign Secretary⁶ might visit Iraq in the next one to two months. In the opinion of the British participants, the GOI is "formidable and relatively efficient."

4. The British feel that Iraq is the country most likely to be affected by the Iranian situation, especially given Iraq's large Kurdish and Shi'a populations. While there have been few major signs of increased Iraqi concern about these groups, both the U.S. and the U.K. teams expect the GOI will continue to maintain a close watch over domestic developments and to steer a course in its relations with Iran that is least likely to provoke Khomeini and the new government.

5. The British noted that the Iraqi Government appears to be confident as it moves to win from Sadat and the Egyptians a significant measure of support among the Arab intelligentsia. The U.K. feels there is considerable evidence that Sadat and the Egyptians have lost ground among Arab intellectuals. In particular, the British team noted that as Iraq seems to be returning to the Arab fold, the other Arab states have been engaging in wishful thinking about current trends in Iraqi foreign policy. This increased respectability within the Arab world is one of the cards the Iraqi Government may be able to play. The other Arab states—especially the moderates—may be pulled closer to the Iraqi position by their desire to achieve Arab unanimity.

6. The American side agreed that Iraq's foreign policy has become substantially more active and effective. It also concurred with the British that the Arab moderates currently seem to fear Iraq less than before. One year ago, during the effort to win congressional approval of the sale of F-15 aircraft to Saudi Arabia, Iraq was portrayed as one of the enemies of Saudi Arabia. We have not recently heard Saudi Arabia or any Gulf state—except the UAE—describe the Iraqis as a threat. The Kuwaitis now appear to view Iraq as quite moderate and some responsible Kuwaitis have denied that Iraq poses a threat to Kuwait—perhaps an example of the wishful thinking described above. The UAE still perceives Iraq as a continuing threat, however, its leaders seem to feel that the improvement in Iraqi/Syrian relations is due primarily to events in Iran and not to any particular moderation of Iraqi views.

⁶ David Owen.

7. In addition to playing a more active role in the Middle East, Iraq has devoted noticeable attention to the question of stability in the region. Common opposition to the Egyptian-Israeli treaty contributes to the maintenance of a strong relationship between Iraq and the USSR. Nevertheless, being wary of Soviet encroachment in the Middle East, Iraq will continue to build its credentials as a member of the non-aligned movement and may encourage other Arab states to do so as well. To the extent that it can mobilize Arab opinion against Sadat, Iraq constitutes a threat to U.S. and European efforts to bring peace to the Middle East. At the same time, Iraqi interests in maintaining stability in the Middle East and especially in the Gulf coincide to some extent with those of the West, as does Iraqi wariness of expanded Soviet influence in the region. Nevertheless, in the absence of any dramatic change in the situation, there is little likelihood that the political gap between Iraq and the U.S. will be substantially narrowed, though there may be some improvement in Iraq's relations with Western European states.

Vance

137. National Intelligence Estimate¹

NIE 36.2–1–76

Washington, June 21, 1979

IRAQ'S ROLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

[Omitted here are the foreword and the table of contents.]

PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

Iraq's Ba'thist leaders are determined to perpetuate themselves in power, to impose their national, socialist, and secular philosophy on the country, and to expand the state's power and ability to wield influence abroad. Iraq will be a state to reckon with in the Middle East for at least the five-year period of this Estimate. It has both the will and the means to pursue radical goals and will complicate US efforts

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 34, Iraq: 1/77–3/80. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. A typed notation reads in part: "The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, and the National Security Agency participated in the preparation of this estimate. The Director of the CIA issued this estimate; the National Foreign Intelligence Board concurred, except where noted in the text."

to fashion a comprehensive Middle East peace, maintain stability among the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, and assure adequate oil supplies to the West.

The 40-year-old civilian Saddam Husayn is likely to succeed the ailing President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, a military man and Ba'thist of impeccable pre-1958 revolutionary credentials. We cannot predict whether the Iraqi military, arbiters of power since the 1930s, will tolerate a purely civilian regime. However, we would expect relations between the military and the political leadership to be less smooth after Saddam's succession, at least until officers personally loyal to him occupy the most important command positions. We do not know enough about the political attitudes of military officers to do more than indicate that an orderly Saddam succession is not a sure thing—although it is clearly the most likely development.

Ba'thist power is firmly entrenched, relying on multiple security services, regimentation of the population through the party and its associated "people's" organizations, and summary disciplining of any who might dare to differ with the regime. The country as a whole is prosperous because of large and growing oil revenues: it has achieved a 10-percent annual rate of growth since 1974 without suffering undue inflation. There are, however, serious economic problems that will take years to solve; skilled and semiskilled labor is in very short supply, and agricultural production has stagnated.

The Baghdad regime will continue to feel insecure about Iran until that country acquires a government with which Baghdad can build a satisfactory nonconfrontational relationship. The Iraqis also fear that the Islamic movement in Iran will infect their own Shia majority, which has long felt mistreated by Sunni-dominated governments in Baghdad. They are clearly worried that the Ayatollah Khomeini—who spent 14 years as an exile at the Shia theological school in An Najaf, Iraq—sees himself as a religious leader whose influence should extend beyond the borders of Iran. Another concern is that lack of central government control in Tehran will allow arms to flow from Iran to Iraqi Kurds. Baghdad will probably have to continue to use military force to control disaffection in Shia and Kurdish areas.

The regime's desire to play a leading role in the region and a concern about unsettled conditions in Iran will, in the near term, push it toward nonconfrontational relations with many other Arab states. Although muting their policy of subversion, Iraqi Ba'th leaders will continue to support the development of party organizations in other Arab states and spread Ba'thist socialist doctrine throughout the region.

Baghdad will continue to rely on the Soviets for arms and other technological support, but Iraq is becoming increasingly concerned about the USSR's support for such clients as Ethiopia, South Yemen, and

Afghanistan. Should the USSR be drawn into Afghanistan's troubles to the extent of providing troops, Iraqi-Soviet relations would take a sharp downturn. In any event, Iraq will balance its relations with the Soviets by strengthening ties with Western industrial states. This policy will include continued commercial ties with major European states, as well as military purchases from France and others.

Long a price hawk in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, Iraq will continue to seek crude oil price rises that run ahead of world inflation rates. World supply/demand tightness, expected to continue in the 1980s, will increase Iraqi influence in OPEC decision-making, and Iraqi production decisions will have much greater impact on the international oil market. Current production is about 3 million barrels a day. Although we do not know what level Iraq plans to achieve in the next five years, we expect it to be substantially lower than Iraq's maximum sustainable capacity.

The implications for US interests of the likely course of events in Iraq and of that country's policies are not promising. The political framework in which Baghdad's rulers operate is largely hostile to US policies in the region. Iraq will not change its opposition to the US approach toward the Arab-Israeli problem unless it sees convincing evidence that a Palestinian state is going to appear in the West Bank and Gaza, that Syria is retrieving Golan, and that Lebanese Maronite factions are no longer being supported by Israel. It will rather use the opposition of other states to US efforts with respect to a settlement to try to reduce US influence in the area as a whole.

The current level of relations with the United States is sufficient to satisfy Iraqi desires for access to US technology. Iraq's leaders will not feel compelled to improve political relations with the United States unless they see progress toward a settlement of the Palestine issue, or they are jolted by some major Soviet advance in the area such as the emergence of a leftist government in Iran. The reliance of certain states on Iraqi oil will put pressure on them to accommodate Iraqi desires. Pressure on France (Iraq's principal friend and contact in the Western world) and Italy to live up to commitments to provide major nuclear components may be quite strong, with obvious implications for US nuclear nonproliferation policy.

Despite Iraq's cooperation with the USSR, the regime is not anxious to see it or the United States either very active or very successful in the region. Baghdad's rulers have long made known their concern about Soviet actions in the area. In foreseeable circumstances, Baghdad will work to limit Soviet influence in the Middle East. The emergence—or perhaps only the threat of such emergence—of a leftist and Moscow-oriented regime out of the turbulent conditions in Iran would profoundly upset the Ba'th leaders. Such a development would cause the

leaders to assess their external relations and could, if other conditions were right, lead to a major change—on the scale of that in 1975 with Iran²—in relations with the United States. Such a development looks impossible from today's perspective, but the Ba'ith regime is, within the bounds of its goals and requirements, flexible. Such flexibility is not to be confused with moderation; this is a regime led by extremists and chauvinists, determined to make the Iraq they run as self-reliant and independent as possible.

Until a year ago Iraq was considered the pariah state of the Arab world. Its relations with most neighbors were poor because of its reputation for ruthlessness and its support for terrorism and regional radical groups. The Camp David accords shocked the Iraqis into a reassessment of their contentious policies and the adoption of a new tack: they ended their bitter feud with Syria and provided strong leadership in organizing an Arab consensus against the peace terms negotiated by President Sadat. Iraq is riding high in its newfound role as a regional leader and may move on to assume the leadership of the nonaligned movement in 1982.

Iraq's rapprochement with Syria has enhanced Baghdad's ability to play a major role in the Arab-Israeli conflict and has already damaged efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace settlement. While the two countries are not likely to achieve complete unity, their self-proclaimed goal, cooperation between them on selected issues is likely to increase.

Although the basing in Syria of more than token Iraqi forces is unlikely because of the probability of Israeli preemption, Iraq's likely contribution of expeditionary forces in a war with Israel has increased to five divisions (from the two divisions which saw combat in 1973). Iraq has already expanded and improved its armed forces more than any other Arab state since the 1973 war. Specifically, Iraq has:

- Doubled its military manpower and its armored forces.
- Increased its inventory of combat aircraft by almost 65 percent.
- Expanded its air defense forces to nine times the 1973 level.

With the second largest and the best equipped armed forces of any of the Arab states by 1982, Iraq will, indeed, be a state to reckon with in the Middle East.

[Omitted here is the body of the Estimate.]

² Reference is to the March 1975 Algiers Agreement between Iraq and Iran following a Kurdish rebellion in Iraq that Iran had aided. In the agreement, Iraq acquiesced to Iranian demands to redefine the Shatt al-Arab waterway boundary; Iran promised to close its borders to Iraqi Kurds and to cease aid to the rebellion in Iraq.

138. Telegram From the United States Interests Section in Baghdad to the Department of State¹

Baghdad, July 17, 1979, 0957Z

1528. Subj: (C) Passing the Torch: Saddam Is Solidly In Charge.
Ref: Baghdad 1527.²

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: President Bakr's dramatic July 16 abdication was unexpected, but the smooth succession of Saddam Hussein et al was not. Health may indeed have been the real reason, but the timing of Bakr's exit may be fortuitous in terms of governmental stability at least in the short run. Number of factors combine to leave Saddam with a firm grip on a relatively solid regime. End summary.

3. Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr was known to be old (particularly for his age—62) and not terribly healthy. The general consensus of outsiders' opinions, however, was that the old gentleman would totter around for some years to come, probably with a steadily decreasing role other than the symbolic leader of the country. Over the past several months, there were signs of occasional weakness, but nothing of sufficient duration or impact to lead to a conclusion that he was about to resign.

4. The July 16 announcement was therefore a surprise. The extent to which there was actually a sudden deterioration in Bakr's health or in his desire to conserve what is left of it in the quieter role of dictator-emeritus, is unclear. The pressures of office have indeed grown, as Iraq has become less and less isolated, and while Saddam was carrying the major share of the role, even the ceremonial responsibilities were taking their toll on Bakr's flagging resources (Baghdad 1404).³

5. The announcement may have been a surprise in terms of its timing but the handing over of the Presidential and leadership responsibilities to Saddam was not a surprise in any sense. He had long since been designated as Bakr's handpicked successor, and the passing of

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790323–0610. Secret; Immediate. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Algiers, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Dhahran, Doha, Jidda, Khartoum, Kuwait, London, Manama, Mogadiscio, Muscat, Rabat, Sana, Tehran, Tripoli, and Tunis.

² Telegram 1527 from Baghdad, July 17, outlined the changes Saddam made to the Cabinet after Bakr's resignation on July 16. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790322–1080)

³ Telegram 1404 from Baghdad, June 28, evaluated Bakr's health and overall appearance during a series of recent public events, noting that during a June 19 press conference following a visit by Syrian President Asad, Bakr had a "very noticeable slackness about the face that made him look, with his glasses on, like a badly dazed Groucho Marx." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790299–0803)

the torch has been as smooth as everyone anticipated. The clear indications that Izzat Ibrahim had been chosen as Saddam's successor (Baghdad 1524)⁴ was the only real sign—in retrospect—that the announcement of a major change was in the offing but this tends to reinforce rather than weaken the assessment that Saddam is taking over a relatively unified and apparently solid regime.

6. How long it will stay that way, given low-level rumors of rivalries and factions is highly problematical. The timing of Bakr's departure however, will probably on balance be a stabilizing factor. While there are a number of serious problems facing the leadership, in particular the possibilities of increased domestic unrest resulting from the Kurdish problem and the as-yet unmeasured threat of active Shia dissidence, the GOI is at or near the pinnacle of its aspirations. Thus far, it appears that the threat posed by the Shia majority may not be as major as early signs of trouble indicated. The recent announcement of improved relations with Iran should assist in reducing the potential for unrest to some degree, and there is also a feeling that even those who are not strongly in favor of the secular Baathi regime would prefer it to the chaos and anarchy that might result from an Islamic upheaval a la Iran.

7. To the extent that Kurds and Shia can be eliminated from the list of critical internal threats to the new regime, and the local Communists in their present decimated condition ignored, the only real question mark is the military. Whether or not Saddam (a civilian) can function as Commander-in-Chief with Adnan Khairollah (until recently a Lieutenant Colonel), as Deputy Commander-in-Chief and MinDef will be determined with the passage of time. Our preliminary estimate is that the efforts that Saddam and the party have made to purge and realign armed forces leadership over the past several years, combined with the dramatically heightened increase in the threat from Iran, are probably sufficient to hold the military in line.

8. The party itself has always been considered relatively unified, and the recent upsurge in Iraq's Middle Eastern—and world—role should act to keep the militants happy. Saddam takes over a nation that has gained remarkable international stature in a remarkably short space of time, is wealthy and growing wealthier, faces an external threat which, imperfectly, tends to strengthen rather than weaken support

⁴ Telegram 1524 from Baghdad, July 16, observed: "In the midst of the July 14–17 celebrations [commemorating the anniversary of the July 1958 overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy], MinInt Izzat Ibrahim had suddenly emerged more solidly than ever before in the number three position of the Baath regime. More importantly, he may have become the heir presumptive to the deputy chairmanship of the RCC, once Saddam Husayn inevitably replaces the aging President Bakr." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790328–0158)

for the changeover, and has already demonstrated considerable ability in handling minor difficulties that may occur.

9. This latter point, of course, is one of the most significant intangibles. Saddam Hussein has impressed a lot of people with his adroitness, shrewdness, and toughness. The so-called Tikriti clan i.e. the top handful, has moved upwards more or less as a bloc. The conformity of their views, opinions, objectives and methods may not be perfect, but it also does not appear to be widely divergent. They have had experience in working well together and with their enhanced positions should be able to do so in the future. Thus, in sum, it is reasonable to anticipate a further period of relative stability in Iraq. Barring the unforeseen, which in this country takes in a broad range of possibilities, Saddam Hussein is quite likely to be in power for a long time.⁵

⁵ The telegram is unsigned.

139. Telegram From the United States Interests Section in Baghdad to the Department of State¹

Baghdad, February 4, 1980, 0947Z

231. Subject: Saddam Hussein: Part I—The Man. Ref: CR 79–14508, August 1979.²

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: For as long as he remains in power, Saddam Hussein will be the single individual guiding and directing Iraq's domestic and foreign policies. This message attempts to analyze him as a person and as a leader, the first step in determining what these policies are likely to be.

3. It is highly indicative of the nature of Iraq that Saddam, who was number two for 10 years is still something of an enigma. There is a marked divergence of views as to what he really believes and stands for, as opposed—perhaps—to what he says. Some maintain that he is a rational and pragmatic nationalist; others believe he is a ruthless and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800064–0960. Secret. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Amman, Ankara, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Djibouti, Doha, Jidda, Khartoum, Kuwait, London, Manama, Moscow, Muscat, Sana, Tel Aviv, Tunis, and Tripoli (by pouch).

² Not found.

ambitious ideologue. He may on occasion appear to be the former but is often, and perhaps more significantly, the latter. End summary.

4. An effort to determine accurately whether Saddam is a closet moderate or a rigid megalomaniac is difficult but potentially useful. As long as he is in charge (which could well be a long time), his personality and beliefs will direct the nation. Last August's executions eliminated a part of the leadership which allegedly had his ear, and probably silenced most of those remaining who might otherwise have offered significantly different viewpoints or opinions.³ The Iraqi system does not provide for meaningful inputs from anyone outside the very topmost levels of government, and the security apparatus effectively acts to rule out other possible signs of divergence. Isolated from the people by the apparatus that he has helped to create and from his associates by the fate of their erstwhile colleagues, Saddam is likely to rely increasingly on his own beliefs and views in running the country. It is axiomatic that internal and external developments can act to alter or delay preferred courses of action, if only temporarily, but basic objectives and means should remain the same.

5. As far as we are aware, few U.S. officials have had contacts with Saddam, but he has not been totally inaccessible. Several diplomats have relatively frequent dealings with him and a number of journalists, including two Americans, have conducted lengthy interviews. Over the past 24 months we have had numerous conversations with these individuals in an effort to develop an understanding of Iraq's undisputed leader. We have carefully watched his frequent television appearances, studied his speeches, noted his decisions and actions. On this basis, we believe that a number of reasonably sound assessments and rational estimates can be made of certain aspects of his personal beliefs and objectives, and therefore Iraq's.

6. A man of 42 who has spent many years in exceptionally and increasingly powerful positions, Saddam appears to be an egoist of massive proportions. Thoroughly accustomed to adulation, obedience, unctuous publicity, slavish devotion and servility, he acknowledges the cheers of the masses with a cool, distant smile and an upraised royal hand. (Stalking majestically into a building, a cape-like abaya over his double-breasted suit, he will drop the abaya backwards off his shoulders without looking to see if there is anyone to catch it. There is.)

³ On August 8, 1979, 21 officials of the Iraqi Government, including 5 members of the Revolutionary Command Council, were executed for allegedly taking part in a conspiracy against the government. ("Baghdad Executes 21 Officials for an Alleged Plot," *The New York Times*, August 9, 1979, p. A4)

7. Saddam is a handsome and striking figure, relatively tall (at about 5'10"), always dressed in an elegant, impeccable Western manner. In repose, his face is youthful but strong and stern, an impression heightened by his heavy Baathi moustache. He has a magnificent smile, however, which transforms his appearance dramatically to one of openness, friendliness and warmth. He exudes confidence and self-assurance to the level of arrogance, but always moves, gestures, and speaks in a slow, measured and almost regal manner. His speeches, which are generally given without notes, tend to be highly prolix, convoluted, elliptical and long. They are laden with personal pronouns, slogans, buzzwords, platitudes and—above all—ideology. They are usually delivered as if from the throne, aimed downward to the unenlightened. Saddam is not a gifted speaker; his delivery is a monotone interspersed with long, frequent silences during which he stares directly and balefully at the audience.

8. In much of what he says and does, it is evident that Saddam seeks to be a Nasser, or a Castro, beloved by the masses. He is seriously lacking in many of the personality characteristics that would contribute to the development of real popularity, except perhaps inside Iraq, and does not really have the necessary common touch even here. Charisma, to Western observers at least, disappears as soon as he opens his mouth, but it is widely conceded that he has a strong self-image as a new Salladin,⁴ to whom comparisons are often drawn.

9. Saddam's appearance, personality, and mannerisms create a very impressive leader image. He gives every indication of believing that he is one, on a scale that probably transcends the present borders of Iraq. His aspirations seem global, and Iraq has the funds to make his pretensions worth serious attention.

10. Saddam has been an active militant all his adult life. Thrown out of secondary school for political activities, he has participated actively in every Baathi coup, including the unsuccessful 1959 assassination attempt against Kassim.⁵ In this effort, age 22, he was one of the trigger-men and was wounded (an incident he enjoys recounting, with evident heavy nostalgia for those days of direct action). He has twice fled the country when coups failed (1959 and 1963)⁶ and was imprisoned in 1964 after discovery of a plot to assassinate Aref. It should not be unexpected if, after a lifetime of total immersion in and

⁴ Muslim military leader and first Sultan of Egypt and Syria who defeated the Crusaders at the Battle of Hattin on July 4, 1187.

⁵ See *Foreign Relations*, 1958–1960, vol. XII, Near East Region; Iraq; Iran; Arabian Peninsula, Document 205.

⁶ See *Foreign Relations*, 1961–1963, vol. XVIII, Near East, 1962–1963, Documents 153, 154, 159, 169, and 174.

dedication to the principles and goals of the Baath Party, Saddam were unyielding and rigid on these matters.

11. During the last few years, however, he has managed to develop a reputation in some quarters as a rather flexible, relatively moderate and reasonably pragmatic leader. This seems to have resulted to a large degree from the impressions generated in meetings with leaders from other countries, particularly the moderate Arabs but also Europeans and third-worlders. In conversations, Saddam evidently comes across as intelligent, dynamic, capable, shrewd and tough, but reasonable. He has a great deal of personal charm, knows how to use eye contact and firm handshakes, can be a good listener (depending upon the subject and who is speaking) and has a general made highly-favorable impact on his interlocutors. As Iraq has emerged from its period of virtually total political isolation, with the clout that comes with oil, Saddam has emerged as a leader of considerable and growing stature. His performance in inter-Arab councils, especially his successful efforts in organizing and directing the Baghdad Summit,⁷ as well as at the Havana NAM,⁸ earned praise and enhanced the image of a seasoned and rational statesman. We believe it is significant that this is how he is seen by those over whom he has no direct control.

12. The view of Saddam the statesman conflicts rather sharply with the repressive and often brutal manner in which he deals with any evidence of internal divisiveness. USINT has earlier referred to him as a good-looking thug with high-developed sartorial tastes. He is certainly not slow or stupid, nor is he totally without a certain flexibility, but he can be a vicious and intemperate despot whenever circumstances require—if circumstances also permit. This is not a side that is normally revealed to non-Iraqis, and never in bilateral conversations, but it may be a better indication of the real Saddam and the real Iraq he heads.

13. There is little question that Saddam believes in running a tight ship domestically. No dissent of any kind is tolerated. The government has amply demonstrated its readiness to apply whatever force is required, without hesitation, to repress any group that it feels offers a threat to stability: Shia, Communists, Kurds, whatever. The only thing that has thus far kept Iraq from being a totally effective police state, as opposed to being just a total police state (which it is), is the relative ineffectiveness of the organizations involved. Tariq Aziz, as theologian and spokesman, put internal policies in comprehensible terms a short time ago and his words merit repetition. Speaking to a Western news-

⁷ See footnote 6, Document 12.

⁸ The Summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement took place in Havana, Cuba September 3–9, 1979.

man on the possibility of Shia unrest last June, he said, “if there are those in Iraq who seek martyrdom, the government is prepared to accommodate them”.

14. Any vestigial doubts as to Saddam’s personal views on this general subject should have been dissipated by the actions taken against some of his closest personal associates last August. It is generally agreed that the essence of the crime was more the fact of questioning his absolute authority than any substance upon which the questions might have been based. Adnan Hussein, et al, were executed by a group of volunteers from all over the country who emptied their Kalishnikov’s into the condemned in the presence of the remaining RCC members. There were no further questions.

15. If it is possible to secure agreement on what Saddam/Iraq believes is appropriate inside the country, there is perhaps still room for discussion as to the ultimate objectives of foreign policy. While some countries have peripheral interest in the manner in which Iraq conducts its internal affairs, actions outside the borders probably have greater potential significance. It is obvious that Iraq’s ability to control events on the other side of its frontiers is limited by both internal and external circumstances, and it is equally obvious that there may be considerable slippage between the spoken word and the actual objective, but there is still some utility in examining the logical bases for the relationships between Iraq and certain definable segments in the outside world.

16. In Iraq, it may be that Oriental despotism of the traditional type is the only way to survive; there is certainly historical precedence. The fabric of the nation is of recent creation and lacks cohesiveness in a number of important respects. An Iraqi may view domestic behavior in a different light than an outsider, but that particular aspect of Saddam’s personality may be of importance in considering what can perhaps be expected whenever he has the option to behave in his normal manner.

17. Not well educated himself (his law degree, earned while he was Vice President, is somewhat suspect), surrounded by equally inexperienced and uneducated sycophants, but a highly-competent and shrewd tribal chieftain, Saddam has only his own experiences and beliefs to guide him. His evident willingness to rely on violence, which he has employed beyond Iraq’s borders with some frequency, should be sufficient to give pause to neighbors, and others, who maintain he is a moderate. Part II will discuss this subject.⁹

Peck

⁹ Part II, telegram 488 from Baghdad, March 4, evaluated Saddam’s policies and political objectives. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800119–1216)

**140. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the
Department of State (Tarnoff) to the President's Assistant for
National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹**

Washington, March 7, 1980

SUBJECT

Iraq's "Pan-Arab Charter"

You asked in your memorandum of February 26 that Iraq's proposed Pan-Arab Charter be analyzed to determine whether we might promote a positive outcome of any Arab consideration of it.²

It is important to note that the text of this Charter was presented in a public speech in Baghdad in which Saddam Hussein acidly criticized the past and present actions of the Iraqi communists. In that context, therefore, our analysis shows that, although some of the Charter's provisions are directed against both superpowers, it is aimed principally at the Soviets. This is consistent with the attitudes taken by the Iraqis towards the Soviets in the aftermath of the invasion of Afghanistan.

At the same time, the Charter strongly rejects any foreign military presence or bases in any Arab state and calls for resisting such developments by all available means, including by isolation and political boycott. If the Charter is ultimately accepted by a sizeable number of Arab states, this provision of the Charter could cause problems as we seek access to facilities in Oman and Somalia. We had expected, however, that Iraq and others would oppose our understandings with Oman in any event.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 34, Iraq: 1/77-3/80. Secret; Nodis. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates that Brzezinski saw it. Brzezinski wrote Sick's initials on the first page of the memorandum and drew an arrow pointing to them.

² On February 8, Saddam proposed a Pan-Arab Charter, "which would 'regulate relations among the Arab countries' and their 'commitments' to non-Arab states." The Charter also called "upon Arab states not to grant 'any kind of facility to foreign forces under any pretext'," and encouraged "'resisting and boycotting' any Arab regime not adhering to this policy." (Telegram 39105 to USNATO and IntSum Collective, February 12; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800076-0551). On February 26, Brzezinski sent memoranda to Turner and Vance. His memorandum to Turner reads: "After reviewing the elements of President Saddam Hussein's proposal for an Arab national charter, the President noted that we should analyze the charter proposal to determine whether we might promote a satisfactory outcome through the Saudis and others." The memorandum to Vance was similarly worded. Both memoranda are in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 46, Iraq: 1/79-2/80.

The Iraqis are now trying to convene an inter-Arab summit to approve the Charter. It seems likely that a majority of the Arab states will attend, although Syria is now undertaking efforts to convene a separate conference of the so-called “steadfastness” states, possibly as a countermove to the relatively positive response Saddam Hussein has already received to his Charter proposal.

Some of the Charter principles are indeed compatible with our longer range principles (e.g., commitment to international law pertaining to the use of water, airspace, and zones by any state; resolution of disputes by peaceful means; affirmation of the principles of nonaggression, neutrality, and non-alignment, etc.)

Next steps

In the light of this analysis, we believe any effort we might undertake to exert influence directly on inter-Arab deliberations would be risky and could perhaps unravel the generally anti-Soviet direction the Charter initiative has already taken. At the same time, it would appear to be to our advantage to work indirectly and to find occasions to:

- reemphasize publicly that the U.S. does not intend to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of the countries in the region, whether Arab or non-Arab, and that the U.S. supports the independence and integrity of all these countries;

- make it known that, in view of increasing Soviet expansionism in the region, we believe that a more united Arab stand is needed to strengthen the ability of the individual Arab and non-Arab states in the Middle East to resist Soviet penetration;

- explain that our response to the Soviet threat in the region has been prudent, reemphasizing that the U.S., while seeking to enhance its capacity to bring military power to bear in the region, does not seek bases in the area;

- continue to seek ways to create a more effective dialogue with Iraq on events in the Gulf and Southwest Asia.

Peter Tarnoff³

Executive Secretary

³ Deputy Executive Secretary Raymond G.H. Seitz signed for Tarnoff.

141. Article in the *National Intelligence Daily*¹

Washington, June 18, 1980

IRAQ: New Directions

Iraq is trying to build a leadership role by exploiting Egypt's isolation. Baghdad is playing on the refusal of most moderate Arabs to support the US peace process and on their doubts about US reliability. Trends in the Arab world probably will continue to favor the Iraqi effort. A key question is whether the process will develop a momentum of its own, permanently changing Baghdad's orientation. Alternatively, the still-strong ideological and confrontational aspects of Iraqi politics could reassert themselves and limit accommodation with the conservative monarchies. [paragraph classification not declassified]

Iraq, traditionally the Arab outcast, has been the beneficiary of regional developments over the past two years that have weakened its main competitors—Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. President Saddam Husayn has moved aggressively to exploit this opening. His goals are to organize the Persian Gulf under Iraqi leadership, establish Baghdad as the new pole for Arab politics, and create a nonaligned image. [paragraph classification not declassified]

Adjustments in Policy

Iraq's traditional ideological rigidity and emphasis on subversion have given way to greater pragmatism and moderation in dealing with other Arab governments. In addition, close identification with the USSR is being modified in favor of a more balanced posture between the superpowers. [paragraph classification not declassified]

To give form to these policies, the Iraqis have:

- Reduced support for terrorist groups.
- Developed closer political and, in some cases, security ties with Arab monarchs.
- Increased purchases of Western arms and technology from France, Italy, and Japan.
- Cut oil shipments to the USSR.
- Criticized Soviet policies toward Afghanistan, South Yemen, and Ethiopia.
- Raised oil production by nearly 1 million barrels per day and increased sales to Third World countries in return for political support.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00466R, Intelligence Publications Files (1980), Box 3, Folder 2, National Intelligence Daily. Secret.

—Pressed for a new “Arab Charter” that seeks to make Iraq the center of Pan-Arab opposition to outside meddling. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

Implications and Constraints

Although present Iraqi policy represents a shift away from the USSR and toward better relations with Iraq’s moderate neighbors, it also is designed to detach those governments from their security ties to the US. Baghdad is seeking to promote neutralism on disputes involving the superpowers, militant Arab nationalism on the Palestinian question, and more aggressive use of Arab economic leverage for political purposes. Such militant pan-Arabism, however, would not necessarily be an effective bulwark against further Soviet advances in the region. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

The pace of Iraq’s policy shift has in any case slowed because of several developments in the region. These include the collapse last year of Baghdad’s rapprochement with Syria amid charges of Syrian involvement in coup-plotting. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

The Iranian hostage situation and particularly the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan have refocused superpower attention on the Gulf, thus complicating Baghdad’s drive for predominance. The deterioration in Iraq’s relations with the regime in Iran has been yet another factor. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

Internal unrest, in particular, has acted as a constraint on Saddam Husayn. Iran has had some success in using Iraqi Shias and Kurds, who have longstanding grievances against the Baathist regime in Baghdad. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

Of even greater concern to Saddam Husayn, there has been a resurgence of grumbling within the regime over his monopolization of power. Ideological opposition over his courting of Arab monarchs and his turn toward nonalignment almost certainly exists in the inner circle. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

Other more inherent weaknesses in the Iraqi position are also evident. Previous Baathist attempts to subvert Iraq’s neighbors have left a legacy of deep mistrust and animosity. Beyond that, Saddam Husayn’s continued reliance on repression to rule Iraq qualifies his claim to legitimacy and reduces his attractiveness as an Arab spokesman. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

If Saddam Husayn is to overcome these constraints, he must maintain stability at home and show patience and restraint toward Arab moderates. Should he become frustrated and revert to more traditional heavyhanded behavior, he would quickly revive old suspicions and greatly reduce prospects for a more fundamental shift in Iraq’s role in the Middle East. [*paragraph classification not declassified*]

142. Telegram From the United States Interests Section in Baghdad to the Department of State¹

Baghdad, June 26, 1980, 1019Z

1651. Subject: Meeting With Iraqi Officials: U.S. Emissary to Iraq.

1. (S-entire text).

2. June 25 DCM Jones and I were invited to lunch by ex-Chief of IraqInt in Washington, Fadhil Azzawi, and Chief of Protocol at the Foreign Ministry, Nabil Najim. Such a social-business meeting on Iraq initiative would be rare event for any diplomatic mission in Baghdad. For this useful opportunity to cement relations with the Protocol Chief and continue U.S.-Iraqi dialogue we must thank Azzawi, and Under Secretary Newsom's hospitality to him before his departure from Washington.

2. The two-hour meeting covered a wide range of subjects (septels).² Of particular interest was Azzawi's handling of the question raised in Washington earlier this year whether Iraq would be ready to hold discussions in Baghdad or elsewhere with a senior State Department representative on U.S.-Iraqi bilateral relations and regional issues.³ Azzawi noted that he had asked DAS Draper to try to ascertain whom we might have in mind "to head a delegation to Baghdad". He seemed to think that the delay in our response might be significant and related to a "new policy" toward Iraq initiated by Secretary Muskie. He said "the ball is now in your court" and asked what we knew about the "new U.S. policy" towards Iraq.

4. I replied that his query regarding the person we might send to Baghdad had coincided with Secretary Vance's departure and Secretary Muskie's arrival. Our original proposal was based on our belief that higher level contact and an enlarged dialogue would be beneficial to both countries. A number of developments in Iraq, including a tendency

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800308-0401. Secret; Priority; Exdis.

² In telegram 1663 from Baghdad, June 26, Eagleton reported that during the June lunch with Azzawi and Najim, "the subject of U.S.-Iraqi relations was played back and forth from a number of angles. We did not waste time discussing resumption of diplomatic relations, which is not being considered here at least until after U.S. Presidential elections and a look then at our position on the Palestine issue. Azzawi did at one point say that relations would have been restored months ago had it not been for the Camp David agreement. We are not so sure." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800308-0650) In telegram 1662 from Baghdad, June 26, Eagleton added that, following discussion of bilateral issues, "the subject turned to Afghanistan, the Gulf and U.S. presence in the area." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800309-0001)

³ See Documents 132 and 133.

toward moderation on regional issues, had been well received in Washington. I was not aware of any “new policy” under Secretary Muskie and believed that the U.S. Government was still interested in exploring ways to improve U.S.-Iraqi relations. The delay in our reply was normal in view of personnel changes in the Department.

5. When I asked Azzawi whom he might have in mind as an appropriate person and level for a visit to Baghdad (which I noted would probably be one or two officials rather than a delegation) he suggested Under Secretary Newsom or possibly Deputy Assistant Secretary Draper “since both of them know Iraq and how to deal with Iraqis”. He added that Assistant Secretary Saunders would also be an appropriate person.

6. Protocol Chief Najim had apparently not been briefed on the subject, and Azzawi filled him in as he went along. Furthermore, although Azzawi is obviously interested in arranging a visit to Baghdad by an American official, he left us with the impression that a further decision-making stage would be required within the Iraqi Government after they receive our reply to their query. Thus, the timing for such a visit might slip, certainly until after the July 17 National Day and then perhaps through the mid-summer doldrums. Nevertheless, I believe we should now follow-up on our initiative by indicating who might visit Baghdad. We could suggest several possibilities which would permit the Iraqis to indicate which level they preferred and leave the time open for a mutually agreeable date. Azzawi indicated that a response to his query could be transmitted through IraqInt Washington, USINT Baghdad or both.

Eagleton

Saudi Arabia

143. Briefing Paper Prepared in the Department of State¹

Washington, undated

SAUDI ARABIA

I. Significance of the Country to U.S. Global Policy and Regional Objectives

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is important to the United States as the strategically pre-eminent source of energy for the West and because of its massive financial reserves, its political influence in Arab and Third World councils, and its strategic location.

Saudi Arabia is now the primary source for U.S. imports of crude oil, providing 22 percent of our imports and 7 percent of our total consumption. Continued access to Saudi oil is essential if our economy is to sustain a healthy growth rate while it pursues the goal of greater energy self-sufficiency. Many of our allies in Western Europe, as well as Japan, are even more dependent on Saudi oil. Only Saudi Arabia—with about one-quarter of the world's petroleum reserves—can rapidly expand petroleum production, and this endows Saudi Arabia with more influence over the price of oil than any other producing country.²

Because Saudi Arabia is accruing revenue faster than its domestic needs require, the Kingdom has amassed over \$40 billion in foreign assets. We need to insure that this money is employed constructively so as not to create instability in international financial markets. We also need to encourage Saudi assistance to underdeveloped countries whose needs exceed our own ability to help.

This rapid accumulation of over one billion dollars per month of surplus wealth gives Saudi Arabia increasing influence in regional affairs. In recent years the Saudis have begun to exploit the needs of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon for financial aid in a manner giving Saudi Arabia growing political influence. This is being used in support of our interest in moderation in the Arab world, but it could also be used against us—albeit reluctantly and not without costs to themselves—if the Saudis see our positions diverging too far. Saudi Arabia has thus

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 81, Saudi Arabia: 5/75–5/77. Secret. Drafted by Cecil, Countryman, and Twinam on January 3, 1977. Prepared for the transition.

² For documentation on U.S. policy toward Saudi Arabia as an oil producer and leader of OPEC, see *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980.

become an important factor in the quest for Middle East peace. It is very unlikely that the Arab “confrontation states” would launch an all-out war against Israel unless they felt they could count on Saudi political support and financial assistance.

We have a longstanding interest in the security of Saudi Arabia and the entire Arabian Peninsula. Growing Saudi self-confidence, ability to provide financial aid, and the development of a modest but modern defense capability foster a constructive Saudi leadership role in the security and orderly development of the smaller Arabian Peninsula states. Saudi Arabia’s policy has been generally supportive of our interest in Saudi-Iranian cooperation to secure the oil-rich Persian Gulf.

Expanding Saudi political influence, and the Saudi proclivity toward moderate positions have made Saudi Arabia an increasingly important source of support for U.S. positions in the U.N. and other multilateral fora. As protector of the two holiest shrines of Islam, Saudi Arabia wields great moral suasion among the Muslim nations. It is rigidly anti-Communist, and uses its influence and financial resources to resist the spread of radical ideologies within the Middle East and elsewhere. Recently the Saudis have widened their regional role to support political order and economic development in South Asia and among Muslim countries in Africa.

II. Political and Economic Situation in the Country

Saudi Arabia is an Islamic monarchy; the King is chosen by consensus of the senior members of the royal Al-Saud family. King Khalid, who became Chief of State upon King Faisal’s assassination in March 1975,³ has delegated to his half-brother, Crown Prince Fahd, authority to oversee most day-to-day affairs, an arrangement which appears to be working satisfactorily. The energetic Fahd is responsible for several Saudi foreign policy initiatives, such as seeking to moderate the Algerian-Moroccan dispute over the Spanish Sahara and an attempt to wean the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) away from Communist influence by making Saudi economic assistance available.

The regime is paternalistic and absolute, with no political parties and no elected assembly, but the leadership maintains the tribal tradition of ready public access to the monarch. There is no significant organized domestic political opposition. The ruling family maintains tight control, aided in part by the presence of royal family members in government, the military, and private business, thereby insuring that the leadership is broadly based and well informed of public sentiment.

³ Faisal reigned as King of Saudi Arabia from 1964 until 1975 and implemented a number of reforms and modernization efforts. He was assassinated by his nephew on March 25, 1975.

Western-educated Saudis play an important policy role, particularly in economic matters. Important government posts have long been open to talented commoners.

A major element of the stability of the regime is its willingness to permit the educated younger Saudi opportunity to play a responsible role in the nation's development. This factor plus the gradual liberalization of Saudi society and the increasing distribution of the benefits of oil wealth have mitigated public opposition to the rule of the Al-Saud.

Although the prospects for political stability in Saudi Arabia have remained promising for over a decade, there are possible sources of future unrest: a high rate of inflation (20–40 percent in some sectors), corruption and disparities in distribution of wealth, and clash of traditionalist and modernist views on the pace of social liberalization, a problem exacerbated by the growth of foreign presence in the Kingdom.

In the last five years the Saudis have displayed a notable growth of both confidence and skill in their relations with the Arab world and other neighbors. No longer on the defensive against the revolutionary Arab governments, the Saudis have carefully used their financial influence to develop significant leverage over the policies of Egypt, Syria and other Arab states, have begun to play a more dynamic and sophisticated role as the natural leader of the Arabian Peninsula, and have made sound progress toward cooperation with Iran in the interests of Persian Gulf security. The success of Saudi Arabia in arranging the recent "Riyadh Summit" to seek solution to the Lebanese crisis and Syrian-Egyptian rapprochement⁴ was vivid evidence of the increase of Saudi influence in the Middle East.

Economically, the Kingdom is essentially poor in trained human resources and basic infrastructure. (As recently as 1973, secondary school enrollment was under 27,000, out of a population of 5 million.) A Five-Year Plan projecting expenditures of \$142 billion was announced in May 1975. The attempt to implement this plan has initiated a period of unprecedented economic activity. Many programs are heavily dependent on foreign labor, both skilled and unskilled. Although it is apparent that not all goals of the Plan will be met on schedule, goals in education and health care may be exceeded. The search for quality education will bring more Saudis to the United States, beyond the 5000 presently in our colleges and universities.

While government expenditures have grown abruptly in the past few years, oil revenues continue to be well in excess of the Kingdom's

⁴ Arab heads of state met in Riyadh October 17–18, 1976, to discuss Egyptian-Syrian rapprochement and ways to end the fighting in Lebanon. Information on the summit is in telegram 6446 from Amman, October 20, 1976. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850107–2210)

absorptive capacity. The Saudi Government has invested significant amounts of these surplus revenues in the U.S., mostly in government securities. It is possible that future funds will go into long-term investment in our private sector as the Saudi Government seeks to diversify its holdings. In view of our great need for additional investment capital, it is in our economic interest to seek to attract unutilized Saudi funds into the private sector, but there will be domestic political resistance to doing so.

In Saudi Arabia itself, the Kingdom remains oriented toward free enterprise, although the capital requirements of its own massive modernization and industrialization program necessitate the active participation of the Saudi Government in numerous joint ventures. The Government states that such ventures will eventually be offered for private ownership.

Negotiations are continuing with the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) toward the objective of 100 percent Saudi ownership. The Saudis wish to retain the owner companies (Exxon, Socal, Texaco, Mobil) to produce and market Saudi oil. Average ARAMCO crude production for 1976 will reach the Saudi Government's limit of 8.5 million bpd. The question of how much oil should be produced in excess of that needed to fund the country's internal development and foreign assistance programs (estimated at 5 million bpd) is under constant discussion. Thus the world is faced with the delicate situation of looking for increased oil supplies primarily to the major producer with least economic incentive to increase production.

III. Current State of U.S. Relations and Policy Toward Saudi Arabia

The American interest in the stability and orderly development of Saudi Arabia began forty years ago with the ARAMCO concession. The 1945 meeting between President Roosevelt and King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud⁵ commenced an unbroken manifestation of official U.S. concern for the Kingdom's welfare, and began to build a notable Saudi dependence on the United States as the major power which could be trusted to guide Saudi Arabia into the modern world. For over a quarter century our relationship expanded gradually and soundly, reflecting the measured pace of Saudi development and our important but limited interest in a nation with values quite unlike our own. Our direct interest was in protecting American oil investment and opening promising commercial markets; and equally important indirect concern was the need of our NATO allies for Saudi oil.

⁵ See *Foreign Relations*, 1945, vol. VIII, The Near East and Africa, pp. 2–3.

Then, some five years ago, the United States became directly dependent on Saudi oil and our relationship intensified abruptly, testing the capacity of both of our societies to respond to an increasing interdependence. Our future national interest in Saudi Arabia can be limited only by our ability to get our domestic energy situation in hand.

In response to these recent imperatives both the U.S. Government and our private sector have hastened, along with other industrial societies, to cope with the abrupt shift of economic power toward Saudi Arabia. As the role of the major oil companies has diminished rapidly, the U.S. Government has for the first time become directly involved in efforts to influence Saudi decisions on petroleum pricing and production. We have developed a Joint Economic Commission to facilitate Saudi purchase of U.S. Government expertise for various development objectives.⁶ We have sought to encourage relatively unsophisticated Saudi investment institutions to rely on the U.S. market and have attracted over \$8 billion of Saudi placement in U.S. Government securities.

Our private sector has been equally responsive. ARAMCO while amicably negotiating the relinquishment of its concession rights has retained a major future role in the development of and access to Saudi oil. Other large American companies such as Bechtel and Parsons have joined ARAMCO in undertaking huge development projects. Over 200 American companies are now established in Saudi Arabia; over 30,000 Americans reside there. In 1976 we anticipate selling over \$3 billion of American goods and services (excluding government-to-government military sales) to offset partially our \$6 billion Saudi oil bill. American financial institutions are heavily engaged in "recycling" the huge Saudi financial surpluses, to date placing them mostly in short-term instruments.

In the last few years our longstanding security assistance relationship has entered the "take-off stage," reflecting increasing Saudi capability to absorb modern military equipment and training, a new Saudi regional defense responsibility in the wake of the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf and Saudi ability to buy costly military equipment and services at no cost to the capital needs of the civil sector. Total sales of U.S. equipment and services under FMS have grown from \$2.1 billion in 1966 to a cumulative total of approximately \$12 billion by the end of 1976. Although these figures reflect contracts to be implemented over the next several years (only about \$1 billion of the \$12 billion in equipment and services has been delivered), and

⁶ The Joint Economic Commission was established in 1974. Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E–9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region, 1973–1976.

although over half the total is the value of construction projects managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the acceleration of our involvement in Saudi military modernization raises major policy issues. Last fall Congressional opposition to supplying Mavericks and Sidewinders jeopardized our relationship. Although present U.S. military sales programs reflect the findings of a careful 1974 USG survey of Saudi defense requirements, the limited absorptive capacity of the Saudi armed forces requires that we keep under review the future pace and scope of our security assistance activities if they are to continue to serve our long-term interests in Saudi Arabia.

Until the 1973 embargo the Saudi role in the Arab-Israeli conflict was essentially reactive rather than one of leadership. Since then we have successfully sought active Saudi support for U.S. policies on this key problem, as Saudi Arabia has emerged as a critical factor in Arab decision making. Similarly we have encouraged a more active Saudi leadership role in the Arabian Peninsula and greater cooperation with Iran in securing the Persian Gulf. To date U.S.-Saudi cooperation on regional political issues has progressed remarkably well, but the new Saudi posture of leadership makes it increasingly difficult to isolate our interests in Saudi Arabia itself from the state of U.S.-Saudi accord on the Arab/Israeli and other major regional issues. To the extent our interests diverge, we must anticipate increasing Saudi difficulty in reconciling close cooperation with the United States with its growing leadership role in the Peninsula, the Arab World, and of course in OPEC. The Saudis have repeatedly demonstrated an intense desire to rely on the United States as the primary supplier of technology and equipment for both civilian and military development. But the Saudi dependence is not absolute and other nations seek a share of the present predominant American role. Should the Saudi leadership come seriously to doubt the steadfastness of our support, a possibly irreversible unraveling of our carefully built relationship of mutual confidence could ensue.

IV. Specific Major Issues Having Impact on Relationship

A. *A Middle East Peace Settlement.* The 1973 oil embargo demonstrates that the Arab/Israeli problem will in the final analysis overwhelm the other carefully cultivated aspects of the U.S.-Saudi relationship though Saudi vested interest in the latter can serve as a counterforce up to a point.⁷ The Saudis count on the U.S. to remove a source of regional instability by bringing the parties to the Arab/Israeli

⁷ For documentation on Saudi Arabia's role in the Arab-Israeli peace process, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, and *Foreign Relations*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980.

conflict to a mutually acceptable permanent settlement. They wish to avoid an outbreak of hostilities because they believe the likely result would be an Arab defeat leading to the return to power of radical Arab revolutionary governments hostile to the Saudi regime and a resurgence of Soviet influence in the area. The Saudis have exerted a moderating influence on the "confrontation states," but their patient willingness to support U.S. policy initiatives in the Middle East rests on the assumption that we will rapidly resume the quest for an overall peace settlement. Saudi responsiveness to our position on oil prices in the recent OPEC meeting⁸ has been linked in public statements to expectation that the U.S. will bring its full influence to bear to make progress toward a Middle East peace. They expect real progress in 1977, which to them translates into U.S. success in bringing Israel to withdraw to the 1967 borders and to accept the establishment of a Palestinian political entity outside those borders.

If we make progress on the other elements of a Middle East peace package, the question of the status of Jerusalem will finally come center stage. The Saudis are likely to be the least flexible of the Arabs on the future of Jerusalem and will almost certainly insist that the Israelis agree to Arab political jurisdiction in East Jerusalem, though they might in the end accept control of the Muslim religious sites by an international body.

B. Oil Supplies. Saudi Arabia has been strongly supportive of our objective of minimizing oil price increases. As world demand for oil grows, we must look to Saudi Arabia for additional production if pressures for future sharp price increases are to be eased. The Saudis are already producing above the level needed to meet their own immediate requirements for revenues, and in terms of their own narrow economic needs there is no reason to raise production further. On the other hand, Saudi leaders have been aware of the extent to which their own economic well-being in a broader sense and that of the world economy in general requires Saudi production of essential oil. Moreover, their overriding interest in encouraging U.S. cooperation in other areas, most significantly the search for Middle East peace, causes them to be particularly sensitive to our interests in the energy area.

On the other hand, the Saudis are not comfortable with their global economic responsibilities thrust upon them because of their massive oil reserves. Also, there are influential voices within the SAG urging that production be held back rather than continuing to generate surplus

⁸ At the OPEC Oil Ministers meeting in Doha in December 1976, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates split with the rest of OPEC over the increase in oil prices, instituting a two-tier price structure. See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 113.

assets whose value—it is alleged—is eroded through inflation more rapidly than would be the case if the oil itself were left in the ground for the benefit of future generations. In CIEC and elsewhere, the Saudis have made continued production at levels above their own financial requirements conditional upon measures by the industrialized countries to protect the real value of Saudi assets. It remains to be seen how serious the Saudis really are on this point. But at a minimum they are demanding that we recognize politically that their oil production policy may entail certain problems in terms of financial assets and that we be prepared to discuss these problems with them.

C. Arms Supply Relationship. Saudi Arabia has chosen to rely primarily on the United States, and on our NATO allies to a lesser degree, to acquire military training and equipment. The United States is committed on a government-to-government basis to overseeing the development of an effective jet interceptor (F-5) force capable of defending the country against attack; to manage a ten-year program in which Saudi Arabia will acquire an 18-ship navy, two naval bases, and large numbers of trained personnel; to managing a multi-billion dollar program of military construction; to mechanizing two out of four Saudi Arabian army brigades; and to training the Saudi Arabian National Guard. In other programs, the Saudis have contracted directly with American firms to provide an air defense missile system (Raytheon), an air defense radar network (Lockheed), and a fleet of C-130 military transport aircraft (Lockheed). Arms acquisition requests are in many cases based on recommendations made in the 1974 survey of the Saudi armed forces made by a Department of Defense team.⁹ The scarcity of trained manpower necessitates in many programs that considerable numbers of expatriate personnel assist the Saudis by performing important maintenance, training, and staff work.

Saudi desire for additional military equipment is certain. We have agreed in principle to provide replacements for aircraft due to be phased out of the Saudi inventory during 1978–80; and a specific Saudi request is likely in 1977 for advanced fighter aircraft.

This arms supply relationship is subject to criticism by those who oppose arms sales in principle, and by those who believe arms sold to Saudi Arabia might at some future date be used against Israel. In reply to such criticism, we have maintained that Saudi purchases are reasonable for the defense of a country the size of the United States east of the Mississippi and having vast resources. We have considered it unlikely that Saudi arms will be used against Israel. The Saudis have

⁹ Documentation on U.S.-Saudi military relations during the Second Nixon and Ford administrations is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E-9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region, 1973–1976.

never shown an inclination to engage the Israelis in combat, and they would be reluctant to endanger the future of the many military and economic programs for which they depend upon the United States by unauthorized transfer of American supplied military equipment. There is, however, no absolute guarantee against some unauthorized transfers in the emotional atmosphere of resumed hostilities. We should therefore continue to guard against this contingency by assuring discreetly that the Saudis understand the costs to them of such action would be high and that transfers of sophisticated equipment to other Arabs would not be very practical in terms of the logistical and infrastructure support required. In addition, we must continue to carefully examine future Saudi military modernization plans to assure they meet reasonable defense needs and are within the limited Saudi absorptive capacity.

D. *The Arab Boycott of Israel*.¹⁰ The Saudis are strict in applying the "secondary" boycott against firms blacklisted by the Central Boycott Office in Damascus. They have made it clear that they will adhere to this form of economic warfare until the achievement of a permanent solution to the Arab/Israeli problem. Yet the Saudis have made certain administrative changes in their manner of implementing the primary boycott and appear to have tacitly accepted that neither the U.S. Government nor another American company can refuse to deal with an American firm because it may have been placed on the boycott list. The Saudis have assured us that their implementation of the boycott reflects strictly political motives and does not reflect religious discrimination.

Similarly, the Saudi Government assures us it does not refuse visas on religious grounds.

The Saudis will be watching closely the attitude of the new Administration toward Congressional initiatives for further anti-boycott legislation. Should the Administration support or accept legislation which discourages American firms from competing for contracts in Saudi Arabia, the Saudis may interpret this as an anti-Arab bias which will make it politically more difficult for the Saudis to support the Administration's efforts to facilitate the progress of Arab-Israeli negotiations toward a peace settlement. On the other hand, should the Administration seek a delay in acting on anti-boycott proposals to allow it sufficient time to study this complex issue, this would be viewed as indicative of a genuinely even-handed approach toward the problems of the area.

¹⁰ The Arab League boycott of Israel was imposed in the wake of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war in a concerted effort by Arab League states to isolate and weaken Israel economically.

V. Human Rights Considerations

Saudi Arabia has not been a focal point for groups interested in human rights questions. Within the context of Saudi traditions, the Government considers itself solicitous of the human rights of its citizens and we have no evidence it practices or condones flagrant violations such as torture or arbitrary detention. It is nevertheless evident that Saudi attitudes and practices on many issues are profoundly different from our own. The state supports an established creed, Islam, rather than adhering to our secular concept of the separation of church and state. Though people of all religious faiths are allowed entry into the country, only Muslims are permitted public worship.

Entry into the proximity of the two holiest sites of Islam, Mecca and Medina, is forbidden to non-Muslims. Education for women through college is increasingly common, but the social roles, including employment opportunities, allowed women are generally limited to those which can be carried out without coming into contact with men from outside one's family. In general, professional associations are discouraged. Labor unions are non-existent. Although positions of responsibility may be achieved by demonstrating education and competency, the feeling persists that one's true status is determined by one's genealogical descent, and cannot be altered essentially by legal or administrative actions such as naturalization. Saudi citizenship is awarded to immigrants in rare cases. Justice tends to be punitive rather than reformative in aim. There are no democratic institutions as we know them, and the Koran is still considered the "constitution" of the land. This substantial divergence in attitudes on many social and religious questions is a barrier to the development of broad popular support in the United States for the sort of cooperative relationship our dependence on Saudi Arabia dictates.

VI. Congressional Attitudes Toward Saudi Arabia

The Congressional attitude toward Saudi Arabia is ambivalent. The importance of Saudi Arabia to U.S. economic and political interests is increasingly but still inadequately recognized in the Congress. Congress tends to recognize Saudi moderation on oil and Middle East political issues, and the potential benefits from the use of its financial resources to exert positive leverage within the region as well as in other LDCs. Those who question the desirability of a growing relationship stress Saudi Arabia's strict adherence to the boycott of Israel, accuse it of religious discrimination in visa issuance (although this is no longer the problem it once was), and doubt the real need for the military equipment it is purchasing, which they suspect will ultimately be used against Israel. They also express concern that U.S. dependence on Saudi oil could be used to "blackmail" the U.S. to weaken its support for Israel.

Almost all of the approximately 50 members of the Congress who have visited Saudi Arabia and talked with its leaders within the past two years have returned with a greater appreciation of Saudi Arabia's moderation and of the positive role it is playing in the region. Congress remains concerned, however, over Saudi investment objectives in the U.S., their potential influence over U.S. banks and financial institutions, and the size of their holdings of USG notes and bonds.

The Saudis will continue to look for appreciation for their moderating influence on oil prices and Saudi cooperation in our search for a negotiated peace in the Middle East. Our relationship may be faced, however, with concerted efforts in Congress to restrict the sale of military items to Saudi Arabia—particularly the additional Sidewinder and Maverick missiles which the Saudi Government expects us to provide—and to enact confrontational anti-boycott legislation.

144. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RP 77-10003

Washington, January 14, 1977

SAUDI ARABIA: AN ASSESSMENT

Key Judgments

—Saudi Arabia's pursuit of a more active foreign policy in 1976 has significantly increased Saudi influence in intra-Arab affairs and the Arab-Israeli dispute. The Saudis also now approach diplomatic relations with the US from a new perspective, not as clients but as partners.

—Saudi Arabia views itself as of major importance to the United States not only because it controls vital oil resources and can virtually determine the price of world oil, but because it is the strongest force for moderation in the Middle East, wielding considerable influence over the key Arab players in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

—The US is important to Saudi Arabia because its influence over Israel is the key to the solution of the Arab-Israeli problem, something of overriding importance to the Saudis because it is the only practical

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Near East and South Asia Analysis (DI), Job 76T00412R, Intelligence Publication Files—Record Copy of Finished Intelligence Pubs, Box 1, Folder 12, NESA Intelligence Memo: Saudi Arabia: An Assessment, RP 77-10003, January 1977. Secret; *[handling restriction not declassified]*. Prepared in the Office of Regional and Political Analysis.

way to guarantee stability in the area and end Israeli occupation of Arab territory, including East Jerusalem. The US is, in addition, a primary source of the technology and experience Saudi Arabia needs for its economic development plans.

—Saudi Arabia is placing its highest priority on generating momentum toward a resumption of Middle East negotiations. For this reason, it has tried to block an OPEC price increase that might have alienated the US and disrupted diplomatic activity toward a settlement. Although the Saudis are using oil prices as a carrot to induce the new US administration to give equally high priority to Middle East negotiations, they are probably prepared to be flexible in setting time limits for measurable progress. But they would likely move to higher oil prices should the US enact legislation specifically targeted at their interests.

—The Saudis, in particular, are not disposed to compromise their public adherence to the Arab boycott of Israel, and suspect that the sponsors of antiboycott legislation are out to damage the US-Saudi relationship to Israel's benefit. They will be viewing US activity on the boycott issue as the acid test of US willingness to preserve its relationship with Saudi Arabia.

—Although Saudi King Khalid is technically the final authority in the country, virtually all decisions have been made by Crown Prince Fahd, who is in line to succeed him. Fahd is a shrewd leader who has long advocated close ties with the US.

—The regime is stable, and as long as the family continues to rise above its internal divisions in times of crisis it faces no immediate threats. In the longer term, however, enormous wealth, rapid economic development, and the resulting social changes could erode the monarchy's traditional underpinnings.

Discussion

Since the October 1973 war, Saudi Arabia has emerged as a significant force in intra-Arab affairs and, by extension, in the Arab-Israeli dispute. In the past year, in particular, the Saudis have become more active in pursuing their basic foreign policy goals—a reflection of their growing confidence in the considerable economic leverage they possess over other regimes and of their increasing willingness to wield that leverage. The goals of Saudi foreign policy, however, have remained constant.

Saudi Arabia would like to see a negotiated solution to the Arab-Israeli problem that would both return Israeli-occupied lands—ideally including East Jerusalem—to the Arabs, and remove the Palestinians as a constant source of instability in Arab countries. Other goals follow from this, such as the Saudi desire to smooth over intra-Arab quarrels in order to achieve the unity necessary to make any progress toward

peace. The Saudis would also like to prevent the growth of radically-oriented governments throughout the Arab world, and particularly among their immediate neighbors, who pose a greater threat of infection to Saudi Arabia itself.

Finally, Saudi Arabia wants to conduct its foreign relations in such a manner as to facilitate domestic development programs. This means, among other things, doing what it can to maintain a healthy international economic environment—including trying to stem the growth of inflation—and maintaining good relations with the western countries that supply Saudi Arabia with the technology it needs.

Settlement Efforts

The rise in Saudi influence combined with a move toward moderation and away from Soviet influence on the part of Egypt and Syria—a move for which the Saudis have been partly responsible—have been the major factors shaping intra-Arab affairs since 1973. Egypt's economy—and hence its domestic stability—is heavily dependent on Saudi support; Sadat consequently will not cross the Saudis on any issue about which they feel strongly. Syria can afford to be somewhat more independent, but the Lebanese war² has put major strains on its economy and Asad too, wants to keep Saudi financial subsidies coming. With Riyadh, Cairo, and Damascus forming a united front—however loose—Arab foreign policy is locked into moderate channels; none of the more radical regimes is strong enough to be taken into account. The Saudis are determined to keep it that way.

The current Arab effort to generate some momentum toward reconvening Arab-Israeli negotiations is Saudi Arabia's highest priority. Riyadh was largely responsible for setting the stage for such an effort; realizing that deadlock was inevitable as long as Egypt and Syria remained at loggerheads and the civil war in Lebanon continued to poison intra-Arab relations, the Saudis made repeated efforts to engineer a face-to-face meeting between Presidents Sadat and Asad, as well as Lebanese President Sarkis and Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat. Their eventual success—at the Riyadh summit meeting last October—was a triumph of Saudi persistence and willingness to employ their economic leverage.

Since the Riyadh conference the Saudis have been active in trying to patch up two other Arab and regional quarrels that have no bearing on the Arab-Israeli issue, except in the sense that anything undercutting Arab unity could hamper settlement efforts. They moved to mediate between Morocco and Algeria in the Spanish Sahara dispute—an effort

² Reference is to the first phase of the Lebanese civil war, which was brought to a halt at the October 1976 Riyadh summit. See footnote 4, Document 143.

which has so far gone nowhere, although they have probably not yet given up—and they smoothed over a potentially nasty quarrel between Iran and South Yemen when the South Yemenis shot down an Iranian plane which, they claimed, had strayed into their air space. The incidents illustrate a significant facet of Saudi foreign policy: Saudi Arabia is a compulsive mediator, and it is not deterred by the fact that a problem appears intractable.

The OPEC Decision

Having cleared the deck for movement on the Arab-Israeli front, the Saudis are prepared to subordinate other vital concerns to the achievement of progress in that arena. Hence their willingness to take on the rest of OPEC in order to avoid an oil price hike that might have alienated the incoming US administration and sparked a wave of anti-Arab feeling in the US that could hamper US diplomatic initiatives.³

The Saudis had some economic reasons for bucking OPEC as well—they were worried about the apparent fragility of the West's economic recovery and afraid that too great an increase could start another downturn—but these reasons probably would not have induced them to draw the line at a 5 percent rise, rather than settling for the 10 percent that might have formed a basis for a compromise. The Saudis were trying to deliver a clear signal to the US: nothing must stand in the way of movement toward an acceptable settlement, and the Saudis, for their part, were prepared to make considerable sacrifices to this end.

It is probably not true—as some of Petroleum Minister Yamani's statements following the OPEC conference seemed to hint—that the Saudis are looking for a specific quid for their quo and are prepared to let the price of oil rise if they do not get it. They want to feel that the Carter administration is placing a high priority on Middle East settlement efforts; they want to see US diplomatic activity looking toward the resumption of negotiations; but they are fully aware of such complicating factors as the Israeli elections, and probably would not insist on substantial progress toward a settlement before next summer. Next July's OPEC meeting is probably not a firm deadline. Nevertheless, a complete absence of interest on the part of the US before July might provoke the Saudis to reassess their stand.

Certain "negative" US actions might also induce the Saudis to retaliate by raising the price of oil. Chief among these would be the passage of legislation aimed at making it difficult to do business with Saudi Arabia because of Saudi adherence to the Arab boycott of Israel.

³ See footnote 8, Document 143.

Another would be congressional disapproval of arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Political Implications of the OPEC Decision

[*less than 1 line not declassified*] diplomatic reporting make clear that the decision to break with OPEC and hold the line on oil was very much Crown Prince Fahd's, with the full support of King Khalid. Both Yamani and Foreign Minister Saud oppose the move; so do most members of the Saudi cabinet and technocrats responsible for implementing petroleum and development policy. While Fahd and Khalid are strong enough to keep the rest in line, they would be highly embarrassed if the US reacted by passing legislation directly harmful to Saudi interests. Under such circumstances, Fahd could react angrily and reverse his decision.

All indications so far, however, are that Fahd is determined to stand by his decision, despite the storm of protest it has aroused and the strains it has placed on Saudi relations with fellow OPEC members. Fahd [*less than 1 line not declassified*] has placed his prestige very much on the line on the oil price issue. He has ordered increased Saudi oil production in order to hold down the price, and turned aside attempts by key ministers to get him to change his mind.⁴ Our judgment is that he will hold firm, at least until the Carter administration has been given a chance to show its hand with respect to Middle East policy, barring adverse congressional action. One other eventuality could upset Fahd's decision: a veto by King Khalid, presumably in response to pleas by opponents of the price move who win the King to their side. But Khalid seems to be very much behind Fahd, and dissension within the royal family on the issue would probably have to reach a critical stage to induce him to reverse Fahd's stand.

US-Saudi Ties

The Saudi belief that the US is the key to a solution of the Arab-Israeli problem is not the only reason for the Saudi desire to cultivate the friendship of the US. The two countries have a long history of close relations, dating from the first exploitation of the country's oil by the Arabian-American Oil Company in the 1930s, shortly after the nation was unified by King Abd al-Aziz. Aramco came close to playing the role of a benevolent colonial authority in the new country; it gave advice on the structure of government departments and took a hand

⁴ Current Saudi planning calls for production of 11.5 million barrels per day by mid-1977, rising to 12 million by the end of the year. The Saudis are aware that company drawdowns of excess oil stocks will keep prices soft for the first quarter of this year, by which time Riyadh hopes to increase capacity sufficiently to maintain the pressure on prices. [Footnote is in the original.]

in foreign policy. Unlike most such relationships, the experience was seen as mutually rewarding by both parties, and the Saudis came away with considerable respect for US technical abilities.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Saudi conservatism, Muslim fundamentalism, and entrenched hatred of communism reinforced Saudi approval of American foreign policy, apart from US support for Israel. Those were the years when the Saudis were well out of the mainstream of an Arab world dominated by Nasir's Egypt, and Saudi friendship with the US reinforced that isolation. The kingdom was, at that time, the strongest friend of the US in the Arab world, and the Saudis were—and are—fond of pointing this out.

The US-Saudi relationship was strained by the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, but it was only after the 1973 war—which brought the Arab oil embargo and the enormous surge in oil prices in its wake—that serious divisions occurred. Popular opinion in the US tended to lay blame for oil prices at the door of the "Arabs," despite the fact that the most serious jump was due to Iranian pressure and that the Saudis, even before their break with OPEC, had acted to keep prices down. Suggestions in the US press that Washington was planning—or ought to plan—to invade Arab oil fields angered, and probably also alarmed, the Saudis.

But the change since 1973 has been more fundamental. The Saudi international role has grown since the world first became aware of the importance of oil to its economy, and since Saudi revenues began to soar. The Saudis now approach diplomatic relations with the US from a new perspective, not as clients but as partners. They feel that the interests of the two countries are complementary—the Saudis need US technology, the US needs Saudi oil. They have difficulty understanding how the US can let its attachment to Israel interfere with such a happy combination of interests. One of the reasons behind Saudi Arabia's decision to keep the price of OPEC oil down was to demonstrate to the US that Saudi Arabia matters, that it is an ally worth keeping because it is in a position to either help or hurt.

The two-way street between the US and Saudi Arabia has involved a swap of Saudi oil and surplus funds for US technology and management assistance. The Saudis have been accounting for roughly 1.2 million barrels per day or 22 percent of US oil imports; as of mid-1976 \$12 billion of Saudi Arabia's foreign assets of \$32 billion had been placed in the US. US exports to Saudi Arabia have grown from only \$500 million in 1973 to \$1.5 billion in 1975, accounting for about one quarter of Saudi imports. In 1976 alone, US firms secured contracts worth an estimated \$27 billion, to be spread over five to ten years. Some 28,000 Americans are working in the kingdom on numerous projects and more than 50,000 will probably be there by 1978. The US involvement includes:

—The construction of an entire \$50-billion city, port, and industrial complex in Jubayl on the east coast, led by Bechtel Corporation, and of a \$15 billion complex on the west coast at Yanbu in which Frank M. Parsons Inc. and Mobil are involved;

—About \$12 billion in military construction projects under the aegis of the US Army Corps of Engineers; and

—Participation by Fluor International and Aramco in a \$16-billion gas gathering system.

The Boycott Issue

The most immediate potential flashpoint in the mutually beneficial Saudi-US bilateral relationship is the boycott issue. The Saudis are not disposed to compromise on their public adherence to the Arab boycott of Israel, for all their looseness in administering it in the past. They are willing to “clarify” those secondary and tertiary applications of the boycott which are largely irrelevant and ineffective and which offend US sensitivities; they would like to make it legally possible for most US companies to do business in Saudi Arabia without being penalized by their own government.

The Saudis were well on their way to working out such a formula as long as they felt that Congress and the administration were primarily concerned with preventing injustice by one American against another. They are now beginning to suspect, however, that the sponsors of antiboycott legislation are out to damage the US-Saudi relationship to Israel’s benefit. As a result, their initially conciliatory attitudes have begun to fade. They will be reviewing US activity in the boycott sphere as the acid test of US willingness to preserve its relationship with Saudi Arabia; Fahd’s pro-US oil policy almost certainly hangs in the balance.

The Saudis cannot understand US insistence in making a public issue of the boycott matter. They feel that their attempts to modify the boycott under the table ought to be sufficient. They have been pushing other Arab states to ignore the boycott in the case of international telecommunications services; they have backed Egypt’s proposal to take firms willing to invest in Arab countries as well as Israel off the blacklist; they will go along with substituting a certificate of origin for a statement that the goods are not of Israeli origin; they will eliminate restrictions on a prime contractor’s choice of subcontractors. But they will not back off publicly.

Saudi commercial practices are rife with examples of willingness to turn a blind eye to the boycott. For example:

—Philips, the large Dutch electronics and communications company—despite being on the blacklist—was awarded a \$3-billion telephone system contract in Saudi Arabia, [2 lines not declassified];

—Motorola, which operates a plant in Israel, deals in Saudi Arabia and throughout the Arab World;

—A prominent Jewish-owned US transportation firm has exclusive rights to operate a Ro-Ro (roll on-roll off) shipping service to Saudi Arabia; and

—TWA, the sole US civil-air carrier to Israel, has the management contract to operate the Saudi Arabian airline

[5 paragraphs (59 lines) not declassified]

Longer Term Problems

The regime faces no threats of consequence, despite its rigid conservatism and total lack of representative institutions. Partly as a result of its ambitious development policy, however, and partly simply as a result of the sudden influx of vast wealth, the country is facing a period of sweeping economic change that cannot help but drag social change in its wake, unsettling the country's traditional structures and perhaps, in time, endangering the monarchy.

The country suffers from a severe shortage of manpower. Of its population of perhaps 5 million, at least a million and probably more are foreigners, and the Saudis can expect a continuing influx of foreign workers—perhaps half a million in the next five years—if their development plans even approach the scale proposed. Some will be unsophisticated manual laborers from North Yemen and the Sudan; some will be skilled technicians from other Arab countries and the West. No matter how hard Saudi leaders try to insulate the population from the influence of “foreign” ideas, new ideas will come—perhaps demands for the formation of labor unions, which are now illegal, or attempts to introduce flexibility into the country's rather oppressive, religion-dominated social life.

Social change is likely to usher in demands for a political role by wealthy businessmen and educated, middle-class technicians. The Saudis are determined not to follow the example of Kuwait, where the National Assembly—until its recent suspension—gave free expression to radical and antiregime ideas. Rather than toy with similar democratic experiments, the Saudis will try to grease social frictions with money, already a key factor in ensuring Saudi stability. Although far from evenly distributed—a factor aggravated by the conspicuous consumption of those at the top—Saudi wealth is virtually bottomless, and should go far to ensure cooperation with the regime.

But money will, in turn, gradually erode traditions spawned by an ascetic, desert culture. Respect for the ulema—religious leaders—will eventually diminish; tribal sheikhs will dwindle in importance; business ties will supplant tribal ties. All this could have an effect on the monarchy. The king of Saudi Arabia was originally—and in significant ways still is—a kind of super-sheikh. Any Saudi can petition him in person or appeal for his judgment in a dispute. But in the

modern Saudi Arabia, no king is going to be able to maintain that kind of accessibility indefinitely. As the monarchy grows more remote from the people, it will be perceived as more absolute; and this is likely to spur popular agitation for a say in the decision-making process.

A breakdown in mores and customs sufficient to threaten the monarchy will take time. Any more immediate threat would have to come from the army and the air force, the only institutions with the power to mount a coup—and the threat from this quarter seems almost equally remote. [12 lines not declassified]

[1 paragraph (17 lines) not declassified]

145. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State and the Department of Defense¹

Jidda, January 23, 1977, 1242Z

585. Subject: Saudi Desire to Acquire F-15 Aircraft. Ref Jidda 0127.²

1. Ambassador and Defense Attache met with MinDef Sultan on Jan 19. Amb Porter mentioned recent Saudi references to their interest in acquiring new aircraft. He added that this subject would be studied by the new administration. MinDef Sultan replied that this was not a new subject, since it had been discussed with SecState Kissinger over a year ago and an agreement had been concluded.³ Kissinger had concurred that it was necessary for the SAG to replace outmoded aircraft with F-14's, F-15's or F-16's. It was agreed, MinDef said, that SAG would send a committee of aviators and technicians to the U.S. to examine the aircraft and to determine which was most suitable for Saudi Arabian needs. This was done. One month ago the decision was made that the SAG would require the new aircraft a year and a half from now, and a letter had been prepared requesting them. Specifically, SAG will request 50 F-15's, to include 40 fighters and 10 of two seat configuration for trainers. He is ready to deliver the letter.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770024-0796. Secret. Sent for information to USCINCEUR and CHUSMTM Dhahran.

² In telegram 127 from Jidda, January 5, the Embassy reported on a meeting during which Sultan informed U.S. officials that King Khalid and Crown Prince Fahd had selected the F-15 "as the advanced fighter aircraft for the Royal Saudi Air Force." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770004-0659)

³ Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. E-9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region, 1973-1976.

2. Amb said this information was helpful and would be useful in briefing the new USG, but requested that Sultan delay sending us the letter, awaiting further word. Sultan indicated he had no objection to waiting, but that he would appreciate guidance as soon as possible. MinDef Sultan requested that any further word be provided before Feb 1, since SAG wished to send the letter some time between Feb 1 and Feb 15. Amb Porter assured the MinDef of his continued interest in the matter and said he would reply as soon as possible.

3. Comment: From his reference to SecState Kissinger's visit, it is clear that MinDef Sultan feels the USG has made a commitment to provide the SAG with advanced fighter aircraft. Indeed, DepSecDef Clements reinforced that view during his visit in Oct 76,⁴ stating that the SAG could purchase whichever advanced fighter—including the F-15—they preferred.⁵

Porter

⁴ Clements visited Jidda October 21, 1976. Documentation on his visit is scheduled for publication *ibid*.

⁵ Saudi Defense Minister Sultan again expressed his desire to reach an agreement with the United States to sell F-15s to Saudi Arabia during a January 24 meeting, which the Embassy described in telegram 696 from Jidda, January 26. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770028–0540)

146. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, February 8, 1977, 2013Z

28217. Subject: Saudi Desire to Acquire F-15 Aircraft. Ref: Jidda 585,² State 17333,³ Jidda 1015.⁴

We believe it would be better if Saudis decided they could hold off, at least for a while, in submitting their official request to purchase F-15s. We appreciate this is a delicate matter and we leave it up to you how to handle with SAG. At your discretion, you may wish to brief Sultan on the contents of State reftel. We do not in the end, however, wish to press SAG in way that makes submission of their letter itself an issue between us.

Vance

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770045-0304. Secret; Priority. Drafted by Twinam; cleared by Sober, Ericson (PM/SAS), and Fifer (DOD/ISA); approved by Atherton. Sent for information Priority to CHUSMTM and USCINCEUR.

² See Document 145.

³ In telegram 17333 to all diplomatic posts, January 26, the Department referenced Carter's January 23 statement on U.S. arms transfer policy and indicated that U.S. officials, if queried, "may inform host governments that, as President clearly indicated, it is not repeat not our intention to place freeze on all arms transfers." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770027-1041). Carter made the statement during a January 23 interview with AP and UPI correspondents; see the Department of State *Bulletin*, February 14, 1977, pp. 123-124.

⁴ In telegram 1015 from Jidda, February 7, the Embassy highlighted topics of discussion, primarily related to security assistance, in advance of Vance's trip to Saudi Arabia February 19-20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770042-1068) For information concerning the visit, see Document 148.

147. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, February 9, 1977, 1511Z

1149. Subject: F–15's for Saudi Arabia. Ref: (A) USMTM 081045Z Feb 77 (Notal)² (B) State 28217.³

1. CHUSMTM has relayed to us (Ref A) the following letter from MinDef Prince Sultan to Ambassador Porter. Begin text of unofficial translation:

H.E. U.S. Ambassador, Jidda

Greetings:

In view of the good relationship that ties the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, we always desire that most of our arms purchases be from U.S. production. In the light of this, we request that you convey the Saudi Government's desire—delegated to the Ministry of Defense and Aviation—to discuss with the U.S. Government—represented by the Department of Defense and the U.S. Air Force—the purchase of fighter planes (model F–15) produced by McDonnell Douglas company.

I request that you transmit this request to the responsible American officials in the U.S. in order that arrangements be made quickly to begin discussions between the two committees of Saudi Arabia and the U.S.

Accept my greetings.

Sultan bin Abd al Aziz

End text.

2. Prince Sultan, you will note, has managed an end-run through USMTM, to put text of his letter in my hand so to speak. However I do not consider this official letter unless or until I receive it. I suggest no repeat no reaction from Department or DOD pending further developments.

3. For CHUSMTM: I hope you can manage to avoid any further discussion on this matter with MODA officials.

Porter

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D7700047–0449. Secret. Sent for information to USCINCEUR and CHUSMTM.

² Not found.

³ See Document 146.

148. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, February 22, 1977, 0552Z

1412. Eyes Only for Under Secretary Habib from Ambassador Porter. Subject: Secretary's Meeting With Crown Prince Fahd. Ref: Jidda 1411.²

1. Summary: Because of its substance and completeness, Ambassador believes following report of the Secretary's meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Fahd on February 19 deserves special consideration. It would be read by officials in the Department, other agencies, and even the Congress, who are responsible for areas where U.S. and Saudi interests meet. End summary.

2. Begin text:

After initial formalities, Secretary Vance said that he brought the Crown Prince warm greetings from President Carter. The President hoped that the Crown Prince would be able to visit him, and had asked the Secretary to deliver a Presidential letter to His Royal Highness.³

Prince Fahd thanked the Secretary, and said he looked forward to visiting the United States. Prince Fahd went on to say that he very much hoped that the Secretary's fact-finding visit to the Arab countries,⁴ and especially to Saudi Arabia, would be successful. Although he knew it was only an initial visit for the Secretary, such visits always expanded the knowledge of the traveller.

The Secretary replied that the President had asked that he make this visit early in the new administration, to demonstrate to the world the importance he places on a peaceful resolution of the Middle East problem. In addition, he wished the Secretary to meet with the heads of governments of the states most concerned with resolving the Middle

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 1-8/77. Secret; Nodis.

² In telegram 1411 from Jidda, February 22, 0528Z, the Embassy indicated that the text of the Secretary's conversation with Fahd would be transmitted separately and noted that Porter hoped that the conversation would be given "widest possible circulation." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770060-0966) Vance visited Riyadh February 19-20.

³ Carter's undated letter to Fahd discussed the President's desire to have the Crown Prince visit the United States and highlighted some of Carter's thinking on the Middle East peace process. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Trip File, Box 41, Vance, Middle East, 2/14-21/77: Letters)

⁴ In addition to Saudi Arabia, Vance traveled to Israel (February 15-17), Egypt (February 17-18), Lebanon (February 18), Jordan (February 18-19), and Syria (February 20-21). Documentation on his talks in these countries is in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978, Documents 6-15.

East question, to receive first-hand exposure to their views, and to inquire what might be the best procedure to facilitate the peace-making process.

The Secretary went on that he would report to the President on his return, and that the President was looking forward to meeting with the Crown Prince and other Middle Eastern leaders. The President would consider the reports that the Secretary would convey; the President also hoped to review with foreign leaders his own thinking on how the United States can be most helpful in facilitating a peace process.

We were therefore hopeful that Prince Fahd could visit the United States on April 12.⁵ President Sadat would be coming to Washington on the 5th, and Prince Fahd's visit would be the second after that one. Other leaders would be coming to Washington subsequently.

The Secretary added that His Royal Highness had perhaps had a chance to hear from Prince Saud a short summary of the results of our discussions with other leaders whom the Secretary had met during his trip. The Crown Prince had perhaps heard of the difference in views that may have been expressed over the issues of substance and procedure. He said it would be of great value to him to receive any views on how the Crown Prince saw these issues, and how the U.S. might proceed.

Prince Fahd said that in any case the main object of the Saudi Arabian Government was how to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia asked itself in whose interest is it that a condition of peace and stability be postponed? It had concluded that the only beneficiary from continued Middle Eastern instability was the Eastern camp. Even Israel itself does not benefit from the present situation—presumably Israel also wishes the area to be stable and tranquil. Thus the SAG's special concern was how can it help to bring about stability.

From the Arab point of view, there is now a sincere desire for peace. Wars are not to anyone's benefit. This is the Arab consensus, and Prince Fahd is told that the leaders of Israel share the same desire. For that matter, all the Jews in the world know that any continuation of the present situation is not in the interests of the Arabs, of the Jews, or of the world community. Prince Fahd hoped that the United States would spare no efforts to bring about a necessary, just, and peaceful solution to the problem. The problem, however, is one that goes back for many years, and a solution therefore will require the very greatest efforts.

⁵ Fahd met with U.S. officials in Washington in May; see Documents 150 and 151.

Prince Fahd wished to point out one important matter: i.e., the readiness of the Palestinian leaders and the Palestinian people to accept peace efforts and a peaceful solution. In former years no one had perceived such an attitude on the part of the Palestinians, and we all knew that the Eastern camp had no interest in seeing this spirit prevail. For it to be happening now is a signal that the Middle East problem is becoming susceptible to a solution. Prince Fahd knows the USSR is a very great state, and he does not presume to think that Saudi Arabia can "fight" it. But he believes Saudi Arabia can help to convince the states of the area that the USSR is not interested in them for altruistic reasons. Saudi Arabia can perhaps open the eyes of its fellow Arabs to the ideological and economic fallacies which the USSR seeks to propagate. In the past the Soviet Union has wanted to create strong points for itself in the area, and sought to penetrate areas that are weak and disturbed. Its ultimate object is to maximize its opportunities to promote its own brand of ideological and economic imperialism. Saudi Arabian leaders and leaders of Arabic public opinion, in general, thus fear that if a just solution cannot be found, the Soviet Union will infiltrate the area by convincing the Arabs that only it can assure the Arab peoples their rights.

Prince Fahd said he also knew the Soviet Union had interests and aspirations extending beyond the Middle East, to the Far East, Africa and elsewhere. But with regard to the Arab region, it was essential to solve the problem between the Arabs and Israel. Saudi Arabia believed there was no alternative now to this solution; and this in turn very much raised the question of the Palestinian peoples rights. The Palestinian problem must be solved with equity and justice. It is known that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians now reside in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and the Gulf states. All of them look to a solution that would improve their own personal status. Any solution that does not accomplish this, will not be practical or constructive. Thus, the extent to which this area will in the future enjoy tranquility or not, will depend on the extent to which the Palestinians can feel that they have something known as a Palestinian entity, or a Palestinian state.

The Crown Prince noted that a few years ago no one in the Middle East dared to speak of a solution that would include Israel as a state among the states of the Middle East. This is now commonly being said however, and this condition must be exploited. We cannot let the opportunity slip. Saudi Arabia hears that the leaders of Israel say the PLO must declare their recognition and acceptance of Israel, so that Israel in turn can discuss peace matters with them. Prince Fahd wished to comment on this matter: it was a matter of the utmost delicacy, and required the most careful handling. Ever since 1937, the Palestinian peoples have been in part out of their country, and they have inculcated

their youth with the conviction of the eventual certain return to their lands. Palestinian leaders and leaders of Palestinian public opinion know that if they were now to accord such a degree of recognition of Israel, they would not last one day.

But as far as what is happening now, Crown Prince noted the PLO leaders no longer demand all of Palestine. They do not demand that Israel be abolished. All that they ask for is that a Palestinian entity be set up on the West Bank and Gaza. This is tantamount to recognizing Israel as a state. If Israel does not accept a Palestinian state and thereby provide positive support to the Palestinians, the PLO, and Arab leaders, it will be very difficult to find an appropriate solution. Saudi Arabia, moreover, considers that there are many Israelis that do not accept an intransigent view, which primarily serves their own extremists and fanatics. There are those Israelis that believe in the merit of creating a Palestinian state, and entity, granting the Palestinian people their rights.

The Crown Prince urged that the United States consider well, that if this year passes or the next, without a well founded prospect in sight, or without any indication of a possible solution, the results would be grim. Elements exist that do not want stability to prevail in the area, and to proclaim that peace efforts have failed. These prospects are all the more disturbing because such conclusions can quickly prevail in the minds of people who have been told over and over again for 25 years that the only friend of the Arabs is Russia.

Prince Fahd said the Secretary must know that in the Arab equation today there are many of the components of a positive solution: money, knowledge, and skilled personnel. The present leaders of the Middle East, moreover, have much experience, and are the best qualified to lead their peoples to a goal of stability in the region. Conditions are propitious, therefore, but if these hopes are disappointed, and if the Arabs become convinced that there will be no justice for them and no solution, the area will again become inflamed. The Eastern bloc will seize the opportunity to infiltrate and what in that case might the free world do? Would it abandon its friends and its interests, or might it resort to force? And if it did, what might come of the use of such force?

The Crown Prince considered that what happened in Lebanon was an example of what might in other circumstances occur throughout the Middle East. Lebanon was a very small country of no threat to anyone. Nonetheless, this country had gone through 19 months of bloody civil war, in which every kind of arms was used. This bloodshed would not have occurred without interference of the Eastern bloc, and Prince Fahd wondered what might happen if similar unrest were being fueled by the Soviets from Morocco to Iraq.

Prince Fahd urged that the United States now should study the matter of the Middle East with great method and precision. The situa-

tion is now good. But if efforts to reach a solution are frustrated, events will begin to run away with all the participants, and the consequences will be unacceptable. He urged the United States leaders to put forward their ideas. He believed we would be pleased with the reception they received. Doors might appear closed, but if one knocked, they might open. Prince Fahd knew that the burden which the friends of the United States placed upon us was onerous. There was no escaping, however, the burdens of the problem we were living with. He said Saudi Arabia would always be in touch with the United States and if anything useful or new came to its attention, it would contact us. He assured the Secretary that the SAG would always study anything that the United States put forward very closely. He hoped that we would be equally frank and meticulous in keeping in touch with him.

Prince Fahd reminded the Secretary that Saudi Arabia could perhaps help to find solutions to problems between parties to the conflict. Saudi Arabia had always tried in its own quiet way to bring about stability in the area.

Prince Fahd then spoke about Saudi-US bilateral relations. He knew that the relations were very strong, and were of considerable duration. It had been proven moreover, that these ties were not easily shaken: Saudi Arabia had demonstrated its attachment to this relationship even in difficult times. He hoped that this relationship would grow even closer and more useful. Saudi Arabia also knew that there were those in the area that claimed at least privately to be good friends of the United States. But in public they criticized the United States, whereas Saudi Arabia had always stood publicly by its pro-US position.

Turning to the question of oil, Prince Fahd said that Saudi Arabia and the UAE had taken their pricing decision for the well-being of the world community. They had sought to check the rise of inflation, and to do what they could to lighten the economic burden on the consuming nations. Fahd noted that some of the world press had hastened to say that Saudi Arabia was bargaining with the US in adopting this position and was seeking a quid pro quo. This was untrue. Saudi Arabia had acted as it did because it was convinced such action was necessary and good for the free world.

Saudi Arabia, moreover, knew that it needed the help of the USA. With regard to the Kingdom's military development, for instance, it wished US-Saudi ties to be based on the most comprehensive and best possible position. The Prince reaffirmed the importance that Saudi Arabia attached to developing the Kingdom's army, navy and air force under US auspices. He emphasized that Saudi Arabia would never use its arms to attack others. He wished the Kingdom to be as strong as its capabilities and requirements indicated. No one, he noted, could be respected if he could not defend himself—but he repeated that Saudi Arabia would never commit aggression against others.

Prince Fahd also felt that the Gulf states were confident and secure in Saudi Arabia's proximity. They had placed upon Saudi Arabia a responsibility to defend them should the situation require it. He added that Saudi Arabia's military efforts should furthermore be seen in the light of other regional states that are armed most strongly by the Soviets. This is why in the Prince's most recent discussions with former President Nixon, former Secretary of State Kissinger, and former Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, the Saudi side had always expressed interest in military topics.⁶

The Prince noted that in general the US had always expressed its readiness to cooperate with Saudi Arabia, but that the actual implementation of programs was not always as prompt as might be desirable. The SAG was repeatedly told that it should take more time, and train additional manpower to absorb new equipment. In the past, Fahd admitted, they had gotten some good responses from the US but he now wanted to work together on a plan of military preparation and sales that would be agreed to by both sides. He wished to build up the Saudi armed forces in a long term, orderly way. The SAG had to know how it could proceed in future years. If the SAG lacked a well thought out program, or did not know in advance what steps it should take, it would be difficult to proceed. Furthermore, its defensive capability would in no way be appropriate to the country's vast size and very great responsibilities. Saudi Arabia would lack the military strength necessary for it to be respected.

The Prince therefore hoped that the USG would give close attention to what degree it could arm Saudi Arabia with advanced aircraft, such as the F-15. He did not ask for the USG's answer now. But he would want to know to what extent Saudi Arabia could depend on the US.

In the meantime, Saudi Arabia would continue to develop its manpower, but it was important to be able to reassure the Saudi Arabian people and their armed forces that their government was really determined to build a modern army, navy and air force. The Prince hoped that these very delicate matters could be given close attention.

Prince Fahd next came to an important point: he was concerned over what Congressmen and Senators might do about the Arab boycott. Such actions would have great influence on the thinking of Saudi Arabia and on Saudi Arabia's understanding (iltizamat) towards the US as a government and toward the more than 200 US firms in the Kingdom. Congressional action would have an effect on the SAG and

⁶ Prince Fahd visited Washington in May 1974. Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. E-9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region 1973–1976.

private Saudi individuals. The Prince sincerely hoped that matters would never get to the point where our relations would not be as we both might wish. In whose interest he asked is it that US-Saudi economic relations be harmed? Why should US companies withdraw from the market so that European, Japanese and other companies can replace them? Billions of dollars in sales and in banking investments were involved, and these benefits could erode and the door could be opened to others.

The Prince added that decisions in Congress on the boycott could be of the greatest and most far-reaching sensitivity. He urged the USG to be far-sighted. The administration should make congressional leaders of anti-boycott actions aware of the US's true interests. Saudi Arabia was ready to cooperate in such an educational effort. US-Saudi Arabia friendship was not based on formal ties; like any good friends the two sides could discuss great and small matters in an amicable tone. The Prince imagined that some members of Congress who were doing all they could to combat the Arab boycott did not understand the matter. Were they to study the US's interests and the harm their action could do to the US—and friends of the US—perhaps their position would be different. He suggested that such congressional leaders visit Saudi Arabia and discuss matters face to face. He again wished the Secretary to know to what degree legislative measures against the boycott could be harmful to the US.

The Prince did not say that the members of the Congress out of deliberate intent wished to hurt US interest. Ignorance was probably at fault. Therefore, let the Congressmen come to Saudi Arabia. The SAG would point out to these Congressmen what US interests really were and what were the interests of America's friends. Through such discussions, the Congress could see the issue in wider context. Once again, the Prince noted that harm to our relations could result if the USG acted against the boycott on the basis of such congressional decisions.

The Prince said he considered that he had spoken long enough. He expressed his thanks to the Secretary and to President Carter for their thoughtfulness in inviting him to the US. This was an excellent step, and would give him an opportunity to meet with friends, to learn, and to become more personally familiar with the course of US-Saudi relations.

Secretary Vance thanked the Crown Prince for his enlightening presentation. He especially appreciated Fahd's clear and thoughtful analysis of the strategic implications of various forces that might come into play, and the consequences of various courses of action. He asked the Prince's permission to comment on a few points—which he said would be brief.

He completely agreed with the Crown Prince that no one in the area would benefit from a failure not to resolve the Middle East problem.

He said he would spare no effort in working with the Crown Prince and other leaders to find a just and durable solution. The US shares the SAG's concern about the USSR, and is familiar with the problems which may result for all of us if Soviet objectives are attained. We are well aware the Russians have in the past fished in troubled waters and would continue to try to do so.

Regarding the question of the Palestinian people, we have always maintained there could be no just and durable peace without a solution to the Palestinian problem.

Regarding the question of territories, we supported from the outset Resolution 242 which calls for restoring lands acquired by Israel in the 1967 war.⁷

Regarding the status of the PLO, this presents a problem—but one which the Secretary hoped would not be beyond the ingenuity of man to bridge. It is difficult now he said for us to speak finally on this issue, but we must recognize that it poses a very substantial difficulty between Israel on the one hand and the Arabs on the other.

The Secretary next asked if he might say that the US was indeed mindful of the courage and leadership demonstrated by Prince Fahd and other Saudi leaders in their efforts to promote stability in the area. It was the hope and desire of the USG to help Saudi Arabia maintain this stability. The US takes this action not only because it believes that doing so is in the interest of the people in the area, but in our own national interest as well.

Regarding peace efforts in general, the Secretary believed there is an opportunity at this point, and said that we shall strive to the utmost not to lose this opportunity. We assured the Crown Prince that we would work in closest consultations with him in our search for peace. He looked forward to discussing the US view on this matter further with the Crown Prince when he visited the President.

The Secretary then added a few words about our bilateral relations: he fully agreed with the Crown Prince that US-Saudi relations were strong and deeply rooted. He recognizes and appreciates the way Saudi Arabia has stood up in public and defended this relation with us. The US was proud of this relationship and would do all in its power to strengthen it.

On the question of military forces and a plan for the future of our military relationship, the Secretary informed the Crown Prince that the US has undertaken a study of the whole question of sale of military arms. This study would apply not only to the Middle East but to sales

⁷ Reference is to UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967. See *Foreign Relations*, 1964–1968, vol. XIX, Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967, Document 542.

anywhere in the world as far as the US is concerned. The Secretary fully agreed it was an excellent idea to establish a systematic, long term plan for Saudi Arabia's military requirements. The US will begin work on such a study and will be happy to discuss it with the Crown Prince when he comes to the US.

The Secretary said that the boycott is a complex and difficult matter in the US. The Congress intends to hold hearings on this question at the end of this month. He was able to defer such hearings to the end of the month but Congress insisted that they should go forward as of February 28. In the meantime, the Secretary said that we were studying within the Executive Branch how best to respond in these hearings at which he himself would have to testify.⁸ Ambassador Porter could also perhaps discuss this forthcoming bilateral issue with Saudi officials. The Ambassador's reports could become part of the Secretary's preparations. The Secretary agreed it would be useful for members of Congress to visit the area. He would encourage Congressmen to undertake such visits, to come, to see, and to learn.

Finally, the Secretary wished to touch on one other subject. He had stated previously that the US should move to convene the Geneva Conference in the last half of 1977.⁹ He had not made this proposal of course for the purpose of seeking a delay. He believed, however, it would be more practical to convene the conference in the fall of 1977.

In the meantime, there was much preparatory work that could be done so that all should move smoothly and speedily when the conference is held.

In conclusion, the Secretary wished to thank the Crown Prince for his gracious hospitality. It had been a great pleasure to come to Saudi Arabia and to meet with the Crown Prince and other Saudi Arabian leaders.

Prince Fahd replied that he was happy that the Secretary had visited Saudi Arabia; he hoped that such visits could take place again, because he thought them most useful.

As a closing word, the Secretary asked that the Crown Prince inform His Majesty King Khalid how pleased the Secretary was to have

⁸ For Secretary Vance's March 1 statement before the House Committee on International Relations on the proposed anti-boycott legislation, see the *Department of State Bulletin*, March 21, 1977, pp. 267-270.

⁹ Originally convened on December 21, 1973, to negotiate a solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute, the multilateral Geneva Middle East Peace Conference stood in adjournment since December 29 of that year. For documentation relating to the Carter administration's efforts to re-convene the Conference, see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978.

learned that His Majesty had come through his recent operation in such a splendid fashion.

Prince Fahd praised God for His Majesty's health. He said he had heard that day from Prince Sultan that the King was sitting up in bed and receiving a few friends. The King had also taken some coffee, but the doctors would not allow him to sit in a chair until the following day. The Crown Prince said that His Majesty had not intended to have an operation at first, but when he saw it was necessary, he had said he was prepared to undergo one, two, three, or more operations if they were needed—in hopes that they would be useful. His Majesty was a brave and hardy man.

The Secretary and his party took their leave.

Porter

149. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, May 21, 1977

SUBJECT

F-15s for Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia was informed in 1974, after an extensive U.S. survey of their defense needs, that we were prepared in principle to sell them an advanced fighter aircraft to replace their aging fleet of 44 British Lightnings. In October 1976, Deputy Secretary of Defense Clements told the Saudi Defense Minister that he considered the F-16 the most appropriate fighter for Saudi Arabia, but "if you want the F-15, the choice is yours." The Saudis have conducted their own extensive study and have informed us on several occasions that they prefer the F-15. Crown Prince Fahd will wish to have confirmation of the U.S. commitment during his visit to Washington next week. The pilot who conducted the Saudi Air Force study will accompany Fahd on the visit.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 1-8/77. Secret. Sent for action. Carter initialed the memorandum.

Secretary Brown recommends that we agree to supply the F-15, subject to Congressional approval, with no commitment now on delivery dates.²

Secretary Vance recommends (Tab A)³ that a commitment should be made *only* to consult with the Congress concerning the possibility of selling an advanced aircraft to Saudi Arabia, with no commitment on the type of plane, numbers, and delivery schedules. State believes that it would be virtually impossible to get Congressional approval of the F-15 because of its extensive capabilities and complexity. They believe the lightweight F-16, while still very controversial, might have a better chance of success. State also proposes that any such commitment should be preceded by confidential consultations with key Congressional leaders.

There are two fundamental questions: (1) Should we try to persuade the Saudis to purchase the F-16 rather than the F-15; and (2) How should we handle this issue with the Congress?

F-15 vs. F-16

It is unlikely that the Saudis will be willing to consider substitution of the F-16 for the F-15. They want an air defense fighter, and have decided independently that the dual-engine, all-weather F-15 best meets their needs. Defense agrees that this choice is justified and is within Saudi capabilities to operate in the 1980s. The sale of *any* advanced aircraft will be extremely controversial, and we could not assure Prince Fahd that Congressional approval would be forthcoming if he chose the F-16.

Ultimately, the question is political. In the wake of the political events in Israel and the uncertainties which have been injected into the peace process, as well as the recent U.S. public affirmations of our special relationship with Israel on arms transfers,⁴ Crown Prince Fahd will be looking for a reaffirmation of the U.S.-Saudi security relationship as tangible evidence of our attitude toward the Arabs. Any evidence that we are backing away from previous commitments at this point could have a significant influence on the message he takes back to Asad and Sadat.

² Brown approved the recommendation in a May 11 action memorandum from Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Walter Slocombe. (Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330-80-0017, Saudi Arabia, 400-499, 1977, Folder 6)

³ Not attached. In a May 19 memorandum to Carter, Christopher provided Vance's recommendations. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840134-0692)

⁴ On May 12, Carter announced in a press conference that Israel would be accorded "special treatment" in U.S. arms sales and would receive advanced armaments. (*Public Papers: Carter, 1977-78*, Book I, pp. 866-867)

Consultations with Congress

The basic disagreement between Defense and State is whether we should reaffirm our commitment subject to consultations with Congress (Defense) or commit ourselves *only* to consult with Congress, including advance consultation prior to Fahd's arrival.

Advance consultations on more than a token basis are no longer a practical alternative in view of the imminence of Fahd's arrival. Secretary Vance has informed us that he feels obligated to touch base with key Congressional leaders in advance of discussions with Fahd. Subject to your approval, he and Deputy Secretary Christopher intend to meet privately with Senators Humphrey, Case and Javits, as well as with Congressman Zablocki on Monday⁵ to discuss this issue. Secretary Vance agrees that any wider consultation with Congress at this point, given the extreme sensitivity on the Hill to the recent events in Israel, could set off a major confrontation with Congress while Fahd is in Washington.

I recommend that Fahd be told that we will respect the commitment of the previous Administration to sell Saudi Arabia an advanced fighter aircraft. We understand Saudi Arabia's preference for the F-15. However, in view of the controversial nature of this proposed sale, we cannot assure Prince Fahd that it will receive Congressional approval. For that reason, and to avoid possible embarrassment to the Saudi Government, we would prefer to conduct confidential consultations with the Congress in advance of any formal announcement. We will inform him of the results as soon as possible.

Sidewinders and Mavericks

In addition to the F-15 question, Fahd will be looking for a confirmation of President Ford's commitment to King Khalid that every effort would be made in the future to provide additional quantities of Sidewinder and Maverick missiles. This issue is fully discussed in Secretary Vance's memorandum at Tab A (p. 4). Although State and Defense both recommend confirming the commitment to supply additional weapons, subject to Congressional approval, we believe that this could be politically untenable. You will recall the letter from Representative Rosenthal citing your campaign statement on this subject.⁶ That statement, in conjunction with the overall arms transfer policy, makes a commitment on Mavericks and Sidewinders at this time undesirable. I suggest that Fahd be informed, perhaps during your private talk with him, that raising the issue of Mavericks and Sidewinders at this time

⁵ May 23.

⁶ Not found.

would be so controversial that it could seriously threaten other military programs for Saudi Arabia, including the advanced fighter. Unless he considers this to be critical to his defense, we would prefer to postpone consideration of this request until after the issue of the advanced fighter has been settled. In the meantime, the Saudis could be assured that we would maintain their stocks of Mavericks and Sidewinders at present levels, replacing those which are expended in training.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Crown Prince Fahd be informed that we will undertake consultations with the Congress in the near future on the sale of an advanced fighter aircraft, identifying the F-15 as the preferred choice of the Saudi Government.⁷

_____ Approve.

_____ Disapprove.

That you approve Secretary Vance and Deputy Secretary Christopher discussing the issue with Senators Humphrey, Case and Javits and Representative Zablocki.

_____ Approve.

_____ Disapprove.

That you inform Fahd in your private meeting that consideration of the sale of additional Sidewinders and Mavericks would best be postponed until after the issue of the advanced fighter has been settled.

_____ Approve.⁸

_____ Approve. Prefer that this be raised by Secretary Brown.

_____ Disapprove. Proceed as State and Defense have suggested.

⁷ Carter checked the Approve option for this and the following recommendation. Carter also initialed in the right-hand margin next to the first recommendation.

⁸ Carter checked this option and initialed in the margin below. According to the President's Daily Diary, Carter met privately with Fahd in the Oval Office between 10:35 a.m. and 10:55 a.m., May 24. (Carter Library, Presidential Materials) No memorandum of conversation of this meeting has been found. Immediately after that meeting, Fahd and Carter and U.S. and Saudi officials met until 12:30 p.m. See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978, Document 36. Carter met privately with Fahd again on the morning of May 25. Notes of this meeting are in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978, Document 37.

150. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 24, 1977, 1 p.m.

SUBJECT

Secretary's Lunch for Crown Prince Fahd

PARTICIPANTS

Saudi Arabia

His Royal Highness Prince Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince and
Deputy Prime Minister

See attached guest list

United States

The Secretary

See attached guest list

CIEC

At the Secretary's request, *Mr. Cooper* outlined U.S. views on the prospects for CIEC.² He indicated guarded optimism on the basis of consultations over the last few months with both developed and developing countries. In cooperation with other industrial countries, the United States hopes to put together a quite respectable package.

Turning to the four key issues, *Mr. Cooper* noted that commodity policy is of uppermost importance to some of the developing countries and that the United States is sympathetic to commodity agreements which would stabilize prices. The current round of discussions on sugar is the first serious commodity discussion in which the present Administration has been involved and we foresee coming up with a good proposal to stabilize the world sugar market. We do not see, for technical reasons, agreements on each of the eighteen commodities which UNCTAD has identified for consideration, but we are determined to make a sympathetic effort to make progress on those commodities where agreement appears feasible. Without prejudicing the results of technical studies which we are now conducting, we see perhaps a half-dozen commodities, all tropical, such as tin, rubber, sugar, cocoa and coffee, in which agreements appears feasible. If we are able to

¹ Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Cyrus R. Vance, Secretary of State—1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Box 10, Vance EXDIS MemCons, 1977. Secret; Exdis. Drafted by Twinam; approved by Twaddell on June 8. The meeting took place in the James Madison Room at the Department of State. Reddy sent the memorandum of conversation to Twaddell under a May 27 memorandum, in which Reddy provided a brief summary of the conversation. Attached but not printed is a guest list for the luncheon.

² Reference is to the final Ministerial session of the Conference on International Economic Cooperation, which was scheduled to take place in Paris May 30–June 3.

achieve agreements on a reasonable number of commodities the United States is prepared to support a common fund to facilitate their implementation. Our version of the modalities of such a fund is rather different from that proposed by the UNCTAD Secretariat but our consultations suggest some developing countries are finding our version at least equally attractive. There is hope for success in this regard later this year or early next year.

Mr. Cooper continued with the discussion of the second key issue, overseas development assistance. He noted that a major review of foreign aid is underway in the United States Government, but without prejudicing its findings, we think we can support not only substantial increases in the quantity of our development assistance, but also improvements in its quality. Mr. Solomon stated that we are currently discussing development assistance with the Congress, with mixed reactions.

Turning to the external debt issue, Mr. Cooper noted that there is an analytical problem in the CIEC context since some of the strongest advocates of debt relief are not the countries with the worst debt problems. These countries privately admitted that they see debt relief proposals as a vehicle for resource transfer. Therefore, we see two different approaches as called for: dealing with real debt relief problems on a case-by-case basis while treating the question of resource transfer generally under the label of debt relief. We are proposing a "special action" program for the 30–40 poorest countries. This would be a special CIEC "plum" conditional on a successful outcome of CIEC. Modalities would vary country to country. In our own case, we foresee additional economic assistance, especially for Africa.

On the issue of energy, Mr. Cooper noted that is the area in which the United States and Saudi Governments are co-chairmen and that there had been excellent cooperation between us at the last meeting which had achieved progress.

He noted one difficulty in CIEC is that the Group of 19³ have a limited scope for negotiating on the basis of their mandate from the Group of 77.⁴ Therefore, we view CIEC as a place to pull all the strands of economic international cooperation together, giving the most promising areas the impetus of ministerial level focus and then farming them out to appropriate fora for negotiation. For example, there is a role for UNCTAD in commodities and a role for the IBRD and IMF in

³ The developing nations participating in the CIEC: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, and Zambia.

⁴ The Group of 77, established at the conclusion of the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1964 and comprised of 77 developing nations.

economic development discussions. The one key issue which lacks a forum is energy, and we are open to suggestions as to how best to pursue the energy dialogue post-CIEC.

Minister *Yamani* noted that from the beginning Saudi Arabia had been concerned about isolating international discussions of energy from other economic issues and had wanted a “package deal” —hence CIEC. At the ministerial meeting in Paris next week we will be facing the original problem—how to find a forum for energy discussions which will not separate this issue from the others.

Mr. Solomon and *Mr. Cooper* addressed the question of continuing CIEC. *Mr. Solomon*, noting he was speaking frankly among friends, explained that the continuation of CIEC discussions in the other three areas would keep pressure on the industrial countries to reach positions which were not realizable. On the other hand, the energy discussions were generally without the same specificity as the discussions in the other three areas. *Mr. Cooper* said that the new Administration had addressed the idea of continuing CIEC with an open mind, and in discussions with both developed and developing countries he had found “universal disapproval” of this idea. Everyone wanted to wrap up CIEC. He believed that the Group of 19 felt under pressure from the Group of 77 which questioned the legitimacy of the Group of 19 as their representatives.

When Minister *Yamani* said the problem of the need to link energy to the other discussions remains unsolved, the *Secretary* asked for Saudi suggestions. *Yamani* stated that Saudi Arabia is not prepared to separate the issue. Movement in the energy dialogue will be restricted by separation. Prince Saud reviewed the considerations leading up to CIEC, noting that little progress had been made over the years in discussing various international economic issues separately in UNCTAD and various UN fora. CIEC was conceived as the forum which could oversee all of these related issues and in which the importance of the energy question could provide momentum for progress on the other issues.

In response to Minister *Aba al-Khayl*’s question of why there was need to continue to discuss energy, *Mr. Cooper* pointed out it would be anomalous to discuss other international commodities ignoring energy which is in effect the world’s most important “commodity,” rivaled only by grains. He noted the need to develop a global view on such questions as conservation, development of new resources, and the general supply/demand picture. The United States has no fixed idea on how best to continue the energy dialogue. Three illustrative examples would be: (1) a free-standing committee which would be an extension of the CIEC Energy Commission; (2) putting the energy dialogue into UNCTAD; or (3) a free-standing committee under some form of UN/IBRD auspices.

Dr. *Brzezinski* noted that CIEC seems to serve two unique and important functions: it links the economic issues and it provides a political-economic linkage in the context of the North-South dialogue. If no one wants to continue CIEC it obviously should end, but he hoped that no premature conclusions were being drawn.

The *Secretary* indicated he shared this concern.

Minister *Yamani* suggested that there might be some way in which the Group of 19 could at the end of the ministerial meeting call for keeping the option of reconvening CIEC open.

Dr. *Brzezinski* said that this idea might be expanded to include leaving a body of experts in place to pursue discussions.

The *Secretary* said the first need seemed to be to obtain a better view of how the members feel about the future operation of CIEC.

Mr. *Cooper* noted that in his discussions with the Europeans, Japan, and a half dozen developing countries all parties, except the Commission of the European Community which has a special interest in the continuation of CIEC, wanted to wrap it up. He welcomed Minister *Yamani's* idea of making provision for a number of CIEC participants to be able to call for its reconvening, but noted there is some question about keeping the committees operating. Perhaps there would be some way to keep the energy committee alive in some form.

Yamani reiterated the importance of assuring a linkage between the energy dialogue and the other issues.

The *Secretary* suggested giving more thought to this question and getting back in touch before the ministerial session begins.

Crown Prince Fahd urged trying to continue the concept of CIEC by trying to convince all the participating countries of its benefits. If there are obstacles to its success, there is no alternative but to try to remove these obstacles.

Yamani asked what the United States really wants from the energy dialogue. Mr. *Solomon* explained that there is a world concern about quantities and prices of energy. The discussions to date in the energy committee have not been specific: there has been no discussion of price. In response to Minister *Yamani's* query as to whether the United States expected OPEC countries to discuss price in CIEC, Mr. *Cooper* explained that we would welcome discussion of the implications of pricing, but would not view CIEC as a bargaining session over oil pricing. He added that there are other issues, such as conservation and the exchange of technology in seeking new energy sources which warrant discussion.

Prince Saud suggested that since discussion of one economic issue leads to another it is important that there be a forum which links all the issues.

The *Secretary* reiterated the need to reflect on this problem and be back in touch.

The Horn of Africa

The *Secretary* noted that the United States had given much attention and thought to the situation in the Horn of Africa and had taken certain steps of which Saudi Arabia has been kept generally informed. For example, we have been in touch with the Government of Somalia and have sent a mission to discuss economic assistance. Before going to Europe,⁵ the Secretary had met three weeks ago with the Somali Ambassador and military assistance had been discussed.⁶ The Secretary had indicated at that time that he would be prepared to be more specific on his return from Europe and after the Administration's review of arms transfer policy had been completed. He had agreed to meet again with the Somali Ambassador in the near future. In our view, Saudi Arabia and the United States have an opportunity in the Horn of Africa and should work together exchanging views and judgments as to how to proceed. He asked Crown Prince Fahd's advice about the desirability of forming a consortium of Western countries to provide military assistance to Somalia.

Crown Prince Fahd noted his pleasure at being able to discuss the importance of Africa, which the Soviets and communist states generally are increasingly trying to infiltrate. He said Africa feels a great need for assistance, particularly from the United States. He reviewed at some length his effort to focus U.S. attention on Somalia during his last visit to Washington in 1974⁷ when Somalia had not yet formed strong ties with the Soviets, but when Crown Prince Fahd had sensed Somalia's need for economic and military assistance. While Saudi Arabia had done what it could to help, Somalia eventually felt itself in circumstances making it imperative to listen to the Soviets and ties with the communist states developed. Saudi Arabia had tried to warn Somalia that this trend would be ruinous eventually; but the Soviets had jumped into the breach with aid, especially military aid. Saudi Arabia had kept in touch, and a month and a half ago Prince Saud had held wide-ranging discussions during his visit to Somalia.

Concurrently, a Somali minister and military experts had met with Crown Prince Fahd in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis discern new thinking on the part of the Somali leadership about the desirability of close ties to the Soviet Union in particular and the communist world generally. President Siad and other key officials appear convinced of the dire consequences of continuing a close tie with the Soviets and they are

⁵ Vance traveled to Europe May 5–21.

⁶ Documentation on U.S.-Somali relations is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. XVII, Part 1, Horn of Africa.

⁷ See footnote 6, Document 148.

convinced of the need for good relations with the Arabs generally and Saudi Arabia in particular. Saudi Arabia has pitched in to try to help Somalia. At the same time there are elements in Somalia which will pose obstacles to a reorientation of policy and the present leadership must face the reality that it will take time and outside help to permit Somalia to extricate itself from Soviet influence.

Crown Prince Fahd continued that Somalia realizes the Soviets are seeking better relations with Ethiopia and there are of course problems between Somalia and Ethiopia. He cited Castro's recent failure to bring about Ethiopian/Somalia rapprochement. He noted Castro is a tool of the Soviets and that his recent mission is current evidence of Soviet expansionist aims in Africa. He noted the brutality of the present Ethiopian regime. He expressed concern about Soviet aims in Angola. He said the Soviets will try to create in Zaire a base for future infiltration in Africa and that the situation in Zaire could be improved if the West rushed to Zaire's aid. Noting that Castro met with Qaddafi on his mission, Crown Prince Fahd suggested that the threat of Soviet infiltration extends to North Africa.

Returning to Somalia specifically, Crown Prince Fahd stressed that there is now an opportunity for Saudi Arabia and the West to rush to Somalia's aid, closing out the possibilities for Soviet intervention in Somalia and the Red Sea area. It is better to act now than later because there is a popular feeling in Somalia against the Soviet tie, but if the Soviets establish complete control, popular opinion will no longer matter. Saudi Arabia is trying to help Somalia, but its efforts will be useful only if the United States and other Western countries join in. Therefore, Crown Prince Fahd expressed pleasure in learning of the U.S. economic assistance mission, which he said would boost the morale of the Somali leadership.

The *Secretary* said that the United States and the Saudi views on the Horn of Africa are similar and he welcomed the opportunity to continue the discussion, reviewing what we are doing on a country-by-country basis.

After an exchange of compliments, the Secretary and Crown Prince Fahd moved to the Secretary's office for a private meeting.⁸

⁸ No memorandum of conversation of the private meeting has been found.

151. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 24, 1977, 4:30–5:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Secretary of Defense meeting with Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia (U)

PARTICIPANTS

U.S.

The Secretary
Deputy Secretary Duncan
Governor West, U.S. Ambassador-
designate to Saudi Arabia
Assistant Secretary, ISA
DASD (NEASA), Mr. Janka
Director, DSAA, LTG Fish
DASS, Mr. Sober
Military Assistant, RADM
Holcomb

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Fahd
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince
Sa'ud ibn Faysal
Ambassador to the U.S., Ali
Abdullah Alireza
Saudi Interpreter

Secretary Brown: I am happy to see you in our city and I trust that your meetings have gone well.

Prince Fahd: My meetings with the President and the Secretary of State were useful and constructive.² This is the first time I have met with President Carter, and the meeting was very constructive and good. I am pleased to be meeting with you also.

Secretary Brown: We, in Defense, are particularly proud of the opportunity to cooperate with Saudi Arabia in its development and its security efforts. I am not new to the Department of Defense, but I am new to the position of Secretary of Defense. One thing I have been most impressed with is the closeness of relations between Saudi Arabia and the United States. We will do everything possible to advance that relationship.

Prince Fahd: Please proceed with any matters you wish to raise and I shall be pleased to listen.

Secretary Brown: We would be pleased to hear your views for the prospects for peace in the Middle East, including the effects of the recent Israeli elections, as well as the situation in Lebanon in which Saudi influence on Syria has been particularly constructive. I would also like to hear your views on the form a peace agreement might take.

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–80–0017, Saudi Arabia, 400–499, 1977, Folder 5. Secret; Noform. Prepared by Janka; coordinated by McGiffert; approved by Brown on June 4. The meeting took place at Blair House.

² See footnote 8, Document 149, and Document 150.

Prince Fahd: In regard to the matter of peace in the Middle East, I have already discussed this with the President and pointed out that peace will depend on a continuity of effort aimed at maintaining stability in the Middle East. I can also add that this is the view of the leaders of the Arab world, particularly of Egypt and Syria. It is consistent with what we understand from King Hussein and the leaders of the PLO. All Arab parties want the achievement of a just peace—in an impartial and just way.

As you know, there are resolutions approved by the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly, and these resolutions have been agreed upon by major countries. We in Saudi Arabia believe that fighting for a peace that is just and impartial is essential to the area.

We also believe that the present crisis is made up of many things in its background, but what is important now is a continuity of effort for achieving a just and impartial peace. This is in reference to our Arab point of view. On the Israeli side, we cannot say a lot, but there is now an opportunity for them to find peace in the area. The Arabs who are looking for solutions are aware that the problems in our area will not only affect the Middle East, but the world as a whole. It is important for everybody that we avoid such dangerous situations if they arise.

I have discussed the situation with the President, and I have discussed all the possibilities for solutions with the President, and have given him a good view of what the possibilities are in the Middle East. We believe any solution that is imposed from outside, which does not involve the Palestinians, will not achieve a peace. The Palestinian problem is the basic problem of the Middle East situation. As long as there is an inclination for peace in the area, we must continue our efforts. The problem has been all along that Israel was saying it would not accept any peace until its existence was accepted—that acceptance now exists.

Because the Arabs are asking for return of the lands occupied in 1967, and asking for a settlement for the Palestinians—therefore the existence of a Palestinian State implicitly involves an acceptance of borders with an Israeli State. It is very important that Israel, the Arab countries and the Palestinians, all participate in the process of reaching a peace agreement based on justice and impartiality.

With respect to the results of the Israeli election, the views of our countries are similar and emanate from the lack of stability between the Arabs and Israelis. The results of the elections have created something new—majority views and actions new to us. One of those actions is Menachem Begin's attendance at festivities opening a new settlement in the occupied areas and saying that Gaza and the West Bank are a part of Israel. We do not know whether or not, when he assumes office,

such statements will represent his policy or something different will emerge. We noticed that in the International Press he has been saying things which are not satisfactory to the Arabs or other nations. If he (Begin) wants to complicate the situation, the Arabs will not be responsible.

We must ask ourselves; in exactly whose interest are these obstacles being laid against efforts to obtain peace in the Middle East? We in Saudi Arabia believe the only beneficiary of a more complicated situation in the Middle East would be the Eastern camp, because it is not in the interest of the Soviet Union to see peace and stability in the Middle East. This is because once you have peace and stability in the Middle East, there is no further use for the Soviet Union in the region.

I am also convinced that there are also reasonable people still in Israel who think that having new wars is not in the interest of Israel, or the region, because wars mean destruction and killing of innocent people and the destruction of the development process in the area as a whole.

With reference to the Lebanese problem, the efforts of Saudi Arabia were begun long before the Riyadh summit³ took place. This meeting was held only when we were convinced that the different parties were ready to work in one framework. We did this while bearing in mind that there were still problems between Egypt and Syria and immense problems inside of Lebanon.

We have arrived at very useful results—one of which is obtaining good relations between Egypt and Syria and another in solving the problems between the Lebanese President and the leader of the PLO, Yasser Arafat. From time-to-time there are, of course, some simple problems that arise from nineteen months of war in Lebanon. There is an Arab committee to solve such matters which can make it possible for the Lebanese to start rebuilding their country.

Secretary Brown: Your Royal Highness' account of these events, and your views, reinforces my belief that Saudi Arabia is a very important force for peace and stability in the Middle East. Moreover, Saudi Arabia is a very important influence for economic stability, prosperity and peace for the entire world. For all these reasons, the security of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is very important to the United States. We remain committed to supplying the equipment and services mutually agreed to as essential to meeting the defense needs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I am sure that you know that there is concern in the U.S. about the U.S. being the leading arms selling country in the world. As you

³ See footnote 4, Document 143.

know, President Carter has indicated that, consistent with the security of our friends, we want to gradually lower the sale of arms in the world. It is, in any event, in the interest of both of our countries to minimize the public controversy over the level of arms sales. In this context, we fully intend to carry out our agreements with Saudi Arabia regarding security assistance. As I said, Saudi Arabia's security is very important to the U.S.

Perhaps you could give me your impressions of how the security assistance program is going in general, or in terms of any specific questions you may have.

Prince Fahd: It pleases me to discuss with you the details of this matter. I discussed it during my last visit in 1974 with Secretary Schlesinger and Dr. Kissinger.⁴ Especially with regard to implementing the details of such an operation.

Why is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia anxious to arm itself? This is a very expensive process. We would prefer to do away with arms in favor of constructive programs, but we are convinced that a country that cannot defend itself will not be respected. Furthermore, we do not want to attack any one. But all of our neighbors are fully armed by the Soviets—with armies, navies, and air forces. Therefore, the question is, at which door do we knock in order to obtain arms? We don't want to turn to the Soviets. The Europeans are ready to sell to us, but we prefer doing business with the U.S.

When we want to equip our armed forces with modern equipment, we only want to defend our mutual interests. How can we be friends with the U.S. if we cannot defend either ourselves or our mutual interests? If we do not arm ourselves and an occasion arises in which we must defend ourselves, how will we do so without arms? We also believe the Gulf States are relieved to know that Saudi Arabia will help them against potential aggressors.

We believe that the U.S. has mutual interests with Saudi Arabia in the field of energy and stability; therefore, it is essential that we arm ourselves defensively—a strong friend is better than a weak friend. Arming ourselves is a heavy burden, but a burden one can't avoid. For example: If the U.S. was not strong enough to defend itself, nothing could restrain the Soviet Union anywhere in the world. For these reasons we seek the cooperation of the U.S. in helping us. Unless we have modern equipment, the Saudi Arabian armed forces will be demoralized. The officers of the Saudi Arabian armed forces question why they don't obtain the arms they need when our neighbors are getting large quantities from the Soviet Union. It has been difficult for me to answer

⁴ See footnote 6, Document 148.

our officers, except to say that we are obtaining such weapons from the U.S. I can also add that some of the questions addressed to me by our armed forces included such questions as “do we not have enough money or is it something else that we can’t obtain the weapons we need?”. Because of these circumstances, I do hope the U.S. and its officials—civilian and military—will appreciate these circumstances and provide us what we need.

At the same time we would appreciate if the U.S. will bear in mind that you are dealing with a friendly country, a country that you will never have to have questions about. All officials and members of Congress should, we hope, see this as a special matter where a friendly country is involved.

I would like to mention an issue. We in Saudi Arabia would like to avoid complications that tend to arise in implementing weapons programs. It has been mentioned in the Israeli press that there are Saudi Arabian forces near Israel’s borders and that they might use U.S. weapons in aggressive moves against Israel. To stop such speculation, we took our forces from Syria and Jordan. Israel knows well that Saudi Arabia will not attack. Israel wants to arm itself because it is afraid of its neighbors. The same conditions apply to us as our neighbors are fully armed by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union would be pleased to find Saudi Arabia weak in its armed forces.

I am happy that there will be new thinking here towards giving weapons to Saudi Arabia which they can use and absorb. We don’t want to take weapons from the U.S. and pass them on to anyone else. We want them only to defend the Kingdom. I have personally assumed the responsibility for this program and that is why I wanted to say all this to you. I would like you to help me come up with an explanation for my officers as to why delays in weapons deliveries are taking place. The officers ask me the question; why is the government training us but not giving us the weapons we need? I cannot continue to hold them off, yet I am fully convinced the reasonable people in the U.S. do not want the leaders of Saudi Arabia to be embarrassed.

Secretary Brown: I am happy to hear and agree with what you said. We understand and agree with the needs of Saudi Arabia for military equipment to be strong and defend itself. We recognize that Saudi Arabia has very faithfully lived up to agreements that these weapons are for its own use and security.

We intend to live up to our commitments for the sale of military equipment. For example: For an advanced fighter aircraft to replace your Lightnings—and Saudi Arabia was offered its choice as to which aircraft—we are prepared to seek agreement from Congress for whatever aircraft Saudi Arabia elects to purchase. We think the Saudi Air Force may want to look again, along with our Air Force, as to which

aircraft is most appropriate . . . the numbers necessary and some timing and absorption factors. It may be that the F-16 or F-14 may yet be looked at; but our commitment to provide Saudi Arabia the aircraft of its choice stands.

Moreover, I believe that as a result of your previous meetings with U.S. officials in 1974, a ten-year plan was set out for modernizing your armed forces. About three years have gone by since that plan was initiated. Perhaps it is a good time to review this plan together and see what modifications might be appropriate. I would suggest that the Joint Security Commission, which was set up during your visit, might be a suitable mechanism for joint review. It might be useful to modify the plan—some items to be increased, some items to be decreased. For example: The inventory of 400 helicopters recommended in the plan may no longer be correct. Thus, it may be useful to update the plan according to what we now agree are the current needs of the Saudi armed forces. There are many other items, but this is just one example.

Prince Fahd: I forgot to mention that there were certain needs which were to be provided by American companies who are now claiming that the U.S. Government instructed them not to proceed with certain sales. I want Prince Saud to explain to you those weapons which should be provided, but which were not.

Prince Saud: His Highness suggests that some of our military officers meet with some of your people here following this meeting.

Secretary Brown: I am aware of such problems. General Fish will visit Saudi Arabia next month . . . next week, in fact.⁵ He can go over your list of issues now; then, when he arrives in Saudi Arabia he will be prepared to resolve these problems on the spot.

Prince Saud: That will be helpful. However, I think it is a bad time to re-evaluate the whole ten-year plan right now since we have these many detailed problems.

Secretary Brown: I am not suggesting changing any of our commitments, but it may be useful to review your requirements further out than the 1974 plan.

Prince Saud: His Highness has no problem in reviewing these issues now.

Prince Fahd: It is very important that we start our discussion by sending someone to talk with Prince Sultan.

⁵ Fish visited Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Iran June 23–July 3. He met with Saudi defense officials June 27–30. Under a July 15 memorandum, he sent Brown a detailed report, which included an executive summary, a list of follow-up actions, and topical reports. The report is in the Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330–80–0017, Saudi Arabia, 000.1–339, 1977, Folder 2.

Secretary Brown: The discussions can start tonight and continue next week.

Prince Fahd: This is a very important matter and it will help me with the officers of our armed forces.

In concluding, I wish to extend an invitation from your friends in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Secretary Brown: I would look forward to such a visit since I know that none of my predecessors have ever visited the Kingdom.

152. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, June 18, 1977, 1828Z

142372. Subject: Oil Prices: Message From the Secretary to Crown Prince Fahd.

1. Please deliver the following letter from the Secretary to Fahd:
2. Begin text:

Your Royal Highness, your recent visit here² did much to reaffirm and strengthen the relationship between our two countries. The President and the others of us who were privileged to meet with you benefitted greatly from your views and counsel on a wide variety of issues. We shall wish to keep in close touch with you on the broad range of matters affecting the common interests of our nations.

I would like to raise with you at this time one subject of very high and continuing importance to both of our countries and also to the global economy: the question of oil prices. When you were here, the President expressed our appreciation for the policy of your government on this subject, and we were extremely pleased to hear your reaffirmation of the determination of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to continue its course of moderation with regard to oil prices.

Following your visit, there have been some reports to the effect that your government intends to increase the price of Saudi oil by five

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770218–1164. Secret; Immediate. Drafted by Sober; cleared by Julius L. Katz (EB), Tarnoff, Quandt, Bergold (White House), Roger R. Gamble (S/S–O) and in substance by Cooper; approved by Vance. Also printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 126.

² See Documents 150 and 151.

percent within the coming month, in the context of the forthcoming OPEC meeting. These same reports state that the eleven members of OPEC which increased their prices by ten percent last January³ would forego any additional price increase until the end of 1977. We do not know whether these reports are correct.

From our point of view, it appears clear that the interests of the global economy would be best served by avoiding further increases in the price of oil. With regard to any possible price increases which your government might be planning for the remaining months of this year, we trust that you are also considering the desirability of achieving an understanding that would call for a period of stability in the prices of the other producers beyond the end of 1977.

I would value greatly your sharing with me your thoughts at this time on the prospects for oil pricing in the months ahead. As we agreed during your visit here, continued cooperation between our two countries on energy matters will remain of the highest importance. For our part, the President is continuing to press his proposals for a United States energy program that places special emphasis on the need for maximum conservation, and we will wish to keep you informed of the progress of our efforts in this regard. The President has asked me to convey to you, and through you to King Khalid, his warmest wishes and his hopes for your good health. I join in these wishes and hopes. Sincerely, Cyrus Vance.

End text.

Vance

³ Reference is presumably to the OPEC meeting at Doha in December 1976 when 11 OPEC members raised the price of oil by 10 percent. See footnote 8, Document 143.

153. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, June 26, 1977, 1508Z

4503. Subj: Oil Prices: Message From the Secretary to Crown Prince Fahd. Ref: State 142372.²

1. We have received letter from Crown Prince in response to Secretary's letter of June 18 (reftel). Text (our translation) follows:

Greetings:

We have received with pleasure your note dated June 18, 1977. While thanking Your Excellency for the kind feelings you expressed concerning our recent visit to Washington and its auspicious results, we share with you the hope that similar contacts be continued in the future to solidify the close ties between our two countries and in support of their common interests.

With respect to Your Excellency's comments in the said note on oil prices, and the possibility that certain increases could take place in one state or another in the coming months, we would like to point out that Saudi Arabia has and is still following with concern the fluctuating (tadhabdhub in Arabic) oil prices in OPEC producing states. (Saudi Arabia) believes that such fluctuations do not serve the common interests of the producing states themselves; that wisdom and moderation call for an end to this situation, and thence for an attempt to create a positive dialogue in the light of which a single formula for oil prices might be reached during the coming period. I had already mentioned this to H.E. President Carter during the talks I held with His Excellency in Washington.³

In our opinion, coordination of oil prices within the framework of OPEC would achieve the following results:

First: It would end the current fluctuation in oil prices, and consequently put an end to the imbalance in the supply and demand of exporting countries.

Second: Protect OPEC unity and survival as a world body promoting the growth and stability of energy to the advantage of the entire community.

Third: Offer chances of stability and steady growth for the economies of states, developed and developing.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770228–0548. Secret; Immediate. Sent for information to USLO Riyadh.

² See Document 152.

³ See footnote 8, Document 149.

As Your Excellency is aware, a unified price is definitely in the interest of consumers, even if this entails an increase in the price of oil exported from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, for this (increase) is based on the absence of an oil price hike by the others as they had agreed to with effect next July.

If we take the weighted average of crude sale (prices) at an increase of five percent and at a fifteen percent increase, the average would be higher than ten percent, an additional burden on consumers which may be removed if the prices of Saudi Arabia and UAE were stepped up.

However, the prices—as Your Excellency is aware—are basically subject to the law of supply and demand. As long as the supply can be increased considerably beyond present levels only with difficulty, any increase in demand results in a price hike no matter to what degree we concentrate efforts toward the opposite direction. We greatly appreciate Your Excellency's efforts in opposing increased consumption of energy, but we seize this opportunity to stress our concern that demand be reduced. Even if efforts to reduce consumption succeed, demand for petroleum will continue to be considerable, as a result of the building up of petroleum reserves of various kinds. This development came at a time when Saudi Arabia was striving to block unreasonable increases in prices, and (our) efforts have been and are still affected by this policy which increases demand for petroleum, dissipates the advantages of conserving energy, and weakens the results of Saudi Arabia's efforts, perhaps fatally.

From all the foregoing, Your Excellency will realize that Saudi Arabia's role vis-a-vis oil prices stems from its sense of international responsibility and communal responsibility for the sake of keeping this vital substance a source of prosperity for man, his growth and happiness. And thus we join Your Excellency in a common understanding of the necessity for further stability in the prices of energy so that it may continue to be a means for the good of man. And, lastly, we hope that forthcoming efforts may yield good results to the advantage of all.

In closing, I am pleased to reiterate my thanks and appreciation for the sentiments and valuable views contained in Your Excellency's note. Please convey to H.E. President Jimmy Carter the greetings and wishes of H.M. King Khalid bin Abd al-Aziz, and it gives me pleasure to share His Majesty's greetings and best wishes for H.E. the President and for Your Excellency personally.

Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz al-Saud
Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister
Riyadh, 9 Rajab 1397H
June 25, 1977 A.D. End text
2. Text of letter being pouched.

154. Report Prepared by the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West)¹

Jidda, August 1977

**SAUDI ARABIA—PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS****INTRODUCTION**

Based on my first few weeks in Saudi Arabia, certain conclusions have become clear. None of these are revolutionary or even necessarily new, but the personal discipline of stating them as simply and clearly as possible has been helpful to me and hopefully will be of benefit to others concerned with the problem at hand.

Some recommendations likewise are being offered based on these conclusions. Hopefully, these recommendations coming from a fresh perspective will have that advantage to compensate in part for the lack of in-depth knowledge and relative inexperience of the writer in formal diplomacy.

Saudi Arabia is important to the United States and its allies for two major reasons:

1) Saudi Arabia will have effective control for at least the next decade of the world's energy situation. Not only is over one-fourth of the world's known oil located in its borders, but more importantly the vast majority of the world's "cheap" oil is situated here. Access to that oil on terms that do not wreck the United States and the free world's economy is vital to our national interests.

2) Saudi Arabia has a unique opportunity and capacity to provide economic and political leadership in a form consistent with the United States' national and international goals and policies. The political role is not limited to the influence and leverage it has in the Mid-East and the peace negotiations there, but also is equally potent in Africa and other developing nations. The economic role means in part providing funds which might otherwise have to come from the United States.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 9–12/77. Secret. Attached but not printed is a September 2 memorandum from Sick to Brzezinski under which Sick sent West's report. Sick also attached a memorandum to Carter from Brzezinski, for Brzezinski to sign and attach to West's report. A notation on Sick's September 2 memorandum indicates that Brzezinski hand-carried the package to Carter on September 7. Carter added the following notation on the first page of Brzezinski's memorandum: "Fritz—A superb report, J." Vance added "I agree. Cy" in the margin. An August 21 covering letter from West to Carter is also attached but not printed.

To give a full picture, it is clear that the present regime in Saudi Arabia feels the need for close ties with the United States and probably links their own survival to the maintenance of good relations with us. They are acutely aware of many of their own weaknesses and at least some of their vulnerabilities. They know that they need a strong friend and protector if they are to continue to control and benefit from the oil treasure which fate has allotted to them. This awareness on the part of the Saudi regime provides us with some influence in their policies and conduct, but in no way lessens the validity of the two major premises as above stated.

SAUDI ARABIA—OIL AND ENERGY

Peace in the Mid-East has been one of the highest of priorities in the U.S. foreign policy—and rightly so. However, of equal, and probably more importance to our national interest, and those of our allies, is our relationship to Saudi Arabia as it affects our future supplies of oil and energy.

The critical nature of this problem has become increasingly clear to me in my time here. I feel it important that I express to you the sense of urgency and concern about this phase of our relationship which is becoming more obvious to me as the days go by.

My concern is based on the general conclusion reached by all of the current energy studies and projections (C.I.A. et al) that there is no way, at least for the next decade, that we can eliminate our dependence on oil imports and maintain a strong, viable economy in the United States. To our Western allies, the problem is even more critical. Saudi Arabia is the one country in the world with the reserves (up to 30% of the world's total) and the potential production capacity (at least 15 to 20 million barrels per day) to insure that the industrialized West can obtain the oil that is needed at a price that will not wreck our economy.

A great deal of attention is given to the size of the Saudi Arabian oil reserves and their potential productive capacity, but I think the factor of the production cost of their oil adds a most critical factor to our necessity of having access to these supplies for possibly decades in the future. Saudi Arabia will be able to produce 20 million barrels a day of oil for almost a quarter of a century at a cost of production that is less than 10% of the North Sea oil or that of our oil from Alaska.

The political consequences of this oil being under the control of forces unfriendly to the United States are frightening. For example, consider the political influence that an unfriendly power could have in a place such as Italy if that power were to offer an oil supply to them at one-third of what they are now paying in exchange for certain political moves. On the other hand, I am told that the new supply of oil from the North Sea will probably not lower the cost of energy to

the average Englishman. In other words, not only the availability but also the price of oil is a potent political weapon.

It is hard for even an informed observer to realize fully the implications of oil economics and politics. In my brief period here, I have begun to sense some of the dangerous, even disastrous consequences which can happen in this international game with such high stakes. Any one of many pitfalls along the way can trigger a chain of events which would make us a bigger loser than I think we can afford to be.

For example, the oil producing and storage facilities in Saudi Arabia are highly vulnerable to disruption. Since their inception, the production and gathering facilities have been designed for maximum economic advantage . . . no attention has been paid to their physical security. Backup transportation systems are all but non-existent. I have been told that if the May 1977 pipeline fire had occurred at a location fifty feet away from the actual rupture, it could have resulted in a loss of world oil production of at least five million barrels a day for months. This fact, and possible consequences, was one of the topics of discussion between Senator Javits and Sheikh Zaki Yamani, the Oil Minister:²

Yamani: "If the fire had occurred 15 meters closer, it would have cut our production by 50% for at least six to nine months."

Javits: "And what effect would that have had on world markets?"

Yamani: "It would have been a disaster. If our production had been cut to, say, 5 million barrels per day versus our present 10 to 11 million, the shortage would have been felt throughout the world. The law of supply and demand would have forced the price in the market place far beyond the OPEC schedule. You would have had a depression in your country unlike what you have seen since the 1930s . . ."

The Oil Minister may well have been indulging in Arabic overstatement, but I'm not in a position to dispute his conclusion. Even more important, it impressed Javits. On our subsequent visit to Dhahran, the Senator asked Aramco's Board Chairman Frank Jungers to show him the site of the fire and that 15-meter difference, which he did.

In any event, that bit of dialogue points up just one of the several dangers to our energy supply in this country. If our energy sources are jeopardized for whatever reason, the effect on the existence and individual life styles of both our nation and our allies would be devastating.

Four of the more obvious dangers to our access to Saudi Arabian oil may be summarized as follows:

- 1) Sabotage and/or internal breakdown like the May fire;

² Javits met with Yamani on July 6 during his July 6–9 visit to Saudi Arabia. An account of the meeting is in telegram 4804 from Jidda, July 9. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770244–1002)

2) External aggression, i.e., seizure of the oil fields by unfriendly powers;

3) A political-economic decision to limit production to an amount just necessary to generate funds for present financial needs;

4) An overthrow of the existing leadership within the Royal Family by either a Qaddafi-type coup or a victory by the conservative elements of the family over the Fahd-Saud faction; or conceivably some combination of the two.

I will not attempt to comment on items (1) and (2) in any detail; they constitute well-known possibilities which no doubt are under constant consideration at the policy level by State as well as the Defense Department. Our programs of assistance to the military and national guard forces have undoubtedly been a result of the recognition of these first two dangers. Items (3) and (4), however, warrant a more detailed discussion. One or two recent developments make a current assessment of these items even more necessary—perhaps critically so.

Saudi Arabia is presently undergoing an almost fantasy-like experience similar to *A Thousand and One Nights*—the whole country is changing overnight as though someone had rubbed Aladdin's lamp and said, "Take this place into the Twentieth Century." No country in the history of the world has ever before had such an influx of goods and services from outside in such a brief period.

The modernization that Saudi Arabia has experienced with its five-year plan has brought with it pressures for changes.

These pressures in turn are creating tensions and frictions at all levels. What the ultimate effect will be on the present government cannot be predicted with certainty, but it is important for us to understand as best we can what may happen and how it affects our interests.

The starting point logically is

ROYAL FAMILY—POLITICS AND POLICY

In the murky field of the politics of the Saudi Arabian Royal Family, there is much speculation, but little real knowledge, though certain conclusions are generally accepted.

The most important of these is that the Royal Family is divided into two groups: the liberals, headed by Fahd, and the conservatives, whose leader is generally considered to be Prince Abdullah, the second Deputy Prime Minister and the leader of the National Guard.

King Khaled holds his present position because he was acceptable to both factions at the time of King Faisal's death. Prince Mohammed, his older (full) brother, was passed over because of his conservatism and fiery temper. Fahd, reportedly the late King Faisal's choice, had strong opposition from the conservative wing of the family. Khaled

has done a good job of peace-keeping in at times difficult situations—he has supported Fahd in his liberal views on oil supply, pricing, and assistance to other countries, but he has tilted toward the Mohammed-Abdullah faction in internal religious matters and customs.

King Khaled's reported desire to abdicate has, of course, been strongly opposed by the conservative group who see the ascendancy of Fahd to the throne and the increased prominence of leaders like Prince Saud (King Faisal's son, now Foreign Minister) as a major setback to their side.

The conservatives can be divided into two groups, economic and religious. The economic conservatives could be compared to the pre-World War II isolationists in the U.S. in that they fail to realize how Saudi national interests are linked to the fate of the rest of the world. The religious conservatives are essentially patriarchal puritans opposed to modernization beyond obvious material benefits such as literacy, health, and defense.

The economic conservatives espouse a sort of "Iron Law of Petroleum" which holds that production of five million barrels a day would suffice to give SAG all the funds needed to finance their government activities plus assistance to their beneficiary countries. According to this school, the current production level of nearly ten million barrels a day (capacity is now being increased to 16 MBD) wastes a resource whose value in the ground will increase faster than portfolios of investments made with excess oil revenues. Hisham Nazer, Minister of Planning, is the most outspoken supporter of this position, pleading that inflation is eroding the value of Saudi investments which soak up their excess cash. The Saudi oil supply is finite. Its maximum value for the Kingdom will be attained by holding production down so prices will inflate. On solely economic grounds, a simple, logical, very compelling argument!

The religious conservatives are less articulate, but preach against the erosion of traditional Islamic values caused by modernization. Not really diehard fanatics, basically they wish to see the Kingdom's wealth used to pour the new wine of western civilization into the old skin of Islamic religion and culture without rupturing the wine skin. In other words, western material benefits such as health care, literacy, et al without western materialism. To this end they preach strict adherence to the stern doctrines of the Koran as an antidote to the western values threatening to swamp their traditional way of life. In the Royal Family, the religious conservatives, foremost among them the King's older brother Prince Mohammad, have recently won the King's ear and evidently his sympathy toward their views.

Up to now, the western-educated economic conservatives have had no real alliance, either inside or outside the Royal Family, with the more parochial religious zealots. However, the interests of the two

groups, which superficially appear rather far apart, might dovetail enough in the near future for a new conservative coalition to be formed. The effects of this coalition would probably stalemate the current ruling clique of "liberal" Princes headed by Crown Prince Fahd. The ensuing squabbling and divisiveness could engender even more serious and unexpected consequences for the Royal Family and consequentially the stability of the present regime.

The over-simplified conclusion, therefore, is that there is within and without the Royal Family a substantial minority group, the conservative-isolationist faction. The coalition is loose, somewhat fragmented—but with a real potential to influence if not take over the leadership of the country.

Any one of several events could coalesce these disjointed groups and create real problems in US-SAG relations, vis a vis oil and energy. The two more likely in order of importance:

1) A failure of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations coupled with continued U.S. support of Israelis;

2) Stringent implementation of anti-boycott and other legislative and administrative measures by U.S. which the Saudis would deem contrary to their interests, and in a sense would be as spurning their gestures of friendship with the U.S. and their leadership in the third world. Such embarrassing developments as Prince Saud's being denied the purchase of the apartment in New York are certainly not helpful.³

The conflict thus generated between a combination of the conservatives versus the liberal elements could weaken the government to the extent that its continuation in present form would be jeopardized.

The possibility of some revolt against the existing government cannot be overlooked. One overriding lesson of history is that absolute monarchies invariably fall, especially as civilization progresses. "Civilization" in this instance means education, training, the development of a middle class society, and pressures to bring women into wider areas of public life.

The SAG has made tremendous strides in the last decade—but there is still a long way to go. King Abd-al-Aziz was an absolute monarch who by the force of personal leadership united Saudi Arabia and made it a nation. The present King is not an absolute monarch and the present system can perhaps best be described as a "constituent monarchy." The constituency consists largely of the surviving sons of the late King Abd-al-Aziz plus some of his grandchildren, such as Prince Saud, the Foreign Minister.

³ An unknown hand wrote a question mark in the right-hand margin next to this sentence.

This constituent monarchy has exhibited a social sense and concern for its subjects which, given the other restraints of tradition in the country, has undoubtedly minimized the danger of a coup sparked by students and young intellectuals. The Royal Family has many strengths, including its numbers, family tribal ties, and the control of the military forces, making a coup a la Qaddafi somewhat remote. (The Defense Minister, Prince Sultan, is a full brother of Fahd, and the head of the National Guard is Prince Abdullah, a half brother.)

However, the most likely danger of a disruption in the continuity of the present SAG ruling group will come from some combination of forces set in motion by two basic trends:

- 1) An acceleration of the internal conservative versus liberal struggle in the family as Khaled's departure from the Kingship becomes closer;
- 2) Unsettling, semi-revolutionary forces begun by the modernization processes now under way and further sparked by Saudis returning from education and cultural experiences abroad. The large percentage of non-Saudis now in the Kingdom—presently estimated to be 30% of the population—is bound to increase as the SAG's development plans are implemented, and they provide another force for change.

The tremendous crosscurrents generated by the conservative-liberal struggle can best be illustrated by an example of the paradoxes of extremes, which would be laughable if it were not so serious.

Sometime ago the Saudi Arabian Government made a decision to undertake a major reform of its correctional system. A management consultant firm was employed, and as a result of their recommendations, proposals have been submitted for the creation and construction of what has been described as the most modern penal and correctional system in the world—to cost at least a half billion dollars.

The penal system comes under the Ministry of the Interior. The Minister, Prince Nayif, and his deputy, Prince Ahmed, are full brothers of Fahd (the Sudeiri Seven). Both have assured me that the program was proceeding and the first contract would be awarded momentarily. (An item of interest is that the firm which appears to be favored to get the contract is a consortium which includes Dr. Ellis McDougall. He is a nationally recognized correctional expert who headed prison reform efforts in Georgia, South Carolina, and Connecticut.)

At almost the same time that I was discussing prison matters with Prince Ahmed (and trying to get some U.S. citizens out of Saudi jails), an incident, gruesome by U.S. standards, was happening. I will relate it in some detail because it illustrates so well the vivid contrasts now present in this country.

A royal princess, the granddaughter of Prince Mohammed, the King's older brother, asked for permission to marry a commoner with

whom she had allegedly been living. Permission was refused. She faked suicide by leaving her clothes by the Creek, a resort swimming area off the Red Sea north of Jidda. A full search, including helicopters, was made for her.

Disguised as a man, she and her lover, the nephew of the Saudi Ambassador to Lebanon, were apprehended as they attempted to leave the country from the Jidda airport. (During the security search, her reportedly prominent female characteristics proved her undoing.) A captain in the Jidda police provided assistance to the eloping couple.

She was publicly executed the next day—shot four times. Her lover was beheaded (it took nine licks of the sword). The captain was sentenced to five years imprisonment along with a public flogging once a month for that period.

Prince Mohammed insisted on the execution—said he would kill them both if they were not executed. Technically the execution was justified according to the Koran, which punishes sex outside of marriage by death. However, its infliction on a member of the Royal Family was unusual, and in fact for such a crime, unprecedented. By our standards, an almost sadistic feature was added—all of the royal princesses, including her mother and sisters, reportedly were bused to the execution and forced to watch.

Prince Mohammed was passed over as King by his late father, King Abd-al-Aziz because of his temper and his known conservatism. (He was called “the stormy one.”) Nevertheless, his influence is great, especially since his full brother, Khaled, became King. The fact that he personally insisted on the execution of his granddaughter, who had reportedly been one of his favorites, is an indication of his power and the strength and depth of the conservative movement here.

This execution brings into focus and illustrates two disrupting factors which may well change or influence the governmental future of Saudi Arabia in the next decade, i.e.,

- 1) A revolt by the young intellectuals exposed to Western culture against the harsh and restrictive rules by Saudi society, coupled with
- 2) The Women’s Lib Movement—which is now being recognized as creating a real problem for the SAG.

Crown Prince Fahd mentioned the latter to me in a social conversation a couple of weeks ago. He said as Minister of Education, he made the decision to educate women some fifteen or twenty years ago—and there had been trouble ever since.

He related that his favorite niece was in a class this year which emphasized the advantages of plural marriages and taught the young girls how to get along with their fellow wives. Near the end of the course, the professor announced that each girl would be required to

write an essay setting forth what she had learned about the subject—and that a prize would be given for the best paper.

The Prince said his niece thereupon got up and said, “Professor, I think we all should walk out right now!” He then commented that one of the big problems of the Kingdom was that there were about 700,000 young women who were being educated and that there were not enough jobs in the teaching and nursing fields to absorb them.

Fahd’s seeming inclination is to relax the restrictions on women, but he is quite evidently being overruled by the traditionalist-conservative group. For example, American firms with Saudi contracts have been using female employees—in fact Northrop even had permission (so they thought) to hire wives of their male employees.

However, within the last month, police from the Ministry of Interior have been checking closely on female employment, including U.S. firms. I broached the subject to Prince Ahmed during one of our meetings and was told politely but coolly that no females could work without a permit issued by SAG. And there was no doubt in either of our minds after his reply that none would be granted. Incidentally, he is not only Fahd’s full brother but also a political science graduate of the University of Redlands. His brother, Prince Nayif, has just returned to the country. He does not speak English and I have met with him only once. I do not have much hope that Nayif will overrule or modify his brother’s position.

Another evidence of the return to traditionalism—and as a possible aftermath to the Princess’ execution—has been an order by the King to all of the Royal Family to remain in the Kingdom and to observe fasting, etc. during the holy month of Ramadan. Historically many of the members of the Royal Family take European or U.S. vacations during this period, but King Khaled has decreed otherwise for the first time this year.

All of this goes to underscore a basic fact which is hard for an American to recognize, much less understand, namely the vast cultural, social, and political differences between our two societies.

The issue of human rights is a good starting point. We base our human rights values on Christian concepts formulated by our Judeo-Christian heritage. Saudi Arabia is one of the few parts of the globe that has never been exposed to Christianity. Russia had its orthodox churches, communist China, Christian missionaries. The northern part of this particular continent has all been exposed to Christian influence in varying degrees. Even a vast majority of the continent of Africa has had Christian input one place or another into the society patterns, with the possible exception of a few nomadic tribes. However, this central and southern portion of the Arabian peninsula has received none. Only within the past ten to twenty years have some of its citizens gone to school outside of Saudi Arabia and been exposed to basic modern Christian concepts. The physical location of the Islamic cities of Mecca

and Medina successfully restricted even the minimum Christian influence resulting from foreign trade to areas in Jidda. As recent as 1900, less than a dozen Europeans had ever reached Riyadh.

Saudi Arabian society ranks the nation-state third in an individual's priorities. Their first loyalty without question is to immediate family. Their second loyalty is to a tribe, and if that tribe is large enough, possibly to some regional area. Then, and only then, will a loyalty to Saudi Arabia as a nation emerge. Underlying, and in a sense an expression of these loyalties, is the Islamic religion. These loyalties, approved by and a part of that religion, make changes slow, difficult, and at times seemingly impossible.

Almost as apparent as their lack of understanding of human rights is their inability to conceive of the value of public opinion in the United States. Even the U.S. educated, highly intelligent SAG officials basically conceive of the President of the United States as a monarch in terms of his authority. In fact, they probably consider that the President is in one sense more of an absolute monarch than the King is here. They have a constituency made up of 20 or 30 senior members of the Saud Royal Family and some dozen religious leaders, but they consider the President literally to be accountable to no one. Not only do they fail to see why they should make any effort in any form to improve their image with such as the American public, but they don't even make a really serious effort to improve their image with their own people. (This fact gives rise to some of the recommendations which I want to make.)

These vast cultural and social differences are well illustrated by a story told me by an American consultant to members of the Royal Family. He was complaining loudly and forcefully to two of the half dozen or so more prominent members of the family who have had education outside Saudi Arabia about some delays and lack of decisions that were being encountered with a major project. After patiently listening for a few minutes, the more senior of the two princes calmly replied: "We are attempting to move a 17th Century monarchy into the 18th Century in six months time—that feat took your ancestors one hundred years. If we ever succeed in reaching the 18th Century, then you and I will discuss the 19th Century."

SAUDI'S LEADERSHIP ROLE

The Saudis are obviously enjoying their emerging role as a regional and possible world leader. Scarcely a week passes without a chief of state or cabinet-level official coming here to pay his respects to the King and Crown Prince (and of course to ask for money). In this year alone, more than thirty heads of state or foreign ministers have visited here. In addition, there have been over one hundred official missions here from other countries.

Such an influx would create a crisis even for Evan Dobelle, Dot Padgett,⁴ et al. In Saudi Arabia, with little staff and virtually no infrastructure, it is pandemonium plus! The Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, spends between one-third and one-half of his total time entertaining foreign dignitaries. To that fact add these difficulties:

- 1) His staff includes less than a half dozen people capable of typing;
- 2) Only one out of ten duplicating machines is operable;
- 3) No known filing system exists other than an attempt to file by date;
- 4) The Foreign Ministry Building is seriously infested with termites that are literally devouring the national records;
- 5) The Foreign Ministry Building has just been structurally condemned and they are trying to find new emergency headquarters in order to continue to operate at all;
- 6) The Foreign Minister's personal working library consists of a small world globe in Arabic and a recent atlas from England.

Several of the other ministries are apparently in better shape as far as the physical plant goes, but none of them probably has over a half dozen people that would be considered even reasonably competent by our standards.

Despite these problems, their vast financial wealth and the fact that they represent the focus of Islam makes them critical in Middle Eastern peace. I am more than ever convinced that the Khaled-Fahd-Saud leadership will at this time do everything in their power to bring about peace.

The nature and extent of their involvement in the PLO question is in itself evidence of the sincerity of their commitment to peace. Unfortunately, if present efforts fail despite their all-out contributions, they will, in my opinion, then support the Arab cause in event of hostilities with Israel with a holy zeal. This support would include as a minimum an unlimited financial commitment and would probably eventually include an all-out utilization of the oil weapon as well.

Looking beyond the Middle East situation, it is obvious that the Saudis have a fortunate working relationship with many of the developing nations. Their actions related to the price of oil and their efforts in OPEC are a matter of record. What may be less obvious is their special interest and concern about the political situation in Africa. They are almost paranoid about Soviet involvement in any area that they feel relates to their future and will make any commitment which in their judgment will deter the spread of communism in at least Africa and the Mid-East.

⁴ U.S. Chief of Protocol and Assistant Chief of Protocol, respectively.

While enjoying this new leadership role and the prestige which it carries, the Saudis recognize their lack of experience, their all but non-existing government organization and infrastructure, and their consequent limitations in the formulation and conduct of foreign policy. They look toward the United States for support, guidance, and approval, without which they will not have the self-confidence to move forward as the leader-financier of this region of the world.

Based on my impressions and exposure to date, I have reached the following conclusions:

1) That the future well being, and perhaps even the survival of the United States and its allies and Saudi Arabia depend upon the development and continuation of a degree of unity, cooperation, and common effort paralleled in modern history only by the alliance of the Allies of World War II.

2) That the creation and maintenance of such a relationship is difficult but not impossible. It cannot and will not happen unless and until there is a reconciliation or at least a better understanding of vast cultural, social, and political differences between the countries. In short, there must be understanding coupled with patience, tolerance, and forgiveness on both sides.

3) That relationship can best be accomplished through the existing Saudi Arabian government, which is in effect the Fahd-Saud or liberal wing of the present Royal Family;

4) The Royal Family is beset by tensions, rivalries, jealousies, as well as crosscurrents of economic and religious differences, all of which could create dangers with respect to present and future USA-SAG relationships; and

5) That the United States must take a positive leadership role in bringing about the desired relationship between our nations. The sharing of common goals plus the immediate overriding urgency of economic survival on the part of the United States, its allies, and the political survival on the part of Saudi Arabia demand an all-out effort to establish and maintain strong working ties between our countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The U.S. Government for its own national interests for the next decade needs to be a combination of a political counselor, economic partner and government-reformer to Saudi Arabia. Whether any or all of those roles can be played successfully, recognizing political realities as well as the national sensitivities of a proud (and rich) people, may well be one of the great challenges of our times.

Specifically, at the policy level, I recommend:

1) That we encourage and support the Saudi leadership role, especially in this geographic area. Encouraging them to assume an increas-

ingly important leadership role in the Arab-Israeli issue is a vital first step. They want to look upon themselves as a full partner with the U.S. in this undertaking. As Prince Saud said to me recently, “The settlement of this dispute requires two honest brokers—you working on the Israelis and we doing likewise with the Arabs.” We should, therefore, take every opportunity by word and deed to show our appreciation to them for their moderating influence in OPEC and their financial assumption of the burden and leadership role in fighting communism in Africa. As a young nation with little leadership experience, their leaders need constant encouragement in the form of expressions of appreciation and approval by the United States.

2) Encouraging closer economic ties with the U.S. to include (a) softening as much as possible the effects of the anti-boycott legislation;⁵ (b) amending our present tax laws which are putting U.S. companies in an untenable competitive position in the Mid-East market; (c) encouraging more investment by Saudi Arabia’s public and private sector in the United States;

3) Assisting the SAG to implement needed reforms and changes to curb abuses and minimize the pressures resulting from inefficiencies, excesses, and abuses;

4) Encourage and assist the Saudi Government to present and project a better image to the Western world where public opinion is so influential;

5) Encourage and assist the Saudi Government to present and project a better image of its operation and function to its own citizens and the citizens of this region.

A beneficial effect of implementing (4) and (5) will be that it should constitute a self-policing procedure which will be helpful in accomplishing the needed changes and reforms.

To begin to implement the above broad recommendations working toward the establishment of the kind of relationship we need with Saudi Arabia, I have as of now four specific recommendations which I feel are essential:

1) That key political, business, and cultural leaders from the United States be encouraged to come to Saudi Arabia. One visit here is literally worth a thousand words. The political and strategic importance of this country can easily be seen and sensed by even the most skeptical of visitors. A special effort should be made to encourage visits by members

⁵ The 1977 amendments to the Export Administration Act of 1969 (P.L. 95–52), signed by President Carter on June 22, discouraged and, in some circumstances, prohibited U.S. companies from participating in the Arab League boycott of Israel.

of the Congress as their understanding and support of our current Mid-East policy is essential to its success;

2) A continuing evaluation of events involving the Royal Family as they may affect the SAG's stability and future policies. This is being done now on a somewhat informal and, I sense, uncoordinated fashion, but I feel that its importance warrants a more precise and structured approach. I discussed this matter with Harold Saunders during the visit to Taif and this recommendation is already being implemented.

3) Development of a plan to coordinate USIA efforts with the Saudi Ministry of Information to present through the Saudi media (largely TV at the outset) programs about the special relationship which exists between US and SAG. These programs would emphasize the strengths of present SAG leadership for such things as a TV special showing Prince Fahd's visit to U.S. and his relationship with President Carter, or King Khaled having Dr. DeBakey⁶ open a heart clinic at King Faisal Hospital, etc. I would expect Isa Sabbagh to take a key role in the development of this idea and would probably want to involve private sector companies such as Aramco, Mobil, and others.

4) The strengthening of the Embassy staff here. Because of numerous transfers, vacations, home leaves and the like, I have not yet assessed fully what our needs may be. With the development of a presence at Riyadh plus the increasing Saudi involvement regionally, we may need additional people to perform effectively. However, I will be in a position to discuss our requirements in detail in October when I return to the Department for consultation.

This document has already become too lengthy. I hope it will provide a basis for discussions out of which will come some constructive steps toward helping our efforts in this most exciting and challenging area of the world.

John C. West
Ambassador

⁶ Dr. Michael DeBakey, President of the Baylor College of Medicine, was one of the first heart surgeons to perform coronary bypass operations and pioneered various surgical techniques.

155. Letter From Secretary of State Vance to Secretary of Defense Brown¹

Washington, August 30, 1977

Dear Harold:

Thank you for your letter of August 15 which forwarded the JCS evaluation of the Saudi request for sixty F-15 aircraft.²

When I spoke with the Saudi leadership during my recent trip,³ I explained that the F-15 case had to be held until the notification of the Egyptian non-lethal package had completed the Congressional review period. The Iran AWACS case will also be before Congress when it reconvenes.⁴ I believe we should wait until those cases clear the Congress before deciding when to move on the F-15's.

There is no question that going forward with notification of the F-15 sale will generate substantial opposition. We would have to be fully prepared and consequently I appreciate your offer of additional data and support. A detailed analysis of the Saudis' military need for the aircraft as well as an analysis of the impact of the sale on the area military balance would be most useful. As you are aware, State (PM working with NEA) is chairing an interagency study on Saudi Arabian requirements which would mesh closely with this effort. I would like to suggest that Dave McGiffert work closely together with Les Gelb and Sid Sober to meld your analysis with this study, concentrating on expediting a full understanding of the F-15 sale.

Additionally, the Arms Export Control Board on September 9 will hold a preliminary discussion of the proposal. This will bring to bear other views which should be of use.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P770146-0371. Secret.

² In the August 15 letter to Vance, Brown indicated that he concurred with JCS findings in an evaluation of the Saudi request for 60 F-15s. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P770146-0373) Brown also forwarded the JCS report, which consisted of a July 18 memorandum to Brown from Major General Philip Shulter and an appendix entitled "Military Requirement for 60 F-15 Aircraft for Saudi Arabia and Appropriateness of Delivery in CY 1981." In the July 18 memorandum, the Joint Chiefs concluded: "The Saudi request for 60 F-15 aircraft fills a valid military requirement to modernize its fighter force, maintain operational force level, and acquire an all-weather fighter capability." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P770146-0374)

³ Vance visited Saudi Arabia August 7-9. For records of his meetings with Saudi leaders, which mostly concerned the Arab-Israeli peace process, see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977-August 1978, Documents 74, 75, and 77.

⁴ Documentation on the issue of AWACS for Iran is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. X, Iran: Revolution, January 1977-November 1979.

Because of probable Congressional questions, your analysis should include discussion of possible alternatives to the F-15 (F-14, F-16, F-18, or additional F-5's).

Sincerely,

Cy

156. Memorandum From Jessica Tuchman of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, September 29, 1977

SUBJECT

Sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia

In my judgment we stand an extremely slim chance of getting Congressional approval for the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia within the next six months—and probably longer. Many of those on the House Committee (Bingham, Wolff, Solarz, Ryan, etc.)² who supported the AWACS, or were only mildly disapproving of it, will be strongly opposed to this one. I have less first hand knowledge of the Senate Committee, but I would guess that Case, Javits, Stone and perhaps Humphrey would be opposed.³

As they did on AWACS, members will question the need for this particular system rather than a less advanced one. In addition to pointing out that the F-5s we are now delivering are straining Saudi Arabia's absorptive capacity, Congress will want to know why we are selling them F-15 instead of the F-16. There is no good answer. Saudi Arabia simply does not face the external threat or have the geographical conditions that might argue for the necessity of a two-engine plane. In my view therefore, we should be looking for a way out of this with the

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 9-12/77. Secret. Sent for action.

² Representatives Jonathan Bingham (D-New York), Lester Wolff (D-New York), Stephen Solarz (D-New York), and Leo Ryan (D-California), members of the House Committee on International Relations.

³ Senators Clifford Case (R-New Jersey), Jacob Javits (R-New York), Richard Stone (D-Florida), and Hubert Humphrey (DFL-Minnesota), members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Saudi's that will not damage our bilateral relations. I would suggest the following as a first step.

Even if we were to go ahead with the sale, we would get—as we did on AWACS—a request from the GAO for a cost effectiveness study comparing the F–15 and the F–16. I suggest that we task DOD for such a study right now. If it is an honest effort, the study will show that the F–16 is at least as good, if not better than, the F–15 for Saudi Arabia. (While there would be opposition to an F–16 sale also, it would be less than to the F–15.) We could then quietly use the results with the Saudis to try to convince them to alter their request—both as to the kind of plane, and timing of the sale.

If such a study is undertaken it should be completed well ahead of the Foreign Minister's visit in late October.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you sign the attached memorandum to Secretary Brown asking for a comparative study.⁴

⁴ Attached but not printed. Brzezinski did not sign the memorandum, but added next to this recommendation: "Jessica—Just call over and get it started. I do not want the record to show that it started from here."

157. Telegram From Secretary of the Treasury Blumenthal to the Department of State¹

Dhahran, October 28, 1977, 2110Z

Blumto 73/1261. For the President from Blumenthal. Subject: Prince Fahd-Blumenthal Talk.

1. After a courtesy call on King Khalid here this afternoon (October [28]), I had an hour's meeting with Crown Prince Fahd. Fahd made a number of points which I want to summarize briefly for you in this message. I will be reporting more fully later on this talk and my options here.²

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840081–1901. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Blumenthal was in Dhahran as part of a Middle East trip that included visits to Egypt, Kuwait, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

² Telegram 1286 from Dhahran, October 30. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840081–1893)

2. On oil pricing, I expressed your deep appreciation for the Saudi moderate position. I said I was happy to be able to tell Fahd that the Shah had told me yesterday that Iran would be willing to accept a price freeze at Caracas if that were the OPEC decision.³ Fahd welcomed this “very good news”. He said the Saudi Government was convinced that a price freeze would be in the interest of the free world. He said they hoped to convince other OPEC members to freeze prices—say, for another year. (He was more positive on this than Yamani had been with me earlier this afternoon). I thanked him and said that the decision on oil pricing in December could have a critical effect in the coming year on the effort of many countries to control inflation and turn their economies around in a positive way. Inasmuch as Fahd had also expressed concern over the dollar, I said an oil price freeze would definitely be helpful, assuring him that the dollar remains fundamentally sound. Fahd reaffirmed that it is not repeat not Saudi policy to use oil as a political weapon, he explicitly denied contrary reports which he said had been carried in Soviet/Arabic broadcasts.

3. On Arab-Israel problems, Fahd very strongly expounded the need to move ahead to Geneva, and emphasized the primacy of the U.S. role in the peacemaking effort. He said the Arabs based their hopes on you. The Arabs wanted peace, and there was still time to work out a just solution. This must include, he said, establishment of a Palestine state on the West Bank and Gaza. Failing that, he said, things would drift back to a situation which could help only the Soviets. I assured him of your continuing commitment to do everything we could to help bring about the Geneva Conference and successful negotiations between the Arab states and Israel, and I promised that I would relay his remarks to you. I stated that while we had an important role to play, you were counting on Saudi Arabia to continue its own very helpful efforts.

4. Fahd made a strong pitch on the F-15. He affirmed that Saudi Arabia had no intention to use arms for aggressive purposes. But it must have an adequate air defense with weapons to match those in the hands of other countries in area which had been supplied by Soviets. He volunteered that the F-16 was not an acceptable substitution. If we did not agree to supply the F-15, Saudi armed forces would want Saudi Government to obtain replacement from other sources. He argued that that would be against interests of both Saudi Arabia and the U.S., noting that if the Saudis made a decision to buy elsewhere, it would be most difficult to turn back to the U.S. at a later time. I told him we were proud of our past collaboration in developing the Saudi armed

³ Reference is to the OPEC summit conference scheduled to take place in Caracas, Venezuela, December 20–21.

forces. I noted that you faced a difficult situation in the Congress on this general subject, but I also assured Fahd that you would very carefully consider the questions he had raised.

5. It is clear to me that Fahd wished to convey, during this conversation, his continuing very strong desire for fullest possible cooperation with U.S. Saudi intention to seek a price freeze at the OPEC meeting in December very greatly increases the chances that such a freeze will be decided. As for the F-15 issue, I had the impression that Fahd was voicing his honest concern that we might not be able to come through, and that he mentioned possible need to turn elsewhere as a contingent inevitability rather than as a threat.

Bushnell

158. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RPM 77–10409

Washington, November 10, 1977

SUBJECT

Factors Affecting Saudi Arabia's Position on an OPEC Oil Price Increase

Any consideration of strategies aimed at persuading Saudi Arabia to hold the line on oil prices must take into account the following factors:

—Saudi Arabia's determination to avoid another break with OPEC and its reduced leverage over OPEC due to technical production limitations.

—The Saudis' expectation of tangible political results from the US in Middle East peace negotiations.

—The Saudis' belief that modest oil price increases are unavoidable and justified due to market conditions and are a necessary spur to the development of a "responsible" energy program in the US.

—The likelihood that Saudi Arabia, out of concern for the health of Western economies, will continue to lobby for only minimal price increases and periodic freezes so long as Middle East peace negotiations do not collapse.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00071A, Production Copy Files (1976–1979), Box 10, Folder 77, Factors Affecting Saudi Arabia's Position on an OPEC Oil Price Increase. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified].

Given the above factors and the present climate of pessimism in the Arab world over the prospects for a Geneva conference, we believe it highly unlikely that further US demarches to Saudi Arabia aimed at preventing an oil price increase at Caracas would be successful.² Prince Fahd told Secretary Blumenthal that the Saudis are prepared to argue initially for a price freeze but he implied that the Saudis would be forced to accept some increase because they could not be sure the other OPEC members would agree to a price freeze.³ A revised US demarche to Saudi Arabia to hold down any increase in oil prices at Caracas would be an unnecessary expenditure of political capital because the Saudis probably would work on their own to hold any price increase to the 5–10 percent range.

Beyond next month, Saudi decisions on oil policy are likely to be primarily influenced by the course of Middle East peace negotiations. The Saudis are unlikely to respond favorably to US demarches for further restraint if they perceive that the US is unwilling to press Israel to meet basic Arab demands in a settlement. The Saudis recognize that only they have the kind of leverage over the West that holds out the hope of budging Israel and their warnings that they will feel forced to use this leverage have become more explicit in the past few months.

The Saudis see a Middle East settlement as vital to their own security. They believe the resolution of the Arab-Israeli dispute is the key to preventing the further spread of radicalism and Soviet influence in the Arab world; in particular, they want to prevent the overthrow of Sadat and Asad. They fear that the fall of the moderate Arab leaders would guarantee another Arab-Israeli war, threatening Saudi oil and security interests. Further, they know the reestablishment of radical regimes in Egypt and Syria would isolate Saudi Arabia as it was in Nasir's day, redoubling the likelihood of externally sponsored subversion.

The Saudis might impose, or threaten to impose, an oil production limitation if there is a sustained period of no movement toward a peace settlement, coupled with an Arab perception that the US is not sufficiently pressuring Israel to reach a political compromise. A production ceiling at a low enough level would have the same economic impact as an embargo on the US and its allies. Riyadh would recognize that any reduction in oil supply to the West must be fine-tuned to avoid world economic and political disaster and yet hurt enough to achieve the desired political results.

² West had made an oral presentation to Prince Saud on November 9 concerning an OPEC price freeze. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 137.

³ See Document 157.

The serious technical problems that will further limit Saudi production flexibility after the next year and a half are not a constraint on the Saudis in the context of current efforts to achieve a Middle East settlement. The prospects for either progress in, or the collapse of, negotiations should be clear within the next several months.

While Saudi Arabia, because of technical difficulties, may no longer be in a position to greatly help the US on oil production and pricing after 1979, it is, and will remain, in a position to hurt the US.

Beyond its ability to pressure Israel for negotiating concessions, the US has no credible defense against a Saudi decision to manipulate its oil leverage in support of Arab political demands. The Saudis, for example, are unlikely to be impressed by a US sponsored attempt to form a consortium of oil-consuming nations to pressure them on oil prices. The Saudis realize that European states are not in a position to apply economic or political pressure on the Arabs for fear of jeopardizing their own oil supplies. Further, they would believe that European nations would not want to be associated with a US policy that they believe lacks credibility. The Saudis are equally unlikely to be impressed by confrontation tactics—such as trying to impose a Western arms embargo on Saudi Arabia—because they know that European nations such as France are unlikely to cooperate.

In light of the above considerations, we believe that further unilateral US or multilateral efforts to impress on the Saudis the damage that would be done to the economies of the Western and less developed countries by oil price increases are unnecessary. The Saudis are already aware of all the arguments that could be made and they fully comprehend the negative effects of even a minimal rise in oil prices.

159. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, December 1, 1977, 1510Z

8145. Subject: Sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia.

1. Summary. On December 1, I met with Prince Sultan ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Sa'ud in his capacity as Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs in order to confirm the dates of the visit of President Carter to the Kingdom

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770445–0982. Confidential; Niact Immediate; Limdis.

of Saudi Arabia. During the course of this meeting, Prince Sultan expressed considerable petulance over U.S. foot dragging on supplying the F-15 to Saudi Arabia. End summary.

2. During a general discussion of recent Middle East developments, Prince Sultan said that Saudi Arabia was as yet unable to satisfactorily determine the U.S. position on Sadat's recent moves. Prince Sultan hastened to add that in his capacity as Foreign Minister he could express his appreciation for U.S. policy support in the Middle East, however, as Minister of Defense, he must express his chagrin with regard to U.S. policy towards arms sales to Saudi Arabia. Prince Sultan stated that the F-15 case has been in the mill now for over two years and has yet to be resolved. He pointed out that it was a U.S. Air Force team that made the recommendation that Saudi Arabia should have the F-15s.

3. I explained to him that any military sales in excess of 25 million dollars must be approved by Congress. Some time ago, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee had passed a resolution asking the administration not to submit any more military sales proposals during 1977 so that Congress could concentrate on crucial legislation, such as the President's energy plan.

4. I further pointed out to Prince Sultan that not only was President Carter coming on January 3,² but the Senate Majority Leader and the Senate Minority Leader would also be paying a visit to be followed by Congressman Zablocki and a large group of Congressmen. Thus in a very short time, Prince Sultan would be able to personally express his views not only to the President but to key congressional leaders. Prince Sultan said that he would be more than pleased to express his views to these gentlemen.

5. I also mentioned that Miss Barbara Bodine, NEA/POL-MIL was visiting Jidda at the moment and she followed military procurement for this area. Prince Sultan said that he would like to see Miss Bodine and we arranged an appointment for December 3 at 1030 hours.³

West

² Carter was scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia January 3-4, 1978. See Document 164.

³ See Document 160.

160. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, December 7, 1977, 0719Z

8287. SecDef for ISA, DSAA for Lt. Gen. Fish. Subject: F-15 for Saudi Arabia.

1. In a meeting December 3 with Prince Sultan in his capacity as Acting Foreign Minister, Ambassador and ARP officer Barbara Bodine had a wide-ranging discussion of the Saudi request for F-15's. Embassy Counselor Sabbagh and POL/MIL officer Lewis were also at the meeting.

2. Prince Sultan said that leaving aside U.S. interest in Europe which he recognized as vital, it seemed that in the Middle East the United States had three friends in the following rank order. First was Israel, second Iran, and third and last Saudi Arabia. Sultan said that he could not understand why the U.S. gave billions of dollars worth of arms and other assistance to Israel. If the U.S. feels that it contributes to stability in the area, then "that premise is wrong".

3. When it comes to Iran, Prince Sultan said there was a lot of arms being provided to Iran in an open-ended fashion. He said the U.S. is providing huge quantities of highly sophisticated weaponry to Iran and that "it is an exaggerated notion" that the policy of the U.S. toward Iran would achieve stability and provide protection on the Gulf for oil. Sultan said he is sure that the U.S. is aware that Iran purchases military equipment from the Soviet Union, Peoples Republic of China (sic) and France. "Does this mean that Iran will be the protector of the area?" he asked.

4. "Now it is painful to me to come to America's number three friend in the area, Saudi Arabia," Sultan said. In a brief but animated review of Saudi-American relations, he said that Saudi Arabia had faced in the past two decades dire circumstances—military disasters with Yemen in the early 60's, near bankruptcy, droughts, and near famines. "Yet at no time," he said, "did Saudi Arabia come knocking at the door of the U.S. in a manner that would embarrass a friend." He said that on the contrary, the SAG has undertaken tireless efforts to keep Communism out of the Arab world and beyond. He recalled that the late King Faisal spent many sleepless nights worrying about radical influences in the Arab world and had pursued this goal with

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770453–1115. Secret; Immediate. Sent for information Immediate to CHUSMTM and the Department of Defense.

such energy that the younger men around him were exhausted. Prince Sultan said that the same policy is being followed by His Majesty King Khalid and Crown Prince Fahd. Yet the response from the U.S. has not been commensurate with the Saudi effort. He said the SAG paid for its own weapons, and used them for its own defense. How could it face its own people when the U.S. provided it with only 1/10 of what its neighbors get from other sources and the U.S.? Having said that, Sultan reaffirmed that the SAG's friendship with the U.S. was still constant and "no Saudi who can be called a Saudi can initiate or condone any animosity toward the U.S."

5. Ambassador West said that he was pained when Prince Sultan described Saudi Arabia as America's "third ranked friend in the Middle East." Amb. West said that twice in recent months he has discussed Saudi-U.S. relations with President Carter. On both occasions the President said that he considered Saudi Arabia to be among the closest and best friends the United States has in the world.

6. Ms. Bodine told Prince Sultan that a frequently-asked question is whether Saudi Arabia has the manpower and capability to absorb this aircraft. Prince Sultan said that the program for absorbing an advanced fighter aircraft was based on the 1974 recommendations of the U.S.-Saudi Joint Security Commission² and that there was no question in his mind that the Saudi Air Force could absorb and maintain the F-15.

7. Sultan said that he was under great pressure from other members of the royal family to accelerate the acquisition of an advanced fighter but that he resisted this pressure preferring instead a paced and more thoughtful program to insure that a new fighter would be absorbed smoothly while they phased out the Lightning aircraft. He said that the Saudi decision was based on a careful review and test which included the F-14, 15, and 16 by Saudi pilots. The Saudi Air Force had preferred the F-15.

8. Ms. Bodine said that it was understood that Saudi Arabia had requested the F-15 for its own defense but a frequently-asked question in the U.S. was whether these planes might be used offensively. In reply, Prince Sultan said "How can we attack countries that are twenty times better equiped than we are?"

9. In closing Prince Sultan stated that he was willing to go before Congress to explain Saudi Arabia's case for the F-15, "after all, President Sadat went to Jerusalem and spoke before the Knesset".³

West

² Documentation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. E-9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region, 1973-1976.

³ Reference is to Sadat's November 19-21 visit to Jerusalem.

161. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Riyadh, December 14, 1977, 5:15 p.m.

SUBJECT

The Secretary's Meeting with Crown Prince Fahd

PARTICIPANTS

SAUDI ARABIA

HRH Crown Prince Fahd

HRH Prince Abdullah

HRH Prince Sultan

HRH Prince Saud

HRH Prince Turki

Royal Counselor Rashad Pharaon

Ambassador Ali Abdallah Alireza, Ambassador to US

UNITED STATES

The Secretary

Under Secretary Philip C. Habib

Ambassador John C. West, Ambassador to Saudi Arabia

Mr. David A. Korn, S/P

Mr. Isa Sabbagh, Interpreter

Crown Prince Fahd said it is obvious to everybody that we are in a very delicate stage in the history of the Middle East problem. The eyes of the world are on the Middle East. Everybody is waiting to see the results. Fahd said Saudi Arabia divides the world into two categories: those who want to see good results from the current negotiations and those who do not want to see good results. Fahd said by the latter he especially meant the Soviet Union. He wanted to make clear that it is the earnest hope of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that the United States will be successful in persuading Israel that now is the golden moment to solve the Arab-Israeli problem. Such an auspicious moment may never come again. This is also a golden opportunity for the United States, Fahd said, since another such time may never come again.

Fahd said that Saudi Arabian support for Egypt and for President Sadat is old and deep. A few days before Sadat went on his trip to

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 81, Saudi Arabia: 11–12/77. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by David Korn (S/P). The meeting took place at the Royal Palace. Vance met separately with Saud and Khalid earlier in the afternoon. Memoranda of conversation of these meetings are *ibid.* Telegram Secto 12130 from Riyadh, December 14, in which Vance summarized his meetings with the Saudi leaders, is printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, Document 176. Vance traveled in the Middle East December 9–15, visiting Cairo, Jerusalem, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, and Riyadh. Records of his meetings in the other capitals are *ibid.*, Documents 167–175.

Jerusalem he visited Saudi Arabia. The discussion focused on the Geneva conference and Sadat emphasized that he was going to Geneva irrespective of whether others attended it. Sadat urged Saudi Arabia to prevail on the Syrians and the Palestinians to go to Geneva. There was of course, Fahd said, at that time a difference of opinion between Syria and Egypt on Geneva. The Syrians wanted everything cleared up before Geneva. The Egyptians said this was not necessary because Geneva would clarify it all. Saudi Arabia's efforts were therefore channeled in the direction of convincing the Syrians and the Palestinians to go to Geneva. Fahd said Saudi Arabia had told the Syrians and the Palestinians that it would not be good to give a chance to those who wanted to complicate matters. Saudi Arabia urged them to go. Saudi Arabia's main concern was how to bring the two sides together, so as to ensure that all parties concerned could go to Geneva. Fahd said that the Saudis had suggested to the Arab parties that they might have a pre-Geneva meeting in Saudi Arabia.

Fahd said that after that Sadat went back to Egypt and Prince Saud went to Syria to talk with the Syrians about Geneva. Saud came back with the impression that the Syrians would like to have a Geneva conference. The first the Saudis knew about Sadat's intention to visit Israel was Sadat's speech in which he announced that intention.² Fahd said at first we did not imagine Sadat would actually go, that he was serious. Saudi Arabia did not receive any notification from Sadat. However, after the visit was announced, Saudi Arabia sent a letter to Sadat asking him to wait a while, not to do anything rash. This was a letter from King Khalid and it stressed that Saudi Arabia's desire was to see fruitful results.

Fahd said there were two ways to view Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. The first is that it showed a desire for peace. The second is that it was an impulsive act. Fahd said the way Saudi Arabia looks at the visit is that it was an important step and that it should have good results. Otherwise it will play into the hands of the enemies of the United States and Saudi Arabia. Fahd said Saudi Arabia has based its attitude on the desire that Sadat should succeed. We want to assure you that Saudi Arabia is keenly watching the development of events because it wants to see Sadat succeed. Saudi Arabia places great hopes in the United States because it is the one country that can bring a change in Israel's position.

Fahd said that if Saudi Arabia had rushed to the support of Sadat it would have upset the balance in the Arab world. That is why we

² Sadat delivered the speech on November 9 before the Egyptian People's Assembly. See *ibid.*, Documents 144 and 145.

thought it the better part of wisdom to keep cool. The Arab world is now in a period of turmoil, debate and change. Fahd said he hoped the dust would settle and then Saudi Arabia's role would become clearer. Saudi Arabia's declaration on the Sadat visit, Fahd said, stated the facts. We did not criticize the visit but did not support it either. We said we did not know of the visit beforehand and had sent a letter to Sadat on it but received no reply. Fahd said the Secretary certainly knew that Saudi Arabia's relations with both sides are good. It has good relations with the Palestinians, with Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. This is the right policy for Saudi Arabia, Fahd said.

Fahd said Saudi Arabia would be very pleased if the current negotiations produce good results. He thought Syria would go along if the results were good. The position of Algeria and Libya is not the same as that of Syria. Neither they nor the Soviet Union want the current negotiations to succeed. The Soviet Union sees clearly that the situation in the Arab countries is not satisfactory from its point of view, and it is also unhappy about what happened in Somalia.

Fahd said that on Somalia he had long worked for the result that has come about. But, he said, Saudi Arabia is not pleased over the continuation of the trouble between Ethiopia and Somalia. Fahd said the Saudis had discussed the problem with the President of Somalia and told him that war would be counterproductive in the long run. Fahd said Saudi Arabia feels it must help Somalia because if Somalia is defeated then it will be a great victory for the Soviet Union. Fahd said the Saudis had spoken to the Somalis about Kenya's fears. The President of Somalia had assured the Saudis that he had no desire to create problems for Kenya. Fahd said the Saudis would be happy to receive an envoy from Kenya to discuss this. Fahd said the Saudis believe that Ethiopia and the Soviet Union are trying to poison the mind of Kenya against Somalia. There are those in Kenya who are trying to put it in the communist camp. Saudi Arabia has heard that contacts have been established between Ethiopia and the Soviet Union and people in Kenya who want to put Kenya on the Soviet side. We are sure that nothing will happen as long as Kenyatta³ is there, Fahd said. But no one can know what will happen afterwards.

Fahd said the Saudis had heard that Ethiopia is getting help from Israel. If this is true, it is too bad. It would really be strange if there were such unusual bedfellows now. However, Fahd expressed suspicion that the Israelis and the Soviets may be working together in Ethiopia. Fahd said the Saudis feel that they have effectively undermined the position of the Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa. If Saudi Arabia is

³ Jomo Kenyatta, President of Kenya from 1964 until 1978.

successful, Soviet presence will have been considerably reduced. Fahd said the Saudis know that the Soviet Union is their main enemy in the area.

Fahd again expressed the hope that Sadat's initiative would be successful. If not, it would be a victory for those who attended the Tripoli conference.⁴ Sadat's visit was very important in showing that the Arabs seriously wanted peace. The visit strengthened President Carter's hand. Fahd said it was good to hear that the Israelis have changed their opinion, but more than that must be done. Some concrete result must emerge from the Cairo conference.⁵ If the Cairo conference brings about a declaration of principle on Israeli withdrawal and solution of the Palestinian problem, then there would be general Arab agreement on going to Geneva. Fahd said Saudi Arabia understands why Hussein decided not to go to the Cairo conference; and Sadat also no doubt understands. Fahd added that he could assure the Secretary that Sadat knows about Saudi policy and approves it.

Foreign Minister Saud said it was most important that Israel not take advantage of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem to try to legitimize its presence there. Saud said he was pleased with the Secretary's assurance that the US would not move its Embassy to Jerusalem. Fahd said he hoped Israel was intelligent enough to realize that Sadat's visit was not an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of Israeli presence in Jerusalem.

Fahd said that he wanted to say a word about the price of oil. Saudi Arabia hopes to be successful in rallying a majority in favor of an oil price freeze until the end of 1978. But there is a question which greatly concerns Saudi Arabia in this regard: that is the value of the dollar. Fahd said he had taken up this question with the Secretary of the Treasury and had been told that the US does not want its friends to be hurt by a drop in the value of the dollar.⁶ Fahd said he was mentioning the subject because it will be brought up at the OPEC meeting.⁷ The opponents of an oil price freeze will argue that since the dollar is going down the price of oil must be raised. Fahd said Saudi Arabia hopes the US will pay close attention to this problem. Saudi Arabia is also concerned about the drop in the value of the dollar because it affects the value of Saudi holdings in the United States. Fahd

⁴ Arab leaders from Libya, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, South Yemen, and the PLO met in Tripoli December 2-3 to discuss possible actions to take against Egypt after Sadat's visit to Israel. Egypt responded to the conference's measures by breaking diplomatic relations with Libya, Syria, Algeria, and South Yemen.

⁵ Reference is to the preliminary Arab-Israeli peace talks scheduled to take place in Cairo in December.

⁶ See Document 157.

⁷ See footnote 3, Document 157.

said he was certain the US Government would respond seriously to this problem.

Fahd said the other problem he wanted to raise with the Secretary is that of arms for Saudi Arabia. Fahd said he thought that fears that exist in the Congress of the United States that Saudi Arabia wants arms in order to attack Israel have now been proven baseless. It has become clear that Saudi Arabia needs arms to defend itself from its neighbors and from the Soviet Union. Saudi Arabia's neighbors are stronger and receive more arms than it does. Fahd said he wanted to underscore the urgency of assuring that something is done soon about Saudi arms requests. The Saudi people and the armed forces need to see that they have weapons with which to defend their country.

Fahd said the states of the Gulf look up to Saudi Arabia and consider themselves dependent on it for their protection. If Saudi Arabia lacks arms, the Gulf states will suffer too. Let us take a simple example, Fahd said. South Yemen has more arms than the Sheiks of the Gulf. Suppose that South Yemen attacks one of the Gulf states and that Iraq came to the support of South Yemen. Iraq has 12 divisions ready to go to battle. Its forces are stronger than those of Saudi Arabia. If such a thing were to happen at a time when the US was incapable of helping Saudi Arabia, the outcome would be terrible. Fahd said for this reason he wanted to ask the Secretary to convey to President Carter his urgent request that the US respond quickly to Saudi Arabia's plea for arms. An American response will be seen as a friendly gesture to His Majesty, the Government of Saudi Arabia, and all the friends of Saudi Arabia.

Fahd asked about Mr. Habib's visit to the Soviet Union. Mr. Habib then reviewed his impressions of his Moscow talks along the lines that he had earlier that afternoon in the meeting with Prince Saud.⁸

The Secretary expressed his appreciation for Fahd's explanation of Saudi policy. The Secretary said he would convey Saudi concerns to the President. The US fully appreciates the need for a forthcoming Israeli response to the actions taken by Sadat. The Secretary said he had already spoken to Begin about this, and he and the President will have another opportunity to discuss this with Begin when Begin comes to Washington on Friday.⁹

⁸ No memorandum of conversation of this earlier meeting has been found. However, Vance provided a summary of it in telegram Secto 12130 from Riyadh, December 14. See footnote 1 above.

⁹ December 16. For the memoranda of conversation of Carter's meetings with Begin December 16–17, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, Documents 177 and 178.

The Secretary said we fully agree that it is necessary to bring about a just and comprehensive settlement for the Arab-Israeli dispute, because if we fail the consequences will be dire for all. The US much appreciates all Saudi Arabia has done in regard to Somalia. We continue to have the problem of the Horn of Africa under very close review. As of now we are giving only economic aid to Somalia and that aid is not very large. However we are considering expanding it. The Secretary said that in regard to the Crown Prince's question about Israeli support for Ethiopia, it is true that Israel has been giving some assistance to the Ethiopians. We have told the Israelis that we think this is wrong and we will continue to make clear our views to them. The Secretary said we know that the Soviet Union has been giving substantial assistance to Ethiopia. This assistance and the size of the Ethiopian population give Ethiopia an advantage over Somalia. The Secretary said he had discussed the problem of the Horn of Africa during the NATO meeting a week ago¹⁰ and also with the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany. He had also discussed it with Sadat and Sadat had said that he had taken the matter up with the Sudanese and that the Sudanese would give aid to Somalia. The Secretary said he was sure that President Carter would want to discuss the question of the Horn of Africa when he visits Riyadh.¹¹

The Secretary said that on the question of arms for Saudi Arabia, he had begun discussions with key Members of Congress. He had received a good response, and events of the last several weeks had helped change several minds. The Secretary said he thought there was an increasing awareness in Congress of the importance of approval for the Saudi arms request. He wanted to point out that there would nonetheless be some Members of Congress who would continue to be difficult. But, the Secretary said, the Administration plans to go forward in January with a proposal to Congress. Fahd said he was pleased to hear this. Fahd suggested that any "recalcitrant" Members of Congress be invited to Saudi Arabia. The Secretary said Congressman Zablocki would be visiting Saudi Arabia shortly at the head of a large delegation. They would have an important voice in this question. Fahd said the Saudis would welcome them. The Secretary said that Senator Byrd and Senator Baker would also be coming and they too could be very important. Fahd said "We will welcome them. They will come back convinced."

The Secretary said that on the matter of the value of the dollar, this is very important to the US. He had discussed it with Secretary

¹⁰ The NATO Ministerial meeting took place in Brussels December 8-9.

¹¹ See Document 164.

Blumenthal and the President before leaving for his visit to the Middle East. The value of the dollar is a question of the highest priority to the US Government.

The Secretary said he would again like to express the deep thanks of President Carter and the United States Government to the Saudi Government in regard to oil prices. The Secretary said we are fully aware of what Saudi Arabia has done to bring others along.

The Secretary said he would like to say a few words about South Yemen. The US has refrained from doing anything further in its relations with South Yemen since the Secretary's last meeting with Prince Saud in August.¹² South Yemen seems to have been providing increasing facilities in support for Soviet shipping in the Indian Ocean. Since Berbera was denied to them, the Soviets seem to be turning more and more to Aden. They are also funneling arms shipments to Ethiopia through Aden. Fahd said Saudi Arabia is aware of this. The Secretary asked how Fahd would advise the US to deal with the South Yemen problem.

Fahd said in the past Saudi Arabia had seen some positive signs coming from South Yemen and had urged the US to move closer to the Aden regime. But now in view of the new circumstances we urge you not to do so. Fahd said there had earlier been discussions between Saudi Arabia and South Yemen to improve relations. Certain points were agreed upon during the visit of the President of South Yemen to Riyadh, and Saudi Arabia was ready to help South Yemen with money and food, and also with their refineries. But, Fahd said, after the speech made by the South Yemen President in the UN in which he attacked Oman, Saudi Arabia stopped its aid. Fahd said he had sent the President of South Yemen a memorandum saying that now Saudi Arabia has doubts about the wisdom of dealing with South Yemen. Saudi Arabia had already informed Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE of its new attitude towards South Yemen. Fahd said he had recently sent another letter to the President of South Yemen and thus far had not gotten a reply. He had also sent a Saudi envoy to Aden to explain Saudi concerns but the envoy had not yet returned.

Fahd said Saudi Arabia now wants to be very cautious toward South Yemen. It will weigh events and will not move quickly. We will keep you informed of anything new that develops, Fahd said. Prince Saud said that if the United States has any information on aid that South Yemen is getting from the communists, Saudi Arabia would appreciate having this information. It would also appreciate having information on communist aid to Ethiopia that is being channeled

¹² See footnote 3, Document 155.

through South Yemen. The Secretary said he would check right away with Washington and we would provide whatever we have. On the general question of relations with South Yemen, the Secretary said the US will consult closely with Saudi Arabia and follow its suggestion that we proceed slowly. Fahd expressed appreciation for this. He reiterated that the Saudis had been taken by surprise by the attitude expressed by the President of South Yemen at the UN.¹³ Either he talks through both sides of his mouth, Fahd said, or he has become a puppet of the Soviets. Fahd said Saudi Arabia had heard that perhaps the Soviet Union and South Yemen had agreed that South Yemen would pay lip service to improvement of relations between itself and Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries in order to get aid from them. Fahd said after the speech by the President of South Yemen, we concluded that this must be true. Fahd reiterated that from now on Saudi Arabia will be very cautious in its dealings with South Yemen.

Fahd said that in closing he wanted to underscore that Saudi Arabia hopes that the US would keep in mind the need for a just solution to the Palestinian question. There can be no settlement without a just solution to the Palestinian issue, Fahd said. The Secretary said we fully understand this.

¹³ See footnote 9, Document 235.

162. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, December 15, 1977

SUBJECT

Arms Sales to the Middle East

Attached at Tab A² is a memorandum from State asking for your authorization of Congressional consultations in January on a proposed arms sales package to the Middle East. The package would consist of:

¹ Source: Washington National Records Center, RG 330, OSD Files, FRC 330-81-0713, Arms Transfer—Middle East Package, Folder 2. Secret. Sent for action. Brzezinski hand-wrote the date on the memorandum.

² Not attached and not found.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Aircraft</i>	<i>Number</i>
Israel	F-16	50–150
Israel	F-15	25
Saudi Arabia	F-15	20–60
Egypt	F-5E	40–120

In these preliminary discussions the numbers will be left purposely vague so that attention can be focused on the concept of the package approach. If the past is any guide these discussions will leak to the press within hours.

The two most important points to be considered in making this decision are the following:

1. If we really want to make the Egyptian and Saudi sales, the package approach is certainly the least painful way to win Congressional approval. In the case of the F-15s for Saudi Arabia, it is probably the *only* way to do so.

2. On the other hand, public opinion and editorial comment may well be dumbfounded by the spectacle of the US pressing forward with this huge arms sale (the package is worth more than \$8 billion) just as peace appears to be breaking out. Those we consult on the Hill will be unlikely to feel this way—they will be more concerned with our arms sales policy per se, and with balancing Israeli and Arab interests, but I expect that this reaction may well be prevalent once the decision becomes publicly known. The Soviets and the European arms suppliers may not only be taken aback by the announcement of this sale, but may find in it reason to doubt our credibility in urging them to adopt a policy of arms sales restraint.

I therefore recommend that you direct State to do all the preparatory work for these consultations—talking points, Q&As, etc.—but that you reserve final approval until January when we will have a better idea of what is going to happen in the Middle East.³

³ Carter checked the Disapprove option and wrote in the margin below it: “I want first to see *entire* FY1978 arms sales package. J.”

163. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, December 20, 1977

SUBJECT

Letter from Ambassador West

Ambassador West's latest letter to you makes the following points:

1. As reported earlier, Oil Minister Yamani is now absolutely certain that there will be an oil price freeze at the OPEC meeting on the 20th. However, when asked if the price freeze would extend for a full year, he hedged, noting that market pressures would make a substantial price increase inevitable depending on how the United States and the European Community cope with their energy needs and problems.

2. Yamani said he had no assurance that Saudi Arabia would increase its production substantially. In fact, he felt there was no way they could or would go to 16 million barrels per day as projected by our CIA report for 1982. There is a tough internal fight within the Saudi Government about going even to a level of 10 or 12 million barrels per day.

3. This fight is becoming more stringent because of the Saudi takeover of ARAMCO.² At the present time it requires approximately \$1 billion in capital expenditures to increase production by a million barrels per day. With the takeover, this capital expenditure will probably have to be included as part of the government budget and will therefore fall under the Finance Minister or Minister of Planning, rather than Yamani. Both Finance Minister Aba al-Khayl and Planning Minister Hisham Nazer are among those opposed to an increase in production.

4. Ambassador West suggested that Yamani come back through the United States after the Caracas conference (assuming it is successful) for a series of interviews and public appearances which might help your energy program. He believes this would be useful to US-Saudi relations and might even stimulate the stock market.

5. Ambassador West suggests that Mrs. Carter make a courtesy call on Queen Efat, King Faisal's widow, during the stop in Riyadh.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 81, Saudi Arabia: 11-12/77. Confidential. Sent for information. A stamped notation on the memorandum reads: "The President has seen" and Carter initialed it. Sent under a December 19 memorandum from Sick to Brzezinski in which Sick recommended that Brzezinski forward the memorandum to Carter.

² Saudi Arabia acquired a 60 percent share in Aramco in 1974 and took full control in 1980.

This matter has been handled in the normal preparations for the trip. Queen Efat will be at the dinner for Mrs. Carter and no separate call is required.

A typed version of his hand-written letter is at Tab A.³

³ Attached but not printed are the typed and handwritten texts of West's December 2 letter.

164. Editorial Note

President Jimmy Carter visited Riyadh January 3–4, 1978, as part of a larger ten-day international trip that included stops in Poland, Iran, India, Egypt, France, and Belgium. On January 3, Carter met with Saudi officials on two occasions in order to discuss the Middle East peace process. For the memoranda of conversation of these meetings, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, Documents 183 and 184.

165. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RPM 78–10004

Washington, January 5, 1978

SUBJECT

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Policy

Saudi foreign policy goals have remained constant for over a decade. The manner of pursuing them has changed, however, since the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and oil embargo. With the ascendancy of Crown Prince Fahd following the death of King Faysal in 1975, the Saudis have more actively asserted themselves in regional politics, using their immense oil wealth as their principal diplomatic tool. They have found

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A, Production Case Files (1978), Box 13, Folder 1: Saudi Arabia's Foreign Policy. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified].

that economic diplomacy has its limitations; they appear, nevertheless, increasingly self-confident and willing to use their economic leverage to pursue their goals. Islamic religious considerations are important in Saudi foreign policy, and may become more so in the future.

Saudi activism and use of economic leverage is most visible in those areas of most direct concern to them—the Arab confrontation states, the Horn of Africa, and OPEC. The Saudis are underwriting arms purchases for Egypt and estimate that their total military and economic aid to Egypt is approximately \$2 billion yearly. In addition to providing hundreds of millions of dollars in economic aid to Syria, Jordan, and Somalia, they have offered to underwrite any military purchases the Somalis can arrange. The Saudis have used their leverage in OPEC to maintain oil prices at levels they consider to be moderate.

Policy Goals and Constraints

Saudi foreign policy for many years has been keyed to protecting the Saudi kingdom; containing world communism and regional radicalism; and, protecting and expanding the Islamic religion, for which the Saudis, as protector of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, feel a special responsibility.

In pursuing these goals, Saudi policy has sought to:

- prevent the growth of radically oriented governments in the Middle East, and moderate the stance of those that already exist;

- facilitate a negotiated solution to the Middle East conflict—thereby removing the greatest source of instability and tension in the region. Such a settlement, in the Saudi view, would include return of Israeli-occupied territory (and East Jerusalem) to the Arabs, and a solution acceptable to moderate Palestinians;

- develop and maintain a “special relationship” with the US, which it sees as the ultimate protector of the Saudi kingdom from external subversion, and as a major source of the technology needed for the kingdom’s development;

- maintain a healthy international economic environment that will facilitate domestic development—a major rationale for moderating oil prices within OPEC.

Major constraints influencing Saudi goals are:

- lack of trained manpower, which makes it difficult to staff ministries at home and diplomatic posts abroad with qualified personnel, and tends to concentrate all decision-making responsibilities on the top leadership;

- its small population—estimated at about 5–6 million; this makes it all but impossible for Saudi Arabia to attain a military strength commensurate with its boundaries, wealth or regional interests.

Personalities and Special Topics of Interest

Crown Prince Fahd generally controls the major foreign accounts, such as relations with the US, oil policy, and the Horn of Africa, but other senior princes are regularly consulted and decisions usually represent a consensus viewpoint. In addition to Foreign Minister Prince Saud, these other senior princes usually include Defense Minister Prince Sultan, National Guard Commander Prince Abdallah, intelligence chief Prince Turki ibn Faysal, and royal adviser Kamal Adham. Important decisions are always cleared with King Khalid. While Khalid usually does not take an active part in policy formulation, he can and does get involved if a particular subject—such as Saudi policy on the current Egyptian-Israeli peace talks—interests him. A devout Muslim, Khalid will also assert himself if Islamic considerations are involved.

[5 lines not declassified] The Saudis remain deeply suspicious that Sadat will sign a separate peace with Israel; they have repeatedly warned Sadat against making a bilateral settlement.

The government is united, however, on two issues it considers highly important: sale of F-15 fighter-bombers, and the sale or third-country transfer of US equipment to Somalia. The Saudis see the F-15s as a symbol of the US commitment to Saudi security and to the “special relationship.” Defense Minister Prince Sultan, in particular, has made pointed references to Saudi unhappiness that the US has not already agreed to their sale. The Saudis would probably see a public US commitment on the F-15s as a suitable sign of US appreciation for their efforts to moderate oil prices at the recent Caracas OPEC conference.

The Saudis view the conflict in the Horn as a prime opportunity to remove or lessen Soviet influence in the region. They believe this should be a joint Saudi-US goal and should override any US inhibitions about African territorial integrity. They have urged the US to allow the sale or transfer of US military equipment to Somalia.

Foreign Minister Prince Saud recently told Ambassador West that the Saudi government was upset by the recent Congressional report on energy that suggested the US should permit Iran to secure Persian Gulf and Saudi oil supplies if they were threatened. The Saudis take such reports, no matter what the source, as veiled US threats aimed at them.

[2 paragraphs (20 lines) not declassified]

166. Memorandum From Jessica Tuchman of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, January 27, 1978

SUBJECT

F-15 for Saudi Arabia

Les² and I met this morning with Frank Moore and his staff at their request to discuss the Saudi F-15 sale. They have been getting indications that AIPAC has mounted a major campaign against the sale, visiting almost every member already. A copy of AIPAC's briefing sheet is attached at Tab A,³ FYI. On the other hand, there is definitely a more balanced view prevailing now on the Hill,⁴ with more sympathy and understanding of the moderate Arab cause than has been the case in the past. (C)

After much discussion, the conclusion was that if at all possible, the sale should not be sent up until early March, for the following reasons:

—We need time to mount a major educational effort on the importance of the Saudi role in the mid-east peace process, as well as in the production and pricing of oil. If we are to win this one we must be able to *recruit positive supporters*—not just try to moot the opposition's arguments as we did on AWACS. (C)

—Waiting until March might allow the F-15s to be sent up as *part of a package* including the Israeli sales, which would help immeasurably with passage. (C)

—After thinking about this for a while, the Senate people realized for the first time that this issue is *likely to collide with Panama*.⁵ Many of the Senators we are depending upon to make our case on Panama, as well as those for whose votes we are negotiating, also have strong pro-Israeli records, and a political base in the Jewish community. Exam-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 1-5/78. Confidential. Sent for action. Copies were sent to Schecter, Pastor, and Sick.

² Reference is to Leslie Denend.

³ Not attached.

⁴ Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Affairs Douglas Bennet sent Vance a briefing memorandum on January 27 outlining the congressional factors concerning the F-15 sale to Saudi Arabia. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P860124-0987)

⁵ Reference is to the ratification debate concerning the Panama Canal treaties, which Carter and Panamanian leader Brigadier General Omar Torrijos Herrera signed in September 1977.

ples: Bentsen, Brooke, Case, Church, Glenn, Metzenbaum and Stone.⁶ They would be caught in the middle and might only be able to afford (particularly those who are up for reelection) to give the Administration one vote or the other, not both. (C)

These seem to us to be good reasons to delay sending up the Saudi sale for about one month. If Panama goes on schedule, the Saudi sale would still be early in the 20 day pre-notification period when the Panama vote takes place. There are only two drawbacks to this plan. First, it has to be made palatable to the Saudis. This shouldn't be too hard if we tell them that we are definitely going with it and when. We should then be able to find some good reasons why it takes 30 days to prepare the papers. The other drawback is that waiting until the beginning of March means that the statutory 30 day consideration period will overlap with the 10 day March recess. This will be used to try to make us withdraw the sale and resubmit it later—just as happened last summer with AWACS. (C)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Saudi F-15 sale not be sent up to the Hill for approval until the first week in March (assuming Panama stays on schedule) and that every effort be made to send it up in a package with the Israeli and Egyptian sales. (C)

⁶ Senators Lloyd Bentsen (D-Texas), Edward Brooke (R-Massachusetts), Clifford Case (R-New Jersey), Frank Church (D-Idaho), John Glenn (D-Ohio), Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), and Richard Stone (D-Florida).

167. Editorial Note

On January 25, 1978, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance sent Ambassador to Saudi Arabia John West a telegram instructing him to meet with Saudi Crown Prince Fahd ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Saud in order to inform him that Vance and President Jimmy Carter “have been giving very careful attention to the question of how to move ahead most effectively on F-15s.” Vance also requested that West inform the Crown Prince that the efforts aimed at securing congressional approval had been complicated “by the pause in the direct negotiations between Egypt and Israel.” Vance instructed: “Finally, tell Fahd that I have asked you to say that the President is prepared to send forward to the Congress

in the very near future a request for F-15s for Saudi Arabia if that is Fahd's wish. But we would like for him to consider the tactical advantages of delaying until the peacemaking effort regains momentum to provide a more propitious atmosphere for congressional consideration of our request. I know Fahd shares our desire to handle congressional consultations in a manner maximizing the chances of success; at the same time, we want to minimize the sort of public controversy which would be embarrassing to the U.S.-Saudi relationship as well as harmful to the overall atmosphere for the Middle East peace process." (Telegram 19647 to Jidda, January 25; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071-2631)

The following day, President Carter approved a letter to Saudi King Khalid bin Abdul Aziz that, in part, dealt with the F-15 sale. In the letter, Carter stressed: "I want to repeat to Your Majesty my personal commitment to assisting Saudi Arabia in meeting its security requirements. As I told you in Riyadh, we will move forward as promised with your request for the F-15 aircraft in order to ensure the earliest feasible delivery. Secretary Vance has already begun consultations with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and you can be assured that we will do our best to explain to the Members of Congress the contribution that this sale will make to U.S.-Saudi relations and to stability in the area." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 81, Saudi Arabia: 1-2/78)

On January 29, West cabled the Department of State to report Saudi reactions to a possible delay in the Carter administration's submission to Congress of the F-15 proposal. West reported: "Saud was adamant that a delay was 'failure' and that the President should submit the proposal forthwith." West reported that he had also met with Crown Prince Fahd: "In the last half of the meeting, Fahd made these points time and time again (1) that the F-15 issue was a basic, crucial test of our relationship; (2) that he was personally embarrassed by the delays thus far and could not willingly submit to any further such embarrassment; (3) that to impress the President and the Congress with the extreme urgency of the issue, he wanted me to take a personal message from him and the King to you and the President setting forth all of their concerns; he said that he felt my taking it in person rather than by cable would emphasize this feeling of urgency; (4) that he wanted the planes and he would not attempt to tell us what tactics or strategy we should use to get them." West noted that both Saud and Fahd placed full responsibility for the success or failure of the sale on the United States. (Telegram 81 from Riyadh, January 29; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071-2511)

In telegram 24580 to Jidda, January 31, the Department indicated that Vance had seen "no need" for West "to return to Washington for

consultations at this time. We want to have a chance to digest the report of your latest conversation with Fahd and Saud before deciding whether you should come. You should know that we are working toward trying to put you in a position to convey a decision to the Saudis in the next few days, but you should not mention that until you get our further instructions.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071–2523)

In telegram 86 from Riyadh, January 31, West summarized his January 30 meeting with top Saudi officials, commenting that the discussion had “reinforced earlier opinion that this is highly emotional issue, basic to present US–SAG ‘special relationship’ and must be dealt with promptly and affirmatively to avoid further suspicion that U.S. is trying to renege on F–15 commitment.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071–2517)

168. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, January 31, 1978, 2140Z

25643. For Ambassador West. Subject: Presentation of F–15 Sale to Congress. Ref: Riyadh 086.²

1. Please see Crown Prince Fahd again at the earliest possible date, and make the following points:

—The President is pleased to inform King Khalid and the Crown Prince that he has decided to approve the Saudi request for 60 F–15 aircraft. We see this as an important dimension of the US–Saudi relationship and believe that it will contribute to the close ties that exist between our two countries and to the peace and stability of the Middle East.

—We want the Crown Prince to understand how we intend to proceed to insure the best possible climate in Congress for consideration of this sale.

—The Saudis should understand that the present mood in Congress is distinctly hostile to the sale. We clearly will have an uphill battle

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850071–2524. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Quandt and Sober; cleared by Gelb, Saunders, Tarnoff, and Douglas Bennet (H); approved by Vance.

² See Document 167.

on our hands and we cannot guarantee the outcome. Because of the importance we attach to US-Saudi relations, however, we are prepared to deal with the controversy that this will inevitably produce.

—Secretary Vance has already begun consultations with leaders in the House and Senate on the F-15 sale, and Secretary Brown will do likewise. The President will also speak to congressional leaders. We will continue these preliminary consultations until Congress recesses for about ten days beginning February 10.

—On a case of this sort, we are obliged to give Congress informal advance (confidential) notification of 20 days before we send up formal notification, together with certain supporting information, of our intent to make a given sale. We intend this advance notification period to begin when Congress reconvenes in late February.

—After the 20-day informal period, Congress has 30 days during which to consider the case pursuant to our formal notification. We can expect that hearings will be held and administration witnesses will testify in support of the sale.

—If Congress does not act to prevent the sale, we will be prepared promptly to begin detailed discussions with the SAG to enable us to prepare and submit formal letters of offer and acceptance for its consideration.

2. We believe that our informing Fahd of the President's decision to approve the Saudi request for F-15s and of the specific timetable for moving this issue before the Congress is responsive both to Fahd's desire that we move promptly and also to the President's commitment to do so. We trust that Fahd agrees.

3. You should say that, whereas the President wished King Khalid and Fahd to have this prompt word of his decision on the F-15s, we wish to keep the decision secret pending the informal advance notification which will go to the Congress in late February. We are consequently restricting the knowledge of the President's decision to a very small number of people here, and hope that the SAG will do likewise. You should add at that point that there is already, however, intense interest in this subject in the Congress and the press, and we cannot exclude the possibility that there may be some premature leak. If that should occur, we will deal with it in the fashion that seems most appropriate at the time.

4. In light of the above, we do not rpt not see the need for you to come back personally to carry a letter from Fahd to the President and Secretary. You could tell Fahd that the flavor of intensity and urgency which has marked your recent discussions with him on the F-15 issue has come across clearly in the reports you have made of these discussions, and the President has had this in mind in asking that you now convey his decision to Fahd regarding the F-15s.

5. Although it does not seem necessary for you to return to Washington at this time, we will need your help in our discussions with the Congress when the F-15 case is submitted to it. We will let you know more precisely when you should plan to be here to assist us.

Vance

169. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, undated

SUBJECT

Aircraft Sales to the Middle East

I recommend that you approve the sale of 75 F-16s to Israel, 15 F-15s to Israel, 60 F-15s to Saudi Arabia, and 50 F-5Es to Egypt. These numbers represent what we judge to be minimally acceptable to the countries concerned. The Department of Defense and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency concur in this recommendation on the basis of foreign policy considerations. The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency continues to hold some reservations on the basis of arms control considerations, as discussed below.

The following factors bear on my recommendation:

1. Management of the Arms Transfer Ceiling

The total value of this package is approximately \$4.8 billion. In order to manage this large dollar volume within the planned reductions in the arms transfer ceiling, the Letters of Offer will be phased over several years, leaving room for other major priority sales. In the development of our plan for managing the ceiling, we gave first priority to an aircraft package for the Middle East and examined carefully the

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 63, Middle East: Arms: 2/1–15/78. Secret; Nodis. Brzezinski sent the memorandum to Carter under a February 10 memorandum along with a February 1 memorandum from Department of State Legal Adviser Herbert Hansell regarding the nature of the congressional review of the arms proposal. (Ibid.) Carter initialed both Brzezinski's and Hansell's memoranda. Brzezinski returned a copy of Vance's memorandum to Vance under a February 13 memorandum, indicating that Carter had approved his recommendation. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P860067–1261)

possibility of phasing Letters of Offer. The numbers I have recommended above will be amenable to our management scheme.

2. Arms Control Considerations

The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency continues to hold some reservations about selling more F-15s in the Middle East, particularly to Saudi Arabia. They believe that this could lead to similar demands from other Middle Eastern states and complicate our efforts to encourage multilateral restraint. However, Paul Warnke has stated that he appreciates the foreign policy reasons for the sale of the F-15s, and that he is fully prepared to support the sale provided that a careful review is made of the present and future configuration² of the aircraft to be sold.

I would also like to mention the fact that Saudi Arabia and Egypt could purchase advanced aircraft elsewhere. If they were to do so, we would have little or no control over their numbers, configuration, munitions, or deployment.

3. Effect on Negotiations

Although some maintain that any new major aircraft sales to this region are inconsistent with our objective of a peace settlement, I have concluded that it would be even more complicating to the current negotiations not to go forward with some part of the aircraft sales requested by the three countries. Our commitment to Israel's security must remain unequivocal and Israel must have confidence in its security in order to make peace. In particular, this means an increase in the number of frontline Israeli aircraft and continued modernization of the air force.

Egypt, too, must have the necessary self-confidence to negotiate that will come with the assurance that we will help it attain a reasonable defensive capability. When Sadat made the decision to cut his ties with the Soviet Union, he placed the responsibility on us to maintain a minimal Egyptian defensive aircraft capability.

In the case of Saudi Arabia, I believe the desire to modernize the air force with F-15s is reasonable. I believe the supply of the F-15s to Saudi Arabia will not significantly affect the military superiority now held by Israel in the area—especially in light of the proposal to supply F-16s and additional F-15s to Israel. I do not need to reiterate to you the importance of this sale to our bilateral relations with the Saudis.³

² Carter underlined this word and wrote "Let Paul [Warnke] assess" in the right-hand margin next to this sentence.

³ Carter wrote "I agree" in the margin below this paragraph.

4. *Congressional Notification*

Harold Brown and I both believe that these sales should be presented and notified to Congress as a package.⁴ That was the basis on which our recommendations have been constructed, and such a presentation should make it easier for Members of Congress to support all three sales. However, we cannot make this a legally binding package with Congress, which remains free to reject any part. While we will emphasize the important interrelationship of the three sales, we will have to defend each element on a country by country basis and we will want to avoid seeming to make the Israeli sale conditional on approval of the other two. Congress would react strongly to such an effort.

Recommendation:

Accordingly, I recommend that you authorize me to proceed with the implementation of these sales:

75 F-16s for Israel

15 F-15s for Israel

60 F-15s for Saudi Arabia

50 F-5Es for Egypt⁵

⁴ Carter underlined the phrase “as a package” and wrote “good” in the right-hand margin next to this sentence.

⁵ Carter approved the recommendation, initialed “JC” in the lower margin, and wrote “Get Frank [Moore] & Ham [Jordan] to help with Congress today (2/13).” An attached draft statement was not found. Although Brzezinski noted in his February 10 covering memorandum that he had attached the announcement, he added the following handwritten notation at the end of the memorandum: “I am revising it; will submit it later today.” There is no indication as to when Carter received the announcement. A copy is attached to Brzezinski’s February 13 memorandum to Vance (see footnote 1 above). Vance released a statement on February 14 announcing that the President had approved the sale of the aircraft to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. See the Department of State *Bulletin*, March 1978, p. 37.

170. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, undated

SUBJECT

Saudi Desire for Assurances of Our Support and Protection

Prior to returning for consultations Ambassador West met with Crown Prince Fahd February 14. Fahd indicated intensified concern about the Soviet threat posed through the Horn of Africa and the Yemen to Saudi Arabia. In addition to expressing worry about increasing Soviet influence in the Horn of Africa, Fahd indicated there is evidence that the more radical elements in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen are gaining control and are planning to cooperate in the overthrow of the moderate Yemen Arab Republic regime.

Fahd requested Ambassador West to ask you privately what the position of the United States would be if Saudi Arabia has to defend itself from Soviet aggression through the Horn and the Yemen. Ambassador West sought to reassure Fahd about U.S. concern for Saudi welfare, noting particularly your decision to proceed with the F-15 sale as evidence of our determination to enable Saudi Arabia to defend itself. Fahd noted that the Soviet threat could well manifest itself in infiltration and subversion rather than open military aggression.

John West feels that the Saudis, while reassured by your action on the F-15 sale, are feeling increasingly threatened and in need of further assurances of U.S. support. I am attaching a copy of West's memorandum on his meeting with Fahd at Tab 1.²

As you know, since 1950 your predecessors have sent to Saudi leaders a number of written assurances of our interest in and support for the security of the welfare of Saudi Arabia. Such general assurances, which have stopped short of any specific commitment to defend Saudi Arabia, have been buttressed by exchange of intelligence and diplomatic consultations, our military supply and training relationship, and in 1963 the temporary stationing of U.S. Air Force aircraft in Saudi

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Historical Files Pertaining to Saudi Arabia 1973-1990, Lot 91D410, Box 2, Presidential Letters to S.A. (Reassurances). No classification marking. Printed from a copy that does not bear Vance's initials. Atherton transmitted the memorandum to Vance under a March 13 action memorandum recommending "that you send the attached memorandum to the President which suggests that he give West a letter to King Khalid containing assurances of concern for Saudi security but stopping well short of making a specific commitment." (Ibid.)

² Attached but not printed is West's undated memorandum to Carter and Vance.

Arabia at a time when the Saudi leadership felt particularly threatened by the civil war in the Yemen Arab Republic.³ A summary of Presidential assurances to Saudi Arabia is attached at Tab 2.⁴

I believe it would be helpful if you would give Ambassador West a letter to King Khalid, to be delivered through Crown Prince Fahd, containing your assurances of concern for Saudi security and welfare. A proposed text is attached at Tab 3.⁵

³ For documentation, see *Foreign Relations*, 1961–1963, vol. XVIII, Near East, 1962–1963.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

⁵ Attached but not printed.

171. Telegram From the United States Liaison Office in Riyadh to the Department of State¹

Riyadh, April 26, 1978, 1050Z

295. Subject: Discussions With Crown Prince Fahd—Growing Soviet Influence and F-15s.

1. Summary: In two and one-half hour conversation with Crown Prince Fahd April 22, Fahd spent over one hour in presenting his very pessimistic view of current world situation including failure of U.S. leadership, expansion of Soviet influence, and encirclement of Saudi Arabia. On more than one occasion he asked rhetorically how Saudi Arabia could but greet Soviets with friendship if world situation continued to deteriorate. In this discussion and that of F-15 Crown Prince was clearly seeking reassurances that world situation and sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia were not as bad as some are saying. Ambassador in giving Fahd frank appraisal of congressional review of F-15s did reassure Crown Prince that administration remained firmly committed to sale and was doing all it could to gain the congressional support necessary to proceed with sale. End summary.

2. On April 22 Ambassador met with Crown Prince Fahd in Riyadh to review several matters of interest. During meeting Fahd delivered

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780178–0938. Secret; Exdis. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Addis Ababa, Algiers, Amman, UNINT Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Dhahran, Doha, Jidda, Khartoum, Kuwait, London, Manama, Moscow, Muscat, Rabat, Sana, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Tripoli, and Tunis.

long, pessimistic and gloomy review of current world situation. The Soviet Union was thrusting forward with no regard for interest of rest of world. Thrusting was no longer covert but overt. In Africa the people are new to modern life having little and wanting much. Soviet Union provides what they want. What is to stop them from admiring Russians or envying their neighbors who are getting things from Soviet Union? If we say that one day they will realize the danger, I say that day will come too late.

3. A year ago U.S. Representative to U.N.² said U.S. should not be concerned with Soviet role in Africa because African people can deal with situation. It was misleading statement. I have talked with many African leaders and they are perplexed. What did high U.S. official mean? He obviously knows U.S. policy and was he saying U.S. would no longer help Africans? They told me that without U.S. help they were doomed. Then came Angola, Zaire, and Ethiopia and we see what has happened as victories for Eastern camp. These have had tremendous psychological effect. Why can Cubans do so much? Some members of Congress may not support U.S. action because of Vietnam. That was years ago. It is absurd for Congress to be so short-sighted because of Vietnam and Watergate. In Vietnam U.S. did not choose to fight for all out victory. Watergate was one man and one mistake. How long will they hang around U.S. neck like weights?

4. President Carter must want U.S. to regain reins of leadership in free world. If U.S. does not exercise its leadership, it will lose it. Then in two or three years three-fourths of Africa will be Communist and parts of Mid-East and Asia will follow. Then what will be U.S. position and what will be position of America's friends in area? Saudi Arabia is small state but good friend of U.S. We hold on to desire for freedom but we are vulnerable to those with covetous eyes looking in our direction and to Gulf. What if we cannot resist tide of Communism? What would that do to U.S. interests? Certain U.S. media say not to worry about M.E. because Moslems will never embrace Communism. Well, are Libya, Iraq, Syria, and South Yemen following true course of Islam or are they following lead and interest of Soviet Union?

5. Somalia: What does Soviet Union provide its clients?—information support, arms, financial aid, etc. What about those friendly to West? We certainly cannot say our friend takes care of us as the Soviet Union takes care of hers. Look at Somalia. Events dragged Somalia into fight. After consulting Washington, Saudis applied intensive pressure and prevailed on Somalia to withdraw from Ogaden. On that faith we told Somalis there would be plebiscite in Ogaden and Barre agreed

² Andrew Young.

to abide by outcome. What is result? No economic or other support. Only just last week Barre wanted to stop in Riyadh on his way back from his official visit in Peking. SAG used excuse of being previously committed to refuse request because SAG was so embarrassed. SAG had nothing new to say to Barre. Any day there might be leftist or Communist rebellion or coup to do away with Barre. What would happen if new government joined Ethiopia in bloc?

6. Trouble in Iran: Soviet Union is laughing at situation in Iran waiting for collapse or maybe abetting the trouble. Then with change of government more friendly to Soviet Union, Communists would control all armaments of Shah and they will be turned around and used against Saudi Arabia. Whole plan is to encircle Saudi Arabia. It will use its new entrenched position in Africa to harm U.S. interests. Middle East must choose either to accept Soviet Union or be crushed.

7. Sadat: Sadat did what no one thought Arab leader could do when he visited Israel. Yet while his visit received momentary applause which incidentally did not last, it also antagonized many Arabs. If and when people conclude that Sadat's efforts have failed, he will be ousted by person with opposite political persuasions. To avoid ouster, Sadat must find new policy, i.e. to turn back to Soviets and stretch forth his hand. Sadat, who had courage to go to Israel, certainly has courage to reverse his policy toward Soviet Union. If that happens, Soviet Union will accept his hand because they want desperately to get back into Egypt. Later they know they can rid themselves of Sadat. Then what would be position of Saudi Arabia in Gulf, Lebanon, Jordan or North Africa? Tunisia and Morocco are surrounded by people who do not believe in U.S. view of world. Saudi Arabia, too, is surrounded by Syria, Iraq, South Yemen and Ethiopia. When completely surrounded, Saudi Arabia will have no alternative but to greet Soviets with rose petals.

8. Sale of F-15 aircraft: Faced by all these threats, Saudi Arabia asked for only 60 planes and look at furor. Should plane sale fail and Egypt turn back to Soviet Union, what do Saudi leaders say to the people? Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and others will pour abuse on SAG using all types of media. People will ask how long can Saudi Arabia continue its close friendship with U.S. and get nothing in return? Will U.S. apologize later for having done nothing and thus losing a friendly government? Who will be in Riyadh to hear the apology? Saudi Arabia can provide solid basis for American interests in Middle East. SAG has already stood behind U.S. on many issues. Now, Saudis are perplexed at how long U.S. and President can let themselves be whipped around by Israelis who oppose sale to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has not said Israel has to move into the sea or reach some other such end. On contrary, it has said let Israel stay as one of states in area.

9. Congressional action: I (Fahd) am afraid Congress will reject sale because Israel knows she can live without more planes. Egypt could too but not us. Reaction of people will be "to hell with U.S.". It is so strange, even calamitous, U.S. factories will lose billions of dollars that could add to U.S. prosperity. U.S. turning down billions of dollars that we want to spend in U.S. Our only alternative is to turn toward England, France and Soviet Union to buy what we need.

10. From bottom of my (Fahd's) heart, I wish we had never asked for F-15s. What is happening now is degrading. If I had known before that events would have unfolded as they are, we would have looked for another way. The present treatment is shameful to us and to our friends in U.S. Now we cannot turn back. We are now in most embarrassing and critical situation. I believe Congress will not approve sale and then what will we do? I am speaking at length because of our friendship. We want our friends to know what a predicament we are in if Congress rejects sale. All our people will be watching.

11. Ambassador assured Crown Prince that President does believe U.S. must reassert its leadership in world. President and others recognize Soviet threat, particularly threat of encirclement of Saudi Arabia. U.S. determined to see that nothing will happen to interfere with independence of Saudi Arabia. Ambassador pointed out President's staunch support for close relationship with Saudi Arabia as recognition that a relationship of words without actions is meaningless.

12. Ambassador said he regretted Crown Prince felt F-15 sale had become embarrassment to Saudi Arabia and perhaps U.S. He assured Fahd it was not embarrassment to President. His support is unwavering. There are powerful forces in both Saudi Arabia and U.S. that would like to see special relationship destroyed and it becomes duty of leaders such as President and Crown Prince to understand motives of these forces and to work to maintain relationship so vitally important to future of world. Cost can be high. Because of President's stand on sale of F-15s, opponents are saying he will never be re-elected in 1980 yet President has given not one inch. On contrary, their tactics have strengthened his resolve. Ambassador said that while no one could guarantee outcome, he was cautiously optimistic that sale would not be rejected by Congress.³

13. Comment: Crown Prince was visibly tired. He seemed almost in a depressed state. Several factors may explain Fahd's gloomy assess-

³ On April 28, Vance announced that the administration was that day transmitting to Congress formal notification of proposals to sell the aircraft to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. On May 3, he testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee laying out the administration's reasons for the sales. See the Department of State *Bulletin*, June 1978, pp. 38-39.

ment of world situation not least of which is fact that he is overworked and exhausted. He has had no break in almost a year. Secondly, Fahd has been dealing with at least four seemingly intractable problems—growth of Soviet influence in area, oil pricing and production problems, seeming stalemate in Mid-East peace efforts, and financial issues surrounding Saudi reserves and world currency fluctuations. All these issues ultimately reach his coffee cup and there are vocal and opinionated proponents of each advocating host of alternative courses of action. None of the subjects are easy to grasp much less resolve.

14. Regarding Fahd's pessimism on F-15 sale, we learned subsequent to conversation that Prince Turki al-Feisal, who has been very active in Washington in Saudi campaign to gain congressional acceptance of package, has tried to prepare Fahd for possibility plane sale will fail. While this is sound philosophy, he may have oversold his case.

15. On question of Saudi relations with Soviet Union, we are continually told by all senior Saudi officials that only alternative to special relationship with United States is to move to establish some type of more normal relationship with Soviets. Our assessment is that most members of royal family remain opposed to any moves toward Soviet Union but they increasingly talk about option almost as if they were preparing themselves for eventual dose of bad medicine.

Gnehm

172. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, May 18, 1978, 1 p.m.

SUBJECT

Secretary's Meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud: Luncheon Session

PARTICIPANTS

Saudi Arabia

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin Abd al-Aziz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia

Ali Abdallah Alireza, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 81, Saudi Arabia: 3-5/78. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Twinam; approved by Wisner on June 5. The meeting took place in the James Madison Room at the Department of State.

Sheikh Abdallah Alireza, Deputy Minister for Economic and Cultural Affairs,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia

Dr. Nizar O. Madani, First Secretary, Embassy of Saudi Arabia

United States

The Secretary

Andrew J. Young, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations

Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., Ambassador at Large

Richard N. Cooper, Under Secretary for Economic Affairs

Lucy Wilson Benson, Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology

Richard M. Moose, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs

Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

John C. West, American Ambassador to Saudi Arabia

William B. Quandt, National Security Council

William R. Crawford, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

Joseph W. Twinam, Director, Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Notetaker)

Summary. The Secretary, in the context of Saud's expression of appreciation for the Administration's efforts in behalf of the Middle East aircraft sales, put the Congressional issue in context, noting that the Senate vote was not one against Israel but essentially recognition of the importance of the moderate states in determining what kind of place the Middle East will be.² Prince Saud noted the seriousness with which the Congress had looked into the basic issues involved. The Secretary urged the importance of Saudi Arabia's trying to get Arafat to bring the Palestinians to cooperate with the UN forces in Lebanon. Prince Saud stressed that an announcement of Israeli withdrawal would be helpful in encouraging such cooperation and the Secretary assured Saud we had Begin's commitment to move on this in the next few days. A number of economic issues were discussed, with Saud expressing concern that imposition of a fee on crude oil imports as an alternative to a domestic crude oil tax would be misunderstood abroad and encourage further OPEC price increase. The U.S. side suggested that Saudi Arabia add more economic staff to its participation in the UN Overview Committee. Prince Saud said the Saudis would look into this. The Secretary agreed with Saud's recommendation that there be more bilateral consultations on important economic issues prior to key international conferences.

² On May 15, the Senate approved the aircraft sales package for Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel. The President had sent a letter on May 12 to members of Congress urging approval of the sale, and on May 15 he released a statement expressing his gratification at the Senate's action. See *Public Papers: Carter, 1978, Book I*, pp. 896-897 and 916.

(In the course of social pleasantries prior to the luncheon, Prince Saud expressed to the Secretary the Saudi Government's appreciation for the Administration's efforts in behalf of the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia.)

South Lebanon and UNIFIL

The Secretary noted the real problems of morale in the UN peacekeeping forces in South Lebanon as a result of Palestinian attacks on the forces. As a result there is real concern that the forces, now up to 5,000 and scheduled soon to reach 6,000 men, might be withdrawn. The French have expressed concern. If the UN presence starts to become unstrung it would be a disaster for all concerned. The Secretary said we hope Saudi Arabia would use its influence on Arafat to bring the Palestinians under control.

Ambassador Young noted the chaotic situation; there are several factions which the Palestinians have to control. He noted this is the first sustained violation of the neutrality of UN forces and establishes, for example, an unfortunate precedent for Africa where in time there may be as many as 10,000 UN peacekeeping personnel.

The Secretary continued that Prime Minister Begin had promised to meet with the Israeli Cabinet in the next few days to set a date for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from South Lebanon, but this would of course be difficult if the continuation of the UN presence appears uncertain. In response to Prince Saud's question, the Secretary said we do not feel Arafat is doing all he could to bring the Palestinians under control.

Prince Saud said that Israel's setting a date for permanent withdrawal would help. He added that the Syrians should be helpful.

The Secretary said we have talked to the Syrians.

Mr. Saunders noted the importance of a parallel approach in which we push for a date for Israeli withdrawal and at the same time work to assure the safety of UNIFIL.

Prince Saud said that from Saudi talks with the Palestinians they appear to be serious about cooperating with UNIFIL but that SAG would be raising this question again. He continued that any apparent conflict between the Cairo Accords³ and the UN force mandate in South Lebanon is manageable and that the real problem is uncertainty about Israel's intentions to withdraw. Should Israel announce its withdrawal

³ Reference is to the November 2, 1969, agreement between the PLO's Yassir Arafat and the Lebanese Government that called for a cease-fire and established an understanding between the Lebanese Government and Palestinian guerrillas concerning the allowed level of the guerrillas' activity. (James Feron, "Israel: Guerrilla Pact Will Mean New Peril," *The New York Times*, November 9, 1969, p. E4)

this would be an important breakthrough and the announcement should come soon to avoid a deteriorating situation.

The Secretary said we would keep in touch with the Israelis. We understand the Cabinet would be meeting by May 22. Begin had made a commitment to him on this question.

Ambassador Young noted that the UN had been generally supportive of the Palestinian cause. Troops from several nations have suffered casualties from Palestinian attacks in South Lebanon. It is important to realize that the UN peacekeeping force is not so much a fighting force as a moral authority and it is this moral authority that is being challenged in South Lebanon.

Prince Saud said that Saudi Government is in complete agreement that the authority of the peacekeeping force must be upheld.

F-15 Sale

In response to the Prince's question, the Secretary said that the Vice President will address the UN on the 24th⁴ because the President is facing an extremely tight schedule, needing to focus on such difficult domestic issues as the labor bill after having devoted so much time personally to such issues as the Panama Canal Treaty⁵ and the Middle East aircraft sales.

Ambassador Young noted that because party discipline is not strong in the Congress, the President had had to deal with numerous individual members of Congress on the aircraft sales.

The Secretary referred to the President's, Vice President's and his own frequent discussions with members of Congress on this question. He agreed with Prince Saud that issues of great importance were involved in the Middle East aircraft issue, but cautioned that the Senate vote in support of the Saudi sale was not an anti-Israel vote. He said the vote was essentially recognition of the importance of the moderate states in determining what kind of place the Middle East will be. In response to Prince Saud's comment on how carefully members of Congress had gone into the issues, the Secretary noted Congressman Studds' letter to his constituents explaining the issues in careful detail. Ambassador Atherton added that the general public appears to have gone through much the same sort of thought process as the Congress in evaluating the merits of the aircraft sales. The Secretary added that editorial support in the press had been very helpful. He congratulated

⁴ Mondale delivered the address to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament on May 24. For the text of his speech, see the Department of State *Bulletin*, June 1978, pp. 31-35.

⁵ The Senate ratified the 1977 Panama Canal treaties, which led to the return of the Canal Zone to Panama, on March 16 and April 18.

Ambassador Alireza and his associates on the good job they had done in convincing people of the importance of the sale. The Secretary added that even some Congressmen who voted against the Administration's proposal did not seem unhappy with the outcome.

Economic Issues

At the Secretary's request, Mr. Cooper briefly reviewed the international economic situation, which he described as "middling." He said the U.S. economy is progressing very well with employment in good shape and the growth rate being well managed. He noted that Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda has indicated that Japan will be pushing for seven percent growth rate. Europe is the weak spot with slow growth and unemployment problems leading to increased government intervention into the economies sector by sector. The threat of increased protectionism is growing. This will be the major focus of the July Economic Summit.⁶ In addition some commodity prices, such as Zambian copper, are depressed and it is difficult to foresee a revival until the overall world economy picks up.

Turning to the U.S. energy picture, Mr. Cooper noted that the President's energy program has been before the Congress a year, that three of the five key sections of the package have been agreed to, and that the fourth, natural gas price controls, appeared to be within 48 hours of agreement. The final section is the very controversial proposal of a domestic crude oil tax designed to raise domestic oil prices to the world price level in order to encourage conservation. This may be worked out in the Congress in four to six weeks but we must think about alternatives if it does not pass.⁷ One alternative would be to impose an import fee on crude oil at a level which would raise the average weighted price for all crude consumed within the United States to that price which would have prevailed had the domestic crude oil tax been passed. Mr. Cooper noted that Saudi Oil Minister Yamani had publicly expressed reservations about U.S. imposition of an import fee and he stressed that this is only a second-best alternative to the crude oil tax and that it is being considered at the technical level with no Presidential decision having been taken.

Prince Saud said that Yamani obviously had been referring to the OPEC precedent that whenever industrial countries raised tariffs on oil, OPEC always increased oil prices. He cautioned that imposition of a U.S. tariff on oil to solve a domestic problem would be misinterpreted and misused abroad, that rather than solving domestic problems it

⁶ Reference is to the G-7 Economic Summit, scheduled to take place in Bonn in July.

⁷ Congress finally passed all five bills that constituted the National Energy Act on October 15.

would create other problems internationally. After Mr. Cooper had stressed that a U.S. import fee would not affect world price, in response to Ambassador Atherton's question whether the imposition of a tariff by only one country would cause OPEC to raise the world price, Prince Saud said it would if that country were the United States.

The Secretary noted the importance to the international economy of our cutting down on oil consumption and the consequent need for the United States to raise the price of oil consumed in this country one way or another. Mr. Cooper noted that we are also looking at other alternatives and will want to consult closely with Saudi Arabia, recognizing that the OPEC reaction is very important.

Ambassador Young stressed that it is not certain how the President will finally act but that in an open society there is a need to discuss all options publicly.

Mr. Cooper added that there is of course a link between our problem of increased oil imports and turbulence in international financial markets.

Prince Saud noted that the Europeans are very anxious about what the United States is doing about its economic situation. Minister Alireza noted European concern about the dollar. Prince Saud asked if the Economic Summit can't do something to deal with these problems.

The Secretary noted the importance of the Economic Summit stressing that each of the industrialized countries must contribute in its own way to the improvement of the overall international economy. In so far as the United States contribution is concerned, the key issues are whether we can conserve energy and control inflation. We need to do both as our share in contribution to overall world economic progress.

In response to Prince Saud's question, the Secretary said we have had useful discussions with the Japanese who are going to take some action to accelerate their economic growth. They are considering a supplemental budget to expand both growth and imports. We believe the Japanese are making a genuine effort, but it remains to be seen whether this will be enough.

Prince Saud referred to the problems of the underdeveloped countries, such as Zambia, and said that nothing really seems to be moving in the UN forum since all of the LDS's countries are waiting to see the results of the Economic Summit.

Ambassador Young noted the importance of greater Saudi input in UN economic fora, such as the Overview Committee. He sketched the way that regional blocs tend to control UN fora with political rhetoric, constantly chipping away at the real economic interests of the moderate states.

Prince Saud indicated that in general the Saudis feel that the Soviet Union blocks useful activity at the UN. It was for this reason that the

Saudis pushed for the Paris Conference (CIEC). He added, however, that there may be some utility in the Overview Committee. Minister Alireza reiterated that the Saudis doubt that the UN is serious about economic issues and that since the end of CIEC, the Saudi Government has looked to UNCTAD in Geneva for serious treatment of economic issues. He noted how when UNCTAD bogs down the action seems to shift to the UN where the issues are subjected to political pressures. He pointed out that even in Geneva Saudi Arabia must deal with bloc politics in the Group of 77 and that it is hard to get a consensus. Mr. Cooper noted that the substance on some economic questions does seem to be shifting to the UN and there is a general problem of developing countries tending to rely on politically-oriented ambassadors to deal with these complex issues. He noted the value of the Overview Committee in both covering gaps in the management of the overall international economic system and monitoring developments. He said the Overview Committee is an effort to institutionalize things like CIEC. He said it would be useful to have frequent, ongoing dialogues with the Saudis on these issues.

Prince Saud said that the Saudi Government would look into beefing up the economic side of its UN Mission and would be happy to cooperate on all of these questions. He stressed that it would be particularly helpful to understand before economic meetings what the U.S. position will be and what specifically the U.S. wants from Saudi Arabia in the way of cooperation.

The Secretary agreed with this last point.

Ambassador Young noted the difficulty of combating Soviet efforts to stalemate UN activities, citing the problem of keeping the African states lined up beyond [*behind?*] constructive proposals in the face of Soviet influence on liberation groups, and he reiterated the need for more Saudi input into UN economic matters.

Prince Saud said Saudi Arabia would like to see the UN become of more practical use.

173. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron) to President Carter¹

Washington, May 22, 1978

SUBJECT

Letter from Ambassador West

John West has written you a lengthy letter of congratulations following the vote on the aircraft package (Tab A).² The letter makes the following points:

1. We should now move to persuade the Saudis to increase their oil production capacity over the next decade.

2. Based on his contacts with high Saudi officials during the handling of the issue with the Congress and the public, he is convinced that the Saudis are deeply grateful and consider themselves in your debt for your steadfastness.

3. The Saudi monarchy had committed its full prestige to the sale, and the favorable vote vindicated their pro-Western policy approach.

4. A favorable decision on increased production is made difficult by domestic Saudi support for conservation and by cautious Saudi decisions on oil field maintenance.

5. We should avoid any appearance of an "aircraft-for-oil" deal.

6. Nevertheless, we should begin a dialogue over the next few weeks. He specifically suggests raising the issue in the context of briefings on energy aspects of the Economic Summit, focusing our attention primarily on Yamani and staff level officials, leading to an eventual approach to Fahd.

7. He will discuss this with Jim Schlesinger before departure and has talked it over with Cy Vance. He believes it generally meets with State's approval.

8. He hopes to be able to say hello to you before he returns to Saudi Arabia on Friday, May 26.

We will staff these suggestions with State and Energy and have recommendations for you later.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 1-5/78. Secret. Sent for information. Carter wrote in the margin in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum: "I'm not sure how much I want to push the Saudis to increase oil production. J."

² See footnote 2, Document 172. West's undated letter is attached but not printed.

174. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency

RPM 78–10366

Washington, September 20, 1978

[Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A, Production Case Files (1978), Box 13, Folder 63, [folder title not declassified]. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. 4 pages not declassified.]

175. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, December 22, 1978

SUBJECT

Cracks in Saudi Facade (U)

Crown Prince Fahd's indecisive performance at Baghdad² and Saudi passivity in the OPEC meeting³ are most disturbing outward signs of a deeper malaise currently afflicting the Saudi Royal Family. (C)

King Khalid, although recuperating from his open-heart surgery and reportedly off for a hunting trip in the desert, clearly recognizes that his remaining time as King is limited. He has offered to abdicate but is being persuaded to remain in office until the line of succession can be established. (S)

Unfortunately, *Crown Prince Fahd* is himself not well. He is a diabetic and we have had considerable evidence recently that his condition

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 6–12/78. Secret. Sent for information. Inderfurth initialed the memorandum. A stamped notation on the memorandum reads: "ZB has seen."

² Reference is to the Arab League meeting in Baghdad November 2–5. The participating nations released a statement critical of the Camp David Accords, which had been signed on September 17; expelled Egypt from the Arab League; and relocated the organization's headquarters from Cairo to Tunis. (Telegram 7992 from Jidda, November 7; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780460–0171)

³ On December 17 at the OPEC meeting held in Abu Dhabi, the organization agreed on a 10 percent weighted average increase in the price of oil. (Telegram 3319 from Abu Dhabi, December 19; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780524–0491) President Carter and King Khalid exchanged letters about a price increase prior to the meeting. See *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 176.

is worsening. He has gained weight and appears puffy and unhealthy. Reportedly he has become very difficult to wake up in the morning and recently has been three and four hours late for meetings. His concentration is said to be poor and he is meeting with very few people, in contrast with his rather vigorous schedule of a year ago. (S)

The conventional wisdom is that Prince Abdullah will almost automatically become Crown Prince when Fahd is elevated. But Fahd must himself make the choice when he becomes King, and it is not beyond the realm of possibility that he would in fact choose his brother Sultan rather than the dour Abdullah who is leading the opposition to the Fahd clan. If the Crown Prince position is given to Abdullah, as now seems likely, there is still the question of the heir apparent. Sultan is the obvious choice, but he is being challenged by two surprising contenders, Princes Mishal and Abd al-Muhsin. Both claim to be older than Sultan, and both have held government positions in the past. Both, however, are rather disreputable characters and it remains to be seen whether they can in fact generate any substantial support within the Royal Family. Abdullah may simply be using these two claimants to keep Sultan off balance and thereby less actively involved in the Crown Prince sweepstakes. (S)

In any event, at a time when the Arab-Israel question is in the balance, when the Arab world is increasingly polarized, when Soviet influence is on the rise in Ethiopia, Yemen, and Afghanistan, when Iraq is developing a more complex policy of seeking leadership in the Arab world, and when the military pillar of Gulf stability in Iran is crumbling, we are faced with a leadership in Saudi Arabia which is ill, indecisive, and distracted by the succession struggle. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia is actually facing the prospect of a deficit budget for next year, corruption is endemic, and social and cultural tensions with the imported proletariat which does the dirty work (or highly skilled work) in the country have resulted in some unaccustomed riots in the past year. (S)

Saudi Arabia is not Iran. Its financial cushion is far more substantial, its development is better under control, its population is far smaller. They have faced competition for succession in the past, and this is actually less bitter than on several previous occasions, e.g. when they deposed King Saud. But we are also operating on the basis of some of the same principles which got us into trouble in Iran. Our intelligence is all of the "official" variety. We rely primarily on Saudi officials and westerners with a stake in Iran⁴ for our understanding of what is going

⁴ An unknown hand, possibly Inderfurth's, crossed out the word "Iran" and wrote "the establishment" above it.

on. Our embassy focuses on the politics of the Royal Family and the Government, and we limit our military advisors from collecting intelligence. (S)

I have talked to several experts in the past few days, one of which has just returned from a major fact-finding trip to Saudi Arabia. They assure me that it is business as usual and all's right with the world. I am willing to concede that nothing fundamental has changed within Saudi Arabia, but my concern is that the environment in which the Saudis live is changing too rapidly for them and they may not have the latitude for muddling through which has been their salvation in the past. (S)

Sam Hoskinson concurs.⁵

⁵ Hoskinson initialed this sentence.

176. Report Prepared by the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West)¹

Jidda, December 31, 1978

SAUDI ARABIA—YEAR'S END 1978

SUMMARY

U.S.-Saudi relations reached an all-time high during 1978, until the strains of the November Baghdad Summit² and the December OPEC action on oil prices³ created tensions causing some deterioration—the full extent of which is just now being assessed. Three main factors during the year contributed to the development of an even closer and more cordial relationship than had heretofore existed. They were:

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 6–12/78. Secret. West sent the report to Carter under a two-page handwritten letter dated December 31. In the letter, West praised Carter for his 1978 accomplishments and noted that the attached analysis “is not supposed to be an all-out comprehensive analysis, but a more or less personal appraisal of what I consider to be key points in our relationship.” (Ibid.)

² See footnote 2, Document 175.

³ See footnote 3, Document 175.

(1) The F-15 sale;⁴

(2) The continued personal involvement of the President and his Administration in the problems of the Middle East, including not only the Arab-Israel dispute but the security concerns of the region as well;

(3) The Saudi perception of increased Soviet movement in the area with the resulting reminder to the Saudis that protection by the U.S. is their only real security and future salvation.

Two negative factors were:

(1) The strain in the Arab world produced by the Camp David accords and culminating in the resolutions adopted at Baghdad; and

(2) The higher than expected oil price increase at Abu Dhabi.

These two negative events underscored the two basic goals of Saudi foreign policy and their increasingly incompatibility as events unfolded during the year.

The two basic aims of Saudi foreign policy are:

(1) To maintain a sufficiently friendly relationship with all other Arab states, including the radical-rejectionist group, so as to constitute some semblance of Arab consensus thereby preventing not only disunity among the states but also preventing the fomenting of internal unrest in Saudi Arabia by the radical states and groups; and

(2) To maintain a sufficiently friendly relationship with the United States to insure the protection by the U.S. from foreign aggression.

Maintaining these two goals became increasingly difficult in the last two months of 1978.

COMMENT: One inescapable conclusion must be reached based on past Saudi performance and especially the experience of the last sixty days: Saudi Arabia will do everything possible to avoid making any major decision which might alienate either the U.S. or its Arab brothers. Given this fact and the present leadership picture here, we conclude that the Saudis will continue to try to please both sides. A clear decision favoring one or the other's interest will be made only on a crisis basis, and then largely influenced by emotion on the facts of a given situation, all of which is often based to a surprising degree on a feeling of personal obligation or commitment by King Khaled or Prince Fahd.

Saudi support for the Camp David accords has been disappointing. The Saudis have tried, without marked success, to chart a course that would provide enough support to mollify if not satisfy the U.S. and at the same time maintain their Arab ties. They will, in my opinion,

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 172.

continue this tactic indefinitely even if it is showing evidence of pleasing no one.

The Saudis are already defensive, claiming more success than the U.S. has credited them in moderating the Baghdad meeting and holding oil prices down. This attitude, and our reaction to it, will be an important factor in our relations in the immediate future.

On the economic side, Saudi support for the dollar has been one of the most satisfying aspects of our relationship for the past year. However, the failure of the Saudis to hold the oil price increase to below 10% has caused shock and disappointment in the Western world, especially the United States.

The Saudis are frightened to the point of panic about the Soviet threat. The thrust of their foreign policy is based on a deep fear of the Soviets and their allies. The Arab-Israeli problem is important but is secondary. The Saudis are concerned about the perceived threat not only to their oil fields, but to their very survival. Their fear has been heightened by two recent events:

(1) the unrest in Iran, which they consider a part of the overall Soviet offensive which has the oil of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf as its ultimate target;

(2) A report which they have commissioned on the high cost of future Soviet oil production. The conclusion of that report is that the almost prohibitive cost of expanding current Soviet oil production will make cheap Saudi oil such an inviting target that the Soviets may well move at an early date to achieve their takeover or control of Saudi oil.

The internal situation remains stable. The precarious condition of King Khaled's health and his age mean that there could be a change in the ruler at any moment, but we think that, in all likelihood, the transition will be smooth and that Crown Prince Fahd will succeed to the throne and Prince Abdullah will become Crown Prince. However, there will probably be some maneuvering in the Royal Family until the question of who is next in line for Crown Prince after Abdullah is settled.

Further bilateral problems are being caused by periodic resurgence of conservative Muslim sentiment. This upsurge bears only a superficial resemblance to the movement in Iran. Its manifestations include crack-downs on women and foreigners working (without visas) and expressions of concern by some traditionalists over foreign influence and customs. However, it does not pose any threat to the King or his Government, especially since the King is regarded as head of the community of the Muslim faithful in the Kingdom.

Another marked difference between the situation in Saudi Arabia and Iran is the complete absence of any student unrest here. For 1979, I would suggest at least three main objects of U.S. policy to include:

(1) Securing further Saudi—and through them—Arab support for Camp David;

(2) Insuring continued support for the dollar to include:

(a) Rejection of any attempts to change from the dollar as currency for payment of oil;

(b) Retention of Saudi monetary reserves in dollar assets;

(c) Insuring, at a minimum, that there are no further oil price increases regardless of fluctuations of dollar; if possible, forestalling implementation of some of planned phased increases;

(d) Making a strong request to the Saudis to make the decision—and spend the money—to increase their productive capacity so as to meet the minimum projected needs of the Western world in the 1980's.

END SUMMARY.

INTRODUCTION

This is the third informal summary which I have prepared since arriving here in June 1977.⁵ The discipline of preparing it has been helpful to me and hopefully the product is worthwhile. It is a personal rather than an Embassy document, but I acknowledge with appreciation the assistance of key members of the staff who have read and added their comments and suggestions.

Many significant events occurred in 1978 which affected U.S.-Saudi relationships. We will review and attempt to assess the major ones.

THE F-15 SALE

The most important—and most helpful—event in U.S.-Saudi relationships this year was the F-15 sale. In fact, this transaction may well be the most significant single happening in the history of our bilateral relationship. The planes themselves were recognized early on as probably the least important part of the equation, but their symbolic value was beyond calculation. At issue were (1) the credibility of a U.S. pledge given by three Administrations; (2) the justification of Saudi Arabia pro-U.S. policies in the eyes of the remainder of the Arab world; (3) the willingness and ability of the President and the Congress to withstand the pressure of the heretofore unbeatable Israeli lobby in the U.S.

The firm, uncompromising action by the President and Secretary and the subsequent approval by the Senate reassured the Saudis that a promise by the U.S. was reliable and could be depended upon. Saudi Arabia could and did use this happening to prove to her Arab brothers that the U.S. is a worthwhile friend and ally. A failure to approve the

⁵ West sent his first informal summary to Carter in August 1977. See Document 154.

sale would have caused an irretrievable loss of face for the Saudis in the Arab world.

Saudi Arabia had long held the simplistic view that the U.S. Government and its supporting political system were completely controlled by the Israeli lobby in the U.S. President Carter's early statements on the Mideast problems were received with pleasant surprise and polite skepticism. No Arab country, including Saudi Arabia, believed that any U.S. President would take any position in the Mideast contrary to that of Israel. If such an anomaly actually happened, the U.S. Congress would immediately nullify or at least neutralize such action. The F-15 debate, acrimonious and bitter at times, was beneficial. It proved to the Saudis—and the Arab world—that the U.S. could and would take and implement a major foreign policy position contrary to the expressed organized opposition of Israel and its U.S. lobby.

An additional benefit of the F-15 case was the Congressional visits which were undoubtedly a major factor in the Senate vote. The Saudis are traditionally hospitable and when they saw that most U.S. Congressmen and Senators came to Saudi Arabia willing to listen, they responded by making effective presentations of the Saudi view and position. This contributed significantly to a better understanding between our two governments.

I think it a fair assessment to say that had it not been for the favorable action on the F-15 sale, there would have been no Camp David. The President and this Administration established beyond question credentials for leadership, fairness and integrity which will continue to be of lasting value in the tangled problems and politics of the Mideast. I believe Sadat felt he could trust the President and the Saudis felt they could support both Sadat and the U.S. in this endeavor.

A word of caution is in order, however. The Saudis recognize the effort made and the result obtained. They appreciate the political risk entailed for all who favored the sale. However, to assume that as a result of that single transaction we can have the Saudis' support on any given issue at any future given time by simply saying "F-15" would be a serious mistake. While a definite obligation is felt by the Saudis the credit slip is not unlimited or everlasting. The Saudis in fact are beginning to resent an F-15 obligation or having it used publicly as a criticism for them not taking the complete U.S. position, whether it be on the Camp David accords or oil prices. The proper and effective utilization of the political capital still remaining from the F-15 requires not only a setting of priorities but careful advance planning and preparation. A carefully conceived personal request on a given subject from the President to King Khaled would be the most effective vehicle. In that situation, no mention of the F-15 obligation need be made.

*PRESIDENTIAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROBLEMS OF THE
MIDEAST*

The continued involvement by the President and key members of the Administration, especially Secretary Vance, after the F-15 matter was concluded has been a healthy plus for U.S.-Saudi relations in 1978. As we will discuss later, the Arab-Israeli dispute is of secondary importance to the Saudis, their paramount concern being their security from Soviet aggression. However, the Saudis realize that the Arab-Israeli dispute is a continuing threat to their good relations with the U.S. They appreciate therefore the time and effort which the U.S. has made to bring peace to the Mideast.

The President's personal popularity here at year's end was at an all-time high. The personal rapport which King Khaled and Crown Prince Fahd perceive as existing between them and the President is a potent weapon which, if properly used at the right time under the right circumstances, could conceivably cause the Saudis to make a decision or take a course of action unpopular with the other Arab states.

I have thought for sometime that the commitments made to me by Fahd at our meeting of October 24⁶ with respect to the Camp David accords were a result at least in part of his concern that the President would at his luncheon meeting with the King on October 27⁷ get from His Majesty a sweeping, similar commitment of support which, of course, would be binding on Fahd. He wanted to share in the credit for the commitment, and I think he is now embarrassed that he was not completely able to make good on it at the Baghdad Summit.

THE SOVIET THREAT AS PERCEIVED BY THE SAUDIS

Events of 1978 further confirmed the Saudis' fear of the Russians and their satellites. At each meeting with the Saudi leadership, whether it be Khaled, Fahd, Abdullah, Sultan, or Saud, the Russian threat is always mentioned, regardless of the purpose of the meeting or the prepared agenda. Every action or lack of action of the U.S. is weighed by the Saudis on the scales of our recognition of the Soviet threat and our will and capacity to counter it.

In the Saudi mind, the events of the past year in the Yemen and Iran have provided all the additional proof, if any were needed, that the Soviets are after their oil. The assassination of the President of

⁶ See *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978-December 1980, Document 106.

⁷ During a private visit to the United States for medical treatment in October 1978, Khalid met with Carter at the White House on October 27, where they discussed the Middle East peace process. For the substance of the meeting, see *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978-December 1980, Document 108.

North Yemen,⁸ the coup in South Yemen,⁹ the presence of Cubans in the latter, the attempted coup of October 15¹⁰ in the former, have all in the Saudi mind been a part of the ultimate design of the Soviets. In addition to the tangible, visible evidence of Soviet intentions, two intangibles are seen as intensifying the danger from the USSR:

(1) Working in Saudi Arabia are nearly a million Yemenis mostly from North Yemen, virtually all with families in their homeland. The Saudis say that in the event of a Soviet dominated regime in North Yemen, the possibility of Fifth Column activities via the Yemen work force here is very real. The pressure which an oppressive government could place on the families of Yemeni workers here could create tremendous internal problems, in the view of the Saudi leadership; and

(2) The Saudis have in hand a preliminary report on a study of the ultimate cost of oil to the Soviets based on the assumption that they have to develop their Siberian resources to meet their increasing demands for their domestic and satellite needs. The conclusion of this study is that the inefficient Soviet system cannot afford the cost of increased production from these sources without severe strains on its economy. The study, therefore, concludes that the lure of cheap Saudi oil will be a temptation increasingly hard for the Soviets to resist. This study, now being circulated and discussed in the highest Saudi circles, has further increased their fears.

The Saudis, as indicated above, seek constant reassurance of our security commitment to them. However, they are not content to sit back and count on the U.S. to protect them. They are constantly working to eliminate Soviet influence from the neighboring Arab countries. The best example is their conciliatory gesture toward South Yemen at Baghdad even though from past experience President Ali Nasir is known to be a confirmed Marxist. They have offered to resume aid to South Yemen in exchange for a South Yemeni agreement to refrain from provocative actions against its neighbors. The Saudis hope ultimately to woo South Yemen away from the USSR and, through aid, make it possible for the South Yemenis to dispense with Soviet aid and to rid themselves of the Soviet presence.

⁸ See Document 243.

⁹ See Document 244.

¹⁰ In telegram 5137 from Sana, October 15, the Embassy reported: "Elements of the military, military police, and national police apparently attempted a coup d'état in early hours of morning October 15. After early success including seizure of airport, coup failed when armored brigades to north [of the] city confronted dissident units." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780422-0030)

THE INTERNAL SITUATION

As of the end of 1978, the internal situation in Saudi Arabia continues to be remarkably stable. Concern has been expressed in some quarters in the U.S. that the conditions causing unrest in Iran are endemic to Saudi Arabia and that there will be an inevitable spill-over here. In my opinion the differences in the situation here and Iran are so marked that the chances of an eruption here like that across the Gulf are remote.

First and most important, the Saud family is a unifying rather than a divisive force in the country. King Khaled is universally loved and respected. He is a kindly, father figure. He and other key members of the Royal Family maintain a close relationship with the people. Every citizen knows he has the right to take a problem or grievance to the King or a Province Governor's majlis and receive a hearing. There is virtually no criticism of the King—even his pending acquisition of a Boeing 747 airplane fully equipped as a hospital has not been the subject of any critical discussion. The excesses of some members of the Royal Family have been frowned upon and discouraged.

Secondly, the average Saudi is well fixed insofar as creature comforts and opportunities are concerned. There is no student unrest either within or without the Kingdom. There is unlimited free education, schools and medical care. Roads, sewerage and water facilities are being supplied as fast as money and modern technology can perform.

Above all, there are no taxes! Therefore, dissent from the haves-nots is minimal simply because that class is amazingly small. The young Western-educated Saudis who return from abroad find responsible government positions or opportunities in the private sector unequalled in any other society at any time. The rate of return of Saudi students studying abroad is almost 100%. With the continued increase both in production and price of oil, and the continued expansion through exploration of oil reserves, there is no visible end to Saudi prosperity and the accompanying opportunities it offers.

With respect to a coup involving the armed forces, in every branch of the military members of the Royal family hold many of the key positions. They include operational directors, key staff positions, pilots, ground unit commanders as well as administrative positions. The fact that the military forces are completely separated with the National Guard under Prince Abdallah and MODA under Prince Sultan is probably deliberate rather than coincidental. In addition a third military group, the Coast Guard and Frontier Force with armor cars, light tanks, etc., is under the control of Prince Naif, the Minister of Interior. There are always potential Qadhafis in any military force and the threat of a military coup can never be ignored. However the chances of a successful

military coup happening today in Saudi Arabia is in my opinion remote at this time.

While the situation today is stable, there are certain contingencies that could produce an overnight change. The Kingdom is ruled by King Khaled, but in effect governed by Crown Prince Fahd. The combination has worked well and the sudden transition following King Faisal's assassination was remarkably successful with no apparent problems in the ensuing 4-year period.

The precarious condition of the King's health has focused attention on the matter of succession. Fahd is the agreed successor to the King and speculation has centered on the rivalry between Abdallah, presently number three and Sultan who is number four in the present order of succession. Abdallah's stutter is considered by many to be a substantial obstacle to his being King. Sultan is a vivacious, clever person and his control of the Ministry of Defense and Aviation (MODA) gives him a power base unequalled elsewhere in the Kingdom. Likewise he is of the Sudayri seven, a full brother of Fahd and therefore a formidable figure from all aspects. Abdallah on the other hand has the support of the bedouins, plus the anti-Sudayri group. (The surviving sons of the late King Abdul Aziz still number about 30, all of whom are consulted on matters of succession, regardless of whether they are in government. The "Sudayri seven" are a powerful group. In addition to Fahd and Sultan, they include Naif, Minister of Interior, Ahmed, his deputy, Salman, Governor of Riyadh, Turki (recently resigned as Dep MODA) and Abdul Rahman, a businessman who has never held public office.

The rivalry between Abdallah and Sultan could produce a major division in the family, especially if Sultan attempted to become Crown Prince upon the King's death or abdication and Fahd's succession to the throne. The chances of such an open split are in my opinion considerably less than 50–50. In fact, there are already signs that the decision has already been made in the Royal Family that Abdallah will be made Crown Prince with the understanding that, upon his succession to the throne, Sultan would become Crown Prince.

A different picture would be presented if Fahd died or became incapacitated prior to Khaled's death or abdication. Of some immediate concern is the matter of Fahd's health and attitude. He is the consummate politician, polite, suave, persuasive and likeable. There have been reports and criticism of his indecisiveness, his occasional depressions and his neglect of important issues. Undoubtedly, he has not found the process of government an easy one, especially in the last year. He is further handicapped by not having around him any substantial number of trusted advisors upon whom he can rely with complete confidence. All this has made his decision-making process both arduous and thankless. Decisions have generally been made only after a consen-

sus is reached; and if it is not, then the decision is simply postponed. The results have been a general lack of decisiveness and a failure to make the hard but meaningful decisions.

There are other related factors that are cause for some concern with respect to internal stability and tranquility. These include a resurgence of religious fervor with an assertion that foreign influences are eroding traditional values. One of the manifestations of this attitude has been a renewed enforcement of the regulations against women working in certain organizations alongside men, and a denial of work visas and even permits for visas for foreigners.

The conflict between the modernizers and the traditionalists is not new; in fact it is one of the interesting and spirited parts of the history of Saudi Arabia. A number of religious scholars opposed the radio until King Abdul Aziz demonstrated that the Koran could be transmitted by it without demonic distortion. The order that schools be established for women (made by Fahd as Minister of Education and approved by Faisal) caused bloody rioting in the streets. In fact, the brother of the young prince who assassinated Faisal was killed in those riots. The present leadership recognizes that modern ideas must inevitably come to the Kingdom, and they are moving ahead as fast as is necessary to placate the modernizers but at the same time not so fast as to arouse the active opposition of the traditionalists. They make a distinction when comparing the situation here to Iran. They say that the Shah brought Westernization as well as modernization and herein contributed to his problems.

Whether or not this distinction is valid, the current Saudi leadership is not faced with organized religious opposition. While there are religious thinkers and religious teachers in Saudi Arabia, there is no clergy in the sense of Christianity or even of Shi'a Islam, as it is practiced in Iran. By the time of the death of the founder of Wahabism, the religious movement had been thoroughly absorbed in the society. The religious and political realms are fused, and the ruler of Saudi Arabia is simply the leader of the community of the faithful. His decrees and laws must conform to the religious consensus. The important Saudi religious figures do not have the direct political influence of their Iranian counterparts, where a religious leader with a reputation for piety and learning may attract a large number of personal adherents who follow his guidance in matters of politics as well as religion. The religious authorities in Saudi Arabia are in effect judges in the shariah courts dispensing justice according to the Koran as interpreted by the Wahabi scholars. At a lower level, the muezzins and the Friday preachers are paid by the Ministry of Religious Endowments and seldom stray into the political realm.

Another group that may someday present a threat to the Royal Family are the technocrats. The influence of this group is substantial

and is increasing steadily. As of now, they have no political base. There is no indication that any of this group is anything but completely loyal to the Royal family. However, the possibility of a change in that attitude is always there. The technocrats are an interesting group. (I call the group that includes Finance Minister Aba Al-Khail, Planning Minister Nazer and Industry and Electricity Minister Gosaibi the “Young Turk California Mafia”—a term which has been picked up in other circles.)

Aba Al-Khail, the Finance Minister, is the most powerful of the technocrats. In 1978, he won in a power struggle with Oil Minister Zaki Yamani over the future management of ARAMCO. As a result, when the nationalization is complete, the company will be run as a department of the government on a government-approved budget. The importance of this to the U.S. is that it means that any funds for expansion of oil productive capacity must come from the Treasury. The funds required are substantial, i.e., roughly somewhere between one and three billion dollars for each one million barrel increase in productive capacity. Aba Al-Khail does not believe in any increase in productive capacity. In the attaining and exercise of his power, Aba Al-Khail has made enemies, including some in the Royal family. He has said “NO” to many projects including some of the pet projects of Princes. He is sometimes described as the ideal treasurer, a man with long pockets and short arms.

The Royal family must of necessity depend upon the technocrats for the management of the vast resources and the implementation of the ambitious goals of the Kingdom. At this stage there are no apparent conflicts between the two although that possibility cannot be completely discounted at some future time. It is too early in the country’s emergence and development to make even a tentative prediction. However, I would predict that the technocrats will continue to work in close tandem with the Royal Family and eventually there will emerge a constitutional monarchy with the technocrat group being the dominant faction.

A LOOK AHEAD—1979

The year 1979 should see the bilateral relationship between our countries continue to improve. Immediate short-term U.S. objectives here should include securing additional Saudi-Arab support for the Camp David accords; strengthening of economic ties including Saudi support for the dollar; insuring the continuation of an adequate supply of oil to meet present and projected future needs at affordable prices.

These objectives are all interrelated and to a substantial degree mutually supporting, at least from the U.S. viewpoint. Viewed from the Saudi standpoint, in the short term, they present some difficulties, both internally and in the Arab world.

However, the ultimate in Saudi interest in the long term—survival—depends upon their protective relationship with the U.S. This fact is known and appreciated by the ruling group here. Reminders of this dependency are occasionally necessary, but unless handled with sensitivity and diplomacy, cause resentment.

The proposed visit of Crown Prince Fahd to the United States in early 1979 will, in my judgment, accomplish much and set the tone for good relations throughout the year.

John C. West
Ambassador

**177. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the
Department of State¹**

Jidda, January 14, 1979, 1600Z

346. Military addressees handle as Specat Exclusive. USMTM for General Cathey and Colonel Meyer only. Subj: Joint US-Saudi Planning Committee.

Summary: In meeting on January 13 Prince Saud made eloquent plea for U.S. commitment to defense of Saudi Arabia against any direct Soviet threat. He said that formal request from Crown Prince Fahd to President will be forthcoming in next few days for establishment of Saudi-U.S. planning committee to make contingency plans. He urged that plans be formulated right away so that any meaningful decisions with respect to regional security can be made during Crown Prince's forthcoming meeting with President. End summary.

1. I met with Foreign Minister Prince Saud and Intelligence Director Prince Turki for little over an hour on January 13. Meeting was also attended on Saudi side by Deputy Foreign Minister Abd al-Aziz al-Thunayan and General Kabbani and on U.S. side by Deputy-Director USMTM Colonel Meyer, SRF Chief and Pol Counselor.

2. Saud referred to upcoming trip of Crown Prince Fahd to U.S. and said he thought it was important for us to agree in advance on at least some of the topics to be discussed by President and Crown Prince.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2567. Secret; Immediate; Exdis Distribute as Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to CHUSMTM Dhahran, USMTM/DCR Riyadh, USLO Riyadh, and Dhahran.

As far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, the most important issue is regional security. We are faced by a clear-cut Soviet policy to penetrate, destabilize, and spread their influence in the area. They have recently become more open in their activities. This has been evident in Angola, the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, and South Yemen. Their direct involvement in these areas has been encouraged by a lack of U.S. response to their initiatives. This situation should be reviewed and some basic decisions should be made in the meeting between Crown Prince Fahd and the President.

3. Saud said that analysis is not what is needed. There have been numerous discussions of the situation dating from the time of President Johnson. Specialists have come and spoken with SAG. U.S. and Saudi Arabia agree on analysis. The need now is to decide on what has to be done. As far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, the situation is extremely serious. The Kingdom faces a direct, immediate threat. The USSR is involved in South Yemen and it plans to utilize South Yemen to destabilize the surrounding countries, such as Oman and North Yemen. The objective is to penetrate this strategic area. They now even have an important economic reason, and perhaps this explains their more active involvement in the area.

4. Saud went on to say that Saudi Arabia has a responsibility to meet this threat. SAG is trying to assist YAR over the long-run, by aid to help build the country's infrastructure and to promote stability. However, there is also an immediate threat. In fact, there are two kinds of immediate threat, i.e. involvement of South Yemen in YAR and terrorist activity in YAR and elsewhere. There are threats not only inside YAR but in Oman as well. As far as terrorism in Saudi Arabia is concerned, SAG will have to depend on itself to counter that. However, there is a limit to Saudi capabilities when it is facing direct threat from a world power. Saudi Arabia cannot handle this by itself. It needs a commitment from U.S. to meet whatever direct threat there is from the USSR. This would be a preventive measure. If the USSR sees that the U.S. is prepared to meet the threat, then Soviets will not carry through on the threat, but rather will back away.

5. Saud explained that the purpose of the joint US-Saudi committee which Prince Sultan had originally proposed would be to carry the matter from discussion to a joint program. We need a joint program designed to counter the Soviet threat. The committee could develop scenarios and options. If joint policy decisions are needed, they can be made by Fahd and President during the visit. Joint committee could make the agenda for the Crown Prince and President. In SAG view, there are three areas in which help is needed:

- (1) Measures to help YAR protect itself against subversion,
- (2) Steps to provide military equipment needed to meet contingencies,

(3) Contingency planning to define U.S. role in event there is direct involvement by the USSR or any of its allies in Saudi Arabia, YAR, or Oman.

6. I said that we do not disagree with Saudi Arabia about the nature of the threat. I said that I wanted to make two points. First, we do not have formal approval from Washington to set up a committee to prepare an agenda for the Crown Prince's talks with the President. We would of course be happy to talk on an informal basis about issues that may come up in the talks. Second, under our system of government, the President would have to have congressional approval for any commitment that the U.S. might make to Saudi Arabia. The Saudi leadership has been very helpful in receiving congressional visits and has certainly been able to get across to many members of Congress the Saudi viewpoint on the threat faced by Saudi Arabia. This would of course make it somewhat easier for the President to get approval for any commitment to Saudi Arabia he found it necessary to recommend. The President himself understands Saudi concerns and has shown that understanding in his personal intervention to develop a better timetable for delivery of F-5 aircraft to YAR.² That understanding was also evident in his decision to authorize the forthcoming visit of the F-15's to Saudi Arabia.³

7. Saud said he understood both my points. However, he had hoped that there was some urgency on the part of the U.S. to tackle the regional security problem in the Arabian Peninsula. He said he thought it would be useful for a joint committee to devise possible scenarios and the range of U.S. responses to these scenarios. It would be useful for us to know the areas of responsibilities of each side. We need specifics, rather than generalities.

8. Returning to the areas where assistance is needed, Saud said that one way we might help YAR protect itself against subversion would be to improve its intelligence collection capabilities. He said that Saudi Arabia could also use help in this field. As for military equipment needed to meet contingencies, Saud said that Saudi Arabia, and the other countries on the Peninsula as well, wanted to share in their own defense. It would be a shame not to give them what they need. Failure to do so would only hasten the day when the U.S. would have to send troops.

9. Prince Saud went on to say that SAG would be happy to submit formal request for the establishment of a committee such as he

² See Documents 257 and 258.

³ A squadron of F-15s visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for a brief time beginning on January 15. (Telegram 240 from Jidda, January 10; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790013-0277)

described. In fact, he would prepare the request as part of an oral reply of Crown Prince to the oral message sent by the President through me to the Crown Prince in November.⁴ That reply will be delivered to the Embassy in a few days time. I said I would forward the Crown Prince's message as soon as it was received.⁵

10. Begin comment: Prince Saud's presentation today represents a qualitative change in our dialogue with the Saudis and involves requests for cooperation unlike any we have heard before. Beginning in the fall of 1977, we heard pleas for assistance in countering the Soviet threat in the Horn of Africa on the grounds that the Soviet presence there represented a real threat to Saudi Arabia. In July 1978, the plea became even more urgent but it concerned YAR, which Sultan characterized as Saudi Arabia's first line of defense.⁶ The plea we heard from Saud today was an earnest plea for a commitment to the defense of Saudi Arabia itself.

11. The atmosphere here has changed. Whereas SAG was reluctant 18 months ago to talk about U.S. defense of Saudi Arabia or even of the Saudi oil fields, we find SAG welcoming not just a show of force in the region as suggested by Prince Sultan six months ago, but a visit by a squadron of F-15's in Saudi Arabia itself. We have seen hints over the past several months that SAG would eventually come to ask for a U.S. commitment to its defense, and we should therefore not be surprised that it has finally come. Saud was at his eloquent best. His presentation was solemn and earnest and reflected the deep concern that the Saudi leadership feels in the face of events in Iran and in the Yemens.

12. In our view, the Saudi request for a defense commitment is even more than what it says. It is a test. Refusal to engage in contingency planning will be interpreted as U.S. impotence or disinterest in Saudi Arabia. They will wonder if we are prepared to sacrifice them on the altar of detente. They may even wonder if we are prepared to drop them as easily as we did the Republic of China.⁷ They hope, however,

⁴ Not further identified. Carter sent a message to Fahd on the Egyptian-Israeli peace process, which was transmitted in telegram 279224 to Jidda, November 2, 1978. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840153–2316) Carter's message was delivered by the Embassy to Second Prime Minister Prince Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz on November 4, 1978. (Telegram 7860 from Jidda, November 4, 1978; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850040–2678)

⁵ West transmitted the formal request in telegram 890 from Jidda, January 31; see Document 182.

⁶ See Document 248.

⁷ Reference is to the Carter administration's normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China and the severance of diplomatic relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan.

that their oil makes them more important to us and gives them a better claim on our attention. At the same time, they will scrutinize any contingency planning we do with them to see if they can discern the depth of our actual commitment. Any contingency planning that looks inadequate or unresponsive will be interpreted either as failure in our strength of purpose or as sign that we have been hypnotized by the siren call of Mexican oil.

13. I feel sure that Prince Saud will press for an answer ASAP, although we can of course await the formal request from Fahd. I attempted to forestall the request by telling him that we could wait until we received some acknowledgement of our first report concerning the committee. Saud said he would prefer to get a formal request to us. End comment.⁸

West

⁸ In telegram 17130 to Jidda, January 22, the Department responded to this telegram, posing questions and outlining proposals on a number of issues pertaining to Saud's request. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2439)

178. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, January 16, 1979, 1410Z

11799. For Ambassador West. Subject: Joint US-Saudi Planning Committee. Ref: Jidda 0346.²

(S) Entire text.

1. The major issues raised in reftel will obviously have to be the subject of high-level discussion here. In the meantime, however, we think you should give Prince Saud an indication that this message has been received and is being given serious consideration. Obviously, the

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2437. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Saunders; cleared by Quandt and Richard Castrodale (S/S-O) and in draft by Secretary Brown; approved by Newsom. Sent for information Immediate to the White House.

² See Document 177.

subjects raised will be on the agenda both for Secretary Brown's visit to Saudi Arabia³ and Prince Fahd's visit to Washington.

2. Please tell Prince Saud, therefore, that Washington welcomes in principle the prospect of closer consultation on those matters. You should also say that Secretary Brown will be prepared to discuss these regional security issues during his February visit to Saudi Arabia, and that we expect them to be high on the agenda for the conversation between President Carter and Crown Prince Fahd.

Vance

³ Brown visited Saudi Arabia February 10–12 as part of a larger 10-day tour of the Middle East. See Documents 15–17, 19, 20, and 184–186.

179. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, January 23, 1979, 0500Z

589. Subj: Saudi Arabia and Regional Security. Ref: Jidda 346 (Notal).²

1. S-entire contents.

2. Summary: Recent events in Iran and in the Yemen are causing the Saudis to reexamine their position in the region and the status of their relationships with the United States and the USSR. They prefer to maintain as close relations as possible with the United States and they have asked for a defense commitment and contingency planning. This will be a time of serious probing and testing of United States intentions by the Saudis. As unpleasant as the notion of an accommodation with the USSR is to the Saudis, we do not believe they regard it as unthinkable. If they do not like the results of their probing and testing, they may reluctantly come to the conclusion that they have

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790034–1176. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to Dhahran, USLO Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Doha, Khartoum, Kuwait, Manama, Muscat, Moscow, London, Paris, Tel Aviv, USINT Baghdad, Department of Defense, and Sana.

² See Document 177.

no choice but to come to terms with realities as they see them. End summary.

3. We have read the interesting exchange of telegrams from Muscat, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, and Baghdad on Gulf security.³ We have also reflected further on our meeting with Foreign Minister Prince Saud on Jan 13.⁴ We would like to offer the following thoughts on current Saudi thinking about the Soviet threat and regional security.

4. The Saudis are more convinced than ever that the Soviets are embarked on a policy of encirclement to gain control of the Arabian Peninsula and its oil resources. They firmly believe the study that shows that the USSR will be oil short in the mid-1980's. They also accept the results of a recent study they commissioned that shows that the cost of development of oil resources in Siberia over the coming decade will be astronomical, making the cost of production there many times the cost of production in the Peninsula and the Gulf. The events in Afghanistan, the Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, and stepped-up Soviet activity in South Yemen only serve to confirm their hypothesis about Soviet intentions. Some Saudi leaders even believe that the Soviets are involved in Iran. All of them believe that, involved or not, the Soviets will find their ultimate seizure of Saudi oil much easier as a result of the events there.

5. Events in Iran have suddenly and drastically altered the power arrangement in the Gulf.⁵ It is true of course that Iran will not be absent permanently or even for long as an important actor in the Gulf arena. The country is too big, too populous, and potentially too powerful to be excluded from Gulf affairs. Occupying as it does the whole northern shore, it has too many interests in the Gulf to ignore it completely. However, while Iran is distracted and weakened by internal crisis, it probably cannot and will not serve as a regulating force in the Gulf. Like Oman and the other Arab states in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia realizes that the two-pillar arrangement (Iran and Saudi Arabia) has either collapsed or is temporarily inoperative, and they know that temporary things can sometimes last a long time.

6. If Iran's power in the Gulf has declined, its influence in the larger region has diminished even further. Iran had been the principal supporter of Saudi Arabia's anti-radical policy in the Horn of Africa

³ Reference is to telegram 80 from Muscat, January 18; telegram 99 from Kuwait, January 7; telegram 56 from Abu Dhabi, January 8; telegram 70 from Abu Dhabi, January 9; and telegram 93 from Baghdad, January 15. These telegrams are in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790027-0961, D790009-0338, D790009-0805, D790010-1129, and D790022-0795, respectively.

⁴ See Document 177.

⁵ The Shah left Iran on January 16, beginning what became a permanent exile.

and it was instrumental in putting an end to the recent troubles in Oman.⁶ Now Iran is not able to play that role and there is even a question about its ability to do so in the future. The threat of Soviet encirclement has therefore become even more immediate. The USSR and its allies in South Yemen are in a position to bring about chaos in North Yemen and to destabilize Oman. Both YAR and Oman appear to have internal situations that provide such opportunities. The Saudis fear that if hostile regimes were established in YAR and Oman they would seek with Soviet encouragement to promote trouble in Saudi Arabia itself or even to provoke hostilities with the Saudis. The Saudi leadership is actively seeking a way to deal with this situation.

7. For some weeks now, diplomatic circles in Jidda have been buzzing with a story of a conflict in the royal family. The story appears to have originated for the most part from the absence of the Crown Prince from a number of important functions immediately after the return of the King to Saudi Arabia in November and from reports that Foreign Minister Prince Saud refused to return early from vacation in December when summoned by the Crown Prince. Some diplomats have speculated that the conflict involves foreign policy and that some of the royal family believe that Saudi Arabia should come to terms with the Soviets, move to a more non-aligned position, and even establish relations with the USSR. We see no hard evidence for a split in the family over Saudi policy toward the USSR, and most thoughtful and knowledgeable diplomats in Jidda say that this speculation has gone far beyond where the evidence warrants. All the diplomats have trouble in identifying on which side of the Soviet issue the various members of the family stand.

8. Split in the family or not, we think there has been intense discussion among the chief foreign policy decision-makers over the past 16 months concerning Saudi Arabia's position in the region and its relationship to the United States and the USSR. The inability in 1977 and 1978 to find common ground with the United States on the Horn of Africa and the prospect late in 1977 and early in 1978 that the United States would not go through with the F-15 sale caused Saudi Arabia to wonder whether the United States had the interest, will, and capability to work with Saudi Arabia to oppose the spread of Soviet influence and to promote stability in the region. Congressional approval of the F-15 sale reassured the Saudi leadership, but the agony with which the military support program has evolved over the last half of 1978 has created new nagging doubts. Hints of the nature of the discussion among the chief decision-makers may be seen in talks we have had

⁶ See Documents 12 and 13.

with Min Def Prince Sultan, Foreign Minister Prince Saud, and Crown Prince Fahd, who have argued frequently over the past year that security of the Arabian Peninsula is basic to the interests of the United States and who have attempted to persuade us to cooperate with Saudi Arabia in promoting that security. Prince Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz commander of the National Guard, periodically brings up with us the possibility that the day may come when Saudi Arabia will have to move away from the United States but he then dismisses the thought as unthinkable.

9. Our British colleagues in Jidda have concluded that the events in Iran will cause the Saudis to move closer and to strengthen their ties with the United States and that they will not try to reinsure with the Soviets. We agree that they will try to move closer to the United States but after careful reflection on Prince Abdallah's periodic remarks and on our conversation with Prince Saud on Jan 13 we do not think that the proposal for a joint US-Saudi committee for contingency planning has come out of the blue but that it was the culmination of a long process of development. Prince Saud's presentation was too carefully prepared and rehearsed, and he was too ready for the contingency of offering to submit a formal request to the President for the establishment of the joint committee when we told him we had not been authorized to establish it. We think the Saudis regard the contingency planning as an opportunity to test and probe the United States intentions so that SAG will have a better basis on which to review and structure its own foreign policy over the next several years.

10. Heretofore, Saudi Arabia has not wanted a direct U.S. commitment to its defense because it would tarnish its credentials with the other Arabs. Only last year, Saudi leaders were endorsing statements of other Gulf states that they would defend the Gulf themselves, fully believing that the United States would respond anyway when the chips were down. They now know they cannot intervene militarily elsewhere, nor can they adequately defend their own territory. In addition, they are probably not sure of the United States any longer. They still have the nagging fears about the strength of United States purpose which have built up over the past year. They are painfully aware that the United States could not do anything to save the Shah. In addition, having seen the ease with which the United States dropped its commitment to the Republic of China, they may fear that the United States will decide in the interest of detente to rely on a dubious Soviet commitment to good behavior on the Arabian Peninsula. They may even wonder if the United States is not beginning to shift its attention to Mexico as the source of its energy needs and may therefore decide it can afford to write Saudi Arabia off. In these circumstances, the Saudi leadership may wonder if it can still count on the United States coming

to the rescue when the crunch comes. With Iran out of the picture, they may fear that the crunch will not be too far off and may have decided that they had better find out now how strong the United States card is.

11. We know that accommodation with the USSR is an unpleasant notion to the Saudi leadership, but we doubt that it is as completely unthinkable as Prince Abdallah says. We know that the Soviets have had contacts with the Saudis on the subject, mostly through third parties. We suspect that Iraq has pressed the idea with the Saudis as a means of enhancing their credentials with the other Arabs and providing themselves with more maneuverability in the international arena. If the Saudis are not satisfied with the results of their testing and probing of United States intentions, they may well decide that they had better come to terms with realities as they see them and that it might be best to move toward a more nonaligned position. This may not necessarily mean establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR but it could mean a cooling of relations with the United States and an acceptance of the Soviet presence in South Yemen and the Horn of Africa. It could also mean trade ties with the USSR and an agreement to supply some of their energy needs, probably at the expense of the West or Japan. One of the characteristics of the Saudi leaders is to have someone of lesser rank convey messages that the top leader finds embarrassing or unpleasant. Prince Abdallah may have been chosen to convey the unthinkable notion that an accommodation with the USSR may become necessary. In that way, the King and the Crown Prince do not have to be identified with it.

12. In these circumstances, three upcoming events may well be more important than they would seem at first glance: (a) the proposed formation of the joint United States-Saudi contingency planning committee; (b) the visit next month of SecDef Brown; and (c) the proposed Fahd visit to the United States in March.

13. Activists in the SAG have long privately deplored the lack of an effective decision-making process. Consideration has been given to the formation of the Saudi equivalent to our National Security Council. Recent events including the exaggerated report of PDRY incursion into YAR have emphasized concerns about this shortcoming in the Saudi system. The manner of formation and the makeup on the Saudi side of the proposed committee may well be significant. The committee was suggested by Sultan and stated by him to have Fahd's blessing (Riyadh 0039).⁷ The Saudi team is composed of the third generation of the SAG

⁷ In telegram 39 from Riyadh, January 8, the Liaison Office reported on a meeting among West, Sultan, and Saud, during which Sultan raised the idea of establishing a joint committee on security issues. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790024–0531)

royal family: two of Faisal's sons, his son-in-law, General Humaid, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces. These individuals are from the new generation and are U.S. educated. They probably represent the strongest pro-American sentiment in the SAG. If there has in fact been serious internal discussion of the Soviet option, they were probably among the most articulate opponents, since they see no future for royalists in a 21st century Marxist state. They may well be the point group for probing United States intentions, and the joint U.S.-Saudi committee may be the instrument they have chosen. Their uncles may have said to them, "show us how much we can depend on the United States. The time is growing short. We need to know."

14. The first test will come with the United States reaction to Saudi proposals in the committee. The Saudis clearly want specifics, such as joint contingency plans for possible scenarios affecting SAG security. The next test will probably be attempted by the Saudis during the Brown visit. The Saudis will want to know how he will react to joint contingency planning. The ultimate test will come in the Carter-Fahd meeting. Can the President give the Crown Prince the specific assurances which SAG needs to quiet the cynics and doubters of USG?

15. We would like to comment on the conclusion of the Middle East regional conference of Egyptian Ambassadors that the events in Iran will cause Saudi Arabia to move closer to Egypt and to depend on the Egyptians for their defense needs. We believe that Saudi-Egyptian relations will improve anyway as they learn to talk to each other again about the Middle East peace process. Since Egypt is a moderate state, Saudi Arabia will no doubt seek to consult closely with Egypt, as it has in the past, on the Soviet threat in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean area. We think, however, that Saudi Arabia would be very reluctant to see Egyptian troops anywhere in the Peninsula, and we suspect that it would have to be in the direst of circumstances before it would accept Egyptian or any other Arab troops on its own soil. As Deputy Foreign Minister Abd al-Rahman Mansouri told DOD Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Murray on August 1, 1978, Saudi Arabia considers itself the paramount power on the Peninsula.⁸ When it cannot live up to the requirements of that role, it would probably prefer to rely on the United States for assistance, rather than Egypt.

16. If, for whatever reason, Iranian troops are withdrawn from Oman, Saudi Arabia would want to see them replaced by a suitable Islamic state, preferably from a non-Arab state like Pakistan. As for United States assistance to Oman, Saudi Arabia would welcome it if

⁸ See footnote 2, Document 249.

it did not dilute U.S. interest in Saudi Arabia itself. However, it would not want a U.S. combat role unless there was no other alternative. If the U.S. were agreeable to a U.S. military assistance program, the Saudis would probably prefer that it resemble the relationship it approves for YAR, with suitable modifications. SAG would want to be associated with it and appear to be the senior partner.

17. We may well be reading out of a cloudy crystal ball, but we are reporting what the signs seem to say to us at this time.

West

180. Summary of Conclusions of a Presidential Review Committee Meeting¹

Washington, January 23, 1979, 10:30 a.m.–12:05 p.m.

SUBJECT

Summary of Conclusions: PRC Meeting on Southwest Asia and Saudi Arabia

PARTICIPANTS

State

Warren Christopher (Chairman),
Deputy Secretary
David Newsom, Under Secretary
for Political Affairs
Harold Saunders, Assistant
Secretary for Near Eastern and
South Asian Affairs

Treasury

Secretary Blumenthal
Anthony Solomon, Under
Secretary for Monetary Affairs
Fred Bergsten, Assistant Secretary
for International Affairs

Commerce

Stanley Marcuss, Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Trade
Regulations

Energy

Harry Bergold, Assistant Secretary
for International Affairs

Joint Chiefs of Staff

General David C. Jones
Lt. General William Smith

Central Intelligence Agency

Dr. Robert Bowie, Deputy Director
for National Foreign
Assessment

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 72, PRC 088, 1/23/79, Saudi Arabia and Southwest Asia. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Brzezinski sent the Summary of Conclusions to Carter under a January 29 memorandum, requesting that he approve it. Carter initialed the memorandum. (Ibid.)

Defense

Secretary Brown
 Charles Duncan, Deputy Secretary
 David McGiffert, Assistant
 Secretary for International
 Security

Office of Management and Budget

Dr. John White, Deputy Director
 Ed Sanders, Associate Director for
 International Affairs

Robert Ames, NIO for Near East
 and South Asia

White House

Dr. Brzezinski

National Security Council

Thomas Thornton
 William Quandt
 Rutherford Poats

The PRC met to discuss the broad question of strategy in Southwest Asia (the region from Yemen to Bangladesh) as well as specific issues relating to Saudi Arabia. (S)

1. *Regional Strategy.* There was a broad consensus on the existence of domestic instability in many parts of this region that either has external effects or could be exploited by outside forces. While there are many interrelationships, differences within the region preclude a single strategy except in the broadest terms. The Indian subcontinent, Iran and the Arabian peninsula do, however, comprise logical sub-regions. The group recognized that there was no clear correlation between amounts of resources expended and positive results; the region is sufficiently important, however, that we should make a major effort to get whatever resources we believe are necessary, and we should develop greater flexibility in applying resources such as security supporting assistance. Several members commented on the need for better analysis of the economic problems of the area and how they relate to political and security factors. The State Department also offered to circulate a list of current US commitments to the states of the region. (S)

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

3. *Arabian Peninsula.* While our strategy for South Asia looks to a prominent Indian role, there is no similar strong point in the Western part of the region where the situation is potentially more explosive. There is greater concern about US capabilities and commitment and hence greater need for an active US role of reassurance. We need to communicate to the Arabs that our interests in the area are vital and we will defend them. This could become more than an academic exercise if the Saudis feel that they must eliminate the threat from the South Yemen regime. It was widely agreed that the US is now perceived by many in the area as uncertain of its purposes and failing to be responsive to the needs and concerns of the area. (S)

4. *Saudi Arabia.* Treasury presented an analysis of what we want from the Saudis and the leverage we have over Saudi decisions. Three related Saudi oil/economic decisions are of great importance to us: continuation of present high-levels of production to make up for the shortfall in Iranian output and to reduce upward pressure

on prices; moderation on future oil prices; investment now to expand productive capacity in the 1980s to 12.5 million bpd and perhaps as much as 14–16 bpd. The decision to expand production is the most essential and will require investments in excess of \$5 billion just to get to 12.5 mbpd. Our primary ability to influence these Saudi decisions lies not in the economic area, where our choices are limited, but primarily in the political/security area. We must recognize that the Saudis see the Arab-Israeli conflict in security terms as well. It is this relationship between Saudi economic decisions and what we can do in the security area that we should focus on in preparation for Secretary Brown's trip and for Fahd's visit to Washington. We should pay particular attention to the risks of developing a tight linkage between these two sets of issues. (S)

Congressional support for Saudi Arabia is slipping, largely because of Saudi actions at Baghdad and in OPEC.² This may complicate our ability to meet Saudi security concerns. The Saudis are particularly anxious now because of events in Iran, the apparent course of the Egypt-Israel negotiations toward a separate agreement, and the strengthening of Arab radical forces. Coupled with Saudi weakness from the standpoint of internal and external security, these external threats have made the Saudis more reliant upon our support and more fearful that it will not be forthcoming. (S)

5. *Capabilities for Action.* We need to look at our economic and military resources for meeting the needs of some of the countries in the region. A suggestion was made that we might try to shorten lead times for delivering certain types of military equipment by advance purchasing. This would help to overcome the belief that we are unable to respond quickly to meet the requests of our friends. (S)

² See footnotes 2 and 3, Document 175.

181. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RP M 79-10053

Washington, January 26, 1979

THE IMPACT OF IRAN ON SAUDI ARABIA: SECURITY CONCERNS AND INTERNAL REACTION [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The collapse of the Shah's position in Iran and the recent surge in South Yemeni attempts to subvert North Yemen are accelerating a Saudi Arabian re-examination of its regional security position, and the status of its relations with both the US and the USSR. The Saudis' requests for a US defense commitment [less than 1 line not declassified] to plan security contingencies is designed to test US intentions and may well mark a watershed in US-Saudi relations.

If the Saudis consider the US response to their security concerns inadequate, they probably will move toward a more non-aligned political posture, and show less willingness to accommodate US interests in the energy field or to support US-sponsored Middle East peace efforts. The heretofore unthinkable—reaching some kind of accommodation with the USSR—also appears to be a possibility. The events in Iran already appear to be strengthening the position of conservatives within Saudi Arabia—who ironically are among the most critical of US policies—and this could contribute to strains in US-Saudi ties regardless of how the US reacts to Saudi security concerns. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

The Soviet Threat and Regional Security [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Saudi reaction to Iranian developments is heavily colored by the conviction that the USSR is successfully engaged in a strategic effort to encircle Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf oilfields, and that the US, ignoring two years of Saudi warnings, does not appreciate the urgency of the situation or, alternatively, lacks the will to defend its interests in the region. The Saudis believe there are both strategic and economic motivations behind the Soviet drive: to be in a position to threaten Western access to Persian Gulf oil, and to ensure their own future access to Gulf oil. The Saudis, particularly Oil Minister Yamani,

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Office of Research and Analysis for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Program Files for Soviet Middle East materials 1960-1982, Lot 90D113, Box 6, Finished Intelligence. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared in the Middle East Division of the Office of Political and Regional Analysis of the National Foreign Assessment Center.

firmly believe that the USSR will be short of oil in the mid-1980s. The US Embassy in Jidda reports that the Saudis also accept the results of a study they commissioned that indicates the cost of development of oil resources in Siberia over the coming decade will be astronomical, making it cheaper for the Soviets to buy Saudi oil than to develop their own.² [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Over the past two years, the Saudis have cited Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, the coup in Afghanistan, and increased Soviet activity in South Yemen as evidence of Soviet intentions. While most Saudi leaders do not believe the Soviets were involved in the Shah's downfall, they all believe events in Iran have drastically altered power arrangements in the region and make the threat of Soviet encirclement even more immediate. The Saudis never cared for the Shah's self-proclaimed role as policeman of the Gulf, but they recognize that he had been a force for stability and anti-radicalism in the region. The Shah was the principal supporter of Saudi Arabia's anti-Soviet policy in the Horn of Africa and his willingness to commit thousands of troops to Oman in the early 1970s was crucial to ending a Marxist guerrilla war on the Arabian Peninsula. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The Saudis now worry that the USSR, through South Yemen, already is in a position to bring about chaos in North Yemen and to destabilize Oman. They will become more alarmed as the remaining Iranian troops are withdrawn from Oman. The Saudis fear that if hostile regimes were established in North Yemen or Oman, the USSR would encourage them to promote trouble within Saudi Arabia itself. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The US Connection: How Firm an Ally? [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Intense discussions among Saudi foreign policy decision-makers over Saudi Arabia's position in the region and its relationship to the US and the USSR have been under way for over a year. In talks with US officials, the top Saudi leadership—Crown Prince Fahd, Defense Minister Prince Sultan, National Guard Commander Prince Abdallah, Foreign Minister Prince Saud, and intelligence chief Prince Turki—has emphasized the US interest in the security of the Arabian Peninsula and has tried to promote closer US-Saudi cooperation to that end. However, the failure of the US to provide military support last year to the Somalis during the Ogaden war and US hesitation to go through with the F-15 jet sale caused Saudi leaders to question US will and

² See Document 179.

capability to oppose the spread of Soviet influence and to promote stability in the region. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Several recent developments have further shaken Saudi confidence in the US. The Saudis do not specify what they think the US should or could have done to save the Shah, but *[less than 1 line not declassified]* top Saudi leadership is "bitterly unhappy" over what it sees as a very inadequate US response to the Iranian crisis. The Saudis now are deeply worried about how the US would react to a crisis of similar proportions in Saudi Arabia. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

In addition, the US Embassy in Jidda reports that the Saudis, reacting to the change in US policy toward the Republic of China on Taiwan, wonder if the US will rely similarly on vague Soviet promises of good behavior in the Persian Gulf region instead of confronting the "Soviet challenge." The embassy also speculates that some Saudis may wonder if the US sees Mexico as an alternate source of energy, reducing the need for a close relationship with Saudi Arabia. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

The Saudis have acknowledged to US officials that they cannot defend themselves, North Yemen, or Oman. Traditionally they have assumed the US would support them in a crisis. They now believe the threat is looming, and want to test that assumption before it is too late. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Request for Defense Commitment *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Foreign Minister Prince Saud and intelligence chief Prince Turki met with the US Ambassador *[less than 1 line not declassified]* in Jidda in mid-January.³ Saud asked for specific US commitments to defend Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, and Oman from any threat from the USSR or its ally, South Yemen. *[3 lines not declassified]* that the Saudi requests are a carefully thought out effort to test US strategic intentions in the region, and that the US response will critically influence the direction of Saudi foreign policy for the next several years. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

[2 paragraphs (18 lines) not declassified]

Saudi Alternatives: Non-alignment or Accommodation with the USSR?
[classification and handling restriction not declassified]

If the Saudis are not satisfied with the results of their testing and probing of US intentions—and their expectations are high—they may

³ See Document 177.

well decide they must move away from close identification with the US, towards a more non-aligned position. We have already seen Saudi Arabia distance itself from Egypt and the US on the Middle East peace process, and align itself more closely with the majority of Arab states who argue that the Camp David accords do not go far enough. They may move even closer to the rejectionist position. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

As unpalatable as it would be to the Saudis, they might also decide they had to reach an accommodation with the USSR. [*4 lines not declassified*] The US Embassy reports that Iraq—with whom the Saudis have recently improved their relations—may have pressed the Soviet option with the Saudis. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The Saudis obviously have no illusions about Soviet intentions. The Saudis would deal with the Soviets only because they despaired of US ability or willingness to stop the Soviet encirclement of the Kingdom, and as a way to try to buy time to slow the Soviet advance. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

A Saudi accommodation with the Soviets would not necessarily mean the establishment of diplomatic relations. It would probably mean a cooling of relations with the US and Saudi acquiescence to the Soviet presence in South Yemen and the Horn of Africa. It could mean trade ties and perhaps an agreement to supply some oil, probably at the expense of supplies to the US, Western Europe, or Japan. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Internal Reaction to Iran [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The Iranian revolution is also beginning to have some impact on Saudi policies closer to home. [*5 lines not declassified*] the Saudi Government would view an Iranian Government headed by Ayatollah Khomeini with “extreme misgivings.” [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Of more immediate concern to Saudi security authorities, however, is the large Shia minority in Saudi Arabia’s Eastern Province of al-Hassa. Saudi Arabia’s Shias traditionally have been discriminated against and largely ignored by the Sunni central government. Large numbers of Shias have found work in the oilfields, and are employed by ARAMCO; they participated in labor strikes and unrest which periodically erupted among Saudi oil workers in the 1950s and early 1960s. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Because of the years of discrimination and neglect, Saudi security authorities admit they know very little about the political thinking of the Shia minority or how Iranian developments may be affecting that population. They have discovered that the large numbers of Shias

employed by ARAMCO are widely dispersed throughout the corporation and have access to all sensitive oil installations. The security authorities have reviewed security at the oil installations, concluded it is very weak, and not subject to quick improvement. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Two other recent incidents in Saudi Arabia appear related to Iranian developments. They take on added significance because they were non-official and probably caused the government embarrassment. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

On 19 January, the *imam* or religious preacher, at one of Riyadh's largest mosques delivered a strong public attack on the Shah of Iran, and on Egyptian President Sadat and Moroccan King Hassan for their support of the Shah. The *imam* accused the Shah of being an evil, corrupt, and base ruler who deserved punishment for having led Iran away from Islam under the guise of modernization. He described Sadat and Hassan as equally or more corrupt than the Shah, and called on the Egyptian and Moroccan people to overthrow them. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

This is the first incident in memory in which a Saudi mosque has been used for a violent and public attack on Muslim leaders, particularly monarchs. Saudi authorities are concerned that the incident not set a precedent. They are acutely aware that the charge of corruption can be leveled at many members of the Saudi royal family. Corruption among some members of the royal family, including senior princes, is widely known and resented within Saudi Arabia. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

The *imam's* sermon will spur renewed efforts by the royal family to improve its image. Ex-Deputy Defense Minister Prince Turki ibn Abd al-Aziz (not to be confused with the younger Prince Turki, chief of intelligence), was forced to resign last fall because of blatant corruption in military purchases, some from major US corporations, and because of a marital scandal. *[6 lines not declassified]*

The second unusual incident was an unprecedented attack on US foreign policy in the Middle East—particularly the Camp David accords—and on President Carter personally by the editor-in-chief of a leading Saudi Arabic-language newspaper. Clearly labeled as the editor's personal views, the editorial on 20 January was very harsh by Saudi standards, which usually avoid direct attacks on leaders of friendly countries. It is also noteworthy because the editor, one of the more reflective and liberal-minded Saudi journalists, had editorially urged that the Camp David accords be given a chance last fall when other Saudi papers were attacking them. In the past, the editor has gotten into trouble with Saudi government officials for his public stands, but there appears to have been no official reaction this time. *[classification not declassified]*

The mosque and newspaper incidents are significant because they provide a rare glimpse of “public opinion” in Saudi Arabia when it differs sharply from official Saudi positions. Saudi leaders are not immune from such pressures; many, particularly the more conservative, probably agree with sentiments expressed in both cases. If the newspaper editor is not censured for his editorial, it may indicate he has sympathetic protectors among powerful members of the royal family. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Outlook: The Conservative Tide and Implications for US Goals
[*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The internal incidents support our impression that the conservative tide is running strong in Saudi Arabia and will be strengthened by developments in Iran, with serious implications for US interests. For political and economic reasons, we believe Saudi Arabia increasingly sees its self-interests—or at least the way to pursue common interests—as diverging from the US, especially on the issues of high rates of oil production, high levels of spending on development to recycle petrodollars, and US-sponsored Middle East peace efforts. Saudi assertions of its self-interest have already begun, but will be accelerated if the Saudis believe the US is not responsive to their overriding concern—regional security. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Politically, senior conservative princes have been among the most critical of US peace efforts and of President Sadat’s unilateral negotiations with Israel; at least one such prince advocated an immediate cutoff of all Saudi economic aid to Egypt when Sadat signed the Camp David accords. Ironical as it may appear to the US, two senior conservative princes have advocated establishing some level of relations with the USSR. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

For different reasons, the young, Westernized technocrats who play an increasingly influential role on Saudi planning, financial, monetary, and oil policy are also very critical of US policy when it clashes with their view of Saudi interests. These technocrats—most of whom were educated in the US or UK—view Saudi interests pragmatically and often have the advanced financial or technical training necessary to back their arguments with senior princes. While these technocrats might favor a more liberal internal social policy than their elders, they often are very conservative on issues such as oil production and the pace of development.

Despite the current statements by Saudi leaders of willingness to fill the shortfall in oil production caused by the turmoil in Iran, we believe current policy remains that Saudi Arabia should produce no more than 8.5 million barrels/day on an *annual* basis, that it should

resist US pressure to spend billions of dollars to increase future productive capacity, and that the development plans should be slowed considerably.

182. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, January 31, 1979, 1340Z

890. Subject: Letter From King Khalid to President Carter.

1. (C-entire contents).

2. Embassy received on January 31 following letter from King Khalid to President Carter. Informal Embassy translation follows.

3. Begin text: With my best regards. I was informed by the Ambassador of the United States, Mr. John West, of Your Excellency's message concerning an invitation to HRH Crown Prince Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz to visit the United States and to meet Your Excellency in order to exchange views regarding the developments which are taking place in the Middle East region in particular and other matters which are of importance to both countries in general.

4. I have the pleasure to inform Your Excellency that I welcome this gracious step. It symbolizes the proper relations existing between our countries—relations which require cooperation and mutual understanding in all problems and matters. It is especially important to seek means of supporting our relations and means of responding to any development which may affect in one way or another the existing situation in the Middle East.

5. Excellency there is no doubt that Your Excellency is fully aware of the importance of the events which are taking place in the Middle East region and in other regions of the world. If these events intensify they will threaten not only our vital interests but world peace and security. Therefore from our viewpoint the matter requires a precise evaluation of the situation and a decisive, quick response to the challenges and dangers around us in order first to isolate these dangers and then to eliminate them.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790047-0249. Confidential; Immediate; Exdis.

6. Your Excellency may agree with my view that the matter requires formation of a high-level committee of experts and specialists from both sides to study the security situation in the region and to submit the necessary recommendations. These recommendations, in the form of a well-defined working program, should be submitted to Your Excellency before your meeting with HRH Crown Prince Fahd so that these recommendations will enable you to get the full benefit from meetings with His Highness. In this manner, your meetings will achieve the desired results, benefit our two friendly countries, and achieve our aim of strengthening the fruitful cooperation between our two governments.

7. May I extend to you my best wishes for a successful career and for the continuation of good health, happiness, and well-being. Likewise, I wish increasing prosperity, success, and comfort to the friendly people of the United States. God keep and protect you. Khalid bin Abd al-Aziz al Saud, Riyadh, 29 Safar 1399H (January 27, 1979.)
End text.

8. Original letter will be sent by pouch to NEA/ARP.

West

183. Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RP M 79-10061

Washington, February 3, 1979

SAUDI PERCEPTIONS OF KEY ISSUES AFFECTING SAUDI-US RELATIONS [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Saudi-US Relations [classification not declassified]

There are two schools of thought within the Saudi Government on relations with the US. Crown Prince Fahd epitomizes and is personally identified with the traditional Saudi relationship with the US, which most Saudis increasingly see as a "client" relationship. Fahd has supported the US and its policies on regional security, oil, and Middle East peace efforts. Fahd appears to identify Saudi interests with US interests; he puts great faith and reliance in the US-Saudi "special relationship." [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The wisdom of such close identification with and reliance on the US has come under increasingly sharp attack from two groups: conservatives who want to minimize the unsettling Western influences on Saudi society, and young, Westernized technocrats—both royal princes and commoners—who want to more aggressively assert Saudi national interests even if they diverge from US interests. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

US credibility has declined dramatically with all Saudi leaders over the past year. [*2 lines not declassified*] Young nationalistic Saudis have argued persuasively with their elders that Saudi and US interests diverge on issues such as the Camp David accords and oil production policy, and that Saudi Arabia should, therefore, distance itself somewhat from the US. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 1-3/79. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. Prepared in the Middle East Division, Office of Regional and Political Analysis of the National Foreign Assessment Center. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum: "Cy—info JC." Brzezinski sent a copy of the memorandum to Vance under a February 5 memorandum, in which he indicated that Carter wanted Vance to see the memorandum. Inderfurth signed the February 5 memorandum for Brzezinski. (Ibid.) Attached to another copy of the intelligence memorandum is a February 2 memorandum to Carter from Turner, in which Turner noted: "Attached is a thoughtful memorandum on the attitudes of Saudi leaders towards the United States which I think will be of interest to you at this time." (Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81M00919R, Executive Registry Subject Files (1977-1979), Box 14, Folder 22, C-382, Saudi Arabia)

Comment [classification not declassified]

We expect additional strains in Saudi-US relations on major issues such as Middle East peace efforts and oil production levels. US attempts to exploit Crown Prince Fahd's desire for close US-Saudi relations in order to secure pledges on oil and peace are not likely to produce the desired results. [9 lines not declassified]

[1 paragraph (14 lines) not declassified]

[4 lines not declassified] *We believe further US pressure on issues like oil or support for the Camp David talks may provoke a strong anti-US reaction among Saudi leaders including Fahd.* [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

[heading not declassified; classification not declassified]

Saudi security concerns are *the* overriding Saudi foreign policy issue; US responsiveness to their request for specific defense commitments and [less than 1 line not declassified] contingency planning may well determine the course of US-Saudi cooperation for the next several years. The Saudis are convinced that the Soviet "threat" is urgent and strikes at the very survival of their regime. The lack of US responsiveness to Saudi warnings of Soviet encirclement has caused them to begin a fundamental reassessment of their relations with the US and USSR. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Comment [classification not declassified]

ORPA/ME agrees with recent assessments of the US Ambassador [less than 1 line not declassified] that the Saudi request for a defense commitment and [less than 1 line not declassified] contingency planning is a deliberate test of the US commitment to their security. If the US response is considered inadequate, we believe that the Saudis probably will move toward a more non-aligned political posture and become less accommodating toward US energy concerns and Middle East peace efforts. The heretofore unthinkable—an accommodation with the USSR—is also a possibility. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Recent signs of US support like the F-15 visit are not enough in Saudi eyes. [1 line not declassified] National Guard Commander Prince Abdallah—one of the pro-US senior princes—was critical of the visit as being an unconvincing show of force, but just enough to draw criticism of Saudi Arabia from its "progressive neighbors." Abdallah reportedly said that rather than see such "meaningless" shows, he would prefer the US speed delivery of the F-15s Saudi Arabia has ordered and hasten the training of Saudi pilots to fly them. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Oil Policy and Production [classification not declassified]

Saudi policy is to limit oil production in 1979 to an annual *average* ceiling of 8.5 million barrels/day. For technical, conservationist and

economic reasons, the Saudis do not want to continue to produce at higher levels to make up for the Iranian shortfall. The Saudis believe they have done all they can to keep OPEC price increases moderate; they consider US pressure to do more unrealistic and short-sighted. They have expressed resentment over US statements of unhappiness about their behavior at the recent Abu Dhabi meeting.² The Saudis do not intend to spend billions of dollars to install excess productive capacity to meet an ever-growing world energy demand, particularly in light of the failure of the US to curtail its ever-rising demand for imported oil. The Saudis have made clear that they have done about all they intend to do to meet world demand. Major oil consumers, especially the US, must get serious about conservation and developing alternative energy sources. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Comment [classification not declassified]

Despite current statements by Crown Prince Fahd that Saudi Arabia is willing to compensate for the shortfall in oil production caused by the turmoil in Iran, we believe current Saudi policy remains to produce no more than 8.5 million barrels/day on an annual basis, to resist US pressure to spend billions of dollars to increase future productive capacity, and to slow considerably Saudi development plans. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Under US pressure, Crown Prince Fahd has indicated willingness to rescind the oil price increases and production limitations announced in late January by Oil Minister Yamani. Such a move, however, would further weaken Fahd's domestic political position [2 lines not declassified]. US insistence on rescinding Yamani's orders has alienated the Oil Minister and probably has embarrassed and angered Fahd deeply. It ultimately may erode Fahd's willingness and perhaps even his ability to cooperate with the US.³ A rescinding of Yamani's orders—which Saudi leaders believe are justified and in Saudi national interests—is likely to cause sharp anti-US feelings within the government and stiffen opposition to future cooperation with the US. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Fahd's willingness to expend political capital for the US can be expected to diminish sharply if the US is not forthcoming in meeting Saudi security

² See footnote 3, Document 175.

³ Carter sent a message to Fahd on January 30 thanking him for the Saudi decision to maintain its oil production level. See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 185. In telegram 1010 from Jidda, February 1, West wrote: "Our apparently successful efforts to persuade Prince Fahd to reverse the recent Saudi oil pricing decision may well be a pyrrhic victory. Whatever the economic benefits may be to USG, and in the Saudi view they are infinitesimally small, we will have exacerbated existing divisions within SAG and damaged further Fahd's credibility here." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027–2583)

concerns, and, secondarily, its concerns on the Middle East peace issue. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Middle East Peace [classification not declassified]

The Saudis see the Arab-Israeli issue as directly affecting their own national security. To be pushed to support a peace agreement that does not have at least moderate Arab acceptance would, in their view, increase radicalism in the Arab world or possibly cause Palestinian retaliation. In either event they see themselves as a prime target. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

The Saudis have two “non-negotiable” demands for a general Middle East peace: that Arab territory—including East Jerusalem—captured in the 1967 war be returned to Arab control, and that the Palestinians have the right to self-determination, including the possibility of a separate West Bank state. Saudi suspicion of the Camp David accords has hardened along with a suspicion that the US supports a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace rather than the general Middle East peace it espouses. The Saudis believe the Camp David accords will lead only to a separate peace and the isolation of Egypt from the Arab world. Saudi Arabia would then be forced to further align itself with the more hard-line Arab states, further straining ties with Cairo and Washington. The Saudis would like to see the Camp David accords dropped and the peace process returned to the United Nations, where the Arabs would negotiate as a bloc, preventing unilateral Egyptian moves for a separate peace. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Comment [classification not declassified]

Egyptian President Sadat’s negotiations with Israel present Saudi leaders with a dilemma. The Saudis want to remain on close terms with Sadat, but they see their own security in the Arab world, and the best means to reach a general Middle East peace, in Arab consensus, not in unilateral negotiations like Sadat’s. The Saudis would prefer to avoid having to choose between Sadat and the majority of Arabs who reject the Camp David accords as inadequate. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

During the past year, the Saudis have moved away from Egypt and the US on the peace issue. If an Egyptian-Israeli peace is signed that does not contain strong “linkage” to Palestinian rights of self-determination on the West Bank and Gaza, we believe the Saudis probably would go along with the sanctions voted at the Baghdad Summit last November.⁴ The Saudis do not act in dramatic ways and there is flexibility in their position on the peace issue, but the failure of US efforts to convince them to support the Camp

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 175.

David accords should make clear that they will not support what all the Arab world sees as a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace. Saudi unhappiness with the Camp David accords has had a spillover effect on other aspects of US-Saudi relations, increasing the doubts of those who question the wisdom of close Saudi identification with the US. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

184. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia and the United States Liaison Office in Riyadh¹

Washington, February 4, 1979, 0056Z

30211. Military handle as Specat Exclusive. Subject: SecDef Brown Visit: Joint U.S.-Saudi Planning Committee. Refs: A) State 17130;² B) Jidda 890 (Notal);³ C) Jidda 625 (Notal).⁴

(S) Entire text.

1. We are aware of the deep Saudi desire to see a clear reaffirmation of the U.S. commitment to the security and integrity of Saudi Arabia and to the region, as expressed by King Khalid in his most recent letter to the President (ref B). We have examined closely the options available to us within the context of what is possible as well as desirable. In this regard we appreciate your comments reftel C. There is both great practical and political merit in intensifying consultations on security matters.

2. With this in mind, Ambassador in scheduled Feb. 4 meeting with Foreign Minister may confirm our interest in periodic security consultations and that in this connection we see Secretary Brown's visit as initiating this new dialogue which will continue through the Crown Prince's Washington visit. (FYI. We expect Secretary Brown will pro-

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2444. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Bodine; cleared by William H. Marsh (T), Kreisberg, O'Donohue, Murray, Sick, and Leo R. Wollemborg (S/S-O) and in substance by John D. Forbes (P); approved by Saunders. Sent for information Immediate to Dhahran, the White House, Department of Defense, CHUSMTM Dhahran, and USMTM Riyadh.

² See footnote 8, Document 177.

³ See Document 182.

⁴ In telegram 625 from Jidda, January 23, the Embassy provided responses to the questions posed in telegram 17130 to Jidda, January 22, indicating complete approval "of the proposals outlined" in telegram 17130. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2224)

pose a formal mechanism for regular consultations, but we prefer to let SecDef develop this in course of his discussions and therefore prefer that you not preview this to Saudis beforehand. End FYI.) In preparation for Brown discussions, you might suggest that SAG carefully prepare detailed appreciation of their security perceptions to present to Secretary Brown.

3. FYI: We do not envision the joint committee at this time engaging in the kinds of specific contingency planning the Saudis may have in mind. Rather, we view the committee as a high-level consultative mechanism for intensifying the U.S.-Saudi dialogue on security issues. End FYI.

Vance

185. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, February 12, 1979, 1420Z

1318. Department pass SecDef, AmConsul Dhahran, CHUSMTM Dhahran, USMTM/DCR Riyadh. (S) Secretary Brown's Meeting With Crown Prince Fahd.

1. S-entire text.

2. Summary: In two-hour meeting on night of February 10, Defense Secretary Harold Brown outlined for Crown Prince Fahd, Min Def Prince Sultan, and Fon Min Prince Saud U.S. proposals for integrated strategy to promote security and stability in the region. SecDef said U.S. prepared to make strong political and military contribution. U.S. prepared for new collaboration in areas of military assistance, intelligence cooperation, and strategic planning. Secretary Brown proposed consultative mechanism. Regular meetings at the Minister of Defense level would take place at least annually, and there would be interim meetings at lower level. Sub-committees could meet at appropriate levels to deal with specific topics in depth, including bilateral security assistance program, US-Saudi assistance programs for third countries, and intelligence cooperation. Saudi reaction was positive, but they said

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027–2604. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

they wished to consider proposals over night before giving response. End summary.

3. Defense Secretary Harold Brown met for over two hours with Crown Prince Fahd during evening of February 10. Meeting was also attended by Min Def Prince Sultan, Fon Min Prince Saud, Ambassador West, Assistant Sec Def David McGiffert, Deputy Assistant Sec Def Robert Murray, Rear Admiral Hanson, and Embassy Pol Counselor.

4. After opening pleasantries, Secretary Brown delivered to Crown Prince letter from President Carter to King Khalid.² Secretary Brown then said that President Carter had asked him to emphasize how important he considers relations between Saudi Arabia and the U.S.³ We consider US-Saudi relations to be key to peace and stability in this region of the world. President has seen need for integrated strategy in the area and the U.S. is willing to make strong political and military contribution to forwarding that strategy. We have some specific proposals to make along these lines. These proposals are in the areas of military assistance, intelligence cooperation, and strategic planning.

5. Crown Prince Fahd said that he would be pleased to hear any proposals and to discuss them, if not during the current meeting, then at another meeting.

6. Secretary Brown said that he would like to start by giving Crown Prince the U.S. view of the Middle East to see if SAG and USG views are the same. He said that the Middle East was of crucial importance to the United States. It is strategically located; it has vital resources; and its people share common interests with us on critical issues. Security and stability in the Middle East is thus critical for us.

7. Secretary then said that we saw several threats to that stability. The first threat stems from Soviet imperialism. The Soviet efforts to overturn the international order are a threat to the peace of the world. The Soviets are strong. Fortunately, we are with our allies much stronger. We are, for example, clearly superior in economic power, in technological power, in key areas of military strength, and in the strength and cohesiveness of our allies. We are very much aware that this region is a prime target for Soviet encroachments. The Soviets are exploiting internal instability and regional conflict. The evidence of Soviet actions in the Horn of Africa, South Yemen and Afghanistan is a persuasive demonstration of Soviet ambitions. Soviet propaganda is clear evidence that they aim to exploit turmoil in Iran and elsewhere.

² No copy of the letter to Khalid, as approved by Carter and delivered by Brown, has been found. A draft of the letter, which briefly outlines the purpose of Brown's visit, was forwarded by Tarnoff to Brzezinski under a February 8 covering memorandum. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P790046-0328)

³ See Document 19.

The Soviets, however, are by no means invincible. They have had serious setbacks in Egypt, Sudan and Somalia, and they have been excluded from the peace process. The Soviets have no doubt about American strength and will have no doubt about our determination in this part of the world. Saudi Arabia should not doubt either. We will work to check the Soviets. The Soviets can be checked. We look to Saudi Arabia to share in this effort.

8. Secretary then said that the second source of instability in the area came from the tensions and inequities of rapid modernization and social change. In Iran, this contributed to the Shah's problems. His regime lost touch with the people. They saw him as anti-Islamic, alien, even contemptuous of them. He also lost his personal and political will when faced with violence. Our support for the Shah, although it was strong and steady, could not overcome those circumstances. However, there is no reason that the experience of Iran need be repeated elsewhere in the region. Modernization should strengthen governments, make them more popular, if it is equitable and is well-paced. It can give new vitality and expression to religious beliefs. This is a job for each country. For our part, we want to continue to work closely with SAG. We should keep in touch on our separate efforts to promote development in the area. We believe that what our two countries do now will be crucial to orderly economic development and modernization. That is a great responsibility and a great opportunity.

9. Secretary said third source of instability in the Arab world was from those who would pursue radical change with violent means. Secretary then said that he wanted to be frank. Times have changed. The Egyptians do not seek to overthrow traditional regimes now as they did in the 60's. Saudi security has, from this direction, dramatically improved since then. (Crown Prince Fahd and Prince Sultan chuckled at Secretary's words and readily agreed). Secretary went on to say that the threats to the states in the Peninsula today are PDRY, conspiracies from Libya, terrorism which clothes itself in Palestinian garb, and Iraq, which is still led by rejectionists and radicals. Finally, said the Secretary, the dispute between Israel, its neighbors and the Palestinians was profoundly destabilizing. We seek to avoid another war. This is also in Saudi interest. War profits no one, but war and the preparation for it, provide the Soviets vast opportunity for influence and meddling.

10. Secretary stopped at this point to ask if Saudis agreed with U.S. analysis. Crown Prince said he shared U.S. analysis completely. If there is any difference, it is in emphasis only, not in substance. He was pleased to hear it. In fact, he said he had been waiting a long time to hear U.S. say it. He said he now sees indications that the US and Saudi Arabia are on verge of new and positive measures. He then invited Prince Sultan and Prince Saud to comment. Prince Sultan agreed

with analysis and said that he too had been waiting for U.S. to say it. It is crucial that U.S. devise strategy to deal with threat of Soviets and other radical elements focusing on Middle East. Saudis see a long-range, comprehensive Soviet strategy unfolding before our eyes, manifesting itself in the events in the Horn of Africa, in South Yemen, and in Afghanistan. US needs to develop a counter-strategy based on the weak front-line states, such as YAR, Oman, and Somalia. Must also help strengthen military forces of Kingdom. Prince Saud said he wanted to withhold his comments until he heard Secretary Brown's proposals.

11. Secretary Brown said that it was clear that our pictures of the problem were similar with only differences in stress as the Crown Prince had said. There is some question whether the USSR is proceeding according to a comprehensive plan, or whether it is simply taking advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. The effect is the same, however, and what we have to do is the same. Secretary then went on to say that President Carter has been discussing this problem each week over the past several weeks with his key advisors including Vice President Mondale, Secretary Vance, Dr. Brzezinski, and himself, (Secretary Brown). President asked that he tell the Crown Prince that the US sees the need for an integrated strategy for regional security to which it is prepared to make a strong political and military contribution. We are prepared for new forms of bilateral and multilateral collaboration on security matters, including military assistance, intelligence cooperation and contingency planning. We are willing to consider an increased US military presence in the area if it would be helpful, including increased naval presence and new collaboration on basing arrangements. We are also willing to consider concerted measures to counter radical forces that now provide a base for the intrusion of Soviet influence.

12. In pursuing this strategy, we want first to work even more closely with Saudi Arabia. He said he would be making proposals for a formal consultative mechanism on security issues. He would also be responding to Saudi proposals for joint planning and discussing ways to improve our joint assistance program for other countries.

13. Second, we want to promote concerted security measures among moderate states, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan. Secretary said he intended to begin a broader security dialogue with Egypt and to assure President Sadat and King Hussein of the US intention to contain the Soviets. The President would be grateful if Saudi Arabia could assure them of this American intention. The President would be grateful also for Saudis' views of Oman and the Gulf states, the situation there, and their ideas of what should be done, and the role the US should play.

14. Third, we now have—and we intend to maintain and improve—US military forces to provide an increased military presence in this

vital region. Our military forces are already substantially superior to those of the USSR. The Soviets generally deploy only 11 combatants in their Mediterranean squadron. NATO deploys more than 100 combatants, including 23 US of which two are carriers. The US could deploy two carrier task forces to the Gulf in 14 days. A carrier task force is able to project air and assault power and influence a crisis ashore. The Soviets have no comparable capability. During the first 30 days of a crisis, the United States could deploy significantly more aircraft in the Gulf than could the Soviets. The US also specifically plans its general purpose forces against the criterion of having to confront a contingency in the Gulf at the same time as a contingency in Europe. Probably nothing we can do more seriously indicates our commitment to this region, for this planning assumption requires us to expend significant amounts on forces we would not otherwise require or deploy.

15. Secretary then repeated that the US was prepared to consider enlarging its military presence in the region. He asked Crown Prince if Saudis thought this would be desirable. If so, what form should it take? The Crown Prince said this was a very sensitive matter and that he would like to sleep on it. Perhaps he or Prince Sultan could give the Secretary an answer on February 11.⁴

16. Secretary said he understood sensitivity of question and could understand Crown Prince's desire to sleep on it. Secretary then said that, in any event, U.S. cannot go it alone. In order to have public support, we must act in concert with friendly nations. While the nature of the arrangements differs from place to place, we are prepared to make an appropriate American contribution in the Middle East. However, the degree to which we can increase our security role will depend in great measure on the degree to which the moderate states in the area can cooperate with each other. In a similar way, the ability of the Western Europeans to overcome enmities had provided the basis for far reaching US support for Western Europe's security. We have great many forces in Europe and we are even more committed to Europe in case of crisis. We justify that to our people on two grounds. First, the region is vital to U.S. Second, the nations of the region are prepared to cooperate with each other and with U.S. For example, the idea of France and West Germany fighting each other today is unthinkable. Yet, for many years, they did fight each other. In the Middle East, the first condition is met because the region is important to us. The second criterion has a way to go. (Fahd, chuckled and agreed that Arab-Israel

⁴ Brown's February 11 meetings with Sultan are summarized in telegram 1408 from Jidda, February 15; telegram 259 from Riyadh, February 18; and telegram 1540 from Jidda, February 21. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790072–0169, D790095–1049, D790092–0836, respectively)

question was still a problem.) However, it is important for us to be able to say to our people that the peoples of the region will cooperate with each other and that old animosities are forgotten, especially among moderate states.

17. Prince Saud broke in at that point to ask what Secretary meant by moderate states. He understood Secretary to say Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. What other states are moderate? Secretary said that we considered Israel to be moderate. Saud did not contest point. Secretary went on to mention Gulf states, YAR, and Sudan. He added that there were signs that Syria might be gradually moving in that direction. Perhaps, one day, Iraq might also move in the direction. Crown Prince Fahd said he thought that Iraq might become more moderate and sooner than Syria. Prince Saud wanted to know if Secretary Brown was going to Syria on his trip. Secretary said that he had no plans to go to Syria on this trip.

18. Secretary returned to elements of U.S. strategy. He said that, fourth, U.S. seeks cooperation in oil matters that builds on the common interest of the US, its allies, and the moderate states in security and economic development. Crown Prince said he understood.

19. Fifth, said Brown we are moving to strengthen our position elsewhere in the region. We are doing everything we can to assure a satisfactory outcome in Iran. Secretary Brown pointed out that he had been personally involved in every step of the way, trying to support a moderate solution. We have substantial programs for military and economic aid for Turkey. We have granted Turkey \$300 million in aid and we are also working with our West German allies to provide further aid programs for Turkey. In the Yemen, we have mounted, with Saudi Arabia, a major new effort to deter further Soviet and radical threats to the peace. In Pakistan, we recently informed the Zia government that we are prepared to sell a broad range of modern military equipment. Since then we have had further signs that Pakistan is pressing ahead with a program for nuclear explosives, and this is going to limit and perhaps prevent our going ahead with arms sales, and may even require the cut-off of all aid, including economic aid. The wise counsel of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan on the nuclear issue would be very welcome.

20. We would like to know the Saudi perception of regional security requirements, and particularly the ways Saudi Arabia believes an American role would be helpful.

21. Sixth, we are pressing forward with the peace process. No American President has worked harder for a just peace than President Carter. The negotiations are difficult, and will not be quickly completed, but we are committed to them we will continue until they are completed. The United States, and the President personally, are committed

to a full peace, including the West Bank and Jerusalem, not just a peace between Egypt and Israel. In our judgement, the Camp David Accords are a vital first step and need to be quickly translated into an Egyptian-Israeli treaty as the first step toward a comprehensive peace. We see this as essential to regional stability. He said the President has asked him to make clear that our ability to develop and support regional cooperation will be severely handicapped, perhaps even negated, by continued Arab-Israeli hostility. We would hope for a forthcoming attitude from our friends in order to facilitate wider strategic matters.

22. Turning to the US-Saudi consultative mechanism, Secretary Brown said U.S. was prepared to enhance significantly our special relationship with Saudi Arabia if Saudi Arabia wishes. We would like Saudi views on how this should be done. One immediate step we could take, as SAG has suggested, would be to establish a mechanism for regular, periodic security consultations between our two governments. When we set up a joint commission in 1974, it was not chaired by ministers, it could consider only existing military programs and it had no fixed time table for meetings. We propose regular meetings, perhaps annually, at the Minister of Defense level, and interim meetings at a lower level. In this way we would be assured of full discussions on the range of security issues at least every 6 months, more often as necessary. In addition, we could establish sub-groups that could meet at appropriate intervals to discuss in-depth specific topics, including bilateral security assistance programs, US-Saudi programs of assistance for other countries, intelligence exchanges, and the like.

23. Prince Sultan said that concept of consultative mechanism was ok. However, the existing military mission plays part of this role already in that it deals with matters of military assistance to third countries and military supply to Saudi Arabia. Prince Sultan then said it was disappointing that there had been so much correspondence over this matter without results. In any event, he would discuss matter with Prince Saud during the course of the evening and would discuss it further with Secretary on February 11. He would give the Secretary SAG's decision on February 11 or 12. If decision is favorable, Prince Sultan suggested that we make an announcement that we have already held first meeting. Secretary Brown agreed that it was good idea to make such an announcement and that the two staffs could work out the language. Sultan said however it is done, it will have to be done in such a way as not to give outsiders a chance to make trouble. We do not want to give third countries an opening for criticizing our efforts.

24. Secretary then moved on to matter of joint planning. He noted that this had been raised by Prince Saud and Prince Sultan with Ambassador West. He said President Carter had asked him to convey to Crown Prince our willingness in principle to engage in carefully defined

joint planning with SAG. Secretary then referred to four specific questions raised by Prince Saud with Ambassador West. Secretary said detailed answers required some working out and further consultations but that he would like to give Crown Prince our initial answers. With respect to hostilities in neighboring states involving the Cubans, Russians or East Germans, we, of course, could through close bilateral and regional cooperation, do much to prevent this kind of thing from happening. However, it could happen and we agree to engage in joint planning with SAG against that possibility. SAG, of course, must understand that under our constitutional system, joint planning cannot, as such, involve a commitment to joint action. Secretary said that he had no doubt that such a threat would create the kind of situation that would invoke a strong response from our Congress and would meet the constitutional requirements.

25. Secretary said that, in view of the late hour, he proposed leaving the matter of third country assistance programs for discussion the next day.

26. Crown Prince said that he was pleased with all the subjects discussed thus far. He had wanted a long time for the U.S. to come and discuss things in this fashion. He said he would convey the contents of the discussion to the King. He was certain the King would be pleased. Now that the U.S. has taken these steps, we can look forward to executing practical measures in the security field to counter the Soviet threat and to promote stability in the area.

27. Comment: Saudi reaction to our proposals was restrained but very positive. Prince Saud, who accompanied Ambassador to dinner for Secretary Brown, seemed overwhelmed. He said that perhaps we were offering too much too fast.

West

186. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, February 27, 1979, 1050Z

1677. Subject: (U) Assessment of Visit by Sec Def Brown.

1. (S-entire text).

2. Summary: Visit by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown was qualified success.² We think that we have passed initial SAG test of US intentions in regard to defense of Saudi Arabia. We think that limits of security relationship desired by SAG with U.S. have been defined. However, reports from Israel on Brown visit there and reports from Washington on purpose of Brown's Middle East trip have cast shadow on what was accomplished in Saudi Arabia. In addition, answers to questions raised by SAG on supply and military equipment have negative signals. End summary.

3. Now that Secretary of Defense Harold Brown has come and gone, we think we ought to look at what has been accomplished and what has been left unfinished.

4. It is no secret that SAG has been unhappy with certain aspects of its relations with the U.S. Beginning in the fall of 1977, we began hearing Saudi pleas for help against what they perceive as a master Soviet plan to encircle the Arabian Peninsula, particularly Saudi Arabia, and to gain control of the oil of the Peninsula and the Gulf. The events in the Horn of Africa bore all the tell-tale signs of that Soviet master plan and SAG worried that USG somehow did not recognize the danger. Saudi pleas became urgent and pressing after the events in the two Yemens in June of 1978.³ They called for a U.S. declaration of commitment and support for the security of Saudi Arabia, active U.S. participation in an ambitious program to bolster YAR defenses, and possibly even a show of force in the YAR or perhaps even in Saudi Arabia. At the same time, SAG voiced its concerns that the U.S. was suffering from a Vietnam complex that left it either unwilling or unable to meet the Soviet threat. These concerns became more pointed in content and shriller in tone during the course of the summer. As it became increasingly evident that the Shah's regime was about to collapse, Saudi officials expressed their fears candidly about the U.S.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790090–0851. Secret. Sent for information to the Department of Defense, Amman, Abu Dhabi, Cairo, Kuwait, Manama, Sana, and Tel Aviv.

² See Document 185. Brown reported to President Carter on his trip, which included visits to Tel Aviv and Cairo, in a February 19 memorandum; see Document 20.

³ See Documents 243 and 244.

strength of purpose to European diplomats, and it was common talk in Jidda diplomatic circles that key individuals in Saudi royal family were discussing ways of accommodating what they perceived as reality in the region.

5. Meanwhile, we think that the pro-US forces in the royal family were given the task of testing the US to determine the truth about US intentions. They proposed establishment of a joint Saudi-U.S. committee to plan for contingencies in the Peninsula. Failure to respond positively to Saudi suggestion would signify that US was not serious about providing for Saudi defense. An agreement to plan but failure to carry through would signify that the US was incapable of carrying out its commitment.

6. We think we have passed the initial Saudi test. The visit of the F-15 squadron to Saudi Arabia in January provided in part the show of force sought by those responsible for Saudi Arabia's security.⁴ Secretary Brown's after-dinner speech at the Saudi military officers club in Riyadh on February 10 provided the security declaration they wanted.⁵ The speech was cleverly framed, reiterating publicly the public and private commitments of former US Presidents in such a way that the message would be clearly understood, but not serve as a provocation, in those quarters to which it was directed. Although it was not seen or cleared by SAG in advance, it was clear from the remarks of Foreign Minister Prince Saud the following day that the speech met SAG approval. Secretary Brown's development of the Saudi proposal for a joint Saudi-US planning committee and the further discussions of the role of committee between Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Murray on Feb 18 have responded to the Saudi request for joint planning.⁶

7. However, while Secretary Brown seemed to be giving very positive signals to SAG on the broader, overall questions, the signals given on the military supply questions were not interpreted as all that positive by Saudi officials, especially those in the Ministry of Defense. The answers given on individual items desired by SAG were overwhelmingly negative. While Foreign Minister Prince Saud emphasized the positive achievements of the Brown visit, he did take note on February 18 of the unsatisfactory replies on military supplies when he told Murray that if faced by a situation where USG refused to supply Saudi

⁴ See footnote 3, Document 177.

⁵ The text of Brown's speech, in which he reiterated the U.S. commitment to Saudi Arabia's territorial integrity, is in telegram 1319 from Jidda, February 13. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790068-0385)

⁶ In telegram 259 from Riyadh, February 18, the Liaison Office described a meeting between Brown and Sultan, during which the two officials discussed the U.S.-Saudi-YAR tripartite military relationship. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790095-1049)

Arabia with desired military equipment but offered a US military presence in Saudi Arabia, SAG would be on the horns of a terrible dilemma.

8. The Brown visit also served to establish limits on the type of security relationship desired by Saudi Arabia with the United States. As expected, the suggestion of a possible American military presence in Saudi Arabia was further than SAG wanted to go. Our proposal to publicize the joint Saudi-US committee also served the same purpose. As an overwhelmed Prince Saud told Ambassador West privately on February 10, the US seemed to be offering too much too fast. The limits desired by SAG appear to conform to what SAG officials have told us in the past: they want a US commitment like the one that Israel has. They want no treaty, no formal agreement, no formal organization, but instead a military supply relationship and a commitment to come to their assistance if attacked by the USSR or one of its surrogates.

9. Another limit set by the Brown visit and the subsequent talks by Murray and Prince Saud was on the price SAG was willing to pay to get the kind of security relationship it desired with the US. Prince Saud made it clear that the US should not insist that Saudi Arabia support positions that would jeopardize the kind of relations it wishes to maintain with the other Arab states. Saudi Arabia favors a comprehensive Arab-Israel peace settlement. It supports and will continue to support peace efforts toward that end. It supported the Camp David talks. However, it does not and will not support the Camp David Accords as a basis for peace, because they do not include two of the essential elements for a comprehensive peace, namely self-determination for the Palestinians and a return of Jerusalem to Arab hands.

10. In sum, we think that the Brown visit was a qualified success. We have clarified and established the limits of the special relationship desired by SAG with the US in the security field. We have supplied two of the basic elements they regard as essential in a security commitment by the US: a declaration and an agreement for joint contingency planning. We think that the discussion in the leadership circles about which way to orient Saudi foreign policy may now enter a new phase in which the hand of the pro-US forces will be considerably strengthened.

11. However, the success of the Brown visit was not undiluted. The press reports from Israel and the US that flooded into Saudi Arabia after the departure on the visit and undoing much of the good previously accomplished. Reports from Israel that the U.S. was relying on Israel to take the place of Iran in defending US interests in the area and reports in the US that the USG was trying to forge new Middle East defense arrangement centered on Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia gave the Saudi leadership pause. They wondered if the US was pushing Saudi Arabia in a direction that would cause it to become isolated and alienated from the other Arabs. They also wondered whether the US

was not preparing the ground to force SAG to support publicly a separate Egypt-Israel peace and to play a role in OPEC that would cause them not only foreign policy problems but internal problems as well. While Deputy Assistant Secretary Murray told Prince Saud on February 18 that USG was not proposing tripartite defense treaty advocated by Senator Jackson,⁷ we think SAG will need to be reassured further on this point and on the kind of role we expect Saudi Arabia to play in OPEC as well.

12. In addition the negative signals given on the military supply question must be overcome or the momentum engendered by the visit will not be maintained. While the US as a matter of policy is committed to arms restraint, this is not the time or the place to impose such guidelines. To the Saudis, the special relationship is intimately related to their perceptions of adequate supplies of military equipment, and for the moment, the US is viewed as not being responsive enough to these needs. The Saudis believe that their requests are both modest and consistent with the requirements to strengthen the Kingdom's ability to defend itself. This is the continual refrain of MODA officials and was stated with considerable eloquence by Fon Min Prince Saud at his Feb 18 meeting with DAS Murray. Essentially, the Saudis have asked only for Lance, Stinger, additional air munitions, area denial weapons, a speed up in F-15 deliveries, MER 200 and conformal pods for the F-15's and some sophisticated night vision and fire control gadgetry. They have not asked for AWACS, or new squadrons of advanced fighter aircraft. None of these military items are going to change the balance of power in the region nor is their purchase likely to cause serious discontent within Saudi society. However, if the US fails to respond to these requests, then we believe that the atmosphere of our bilateral military relationship will begin to sour and that the repercussions on other financial, petroleum and political issues are likely to be injurious to US interests.

West

⁷ Reference is to a suggestion made by Senator Henry Jackson that the United States work toward a "mutual defense arrangement in the Middle East" among Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel, that "would be powerful enough to deal with any adversary" with the exception of the Soviet Union. ("U.S. May Not Get Oil From Iran for Year, Sen. Jackson Warns, Urging Curbs on Use," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 12, 1979, p. 2)

187. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 6, 1979, 9:30–11 a.m.

SUBJECT

Sensitive Collection and Covert Action Proposals (S)

PARTICIPANTS

Vice President**

Denis Clift

*State*David Newsom, Under Secretary
for Political AffairsAmb. William Bowdler, Director
Bureau of Intell & Research*Defense*

Charles Duncan, Deputy Secretary

Daniel Murphy, Deputy Under
Secretary for Policy*JCS*Lt. Gen. William Smith, Assistant
to Chairman*CIA*

Admiral Stansfield Turner

Frank Carlucci, Dep. Director

John McMahon, Dep. Director for
Operations

Theodore Shackley, Acting

Deputy to DCI for Collection
Tasking

Alan Wolfe, Chief, NE/DDO

Justice

Attorney General Griffin Bell*

Kenneth Bass, Attorney-Advisor

OMB

Dr. John White, Deputy Director

NSA

Admiral Bobby Inman

White House

David Aaron, Chairman**

NSC

Paul B. Henze, Notetaker

*Not present during first half-hour
of the meeting.**Not present during final half-
hour of the meeting.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

The main portion of the meeting was devoted to discussing CIA's proposals for intensified intelligence cooperation and covert action with the Saudi Arabian government and related possibilities for action to preserve our interests in the Arabian Peninsula. (S)

As step parallel and complementary to our [*less than 1 line not declassified*] with the Saudis, establishment of a [*1 line not declassified*] was endorsed. State's concern that we not promise so much that we

¹ Source: National Security Council, Carter Administration Intelligence Files, Box 1020, Minutes-SCC 1979. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Dodson sent the Summary of Conclusions to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Jones, and Turner under a March 19 memorandum signed by Carolyn Cleveland (NSC).

generate exaggerated expectations of returns from the Saudis was noted. It was agreed, however, that [1 line not declassified]. The Ambassador will be kept informed of aspects of the [less than 1 line not declassified] process that have policy implications. The Chairman stressed that a priority concern on our side should be to exploit this intensified relationship [1 line not declassified]. (S)

Provision of counterterrorist training to the Saudis was endorsed. The Attorney-General's representative said that a new Presidential Finding would be required and concurred in the text [less than 1 line not declassified]. (S)

[1 paragraph (10 lines) not declassified]

The principle of providing defensive training for YAR and Omani personnel to enable them to control infiltration and subversion was endorsed, though the State representative cited several cautions. CIA was asked to provide a more detailed proposal for approval at a forthcoming SCC meeting, [2 lines not declassified]. OMB asked for cost estimates. In light of possible Congressional concerns, the Chairman asked that possibilities for overt U.S. military help in this area, as well as CIA-sponsored help, be examined. The representative of the Joint Chiefs was of the view that CIA is better prepared to assist with this sort of activity than DOD. (S)

The proposal for radio operations produced a great deal of discussion but no agreement that benefits from the activity would be commensurate with all the complications it might entail. CIA will study this question further before determining whether to submit a more concrete proposal. The Chairman asked that further efforts focus on questions of compatibility and control to ensure that an operation of this kind could be kept from working contrary to U.S. interests. (S)

The possibilities of larger-scale paramilitary operations were not discussed in detail. The Attorney General chided the group for being overly concerned about congressional sensitivity and thus, he felt, hesitant about advancing ideas. Other members of the group expressed disagreement with the Attorney General's assessment that little damage had resulted from leaks and exposures. Discussion of the Arabian Peninsula concluded with agreement that CIA, working with other agencies as appropriate, would attempt to develop more specific action proposals. (S)

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

188. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Riyadh, March 17, 1979, 3:30–5:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS*United States*

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Warren Christopher
Ambassador John West
Chip Carter
Michael Sterner
Gary Sick
George Cave

Saudi Arabia

Prince Saud al-Faysal al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Prince Turki al-Faisal
Director of Intelligence
Dr. Rashad Pharaon
Mr. Abd al-Rahman al-Mansuri
Note taker

Prince Saud opened the discussion by noting that this was the first meeting in this room and in fact inaugurated the entire building. (There was a brief photo opportunity for members of the press) Prince Saud continued that, especially during these times of great stress and strain two countries with such good relations as Saudi Arabia and the United States should share an exchange of views, we should know what is on each others' mind. This is the way to understand each other. It will contribute to the security and stability of the area. Since the beginning of President Carter's Administration, the areas of our mutual relations have expanded into areas not tackled before. The efforts of President Carter make our relations one of the factors we have to take into consideration in viewing the problems of the area. The leadership of Saudi Arabia has tried in every way to contribute to those relations, including the visit of Crown Prince Fahd to Washington,² President Carter's visit to Saudi Arabia,³ and King Khalid's meeting with the President in Washington.⁴ There have been many other discussions in the interim. We have tackled together many problems in this region. He hoped that with complete trust and guided by our mutual interests

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 33, Memcons: Brzezinski, 3–6/79. Secret. The meeting took place in Prince Saud's office in Riyadh. Sick sent the memorandum of conversation to Brzezinski under a March 28 memorandum requesting Brzezinski's approval. Brzezinski neither approved nor disapproved the request. (Ibid.) Brzezinski, Christopher, and Jones visited Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan during their trip. For Carter's instructions for the mission to Saudi Arabia and Jordan, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, footnote 2, Document 215.

² On Fahd's May 1977 visit to Washington, see Documents 150 and 151.

³ For the memoranda of conversation of Carter's meetings with Saudi officials on the Arab-Israeli peace process during his January 3–4, 1978, visit to Saudi Arabia, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, Documents 183 and 184.

⁴ See footnote 7, Document 176.

we can look forward to a fruitful discussion during this series of meetings.

Dr. Brzezinski said the President has asked the four of us to discuss with you matters of common concern. Chip Carter will later convey President Carter's invitation to Crown Prince Fahd to visit Washington.⁵

It is the President's very deep conviction that the United States and Saudi Arabia share a certain common fund of interests. We wish to underline these common interests and the fact that they are not shared by all countries: belief in God and religious values, which affect the way in which we approach things and represent an important point between us; the feeling of the special relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States, a relationship we wish to maintain. That relationship is also important to achieve justice and peace for all parties in the Middle East, especially those in the destructive and tragic conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The President is absolutely determined to achieve a just settlement. He is the first U.S. President since 1948 to mortgage his political future to that issue. One may or not like every step he has taken, but it is important to remember that he is the first Democratic President to make such an effort, and you understand that that is not easy. We are now at a critical juncture for world affairs and for the region. We face a severe challenge. The fundamental condition of the world today is turbulence. The key question of concern for you and ourselves is whether the outcome is to be shaped by radical power [that] helps the Soviets and hurts Saudi Arabia.

There are two basic threats in the region:

(1) The external threat is the Soviet Union. We have been concerned about the pattern of events which we have observed in recent years in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Iran. Each of these may represent individual events in terms of their internal causality, but they are externally linked since they create a pattern of encirclement which constitutes a security threat. To the extent that we share common interests, this threat represents a threat to the United States as well.

(2) The internal threat is the threat of radicalism. Political conditions vary from country to country but cumulatively the growth of radicalism has the same effect, since it produces regimes practicing similar foreign policies and brings to power similar types of leadership.

The United States is prepared to respond to both threats. If necessary we are prepared to use our power responsibly. As of yesterday, the U.S. carrier *Constellation* arrived on station 200 miles south of the

⁵ Fahd's trip to Washington did not take place.

PDRY. It has on board destructive power capable of taking care of any hostile air force in the area, if that should prove necessary. This and other actions prove that we are prepared to respond quickly—in this case as a result of the request of the Yemen Arab Republic, supported by Saudi Arabia.⁶ We acted because our interests were threatened, but also on the basis of your request. The exercise of U.S. power has been hampered in the wake of Vietnam; however, the Vietnam malaise is now coming to an end. President Carter is a president of peace and resolve. He works for peace but is willing to use power if required to defend his friends. We also wish to promote moderation, but that is more difficult and must be done indirectly. We learned in the case of Iran how limited external forces can be and how dangerous can be the forces released by incompetent leadership.

Our role in the Middle East has three broad aspects:

First, we are willing to promote, with those willing to work with us, a wider consultative security framework. In saying this, I am not intending to even hint at the concept of an alliance. We recognize the complexity of issues, the variety of pressures, and the historic sensitivity of this regime, and we do not propose the formal bonds of a formal alliance. Rather we are ready to explore flexible multilateral and bilateral means to respond to the existing security threat. We need to think seriously about this concept and would like to have your ideas. This must be a mutual effort at establishing an appropriate intellectual framework for cooperation.

Second, we are prepared to cooperate with all Arab states. It is not our objective to split the Arab world. We recognize that beneath the historic difficulties of the present, there is an Arab renaissance at work. We welcome this development and believe that it will contribute to the world as a whole. We are prepared to work with all the Arab states, and any suggestions that you might have to improve our relations with Syria or Iraq, for example, would be welcome.

Third, our intent is to promote a process to shape a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. The Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty will soon be completed.⁷ We worked hard for this, and we see it as the cornerstone for a comprehensive settlement. The process of getting to this point was painful, even on a personal basis. Some of us have

⁶ See Documents 268 and 269.

⁷ The Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty was signed by Begin, Sadat, and Carter in Washington on March 26. Brzezinski and Fahd discussed the state of the Middle East peace process in the aftermath of Carter's March 7–13 visit to Egypt and Israel between 6:30 p.m. and 8:20 p.m. on March 17. For the memorandum of conversation of this meeting, see *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 218.

been accused of being anti-Semitic because of our efforts. We have learned some hard lessons. We have, through experience, come to understand that any attempt to solve all of the problems at once would simply mean that nothing gets solved. Frankly, we started with a different idea, but we discovered painfully that it would not work. I have now learned with some pain that even getting two parties together at this stage is extremely difficult. To try to add other parties would guarantee failure and a continuation of the status quo.

We see three results of the peace treaty:

1. It will establish the principle of Israeli withdrawal and dismantlement of settlements. It would not be wise to boast too much too soon, but this is important as a precedent.

2. The process is directed toward a comprehensive peace, as pledged publicly by President Carter in his speeches in Cairo and Israel.⁸ Once the focus is on the modalities of elections, the registration of voters and other practical political problems, these clear-cut issues will make it easier to mobilize world public opinion. So we are willing, after the signing of a treaty, to undertake discussions with the Palestinians. We see the treaty as the only way the Palestinians have a chance to attain their legitimate rights.

3. It will help cement Arab/American friendships. It is impossible to overestimate the way U.S. public opinion has been affected by President Sadat's initiative. All of you have probably encountered American stereotypes toward Arabs, and perhaps you have been personally offended by these in the past. That view has now been shaken to the roots. Today, more Americans believe that the Arabs are committed to peace than they do Israelis. This provides a sound foundation for the extension of U.S.-Arab relations.

I wish to tell you in utter seriousness that anything which might be done to increase Sadat's difficulties economically would have an adverse effect on our interests in this area. It would make it harder to shape a strategic design. This is not to imply that Sadat is our unique friend or that Egypt will somehow replace Iran, although he is a *friend* and could play an important security role. But undermining Sadat would help forces such as the Soviets. None of us wants to see a pro-Soviet regime in Egypt, and that would be the result of a change in leadership. Actions to hurt Sadat would only help the radical forces in the region. It would also help those rigid Israelis who prefer the *status quo* of holding onto all the occupied territories while surrounded

⁸ Carter addressed the People's Assembly in Cairo on March 10 and the Knesset in Jerusalem on March 12. For the text of his speeches, see *Public Papers: Carter, 1979*, Book I, pp. 412-414 and 424-428.

by radical states. It would also help anti-Arab elements in the United States.

All of this is said as a friend. We know that the peace treaty is causing you difficulties, that you are part of the Arab world and that means that you face pressures. We do not expect unanimity on all points, and we realize it would be difficult for you to provide a ringing endorsement of the treaty. However, we want you to understand the strategic thinking which underlies our own position. We understand and appreciate your pledge that you will do nothing to hurt Egypt and the people of Egypt. Our primary interest is to shape a wider relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia. He then invited Mr. Christopher to add his comments.

Mr. Christopher said that he would say many of the same things but perhaps from a slightly different perspective. He had liked Prince Saud's phrase that our relations had expanded into new areas. We recently saw a degree of security cooperation which would have been hard to imagine previously: the F-15 sale, Secretary Brown's visit, the accelerated deliveries to Yemen, the Presidential waiver on military sales for the first time in our history, the offer to send U.S. F-15s to defend Saudi Arabia air space, the deployment of the carrier *Constellation* and others.⁹ These events have been seen for their positive effects, though they have sometimes also been seen for the distraction they involve. I have heard it said that our response on security issues, together with our promotion of the peace treaty, might cause us to lose interest in going forward toward a comprehensive peace. I think exactly the opposite is the case. The new U.S. activity in the security area, the confidence it has given to us—and I hope to you—now make it possible to conclude a treaty and give new impetus to move forward in the peace process. Our concept of that process is more specific than it used to be.

In the course of seeking this treaty our ideas have changed. It took longer than we anticipated. We cannot see clearly down the road to the achievement of West Bank autonomy, but that does not lessen our interest. We did not come here to sing the praises of President Sadat, but you should know that he held out for a commitment to proceed with negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza and it was agreed that one month after ratification of the treaty, negotiations would start on the West Bank and Gaza. Jordan is invited to join these. We also hope that Palestinian members will join the negotiations. We do not intend to place undue pressure on Jordan to join in but we hope that they will and that the negotiations will include Palestinians.

⁹ See Documents 263, 268, 271, and 275.

Our objectives are twofold: First, to define the responsibilities of a Self-Governing Authority; and secondly, to lead up to elections. These negotiations are to be completed within one year. These are concrete precise steps. Sadat fought long and hard for linkage and got it. There will be many immediate benefits such as family reunions. The United States will be prepared to talk with the Palestinians when they are prepared to discuss peace on the basis of resolution 242. Phase one of the peace treaty provides the precise means to move toward phase two. The alternative to this practical, identifiable process is so much worse, that we recommend that you look long and hard at what is being offered.

We need not come here to interpret for you American attitudes, but it is important to mention the tremendous welling up of support in the United States for the peace treaty. Significantly, this support is bipartisan. Senator Baker, in what may have been an inadvertent comment, pronounced the end of bipartisanship in American foreign policy. But, Senator Baker is also one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the peace process. The people in the United States take great pride in what has been accomplished. The American people also support what President Carter has done in this area in the past few weeks by waiving the 30 days requirement which was a legacy of the Vietnam era. Our response to your request was supported—such as sending AWACS, which invited an interpretation of the War Powers Act.¹⁰ These actions were taken out of a sense of strength and with the knowledge that they all involve some domestic risk.

As you know we have a tripartite form of government. The Executive is only one of three branches of government, and the vibrations of power move back and forth among them. It is important that the President retain the confidence of Congress, and I would underline Dr. Brzezinski's comment that any action to harm Egypt would have a bad influence on Congress. That fact has been apparent in the attitudes of the senior committee chairmen such as Senator Church. Any effort which undermines the peace process, which penalizes Egypt or which seems to penalize them would result in effects which are unfortunate and adverse.

We value our relations with Saudi Arabia so highly that we thought we could speak frankly of these matters and explore how we could expand our relationship. Friendship is a two-way street. We hope that you want to tender our friendship in response. We note particularly that your actions over the past year in the monetary field have been

¹⁰ The War Powers Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-148; 87 Stat. 555) limits the President's authority to commit combat troops and requires the President to inform Congress of such action. U.S. operations cannot extend beyond 60 days without congressional approval.

responsible and conservative in the very best sense of that word. We want to keep our relations that way. So, we came here, in the confidentiality of this room, to raise issues important to the peace process.

Prince Saud responded with thanks for these presentations and noted that they had no fear of speaking frankly. That is the only way people who are friends should talk. The opposite of frankness is deceitfulness. The relations between our countries are so fundamentally strong that they are not affected by transitory elements. We think that our relations can withstand stresses. We are obliged to be frank with you.

We have a belief in the relations between our two countries. Many years ago this Kingdom decided that the cornerstone of its policy involved good relations with United States. This was a specific decision by the founder of the Kingdom. He chose to place this country on the side of the free world and the United States. Some say that the Saudis were often too much of a good friend of the United States when U.S. activities worked to our own disadvantage. We have faced greater stresses in the past that we face today—times when the United States felt that this Kingdom was not a trustworthy ally or that it was an anachronistic social order.

There was a new beginning with the inauguration of the Carter Administration. Since then we have achieved many areas of understanding which were not previously possible. The basic component in that relationship has been confidence. Stable, constant relations provide the essential background for our discussions, and with that in mind I would like to tackle the issues that have been raised.

Our discussions recently with Secretary Brown achieved some understanding in the security area and how to pursue further efforts. I would like to mention some things about the threat; we share the view of an ever present Soviet threat. It is indeed external but it uses internal forces to spread itself through subversion. The Soviets entered this region because of Israel—into Egypt through the arms supply channel in opposition to Israel—through cooperation on the high dam using the leverage of the Israeli problem and the Palestinian problem. They used the conflicts and contradictions in the area to spread themselves and they still do. A new model of the threat is now becoming the use of client states in Africa, Asia and elsewhere to extend Soviet influence, using political forces for strategic gain. (*Dr. Brzezinski* interjected client states and proxy forces.)

Continuing, *Prince Saud* said they have asked the United States to create a just and lasting peace. The Israeli problem is not just a political problem. It has deep roots which cannot be avoided. Why do we want a solution? To bring peace and stability. A peace which does not resolve the basic issues does not lead to peace and stability. We hope and pray

that it will be brought about and we hope that this will happen through the efforts of the United States and President Carter.

No country wishes for peace more than Saudi Arabia. Our country is part of the world and is inexplicably linked to it. We identify ourselves with the future of the Western world. We are convinced of this and we need not be persuaded. The cornerstone of our situation in the Arab world is that we must cooperate with moderate elements. We have built strong relations with Egypt. We have pursued them and we believe in them. Egypt is essential to the security and stability of the region. No country wishes for the success of President Sadat more than Saudi Arabia. No country would be more hurt by his failure. Not indirectly but directly. We would like to see Egypt as the leader of the Arab world, with moderate forces spreading. We would be harmed if Egypt were isolated.

With respect to a peace settlement, there have been many discussions. Starting with Secretary Vance's visit last summer,¹¹ there have been constant talks. We have consistently given our opinion. We have constantly said that an agreement which does not tackle the central Palestinian issues or a total settlement would be difficult for the Arab world to accept. There is a minimum degree of solidarity needed to have this accepted. We know it is not a single step process. President Carter said that the problem would be viewed in its totality. We have no problem taking it step by step or putting it in stages. We gave our views on this subject as friends to the United States when you undertook the heavy burden of leadership.

These efforts must tackle the important obstacle which is Israel. The visit of Sadat to Jerusalem was undertaken to break through that obstacle. After that there was a transformation in attitudes. When President Carter was here he thought that the Sadat visit was a good thing but was a little angry about not knowing about it in advance and thus not being able to use it to the utmost.

There are limits to what any Arab country can do. We must act according to our perception—not only one person or two people but what the entire country of Saudi Arabia can accept. When we hold that Jerusalem is an important point, we do so not because we are more religious. It is an important issue to any Muslim country. Arab opinion, it can be said, is biased against Israel; however, that was not true in Iran. Yet, the first issue raised by the new Iranian government was the question of Palestine. Saudi Arabia does not want to be difficult,

¹¹ Vance visited Israel and Egypt August 5–9, 1978, to deliver invitations to Begin and Sadat to meet at Camp David. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, Documents 285–288.

does not want to harm your interests or hurt Sadat. We have constantly expressed our opinions which we hold because they reflect the minimum levels required for Arab support. Even though we differ about the way to achieve a peace settlement nothing we have done in the past few years could be interpreted to make life more difficult. Rather we have tried to assist within the limits of our capabilities. We pray that President Sadat and President Carter will succeed in their efforts. U.S. relations with Egypt are no threat to Saudi Arabia or to any other Arab country except perhaps South Yemen.

We have certain perceptions of the danger to the approach to peace: there are two parties, Israel and the Arab world (or Egypt) and we perceive that the United States gives complete support to Israel both economically and militarily. Israel increases its demands and Egypt is forced to make concessions to overcome the obstacles of Israel. This is our perception, and in the final analysis it is hard to bring the Arab world to support this. Whether it is true or not is arguable. Does strengthening Israel actually lead to compromises? We think our position is correct. The perception exists, which we cannot hide, that Sadat agreed to more than the minimum acceptable to the Arabs. Jordan is a country most interested in peace. It is safe to say that they see themselves incapable of following Sadat, although they tried at every step.

We talked to Sadat and we need to extend efforts to get their views accepted. There are thirteen moderate countries in the Arab League all wishing Sadat success. They hope he will bring something that they can grab and fight for. As Crown Prince Fahd said when the Ambassador brought in a stiff or stern message, "Give us something we can hold on to." We tried to get Arab support. Why does Egypt not go and seek the support they need, stressing the positive elements of the US/Egyptian partnership? Egypt should reflect the Arab view, but we see a lack of that. We hope that the Egyptians will undertake such an effort. After the signing of a peace treaty it will become more difficult.

We would not wish to do anything whatsoever to hint at the punishment of Egypt. We do not want to see it become a Soviet state. However, there are some limits on our independent action as members of the Arab League when a member state signs an independent peace treaty. There will be actions on the part of the Arab League. These "technical results" include: (1) suspension of the membership of that country in the Arab League; (2) removal of the headquarters of the Arab League from Egypt; (3) the application of Arab boycott rules to Egyptian companies dealing with Israel. These are not decisions to be taken, but rather the result of Arab League statutes and the fact of the Egyptian signing of a peace treaty with Israel. These are protective measures not sanctions. They apply not just to Egypt but apply to

other entities as well. They are joint measures in accordance with the statutes of the Arab League and the Joint Mutual Defense Pact. We will hold the position that we will not support any effort to punish Egypt. Rather we will use every effort we can exert to bring about the understanding that we have with Egypt.

With regard to regional security affairs, we talked extensively about this with Secretary Brown. We established a joint committee to look at all bases of the threat and develop a common understanding. We agreed in principle on this, and Mr. Murray has since come back for discussions. Thus far it has involved the South Yemen issue primarily, but we think that is a good exercise. I would like to express the gratitude of my government for the efforts extended in the past two months in achieving common understanding and taking the necessary response to the threat. We work well together. We hope this cooperation will continue and that this kind of quick response will govern our actions in the future. We must face up to the Soviets.

These issues will not be solved in one meeting. We appreciate your presence here not only as a sign that the President wants us to know your views but that you want to know our views. I may have roamed in the course of this presentation.

Dr. Brzezinski said that Prince Saud had made a clear, concise presentation. If there was time, the President had asked him to be as responsive as possible in explaining our position on many other issues such as SALT, and he hoped that you will not hesitate to raise these. We agreed with Prince Saud's final observation that this has been a good beginning, made up partly of your ideas and partly our ideas. Given the fact that the concrete test which arose was certainly not planned, nevertheless, I think that the message was understood by those to whom it was addressed.

I welcome and was heartened by the statement that Saudi Arabia would not be a party to punishing Egypt and would maintain every effort to maintain normal relations with Egypt. If you should do anything tangible beyond those technical issues, it would harm us. We will be helping Egypt, and that effort would be vitiated.

You say that the Arab League reaction is technical or symbolic (Prince Saud starts to interrupt)—the movement of the headquarters from Cairo is certainly a symbolic move. But, it is important that the peace process not be inhibited by an isolated or weakened Sadat. You are very important in that regard.

Your point that Sadat should use more salesmanship is a good one. We will tell Sadat to do more to make his case. This effort is not one of instant miracles but rather shaping a political process to lead to a particular objective. Prime Minister Begin has been in trouble since his proposal of autonomy, return of land, and self-government was

perceived as leading to something more than that. It is impossible to predict what the outcome would be.

We cannot guarantee a Palestinian state but it is important that the Palestinians be engaged more as a *partenaire valable*. We will talk to Hussein about this. He may not be able to participate early in the process, but we hope he will not block it. That plays into the hands of those in Israel who want to stay where they are. U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia and Egypt represent a threat to the hard line elements. The Camp David accords are built on a twin structure of a peace treaty and then moving on to negotiations on the West Bank and Gaza. The treaty is just the beginning of a process but it could gain momentum, especially if the Palestinians begin participating in growing numbers. This will take political sophistication, but we see it as an equitable *beginning*.

Prince Saud asked what would happen in the Arab world in the meantime.

Dr. Brzezinski replied that isolation has to be avoided.

Prince Saud wondered how? Arab perceptions have gone askew at the efforts of Egypt. We thought that Sadat would take on the Arab mantle, but he has achieved self-isolation even from his friends. When he was going to Camp David he told us formally that, "As long as this man (Begin) lives I cannot put my name on any document; so I go there only to get the U.S. position." There have been a series of constant events, surprises. That may move some people, but that rule does not apply in this part of the world.

Dr. Brzezinski said that maybe President Sadat had not articulated his position enough or had not tried enough. It was important to remember the progress, however. Two years ago Israel had said they would never give up the Sinai, they would never return to the original lines. There are different kinds of peace settlements. One is a peace dictated by the victors. The alternative is accommodation, where both sides have to give something. The Arabs are not a vanquished nation. They performed brilliantly in 1973. However, Israel also is not defeated, so compromises are required. After my recent visit to Israel, I am convinced that Begin's political problems are real. The anguish there is real. It was apparent in the Knesset with the great spectacle of political opposition.

Prince Saud wondered whether it would be possible for the United States to announce the end result of the peace process.

Dr. Brzezinski replied that would kill the process from the beginning. We would have three choices:

—first, we could announce a result fully satisfying to the Arabs in which case the Israelis would never join the process;

—secondly, we could announce an outcome favorable to Israel, in which case the Arabs would not join the process;

—thirdly, we could announce an outcome involving serious concessions by both sides, in which case both sides would probably refuse to join in.

Prince Saud wondered why we could not go to an international forum; why not further refine the definition of Resolution 242 in the Security Council?

Dr. Brzezinski replied that at this time a certain measure of ambiguity was needed in order to move forward. He pointed to the speech by Mr. Peres in the Knesset recently, half of which dealt with the rights of the Palestinians. He thought this was extremely important since Peres could conceivably be the next Prime Minister.

Prince Saud said, why not wait until he becomes Prime Minister?

Dr. Brzezinski said he cited Peres' speech as an example of the kind of change of attitudes that can occur when one is not too precise. That is especially true when the objectives are irreconcilable.

Prince Turki noted that Mr. Christopher had referred to the checks and balances among the three different sections of the U.S. Government. He thought there was a fourth element—the press. Saudi Arabia is anxious that its actions not be interpreted in the United States on the basis of their reporting by *the Washington Post*. America has an Ambassador here to find out what Saudi views are.¹²

¹² The U.S. delegation next met with King Khalid at the King's Palace from 5:45 p.m. to 6:10 p.m., followed by a meeting with Crown Prince Fahd. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 218.

189. Draft Intelligence Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency

PA M 79–10189

Washington, April 16, 1979

[Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00150R, Production Case Files (1979–1981), Box 6, Folder 141, [folder title not declassified]. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. 14 pages not declassified.]

**190. Summary of Conclusions of a Presidential Review
Committee Meeting¹**

Washington, April 27, 1979, 3–4:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

PRC Meeting on Saudi Arabia

PARTICIPANTS

State

Secretary Cyrus Vance (chaired)

Richard Cooper, Under Secretary for Economic Affairs

William Crawford, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern and
South Asian Affairs

Ambassador John West

Treasury

Secretary W. Michael Blumenthal

Anthony Solomon, Under Secretary for Monetary Affairs

Defense

Deputy Secretary Charles Duncan

Robert Murray, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern, African and South
Asian Affairs

Energy

Secretary James Schlesinger

Peter Borre, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Energy Resources

ACDA

Barry Blechman, Assistant Director

JCS

Lt General William Smith

DCI

Robert Bowie, Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

Robert Ames, NIO, Near East and South Asia

White House

David Aaron

NSC

Gary Sick

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 74, PRC 102, 4/27/79, Saudi Arabia. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Brzezinski sent the Summary of Conclusions to Carter under a May 1 memorandum recommending that Carter approve it. Carter approved and wrote in the margin: "Zbig—Enumerate for me items of leverage we might exert on S[audio] A[rabia]. J." The President added: "p.s. Supplication is fruitless." Tarnoff forwarded two undated Department of State background papers prepared for this meeting, covering a range of U.S.-Saudi issues, to Brzezinski under an April 25 memorandum. These papers are in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P790064–1310. A portion of the paper on oil and other economic issues is printed in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974–1980, Document 202.

The purpose of the meeting was to develop a strategy for managing our relations with the Saudis over the coming months in order to obtain as much Saudi support for key issues as we can realistically expect. The group agreed as follows:

1. There was general consensus that the U.S. relationship with Saudi Arabia is undergoing a period of severe strain and will require special attention in the months ahead. (S)

2. On the peace process, we need to resume a dialogue with the Saudi leadership about our own plans and intentions. It will be useful to inform them in advance whenever possible of steps we plan to take, but we cannot expect them to change their position with regard to the next stage of negotiations until some progress has been achieved. An early visit by Ambassador Strauss would be helpful as evidence of our intention to press ahead vigorously.² (S)

3. Apart from the key issues of peace, security and oil, there are a range of economic issues which are of interest to the Saudis and where we might be able to show progress. These include the Saudi investments in the United States, tax issues affecting ARAMCO, possible restriction of the foreign tax credit, the payment of interest on Saudi funds deposited with the Defense Department, the boycott, and questions relating to development assistance. It was agreed that these issues needed to be examined on an interagency basis in the context of our overall relations with Saudi Arabia. Secretary Blumenthal could then discuss them with the Saudi Minister of Finance, Mohammed Aba al-Khail, probably in Europe, at an early opportunity.³ (S)

4. The President's decision to request supplemental assistance and credits for Sudan and Oman could be helpful, and the Saudis will be notified of the decision immediately. (S)

5. With regard to the Fahd visit, we should basically let the Saudis determine the appropriate time. We should encourage them to go ahead with the visit, but not apply pressure. A visit in late August or September, after Ramadan, is probably the earliest realistic date for a visit. (S)

6. All agreed that some progress would be necessary on the peace negotiations and/or security issues before we could weigh in seriously with the Saudis on increasing their long-term production capacity. With regard to current production levels, we probably cannot affect their decision to resume production at the previous level of 8.5 million

² Carter placed a vertical line in the right-hand margin next to this sentence. Carter had appointed Special Representative for Trade Negotiations Robert S. Strauss to be his Special Representative to the Middle East peace negotiations on April 24.

³ In the right-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter wrote: "Let me approve first."

barrels per day. However, we should be prepared to object if their production drops below this level. We should make clear that it is our understanding that they are reducing production in response to the resumption of a substantial level of Iranian exports, and we would anticipate a reconsideration on their part if Iranian production should again drop off. (S)

7. This is not an appropriate time to raise the question of their relations with the Soviets. (S)

191. Memorandum From William Quandt and Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, May 3, 1979

SUBJECT

Our Influence with Saudi Arabia

Our ability to make the Saudi leadership take a decision which they believe is contrary to their basic interests is very limited. We do, nonetheless, have the capability of influencing their decisions on a considerable range of issues. Insofar as we are able to influence Saudi Arabia, we will also be in a position to deal with the most important member of OPEC. This relates to your interest in developing a strategy toward OPEC, which we will discuss with Henry Owen at greater length. (C)

There are basically two ways to influence the Saudis—by positive inducements or by negative sanctions. No single act will produce much leverage, but over time our behavior can affect the Saudis in significant ways. (C)

Positive Inducements

This is the method we have used most frequently with the Saudis, and the one which has most often produced results. It is most likely

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 4–7/79. Secret. Sent for information. Brzezinski wrote the following note in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum: “DA please give me your comment. This is troublesome. ZB.” Attached but not printed is a handwritten note to Quandt from Brzezinski that reads: “Bill Q, We need to have a better strategy than this. How can we press them? E.g. on F–5s? ZB.” Quandt added a note to Sick: “GS—any need to develop this further? BQ.”

to be the preferred course of action when we want them to *do* something—as opposed to making them stop doing something. (C)

1. *Presidential Request.* A direct and personal request from the President to Khalid or Fahd which recalls the depth of our “special relationship” and asks for a specific policy or course of action will sometimes produce results. Obviously this must be used sparingly and only for issues of great moment, and there must be some hint that our relationship will suffer if the requested action is not taken. (S)

2. *Security Relationship.* Tangible demonstration of the benefits of the U.S.-Saudi security relationship, e.g. our response to the Yemen crisis is invaluable in countering the Saudi impression that our relationship is always one way, with us asking them for something. We cannot create the opportunities for such demonstrations of our support, but we should remain alert to opportunities to enhance our credibility as a security partner. (S)

3. *Arms Sales.* The Saudis have no major end items on their present shopping list. The F-15 sale was of course a major boost to our relationship, but approvals of lesser items of essentially non-controversial equipment or improvements in deliveries of FMS items only remove potential irritants. They go largely unnoticed by the key decision-makers, who tend to take for granted the efficient operation of our supply relationship. (S)

4. *Economic.* The items enumerated by Mike Blumenthal at the PRC on Saudi Arabia are a sample of the kind of secondary issues which provide potential leverage if our response can be positive and suitably packaged.² These are the kind of items which an emissary could carry in his pocket to forestall the “what-have-you-done-for-me-lately” syndrome. They will not have a major or lasting impact, although they can have considerable influence on a single decision if properly presented. In general, our economic relationship is perceived by the Saudis as one where we are constantly asking for concessions on their part, while we avoid taking painful decisions. Consistent efforts on a domestic energy program, moves to support the dollar, and decisions on taxes and other areas of special interest to Saudi Arabia are areas where we can most effectively counter this impression. (S)

5. *Middle East Policy.* The Saudis imply that they would be ready to pay a price if we were to adopt position on the Palestinian question which is closer to their own. Any movement by the U.S. toward a dialogue with the PLO, support for an Arab role in Jerusalem, or the creation of a Palestinian homeland would encourage the Saudis to significantly revise their policies and draw closer to us on the political

² See Document 190.

front without fear of Arab reprisal.³ In the longer term, demonstration of success in changing Israeli attitudes toward the West Bank and settlement policy would give us new bargaining leverage on the political front. The Saudis previously showed interest in helping to bring the Palestinians into the negotiating process; they could probably be persuaded to renew their intermediary role by a serious U.S. offer to seek Palestinian participation. (S)

Negative Sanctions

Unless done very carefully or on issues of supreme national importance such as an oil embargo, threats by the United States tend to be counterproductive. The Saudis are proud and weak. Their performance at Baghdad⁴ shows that they are not impervious to rather crude threats, but in that case the threats were immediately credible and came from a fellow Arab state. In effect, the rejectionists at Baghdad were pressing the Saudis to do what they basically wanted to do in the first place, and their acquiescence could be rationalized as support for Arab nationalism. Our requests tend to cut against the grain of their natural inclinations, and overt pressure tends to make them stiffen rather than bend. As a general rule, negative sanctions are most effective in persuading them to *stop* doing something. (S)

1. *Arms Sales.* We can slow or stop the delivery of key items of equipment and spare parts for Saudi military forces. This would be a drastic step. If credible, it would force the Saudis to consider alternative sources of supply and could undermine the reliability of our entire security relationship. (S)

2. *Public Statements.* We have already dropped hints that Saudi opposition to the peace process could create unfavorable reactions in Congress and the American public. These warnings have registered and have probably been taken into account. The Saudis have shown great sensitivity to criticism in the U.S. press. This may be a useful way to signal our displeasure if used skillfully. (S)

3. *Economic.* Economic sanctions are a two-edged sword which risks hurting us as much as the Saudis. There is virtually nothing we provide them in goods or services which they cannot obtain elsewhere, and

³ Brzezinski placed a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to the first portion of this paragraph.

⁴ Reference is to the summit meeting of Foreign Ministers from 18 Arab states and the PLO which convened in Baghdad March 27–31, in order to consider sanctions against Egypt for concluding a peace treaty with Israel. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 242.

they have no shortage of retaliatory weapons. We need to look more carefully at the wider range of how we can use economic measures to moderate OPEC behavior on oil prices. (C)

4. *Military.* A threat to use military force to protect our interests would probably be effective *in extremis*, when it would be credible. It is of little value in conditions short of that. Such threats are probably best handled indirectly, through leaks or inspired articles. Kissinger's all-out campaign of November and December 1975 (hints of dire U.S. action in the event of economic "strangulation," stories about war games in the U.S. desert, a sudden carrier visit to the Persian Gulf, and scholarly articles discussing the advantages of direct intervention) certainly got Saudi attention, but did not necessarily affect Saudi behavior. A background of such intangible threats may, however, help to enhance the attractiveness of whatever carrot we might be able to offer with the other hand. In general, positive inducements may be most effective after a period of coolness or tension in our relations. (S)

General Comments

In order for the United States to exercise effective influence over Saudi Arabia on any given issue, four general conditions must be met:

—We must be able to provide a service which is needed or badly wanted by the Saudis;

—The Saudis must be unable to obtain that assistance or equipment or support elsewhere;

—The Saudis must lack the means to *make* us provide the service; and,

—They must be unwilling to do without our help. (C)

Those conditions come closest to being fulfilled in the security area. They are furthest from being met in the economic sphere, where the Saudis have considerable resources of their own. On political issues, there is typically a trade-off between competing interests. Thus, our present strategy of maximizing our security relationship as bargaining leverage in the economic and political spheres is entirely rational. However, by increasing Saudi perceptions of the benefits we can offer on the political and economic sides, we can increase our overall influence and make the relationship more stable. (S)

The decisions which we make on our domestic energy program and the direction of the next round in the peace negotiations are the areas of most promise in sustaining and expanding the U.S.-Saudi ties over the difficult months that lie ahead. Influence, however, will not flow from any single act on our part, but instead is likely to be a function of the quality of our overall relationship. That requires continu-

ing attention to our dialogue with the Saudi establishment, not the search for a quick fix. (S)

192. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, May 11, 1979, 3:30–4:20 p.m.

SUBJECT

Middle East Security Issues

PARTICIPANTS

State

Secretary Cyrus Vance
Harold Saunders, Assistant
Secretary, Bureau of Near
Eastern and South Asian
Affairs

OSD

Secretary Harold Brown
David McGiffert, Assistant
Secretary, International
Security Affairs

JCS

General David Jones
Lt. General William Smith

Energy

Secretary James Schlesinger
Harry Bergold, Assistant
Secretary, International Affairs

DCI

Frank Carlucci, Deputy Director
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East
and South Asia

ACDA

Spurgeon Keeny, Deputy Director
Alan Platt, Acting Assistant
Director, Weapons Evaluation
and Control

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

William Quandt
Fritz Ermarth
Sam Hoskinson

1. *Saudi Financing of Egyptian F-5s.* The SCC reviewed the status of the Saudi commitment to the Egyptian F-5 program. Defense received a letter on April 27 from Saudi Defense Minister Sultan setting forth a schedule of payments. Subsequently, Foreign Minister Saud informed

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00112R, Subject Files, Box 16, Folder 34, (SCC) Middle East. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. Brzezinski initialed the Summary of Conclusions on the last page. Dodson sent it under a May 14 memorandum to Mondale, Vance, Brown, Schlesinger, Seignious, Jones, and Turner. The minutes of this meeting are printed as Document 23.

us that Saudi Arabia was withdrawing its offer to finance the F-5s.² Secretary Vance has sent a cable to Saud in Morocco,³ but has not yet received a reply. The President has signed a letter to King Khalid, and after some discussion, the SCC concurred that the letter should be sent now.⁴ In addition, it was agreed that Secretary Brown should respond to the message from Sultan, emphasizing our broad concerns with the success of the F-5 program, and discussing the financial arrangements for the sale.⁵ All of the principals were concerned about adverse Congressional reaction if the Saudis do withdraw their financial support, particularly in light of the personal commitment from King Khalid to the President. Congressional reaction could be particularly sharp, and might hurt the F-15 program for Saudi Arabia. (S)

2. *Threats to Saudi Arabia.* After some discussion, the group generally agreed that the Saudis are primarily concerned by external threats, not by internal social upheaval. Insofar as the Saudis do face internal security problems, those are exacerbated by external developments. The most immediate dangers as perceived by the Saudis stem from inter-Arab conflicts, not from the Soviets or Israel directly. It was generally agreed that the Saudis have lost confidence in the US ability to help them manage their security problems, and that an important objective in our future plans is to reverse that perception. (S)

3. *Nature of US Military Presence.* In considering ways of reassuring the Saudis and others of our commitment to their security, a number of options are available: enhancing our naval presence; pre-positioning equipment on bases in the area; and the rapid capability to respond to requests for military assistance. Defense has been consulting with the Saudis and Jordanians about contingency planning in the region, and a number of options for strengthening the US military presence

² Sultan's letter was not found. Telegram 718 from Riyadh, May 7, reported that Saud had informed Daniels that, as a result of the decisions at the March Baghdad summit, Saudi Arabia would withdraw funding for the sale of the aircraft to Egypt. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 251. A Mini-SCC meeting, held earlier on May 11, discussed specifically the Saudi withdrawal of funding. See *ibid.*, Document 253.

³ In telegram 116140 to Rabat, May 8, Vance instructed Ambassador Parker to inform Saud that the United States was "deeply concerned by indication that SAG has reversed its decision at funding Egyptian F-5 program." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840133–1743)

⁴ Carter's letter to Khalid, conveying his "great concern" over the effect that the Saudi F-5 announcement could have on U.S.-Saudi relations, was transmitted in telegram 120410 to Jidda, May 11. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, Document 248.

⁵ Brown's letter to Sultan was transmitted in telegram 123107 to Riyadh, May 15. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790218–0703)

are under review. These will be considered at a PRC meeting chaired by Secretary Brown in early June.⁶ (S)

4. *Diplomatic Considerations.* Secretary Vance will chair a meeting of the PRC in early June to consider the diplomatic consequences of strengthening the US military presence in the Persian Gulf region. CIA will prepare a comprehensive intelligence assessment of likely regional and Soviet responses to various types of US presence. Iraq's growing role as a regional power will also be analyzed. A political strategy for enhancing our security relations with key countries in the area—especially Saudi Arabia, Oman, Jordan, the UAE, and Egypt—will be discussed. (S)

⁶ The PRC met June 21 and 22; see Document 26. Christopher chaired the June 21 session, and Brown chaired the June 22 session.

193. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, June 5, 1979, 1415Z

4245. Subject: Crossing the Rubicon: US Military Reorganization in Saudi Arabia. Ref: Jidda 4125 (Notal).²

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: The time is ripe to open the question of a new US military relationship with Saudi Arabia. This Mission believes that SAG would not only be receptive to but in fact, would welcome a change in the US Saudi military relationship. As a starting point, this Mission recommends that the Embassy be authorized to approach SAG at appropriate levels to inform it of our willingness to consider a new

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790255–0376. Secret; Niact Immediate. Sent for information to the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, USCINCEUR Vaihingen, Dhahran, USLO Riyadh, CHUSMTM Dhahran, CHUSEOPE Riyadh, DCR Riyadh, DIVENGER Riyadh, PM SANG Riyadh, CDR DARCOM Alexandria VA, and Chief US Army Engineers.

² In telegram 4125 from Jidda, May 31, the Embassy provided information concerning the tentative planning for the reorganization of the United States Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia. Due to the regional and Saudi political sensitivity this reorganization would entail, the Embassy desired to be kept involved in the process. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790246–1026)

structure and direction in our security assistance efforts to place them in greater conformance with Saudi needs and desires. End summary.

3. There is a little doubt that the military relationship occupies a central place in US Saudi relations. The large and varied programs run by the Corps of Engineers, US Military Training Mission (USMTM) Saudi National Guard Modernization Program (SANG), the Saudi F-5 program administered by AFLC, the SNEP and the SOCP programs make the US security assistance effort in the Kingdom one of the largest in the world today. If we accept the premise that the security of Saudi Arabia with its vast petroleum reserves is of vital interest to the US, then it is also true that, as a concomitant of that interest, it is necessary to ensure that the military assistance program in Saudi Arabia is operated with as much efficiency and effectiveness as possible.

4. Although our military assistance effort over the past 25 years has achieved considerable progress, this Mission has come to the conclusion that our military assistance program has reached a point where we should review both the type of organization which should superintend and direct US military activities in Saudi Arabia and the direction in which these activities should be focused. Concurrent with this conclusion is the growing perception that SAG would not only be receptive to but, in fact, would welcome a change in the US military relationship.

5. During the Feb visit of Defense Secretary Brown and the subsequent US Saudi security consultations, both Defense Minister Prince Sultan and Foreign Minister Prince Saud made it clear that Saudi Arabia wants a new military relationship with the US.³ No specifics were mentioned, but at least three reasons underline the current Saudi attitude.

6. First, for its part, the Ministry of Defense still wants a military organization which symbolizes the deeply rooted and special nature of US Saudi military ties, but it now appears to want something more than a program which essentially monitors and administers FMS cases. The parameters for this new organization have yet to be determined but some extensive changes and reorientation of effort will be necessary.

7. A second consideration is cost, for it is evident that the Saudis are concerned that they are not getting sufficient value or service for every riyal spent. Pressure in this regard has recently been placed on the Corps of Engineers which has been asked to reduce the ten percent surcharge on construction contracts to eight percent.

8. An additional motivation for change stems from the Saudi experience during the recent conflict between the two Yemens. Saudi inability to intervene effectively, even if desired, on behalf of the YAR on land

³ See Documents 185 and 186.

or in the air is widely recognized throughout both MODA and the SAG. Their self-admitted situation of understrength units, shortages of essential equipment, lack of an effective command and control system, and their inability to plan for their own defense or to conduct combined arms operations has shaken their self-confidence. Rightly or wrongly, MODA officials blame USMTM, as the principal organization which administers the current US military assistance program, for many of the shortcomings in the Saudi Arabian armed forces. They perceive USMTM's actions as purely FMS administration with too little advice and assistance in the command and control process, training management, and operational planning matters with little or no regard for MODA's real needs.

9. This contradiction is the outgrowth of a difference which exists between USMTM's functions as defined in the Feb 1977 US/Saudi agreement on the Military Training Mission and the role of USMTM as required by Public Law 95–92.⁴ As stated in article 5 of the 1977 agreement, USMTM's functions include: a) actual participation in training instruction of Saudi armed forces personnel at all levels as a priority mission; b) provision of advisory services in planning, organization, training, armament, logistics, and supply; c) provision of studies and recommendations requested by MODA or initiated by USMTM; and d) management of Saudi FMS cases. Under Public Law 95–92 however, USMTM's primary function is FMS program management and administration only. Training and advisory assistance must be provided primarily by personnel who are detailed to Saudi Arabia for limited periods of time to perform limited tasks. With the exception of six officers, all members of the US armed forces assigned to the Kingdom to manage the assistance program must be assigned on a fully reimbursable basis.

10. As a result of this discrepancy, USMTM is placed in a quandary, as its application of Public Law 95–92 is at considerable variance with Saudi expectations of USMTM's functions as outlined in the 1977 agreement. To overcome this contradiction and to create a US security assistance organization which is responsive to Saudi desires, a change in the US law or some US funding to provide for operational, planning, advice, and training assistance will probably be necessary.

11. This Mission does not propose to identify in any great detail proposals for a future US military organization in Saudi Arabia. We

⁴ A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in February 1977 to govern the day-to-day relationship between the Military Training Mission and the Saudi Ministry of Defense and Aviation. P.L. 95–92, the International Security Assistance Act, which Carter signed into law on August 4, 1977, permitted the maintenance of military management teams during FY 1978 in 16 countries.

suggest, however, that a complete reordering of the current security assistance mosaic, and the creation of one DOD umbrella organization in Saudi Arabia is desirable. It is our view, however, that the establishment of a new US regional command focused on the Arabian Peninsula is probably premature at the present time, although circumstances might warrant its consideration at a future date. Nevertheless, it should be possible to devise a chain of command to Washington which will foster improved dialogue and responsiveness between the United States and Saudi Arabia.

12. Any new US military organization should be structured to carry out activities in three areas. These are: the administration of Saudi FMS cases; the provision of operational planning advice and training assistance for Saudi security programs; and the creation of a joint military program liaison office for handling the middle level staff work, advisory assistance, and coordination with MODA required to implement the US/Saudi military assistance programs in Yemen, Oman, Sudan, Bahrain, Jordan, and other countries. Individual project managers for the Corps, SANG, MODA, and possibly other programs could remain, but they should be under the command/direction of the commander of the umbrella organization. To the extent possible, logistical support for all US activities should be centralized, possibly using the Engineer Logistics Command which supports the Corps as the basis.

13. As a starting point for this new military organization/relationship, this Mission recommends that the Embassy be authorized to approach SAG at appropriate levels to inform it of our willingness to consider a new structure and direction for our security assistance efforts in Saudi Arabia. Provided SAG concurs, we would recommend that a survey team be sent to the Kingdom and, working under the direction of the US Ambassador, determine what the Saudis really want and expect in order to reorient the US security assistance effort to conform with our mutual interests. This team should also look at the relationships between various US programs with a view towards realizing economies by consolidation of similar administrative activities and functions. Once this survey is complete, it should be possible to formulate the basic framework and most efficient chain of command for a new US military organization. The proposal can then be presented by an appropriate high-level US team to the SAG for consideration.

14. This message coordinated with USMTM, COE, PM SANG and USEOPE.

Daniels

194. Memorandum From Secretary of the Treasury Blumenthal to President Carter¹

Washington, June 7, 1979

SUBJECT

Economic/Financial Initiatives Toward Saudi Arabia

At the PRC meeting on April 27,² it was agreed to seek early resolution of some of our more minor economic/financial problems with Saudi Arabia in an effort to improve the atmosphere for subsequent discussions of oil and Middle East peace. You asked to review those proposals. I will be seeing Saudi Finance Minister Abalkhail in Paris on June 14, and would plan to convey the following to him unless you object.

Several of the outstanding U.S.-Saudi issues are in the tax area (outside of petroleum). Some relate to the large U.S. investments of SAMA, the Saudi central bank, and some to the creditability of Saudi taxes against the U.S. tax liabilities of non-oil firms. On all of these matters, I will be able to either assure my Saudi counterpart of a favorable outcome or express confidence that such a result will eventuate. There is also the long-run possibility of a U.S.-Saudi tax treaty, but I do not plan to push this one now because few benefits are likely to result for the United States and because submission to the Senate might be more propitious at a later date.

As we discussed, the creditability of Saudi taxes on petroleum remains a difficult issue. The IRS will shortly be proposing new regulations in this area to resolve a number of outstanding questions. They will likely have the effect of disallowing credits for ARAMCO unless the Saudis make changes in their tax system. I will discuss this with Abalkhail, but because of the complex issues involved, resolution of the situation will probably require extended negotiations.

A second major issue relates to Saudi deposits with DOD for weapons purchases. We have not been paying the Saudis any interest on these funds, and they have been demanding for several years that we do so. We have reached inter-agency agreement on arrangements whereby the Saudis will earn interest on funds that are clearly excess balances according to DOD contractual guidelines. Ambassador West will advise the Saudis that they will be able to earn interest on these funds when he returns to Jidda this week. In my discussions with

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 74, PRC 102, 4/27/79, Saudi Arabia. Secret.

² See Document 190.

Saudi Finance Minister Abalkhail next week, I will also refer to this in seeking to persuade the Saudis to alter their boycott guidelines to enable U.S. firms to continue doing business in Saudi Arabia without violating our laws—but I am not at all sure that they will do so. (It would be possible for us to be more generous, but this would have several disadvantages: higher costs to our FY 79 and subsequent budgets, greater risk of triggering similar requests from other depositors, and potential public/Congressional criticism that we “were being nice to the Saudis when they were gouging us on oil”.)

A third area of Saudi concern relates to U.S. technology transfer. The Saudis feel that a number of our laws and regulations, as in the anti-boycott and tax areas, discourage U.S. firms from doing business with Saudi Arabia and therefore retard their own economic progress. In addition to the tax issues mentioned above, I plan to indicate that OPIC (and perhaps the Export-Import Bank) will be doing more to help in the near future. I will also reiterate that we stand ready to use the U.S.-Saudi Joint Economic Commission, which Minister Abalkhail and I co-chair, to further encourage technology transfer; the Commission, which is completely funded by the Saudis, already sponsors 22 projects (including solar energy and desalination projects) worth about \$1 billion upon completion.

I have considered the possibility of suggesting to the Saudis that we open negotiations on a Trade and Cooperation Arrangement. Such an Arrangement could include provisions to facilitate trade and investment between the two countries, though it would contain more symbolism than substance. At this point, however, I see little advantage in pursuing any major new initiative of this type—particularly as it would probably require Congressional ratification, or at least informal approval.

On the oil issue, both Ambassador West in his conversations and I in my conversations with the Finance Minister intend to follow the approach agreed on unanimously in the SCC meeting chaired by Zbig last week³—namely, that it is in our mutual interests to reduce high international spot prices for oil and that a temporary increase in oil production by Saudi Arabia would contribute to that objective, particularly during the interim six months before the agreed upon 5% conservation measures take effect.

W. Michael Blumenthal⁴

³ Reference is likely to the June 1 meeting of the SCC which addressed international oil issues. Documentation on this meeting is in the Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 104, SCC 168, 6/1/79, International Oil Problem.

⁴ Blumenthal signed “Mike” above this typed signature.

195. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, June 18, 1979

SUBJECT

Organization of Military Assistance Efforts in Saudi Arabia

You asked for my comments on the attached cable² from our Embassy in Saudi Arabia concerning the organization of our military assistance efforts in that country.

The Saudis have realized over recent months that they need to do more to defend themselves. The recent clash in Yemen caused them to take a look at their own military capabilities and particularly to seek ways to improve their top-level planning. With the assistance of General Dick Lawrence, whom we sent to help the Saudis in this effort, the Saudis have identified significant deficiencies in their military capabilities. They are now considering what to do about it.

One possibility is for the Saudis to ask the United States to expand the nature of its advice (beyond the present “Sears, Roebuck” approach of equipment deliveries and small-unit training on that equipment)³ so as to initiate more central planning and operations assistance. I am examining the organizational proposals mentioned in the Embassy Jidda cable, other proposals we have developed in DoD, and the laws governing our assistance programs, to see where we want to make changes and how to go about them. I will be discussing them with Cy, Zbig, and Ambassador West before they are broached with the Saudis. I believe we can resolve the matter within three to four months.

Harold Brown

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 4–7/79. Secret. A notation in an unknown hand reads: “To GS for file. No further action necessary.”

² Telegram 4245; printed as Document 193. In a June 6 memorandum to Brown, Brzezinski indicated that Carter would like Brown’s comments on the telegram. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 4–7/79.)

³ Reference is to the U.S. full-service department store Sears, Roebuck, and Company.

196. Report Prepared by the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West)¹

Jidda, July 15, 1979

SAUDI ARABIA—THE LESSON OF IRAN—AFTER SIX MONTHS

Summary

The events in Iran have brought to the Saudi leadership a realization of two facts: an absolute monarchy is vulnerable and the U.S. and its Western allies are absolutely dependent on imported oil, of which SAG is a major supplier. This realization is causing SAG to be particularly careful about getting too far ahead of its people. It is also beginning to regard the U.S.-Saudi special relationship, generally defined as oil for security, as being somewhat unbalanced in the U.S. favor and is beginning to expect more consideration and more concessions from the U.S. in return for oil.

Introduction

The fall of Iran has made clear to the rulers of Saudi Arabia two basic facts which are more and more influencing SAG foreign policy:

1) The vulnerability of an absolute monarchy, regardless of its tenure, tradition, or outward appearance of stability and no matter how numerous, well trained, and well equipped the armed forces and internal security may be.

b) The absolute dependence of the United States and its Western allies on imported oil, of which SAG is the chief supplier.

The appreciation of these basic lessons has already had a noticeable effect on SAG's bilateral relationship with the U.S. They will be increasingly important considerations in the development and direction of SAG's policies over the coming months. It is, in our judgment, imperative that the USG policy not lose sight of these considerations.

These lessons from Iran's fall are in a sense a strange paradox to Saudi Arabia: the first tells the Saudis how weak they are; the second

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 4-7/79. Confidential. Carter initialed the first page of the report, indicating that he saw it. West sent the report to Carter under a 2-page handwritten letter dated July 22. In it, he commended the President on his recent personnel moves and noted Robert Strauss's trip to Saudi Arabia. Brzezinski forwarded both the letter and the report to Carter under an August 10 memorandum, noting: "The summary on the first page of the assessment provides a good synopsis of the contents." (Ibid.) Strauss made his first trip to the Middle East July 1-7, during which he met with Fahd in Riyadh. See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978-December 1980, Document 271.

how strong they are, especially in their relations with the western world.

Vulnerability

The Shah, with the best trained, best equipped armed forces in the area, fell to a group of untrained and ill-equipped urban revolutionaries. His U.S. arms together with the friendship they implied were useless to sustain him in power. Friendship with the U.S., in fact, was one of the Shah's most vulnerable points, as it became a rallying cry for Khomeini and the masses as they toppled the Peacock Throne.

When the Shah fell in February 1979, the question immediately posed in the highest levels of the U.S. Government was: "Will Saudi Arabia be next?" That question was likewise being asked, debated, and studied at every level in Saudi Arabia with a degree of concern understandably greater than even in the U.S. The question was even similar in form: "Can it happen here?"

A stock reply developed almost immediately to that question—spontaneously we believe, but so uniform as to constitute what we began to term as the party line from both government and private sector individuals: "No, we are different . . . there is no real conflict between the religious and civil authorities . . . the Shah was vain and arrogant, insensitive to the masses, while our rulers are close to the people and responsive to them . . . we have no political prisoners or secret police, yes, there is some corruption, but we're taking steps to correct it."

After a time, one had the impression that the Saudis were trying as hard to convince themselves as they were to persuade us that "it can't happen here." As the ruling hierarchy began to realize that "it can happen here," a resolve began to develop: "We won't let it happen here." That determination, which is basically a strong manifestation of the survival instincts of the Saud family, has increased and has begun to shape Saudi policy, both foreign and domestic. The final bit of evidence, if one was needed, was the assigning of internal stability as the first priority of SAG policy for the new two-year plan.

How will the Saudi concern over its internal security situation affect its relationship with the U.S.? No one, not even the Saudis, can give a definite answer to that question now. But here are some general observations and principles which we believe valid:

a) They do not like or trust South Yemen, Libya, and Iraq (approximately in that descending order). While they will continue to support the PLO financially, their sympathy for that group and its leadership has noticeably cooled since the PLO's attacks on the Saudi Royal Family at Baghdad II.² However, the Saudis will avoid at all costs any breach

² See footnote 4, Document 191.

with other Arab states, including the Rejectionists³ and those definitely under Soviet influence.

b) The Saudis realize more than ever that the political leadership of a traditional Muslim society must not get too far ahead of its people's religious traditions. They will go to extreme lengths to avoid any major altercation with religious leaders and will be particularly careful in the application of Islamic laws and principles. This may create some difficulties with respect to the non-Muslim expatriate population and could exacerbate the problem of U.S. human and civil rights issues (especially concerning the rights of women) as applied to our bilateral relationship.

c) They will avoid, to the extent possible, any appearance of (a) relying on the U.S. for protection, and (b) of being a U.S. client state and thereby bowing to U.S. wishes and pressures. This does not mean that they want any lessening of the U.S. security commitment to them, but it does mean that they want the U.S. connection to be one of low visibility. They do not want a U.S. military presence except in case of direct attack by the USSR or one of its surrogates. They want U.S. military equipment for themselves and for designated neighbors. However, they want to maintain a measure of control over Saudi-financed U.S. military assistance to other Peninsula states, e.g. YAR, Oman, and Bahrain. This means a say in the amount, timing and composition of such assistance.

d) Although still a minority, more Saudis are arguing now that some accommodation with the USSR may be necessary, and there seems to be some receptiveness to Soviet overtures to improve relations. This view still, however, contrasts sharply with the basic Saudi antipathy for atheism and communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular. However, it is more likely today that the Saudis would support bringing the Soviet Union back into the Middle East peace process if the U.S. is seen as either unable or unwilling to pressure Israel into making the concessions they see as necessary for a comprehensive peace. Response to economic overtures from the Soviet Union are also possible in the future.

U.S. Dependence on Saudi Oil

The recent shortfall in world oil supplies resulting from the disruption of Iranian oil production has underlined for the Saudis the absolute dependence of the United States and our Western allies on imported oil. The Saudi leadership increasingly considers that the special relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia is unbalanced and that,

³ See footnote 6, Document 17.

at least in the short run, the U.S. needs favorable Saudi oil policies more than Saudi Arabia needs the U.S. for security. The Saudi perception of our lopsided dependence on their oil has strengthened the position within the Saudi hierarchy of those (1) who favor conservation of oil resources as the investment for Saudi Arabia's future prosperity and (b) who argue that Saudi Arabia should gain more concessions from us in the Middle East peace issues, in supply of military equipment, in investment restrictions in the U.S., and in other areas of our bilateral relationship.

The Saudis have come a long way from threatening the blunt use of the oil weapon as in the 1973 oil boycott. Instead of blindly threatening to cut off all oil supplies to the U.S., the Saudis have become more aware of their political leverage implicit in questions of oil pricing and production levels. In this era of short supply, the Saudis do not have the power to dictate oil prices to fellow OPEC leaders, but they have clearly staked out the most moderate position among the key OPEC countries. They have put themselves in a position where Saudi silence on oil pricing questions alone would yield center stage to those producers demanding that no restraints be placed on escalating oil prices. The Saudis further see themselves as the only country that has the ability in the short term to increase production enough to make up for the loss of Iranian supplies as well as provide the quantities required to fuel continued world economic expansion.

The Saudis have for years been telling the industrial leaders of the West to reduce oil consumption by conservation and the development of new energy sources. They are now in the enviable position of being able to sit smugly and hold production to current levels. As in the question of pricing, a passive policy by the Saudis on production will have severe economic ramifications for the health of the world economy. While there is a recognition that continued prosperity in the West is advantageous to the Saudis (as a protection of their overseas investments and a counter to communist expansion), they will increasingly expect concessions from the United States in exchange for their playing an aggressive role in solving the current energy crisis. For example, there is, in our judgment, a strong but unspoken link between the recent Saudi announcement that they would temporarily increase oil production and their expectations of progress in the Middle East peace process. If within the next six months there is no progress in the autonomy negotiations and recognition of an Arab status for Jerusalem, there will be exceptionally strong pressures within the Saudi hierarchy for a return to the 8.5 mbd level of oil production. There will also be strong pressure for Saudi Arabia to accommodate itself to a unified and higher price for oil at the December OPEC meeting. Marginal progress in the peace process may be matched by marginal cooperation in energy questions.

In the same light, the Saudis are expected to be less accommodating to the constant, if sometimes minor, irritations in our bilateral relations. U.S. refusal to pay interest on FMS deposits, a passive U.S. role in the I.A.M. suit in a California court against the OPEC countries,⁴ U.S. insistence on the application of American human rights standards in a conservative Muslim society (e.g. the Bendix-Siyanco case where the U.S. appears to be insisting that the Saudi Government employ women as instructors for their military),⁵ revisions in the interpretation of American boycott legislation, unfavorable U.S. tax regulations affecting American investments in Saudi Arabia, and the Treasury Department's interpretation of the Ribicoff anti-boycott amendment to the 1976 tax law⁶ are all examples of the sort of problems that irritate the Saudis.⁷ Until recently, the Saudis were more willing to work with us on compromises on such issues. Saudi concessions were seen as part of the special relationship with the U.S. Now they are quick to point out that those strains in the U.S.-Saudi relationship which reflect purely American domestic considerations are Washington's concerns, not Riyadh's. In order for the U.S. realistically to expect continued cooperation on oil, the Saudis expect the U.S. to find solutions to such irritants without demanding concessions from them.

Conclusions

Basic to the understanding of the Saudi system (which is in effect the Saud family), is the fact that they are survivors. The human instinct and capacity for self-preservation has been dominant throughout their 400-year history. Their current active leadership—Fahd, Abdallah, Sultan, and Saud—have either through genetic or cultural heritage, or both, arrived at today's crises with a full measure of the strong will and native ability necessary to survive even in today's complex world.

Therefore, the balancing of strength against weakness by the Saud family with the ultimate goal of survival is the interesting scenario unfolding now in Saudi Arabia. The effects of this scenario on the U.S. are substantial, should be recognized, and should govern to a great

⁴ In 1978, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers brought suit against OPEC in Los Angeles seeking damages for the oil embargo of 1973.

⁵ The Bendix-Siyanco case involved "the disapproval of three female applicants for positions as English language instructors at the Taif Ordnance School." (Telegram 4060 from Jidda, May 29; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790242-0980) More information on this case is in telegram 153400 to Jidda, June 15; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027-2318.

⁶ Reference is to the anti-boycott provisions (known as the Ribicoff Amendment) of the Tax Reform Act of 1976, which Ford signed on October 4, 1976. This amendment denied companies that cooperated with international boycotts certain tax benefits.

⁷ Carter placed a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to the portion of the paragraph from the second sentence beginning with "U.S. refusal" to this sentence.

degree our own responses in our relationship with SAG over the next few months.

John C. West
Ambassador

197. Memorandum From Gary Sick and Robert Hunter of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, August 8, 1979

SUBJECT

U.S. Military Relationship with Saudi Arabia (U)

In his recent report on Saudi Arabian military forces,² Major General Dick Lawrence proposes a refocused and restructured U.S. military relationship with Saudi Arabia. Briefly, he suggests creating a new U.S. military organization that would:

- replace the current U.S. Military Training Mission (USMTM);
- symbolize the genesis of a new military relation with the Saudis;
- have a regional orientation for unity of effort on the Arabian Peninsula;
- be functionally structured along two major tracks: FMS administration, and advisory and planning assistance with emphasis on the latter;
- be staffed with a smaller number of personnel of less visible rank than the current organization.³ (S)

Lawrence found an underlying concern within the Saudi Royal Family about the inefficiency, misplaced focus, top-heavy composition, and large size of the current U.S. mission in Saudi Arabia. By law USMTM is geared toward FMS administration and cannot effectively

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 8–11/79. Secret. Sent for information. Hunter initialed for Sick. In the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum, Brzezinski wrote: “push this—maybe PRC? ZB.”

² Not found.

³ Brzezinski drew a vertical line and wrote “yes” in the left-hand margin next to this point.

handle the areas of military advice and planning assistance which the Saudis now feel are of more vital concern than acquisition of hardware. This proposal is intended to permit the U.S. to focus on the weakest aspect of Saudi military development (middle and upper level management), to deemphasize the military procurement aspect of our relationship, to lower the visibility of U.S. military presence, to meet the expressed desires of key Saudi leaders, and to further strengthen U.S.-Saudi ties. (S)

There are three related areas which must be addressed in considering a restructuring of our security relationship with the Saudis:

—Organizational and management problems (e.g. should the Corps of Engineers report through the head of the U.S. organization in Saudi Arabia or is it more efficient for them to operate independently as they do now?).

—Political obstacles (e.g. how and when we approach the Saudis and at what level in such a way as to look responsive to their needs rather than merely telling them what we plan to do. The question of the Army vs. the National Guard also poses some delicate problems).

—Legal considerations (e.g. how we can best structure an advisory role consistent with the limitations of the Foreign Assistance Act). (C)

Although Lawrence has developed strong support for his proposals from EUCOM, the JCS, within OSD, and among some elements of State, the overlapping and conflicting bureaucratic interests involved in the three questions above insure that this proposal will have tough sledding before getting to any decision. ISA is currently preparing a paper on this issue which they intend to circulate on an interagency basis.⁴ (C)

The ISA paper will provide a good means of maintaining the present interest in the issue and smoking out any problem areas within the bureaucracy. We will monitor it closely and keep you informed. If it appears that the issue is simply being studied to death or being shelved for lack of high level attention, we may want to consider calling for a PRM. (C)

⁴ Not found.

198. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to Secretary of State Vance and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, August 10, 1979

SUBJECT

Security Relationship with Saudi Arabia

I have reviewed the several pending military assistance requests by Saudi Arabia—what John West, in his cables, describes as “irritants” in our security relationship with that country. I suggest we clear away these irritants prior to the visits of Prince Sultan or the Crown Prince. None of the irritants is of such magnitude that removing it to Saudi satisfaction should be saved for later bargaining. Some of the irritants, such as LANCE,² cannot be removed to Saudi satisfaction in any case. But by providing firm answers now to these issues that have been pending for some time, we establish a good atmosphere for subsequent discussions with Fahd and Sultan on larger and longer-term matters.

There are two principal items about which we can do something positive. The first is the payment of interest on the trust fund which we have recently discussed and which I hope can be soon resolved.

The second is our failure to supply more F-5 munitions. I recommend we put the F-5 munitions matter before the President promptly, asking him to authorize me to tell Sultan that we are prepared to recommend additional munitions sales to the Congress in September.³ We promised further sales over three years ago. The types of munitions proposed are already in Saudi inventory. A good military case can be made for the additional munitions. Finally, a major military argument I propose to use in definitively turning down Sultan's request for the LANCE is that the interdiction mission that would be assigned to LANCE can better be assigned to the F-5; it is obviously essential to making this argument effectively that we not at the same time withhold the ammunition.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 8–11/79. Secret. Brzezinski wrote Kimmitt's and Sick's initials in the upper right hand corner of the memorandum and drew an arrow pointing to the initials.

² Reference is to the February 10 request by the Commander of the Saudi Land Forces (SALF) for U.S. “consideration for the purchase of the Lance Missile for the SALF.” (Telegram 1375 from Jidda, February 14; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790070–0553)

³ Brzezinski underlined this sentence and placed a vertical line in the left-hand margin next to the entire paragraph.

I recognize the possible delicacy of the F-5 munitions issue with Congress and that we may have to invest some significant effort to overcome opposition. However, there is not likely to be a better time in the next year or so to propose this sale to Congress than now.

Harold Brown

199. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, October 29, 1979

SUBJECT

Request for Decision on Conventional Arms Transfer Case

I. ISSUE:

I am recommending that you approve one \$120 million Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case for Saudi Arabia for notification to the Congress.

II. BACKGROUND

The proposed sale of additional air munitions, including Sidewinder, Mavericks, laser-guided bombs (LGBs) and cluster bomb units (CBUs) for Saudi F-5s will respond to a Saudi request dating back to 1976.² At that time the quantities of Sidewinders and Mavericks sold to the Saudis were reduced because of a controversy in Congress. In 1976 and subsequent years we promised the Saudis that when possible we would sell additional quantities of F-5 air munitions needed for war reserves and training. Since 1976 LGBs and CBUs were added to the package. The Saudis have continued to press us on this issue which has become a growing irritant in our relationship. DOD believes that the military justification is strong for the following sale now:

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 8-11/79. Confidential. Brzezinski sent Vance's memorandum to Carter under a November 6 memorandum, in which he outlined the F-5 munitions package and recommended that Carter approve Vance's recommendation to authorize "notification to Congress of a \$120 million F-5 air munitions package for Saudi Arabia." Carter initiated the November 6 memorandum. (Ibid.)

² Documentation on the request is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. E-9, Part 2, Documents on the Middle East Region, 1973-1976.

660 ³	Sidewinders	(sold 1892 to date)
916 ⁴	Mavericks	(sold 1650 to date)
3435 ⁵	Laser Guided Bombs	(sold 1,000 to date)
1518 ⁶	Cluster Bomb Units	(sold 3,000 to date)

These amounts are reasonable when measured by standard U.S. Air Force calculations of war reserves on the basis of a potential threat to Saudi Arabia from Iraq and South Yemen. The Departments of State and Defense support the proposed sale in the above quantities since any reduction would not effectively deal with Saudi expectations. The amounts are less than the Saudis would like and delivery schedules will keep their stocks below planned war reserve levels for the next two years.

We have held extensive consultations with Congress on the proposal. Senator Javits is key. He has expressed reservations about the number of LGBs in this proposal but has not indicated whether he will acquiesce in or oppose the entire sale. We expect hearings and controversy but believe that in the final analysis Congress will not adopt a concurrent resolution of disapproval.

ACDA has no problem with the Sidewinders or CBU's, but believe the number of Mavericks should be 850 instead of 916. ACDA believes we should sell no additional LGBs and that with these levels of transfers, fully meeting our original commitments to Saudi Arabia, we will have effectively dealt with Saudi expectations. ACDA's full rationale is attached.⁷

This case can be accommodated within the ceiling on conventional arms transfers and in my view is otherwise consistent with your directive on arms transfer restraint.⁸ It would not cause an excessive economic burden for Saudi Arabia or stimulate arms races or regional imbalance. In addition, the sale is consistent with your human rights policy and related legislation.

RECOMMENDATION:

I believe that the sale will contribute to U.S. foreign policy and national security interests, and I recommend approval of the full sale

³ Carter wrote "ok" in the left-hand margin next to this figure.

⁴ Carter wrote "850" in the left-hand margin and drew an arrow to this figure.

⁵ Carter wrote "1000" in the left-hand margin and drew an arrow to this figure.

⁶ Carter wrote "ok" in the left-hand margin next to this figure.

⁷ Not found.

⁸ Reference is to PD-13, "Conventional Arms Transfer Policy," issued May 13, 1977. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VIII, Arab-Israeli Dispute, January 1977–August 1978, Document 33.

and notification to the Congress. Harold Brown concurs with this recommendation.⁹

ALTERNATIVELY, that you approve sale of the full number of Sidewinders and CBU's, but that Mavericks be limited to 850 and no LGBs be included.¹⁰

⁹ Carter neither approved nor disapproved this recommendation but wrote "Numbers of Maverick & LGB seem excessive. I support 850 & 1000. Reclama ok if *necessary* JC" in the margin below it.

¹⁰ Carter neither approved nor disapproved this recommendation.

200. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, November 12, 1979

SUBJECT

Saudi Arabia: Munitions for their F-5 Aircraft

I understand that you have chosen the option that would allow us to sell 850 Maverick missiles vice 916 and 1,000 Laser-Guided Bombs (LGBs) vice 3,435 to Saudi Arabia to equip their F-5 aircraft. You would permit us to sell the numbers of AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles and CBU's that we proposed. However, I understand that you are open to a reclama on the Mavericks and LGBs.

I strongly recommend you restore the higher numbers of Mavericks and LGBs Cy and I originally proposed. The Department of Defense carefully worked out those numbers in a militarily justifiable way, defensible both with the Congress and with Saudi Arabia. Failure to provide adequate munitions will only reinforce the Saudi

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 8-11/79. Secret. Brzezinski's November 15 covering memorandum transmitted Brown's memorandum and requested Carter's approval of the full complement of Mavericks and LGBs. In a November 13 memorandum to Brzezinski, sent through Albright, Sick and Kimmitt recommended that Brzezinski "support the Brown reclama." Aaron added the following handwritten notation on Sick and Kimmitt's memorandum: "ZB—Do you want to add that this is a particularly good time to get this issue resolved in a way most reassuring to the Saudis who are nervous about the Iran situation in general and the asset freeze in particular. DA." A handwritten notation indicates that Brzezinski's November 15 memorandum to Carter was retyped to include Aaron's suggested language. (Ibid.)

view that we make decisions about their security needs primarily on political grounds, and thus the irritant in our relations we are trying to remove will be perpetuated. (The Saudis would inevitably know the numbers have been reduced, either through press leaks or Congress claiming credit for forcing reductions. Also, in explaining the numbers to the Saudis, DOD would be unable to defend successfully from a military point of view the lower numbers proposed.)

The cut of Mavericks from 916 to 850 is miniscule, but the higher number results from a military calculation. To cut it for other reasons undermines the credibility of our overall case.

With regard to LGBs, I understand that ACDA claims that the sale of 3,435 (vice the 1,000 they recommend) would upset the military balance in the Middle East and constitute a threat to Israel. I do not believe this to be the case:

—Israel has emphasized acquisition of CBUs (27,330 delivered) vice LGBs (1,500 on order), because they have a different concept for use of their air force in the air-to-ground role from the one we have persuaded the Saudis to use. Israel emphasizes interdiction and suppression of air defense sites, for which CBUs are appropriate, and relies on its ground forces to stop attacking columns. Saudi Arabia is going to have to use air power defensively against attacking ground forces, which have penetrated Saudi territory, for which LGBs are more appropriate, because of the small size of the Saudi ground forces and the vast distances they would have to travel to meet an attack.

—Saudi LGBs would not enter “the balance” in the Middle East. On Saudi F-5 aircraft, their use is essentially constrained to within Saudi territory, given the range limitations of the F-5, especially with a bomb load. Even from a forward base, such as Tabuk, they can reach only part way into the Negev. Moreover, to attack Israel would bring great retaliation back upon them; they would surely lose any conflict with Israel. Also, we do not believe Saudi F-5s can be efficiently operated from another country, e.g., Jordan, due to lack of support personnel and facilities. LGBs cannot be effectively used on Jordanian F-5s (we have refused Jordan that capability) nor on any other aircraft in the area. (The exception is Egypt’s F-4s—but Egypt is on our side, and will remain so as long as our current policies in that quarter continue to be successful.)

In summary, I believe that 916 Mavericks and 3,435 LGBs are militarily justified for Saudi Arabia, and would provide an efficient capability for an air force of modest size. Selling numbers that are less than militarily justified will continue the irritant in our relations, impacting other aspects of our relationship, and lead to further requests.

We have consulted thoroughly with Congress on these numbers of munitions. We did not run into strong opposition to this sale. We

believe it highly unlikely that anyone in Congress will step forward at this time to introduce a resolution in opposition to the sale, or to change the numbers proposed.

Cy Vance agrees that the higher number of Mavericks and LGBs should be notified to Congress. He tells me that John West underscored very heavily to him the critical importance the Saudis attach to these items. West is convinced that, even if Congress were to reduce the numbers below those proposed (which, as indicated above, we believe highly unlikely) that would be much better than to have the number reduced by the Executive Branch.²

Harold Brown

² Carter indicated his approval on Brzezinski's November 15 memorandum (see footnote 1 above). In a November 16 memorandum to Vance and Brown, Brzezinski informed them of Carter's decision. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 8-11/79)

**201. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the
Department of State and Multiple Diplomatic and Consular
Posts¹**

Jidda, November 21, 1979, 1345Z

8041. Subj: (U) Occupation of Grand Mosque, Mecca. Ref: Jidda 8039.²

1. Secret entire text.

2. Summary: The Grand Mosque in Mecca was seized by a Saudi religious fanatic, Muhammad Abdallah, 26 years old, a member of the Utayba tribe. He has approx 300 well-armed persons with him, 13 of which have been captured by Saudi authorities.

The captured group included at least one Pakistani. There is no rpt no direct relationship with Iran and Muhammad and his followers

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790536-0257. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Sent Niact Immediate to Dhahran and USLO Riyadh. Sent Immediate to Amman, Abu Dhabi, USINT Baghdad, Muscat, Damascus, Doha, Kuwait, Manama, Sana, Cairo, and London.

² In telegram 8039 from Jidda, November 21, the Embassy reported on the situation regarding the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790536-0192)

deny any Khomeini influence in their actions. There are several thousand pilgrims still in Mosque despite fact that Muhammad's forces allowed approx 5,000 to leave last evening (Nov 20). In addition, several escaped. Saudi authorities at this time do not consider this seizure to be of major political significance although they are reacting strongly so as to be prepared for any eventuality. The fighting between the security forces surrounding the Mosque and those inside was particularly fierce last night but today seems to have calmed somewhat as of one o'clock local time. End summary.

3. I was able to get from a knowledgeable Cabinet Minister a complete up-to-date story on the events surrounding the seizure of the Grand Mosque at Mecca. The Minister said that just after morning prayers, a young man named Muhammad Abdallah along with some followers variously estimated to number from a minimum of 200 to a maximum of 500 seized the holy Mosque.

4. According to Minister, there is a special religious significance attached to the seizure at this time. As he explained it to me, Muslims generally believe that there will be a second coming of Jesus and some believe that there will be a false Jesus preceding the real Jesus. Still others believe that a Mahdi will appear as a forerunner to both of these events. Although not specifically set forth in the Qur'an, the traditional belief is that a Mahdi will appear on the first day of a new century in Mecca and that he will remain in Mecca for a time and then disappear later to reappear in Medina.

5. Muhammad Abdallah is well known to the Saudi authorities. He is reported to be 26 years of age and of imposing appearance and personality. He attended sharia school in Riyadh for approx three years but did not finish. He was imprisoned for approx four months because of activities inimical to govt. When released, he returned south to his home tribe.

6. Following morning prayers on Nov 20, he appeared at the Grand Mosque and told the imam that he was the Mahdi. His followers then seized control putting two guards at each of the 26 doors into the Mosque. Previously, they had been able to bring in trucks loaded with arms and dates for food. In this seizure, armed sentries were sent to the roof of the Mosque and into the minarets. The Minister explained that the Muslim custom on New Year's Day was to go to early morning prayers, then visit the elderly members of family in the surrounding area. Thus there were several thousand (estimated by the Minister to be as many as 40,000–50,000) people in the Mosque at that time. After the seizure some of the worshippers engaged Muhammad and his followers in conversation. One asked if this action were inspired by the Iranians. Muhammad scornfully and emphatically said, "no." One of his followers added that the Iranians were not true Muslims and

had nothing to do with this action. It is the Minister's opinion that these answers were sincere and that the individuals in question lacked the capacity to mislead.

7. The Minister has a personal interest in the incident, since some 45 members of his family are among those being held in the Mosque. He said that he has been receiving telephone calls every 15 minutes from people stationed in houses around the Mosque. He added that he has been able to hear the sound of firing while talking on telephone and the firing reached a crescendo last evening but is much quieter now. Two of the people who escaped from Mosque have come to Minister's house. One was there during meeting, although I did not engage him in conversation. The Minister added that those being held were not being threatened or mistreated but the biggest problem is a lack of sanitary facilities which he says are non-existent in the Mosque.

8. The Minister said that last evening 13 of the intruders were captured, one of whom was a Pakistani. The rest were probably members of the Utayba tribe. According to the people who were there, there were a few non-Saudis involved but the great majority were from the Utayba tribe plus some from the Wadi al-Dawasir.

9. The Minister did not think that the action had a great deal of political significance, although he said he had not had a chance to assess the full implications. He stated that the members of the Utayba tribe were very strong fundamentalist Muslims who lacked sophisticated leadership sufficient to translate their religious principles into overthrow of a civil government.

10. The Minister had heard reports of disturbances at Medina but stated that he had called several people who had prayed in the Mosque throughout the day on Nov 20 and had seen no disruptions or undue incidents. He said that if there were any disturbances, the police had evidently stopped the troublemakers before they were able to enter the Mosque. (Separately, we have been given several, seemingly corroboratory, reports of some minor disturbances in Medina on Nov 20.)

11. I asked the Minister what he thought the results of the takeover would be, and he replied rather calmly: "Sooner or later they will be captured and beheaded."

West

202. Memorandum From Robert Hunter and Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, November 21, 1979

SUBJECT

Mecca (U)

Latest CIA information this morning is a report that there may be some Saudi National Guard soldiers *inside* the Mosque shooting out. *If so*, the implications of the incident could go up dramatically. Harold or Cy may have had more on this at the lunch. (S)

In any event, there would be value in [*less than 1 line not declassified*] approaching Prince Turki today, to get a sense of what is happening. (S)

If that report is untrue, then the incident can be viewed more in terms of propaganda. If so, the key to exploiting the Mecca incident will be what the Saudis say about the people involved: are they Shia? do they have links to Khomeini? were they inspired by Khomeini? Our statements (however put out/planted) can only reinforce (or try to deflect) what the Saudis say. (S)

Assuming the Saudis do make some connection, they still have to consider the consequences of “telling it like it is”: fear of Iran, divisions within Islam, stirring up internal dissension within various countries, perhaps even some tensions within Saudi Arabia. Thus the Saudis may be reluctant to put out the whole story—assuming that Khomeini/Shias are the moving force. (S)

We should consider the following:

—going directly to the Saudis [*less than 1 line not declassified*] Prince Turki is probably the best channel) rapidly, with our own information on Khomeini's destabilizing efforts with various Shia communities; plus reinforcement of the intelligence on the Iranians infiltrated into Mecca [*less than 1 line not declassified*];

—seeking advance notification from Saudi Arabia on any statements they will make on the character of the people holding the Mosque;

—if the Saudis see a link to Khomeini/Shias, *but are reluctant to pin the blame squarely*—especially if it is because of Saudi relations with Iran—we could offer to intensify our involvement with Saudi Arabia, to do what is necessary to protect the Saudis against Iran (military relations, economic discussions, [*less than 1 line not declassified*]). (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Chron File, Box 142, Sick: 11/16–30/79. Secret; Sensitive. Outside the System.

For us, the best outcome would be for the Mecca affair to be pinned directly on Khomeini. Second best (with far greater consequences) would be for the onus to be put on Shias, writ large. In the former case, pressure would be on Shias to demonstrate loyalty to Islam and against Khomeini; in the latter case, the divisions stimulated within Islam could have serious implications. But the choice is probably not up to us. (S)

203. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Tunisia¹

Washington, November 22, 1979, 0313Z

302568. Subject: Allegations of American Involvement in Mecca Incident. For Ambassador Bosworth from the Secretary.

1. Appreciate your efforts to reach Prince Saud on allegations of American involvement in the Mecca incident. Now request you deliver following personal message from me to Prince Saud.

Begin text. Your Royal Highness:

I continue to believe it is a matter of great importance for the Saudi Government to state unequivocally that rumors or allegations of American involvement at Mecca are totally without foundation. My concern is that Interior Minister's response to reporter earlier today (when he issued statement on Mosque situation) "There is no evidence to give rise to belief that incident is connected with other hostilities", was not specific in dealing with the allegations that Americans engineered this behind the scenes.

2. A clarification by your government could take a variety of forms: perhaps in answer to a press query or in commentary on Saudi radio. Certainly you will be the best judge of how to make the statement.

3. I know that Your Royal Highness will feel the deep concern for the safety of Americans which prompts this personal request. I will sincerely appreciate your assisting in this clarification. With highest regards. End text.

Vance

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840167-1944. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Constable; cleared by Rephel (S) and W. Scott Butcher; approved by Constable. Sent for information Immediate to Jidda and the White House.

204. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, November 28, 1979

1. *Consultations with Saudi Arabia Regarding Possible Temporary Reduction of US Presence*—Dave Newsom held a meeting this afternoon to examine the security situation of the 35 plus thousand Americans in Saudi Arabia, in the wake of the recent Mecca Mosque incident, some signs of Shia dissidence in the Eastern Province and the generally unsettled situation in the Moslem world. In addition to Department officials, the meeting included Dean Brown of the Middle East Institute and former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Parker Hart. There was general agreement that under present circumstances a large or sudden drawdown of official Americans would have an unsettling effect on not only the Saudi Government but also the private American community.² We concluded that the preferable course of action at this point is to instruct John West to consult with Prince Fahd about our concerns for the security of US citizens in Saudi Arabia and what further appropriate steps should be taken to ensure their safety. Thereafter, we intend to consult with leaders of the private American community in Saudi Arabia and their parent companies in the United States. We will reserve a decision on any further action towards a temporary reduction of US personnel and dependents pending the results of consultations with Crown Prince Fahd and the American business community.

2. *Occupation of the Grand Mosque, Mecca: Situation Report*—The situation in Mecca has apparently not changed appreciably over the last 24 hours. A small group of gunmen are still believed to be holding out in the labyrinthine basement of the Grand Mosque with an unknown number of hostages. In response to an urgent Saudi appeal, we have airlifted riot control equipment which should reach Saudi Arabia by 1800 hours local time November 29.

Several prominent Arab leaders have visited Riyadh to give moral support to the SAG in the wake of the Mecca episode, including the Amirs of Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar, the Vice President of the UAE, Yasir Arafat and King Hussein.

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 40, State Department Evening Reports, 11/79. Secret. Carter initialed the memorandum.

² Carter wrote “no precipitous withdrawal” in the left-hand margin next to this sentence.

There have been incidents in the Eastern Province, some with fatalities, between police and Saudi Shiites participating in banned Moharram rituals. Elsewhere in the Kingdom the situation is calm.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

**205. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the
Department of State (Tarnoff) to Secretary of State Vance¹**

Washington, November 29, 1979

SUBJECT

Your Breakfast with the President Friday, November 30, 1979

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

2. *Security of Americans in Saudi Arabia.* The President commented, “no precipitous withdrawal” on your Wednesday night note about possible US reductions in Saudi Arabia.² You may want to reassure him on this score.

John West on Thursday had serious talks with Princes Fahd and Bandar about the security of the 40,000 Americans resident there, at which time the contingency of US military action in Iran was raised by the Saudis. Both Princes indicated that Saudi Arabia would be supportive of the US if we took military actions in response to any execution of a hostage or a threat to do so. Such assertions—along with their feeling that other Muslim states would agree with the Saudis—have to be treated with great reserve.

Meanwhile, the Saudis are taking vastly increased security precautions in the Eastern Province, where most Americans are present, surrounding our Dhahran Consulate General with a substantial force equipped with heavy automatic weapons. The Saudis are also strongly controlling planned Shi’a religious processions during this period.

We have instructed John to make it clear in his next exchanges with the Saudis that our approaches were not dictated by considerations

¹ Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Cyrus R. Vance, Secretary of State—1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Box 2, Vance/Brown/Brzezinski Luncheons—10–12/79. Secret; Nodis. A stamped notation on the first page of the memorandum indicates that Vance saw it.

² November 28. See Document 204.

of US military planning, but rather, by our need to assure the security of large numbers of Americans at a time of tension in the region.

At this moment we believe we should not carry out any reduction pending further exchanges and consultations with the Saudis. West's urgent objective will be to develop with the Saudis detailed contingency planning for collecting our people into three regional safehavens at the first sign of trouble. West will seek firm Saudi commitments to earmark military and security forces, the provision of transport, liaison arrangements, etc. What we need is a detailed, credible contingency plan which stands a good chance of working if a worst-case scenario begins to develop.

We are also asking John to set systematic arrangements for confidential exchanges with the American business community, advising him to do this in a way which does not become too visible and thus inspire misleading speculation.³

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

³ In telegram 8238 from Jidda, November 28, and telegram 8241 from Jidda, November 29, the Embassy provided details on these meetings. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850027–2275 and P850027–2270 respectively)

206. Report Prepared by the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West)¹

Jidda, undated

SAUDI ARABIA—AN ASSESSMENT AS OF JANUARY 1, 1980

SUMMARY: The year 1979 has been a difficult one for Saudi Arabia—as it has for the USG–SAG bilateral relationship. The year 1980 will not be less difficult for either and could well see a substantial deterioration in the “special relationship.” Four major problems, which

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 12/79–1/80. Secret. Carter wrote “Good J” in the upper right-hand margin of the report. West attached his report to a January 11 letter, in which he noted that his appraisal was “not as optimistic as some in the past,” and that “frankly, faith in you is main factor holding our ‘special relationship’ at its present high level.” Attached but not printed is a January 30 memorandum from Brzezinski to Carter forwarding West's letter and report. Carter initialed Brzezinski's memorandum. For West's previous appraisals, see Documents 154, 176, and 196.

faced Saudi Arabia in the last year, seem at this time to have no real solution in sight, and may get worse in 1980. These are:

- 1) Destabilizing ripple effects of the religious revolution in Iran, together with similar but unconnected events elsewhere, such as the Mecca incident here;
- 2) Failure to achieve a satisfactory solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute;
- 3) Continuation and expansion of the Russian threat; and
- 4) Corruption in the Western sense.

Developments in these four areas in 1980 will have an important effect on the future of the Saud Royal Family and the nature and scope of our bilateral relationship. USG capacity for being helpful is limited largely to (2) and (3) above. However, our actions in these two areas may well be determinative of the future of the present Saudi Arabian Government. Since the availability of adequate energy supplies for the free world during the next decade depends in large part on the continuation of the present government in Saudi Arabia, the national interests of the United States are indeed at risk here in 1980. END SUMMARY.

INTRODUCTION

The year 1979 saw three main events that have had and are having profound effect on the government and people of Saudi Arabia. They were:

- 1) The development of a full-fledged religious revolution in Iran, which not only toppled the Shah from his well-entrenched throne but sent shock waves throughout the Muslim world;
- 2) Events culminating in the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty;² and
- 3) A continuation of the Soviet threat—including the South Yemen (PDRY) invasion of North Yemen (YAR),³ and as this is written, the direct invasion of Afghanistan.⁴

THE IRANIAN RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

The shock effect of the Khomeini revolution was felt far beyond Iran's borders. In Saudi Arabia, the fall of another monarch was in itself disturbing to the SAG ruling family. The fact that the monarch in question was a neighbor across the Gulf and enjoyed the full support

² See footnote 7, Document 188.

³ See Documents 261 and 264.

⁴ The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan on December 25, 1979.

and confidence of the United States was even more upsetting. The constant broadcasts by Iranian militants over Radio Tehran calling for the overthrow of “the corrupt Saudi monarch” has served as an almost daily reminder of the dangers that can emanate from a fanatical government in a neighboring state.

In addition, Saudi compliance with our request to increase oil production substantially to ease the problems caused by the disruption of Iranian oil exports, and Saudi willingness to keep prices well below that of other countries have increased tensions with other Arab oil-producing states. Likewise, more and more Saudis are beginning to question the validity and worth of the USG–SAG “special relationship.” The Saud family is being criticized for its accommodations to USG, especially in oil production and pricing. More and More Saudis, both in and out of government publicly and privately are blaming USG for contributing to the Shah’s demise and are pointing to the close relationship between the Shah and the U.S. with its parallels to the SAG–USG relationship. The feeling of probably a majority of Saudis now is that the U.S.-Saudi relationship is top-heavy in favor of USG. Fortunately the top leadership, Fahd, Abdullah and Sultan, do not agree with this sentiment.

The full impact of the events in Iran were brought home to the SAG ruling family by the seizure of the Holy Mosque in Mecca on November 20.⁵ Even though there was no connection between the two sets of events, the Mosque incident was a ringing warning to the SAG that “it can happen here.” A searching reassessment and re-evaluation of all SAG policy, foreign and domestic, has been triggered by the Mecca affair. The results of this inward and outward look will be reflected in the SAG’s relationship with the United States during 1980.

EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TREATY

Saudi Arabia was forced by Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty to choose between its close friend the United States and the rest of the Arab world (except Egypt). The choice was not easy, in view of the importance that the U.S. attached to the treaty, but in the end it was dictated by a reasonably firm conviction that the Camp David accords would not work because Begin would never make the concessions necessary to defuse the Palestinian problem. That conviction has been strengthened by the lack of progress since signing of the treaty. The tensions have been heightened by President Sadat’s personal attacks on the Kingdom and its leaders. There is little chance, in my opinion, for lessening of tensions, at least prior to the exchange of ambassadors on February

⁵ See Documents 201 and 202.

26. This exchange will be a symbolic act of great annoyance but also of great significance to the Arab world. Failing drastic eruptions as a result of Israeli-Egyptian exchange of ambassadors, the tensions will continue to increase as the autonomy talks go toward their May deadline.⁶ In the unlikely event that the autonomy talks result in an acceptable solution to the Palestinian problem, the entire atmosphere will change dramatically for the better overnight. However, in the event that the autonomy talks do not meet the deadline, or produce only an agreement not satisfactory to the Palestinians or the rest of the Arab world, a mini-crisis will then arise in the USG-SAG relationship.

We have, throughout the period of autonomy talks, taken the position that we would exercise our prerogative as a "full partner" in the event that Sadat and Begin were not able to reach a satisfactory solution to both the Palestinian and Jerusalem problems. The Saudis, therefore, expect us to take a public position in the negotiating process if a satisfactory solution is not reached by the May deadline. A failure to do so would be viewed by the Saudis as a major breach of faith and an admission that either (1) the U.S. considers the Camp David accords effectively dead; or (2) at a minimum, that the present U.S. Administration is powerless to do anything at this time of election anxieties and rivalries and, therefore, the USG is just shelving an issue so crucial to the area in order to buy "election" time.

THE SOVIET THREAT

The biggest single plus in the USG-SAG bilateral relationship in 1979 was the President's action when PDRY forces invaded North Yemen. The expediting, under emergency powers, of planes and equipment to North Yemen, the sending of the F-15's, the stationing of the AWACS in Saudi Arabia, the sending of a military planning team, and the sending of substantial naval forces into the Indian Ocean, restored in the Saudis' minds the credibility and reliability of USG as a friend and ally in time of need.⁷ Had this not been done, I do not believe that the Saudi Government would have increased its oil production as it did in July,⁸ and maintained its moderate pricing policies.

⁶ Reference is to the ongoing talks on Palestinian autonomy held between Egypt and Israel as stipulated by the March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty. A deadline for the conclusion of those talks had been set for May 26. For documentation on this issue, see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978-December 1980.

⁷ See Documents 268, 271, and 275.

⁸ The Saudi Government announced on July 3 that oil production would be increased. Telegram 174919 to Alexandria, July 6, transmitted a letter for Strauss to deliver to Fahd expressing Carter's appreciation for the increase. See *Foreign Relations, 1969-1976*, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974-1980, Document 223.

As this is written the events in Afghanistan are still unfolding, but the President's firm stand against the Russians will provide added reassurance to Saudi Arabia that we are their best, in fact, their only effective protector from Soviet aggression.

CORRUPTION

The issue of corruption is the greatest single threat to the continued stability of the SAG ruling family. While there have been from time to time evidences of crackdowns on corruption, there are increasing signs, both within and without the Saudi Government, that the problem has not been seriously addressed and is getting worse instead of better. The fact that these attacks have come from many quarters, all accusing members of the Royal Family of corruption, has begun to have a cumulative effect on perceptions throughout the society.

One of the saving factors is that the wealth of the country is so enormous that the alleged commissions and other evidences of what—by Western standards—would be called corrupt practices have not as yet interfered with gradual improvement in the living conditions of any Saudi. The Saudi version of the welfare state provides, or subsidizes, most necessities but disparities in the distribution of wealth remains—especially between the cities and the villages where benefits are only now beginning to arrive. However, the condition is serious and hard to explain. For example, some of the severest critics of corruption are themselves in a series of enterprises with various members of the Royal Family, the profitability of which has been assured by royal influence. Contrasted with our Western concept of “conflict of interests” this society, indeed societies in the Third World, goes by what may be described as “compatibility of interests,” another one is “spread the benefits.”

The problem of corruption is a difficult one and I do not know of any truly effective means that we can use to help correct the situation.

CONCLUSIONS

The year 1980 will probably produce even greater strains on the USG–SAG “special relationship” than did 1979. Two factors will be determinative of whether the bilateral relationship improves or deteriorates: (1) Progress on Mideast peace; (2) Effectiveness of U.S. moves to counter Soviet aggression in the area.

Progress on the Mideast peace does not mean a complete or immediate solution to the Palestinian and Jerusalem issues—although of course such a result would be a welcome Utopia. The Saudis will be satisfied with less, especially if they receive our assurances that we will continue to work for more.

The Saudis fully expect the May deadline to pass without a solution to the autonomy issue. In that event, they expect USG to take a public position on this point. A failure to do so will mean to the Saudis that

we have tacitly approved what they consider Begin's stalling tactics. By implication, this will mean to them that we are approving what amounts to a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace.

I cannot emphasize too strongly how detrimental such a scenario would be to our bilateral relationship in all of its aspects, including oil production and pricing. While the Saudis continue to say that they will not use the "oil weapon," such a statement is more and more considered to refer to an oil embargo of the 1973-74 type. Their accommodations to U.S. needs in terms of both production and price have been a gesture of support for President Carter and his Mideast peace efforts. If the time ever arrives (and it may well do so in May 1980) when the Saudis are convinced that the Administration no longer has the will or the ability to bring about a lasting Mideast peace, then the motivation for accommodation to USG needs will be lessened. A possible—even probable—result by July of 1980 would be a reduction of production to 8.5 MBD or less, and movement toward a price change comparable to the "oil hawks" (including Mexico and Great Britain) namely, a range of \$30 per barrel and upward.

The Saudis will be watching closely USG actions to counter aggression in Afghanistan. Any Soviet moves in Pakistan or Iran will further heighten the already extreme concern which is felt here. If we can show the same decisiveness and achieve the same results as in the YAR-PDRY incident of last February, then our bilateral relationship will be substantially enhanced. The real bottom line in our relationship is U.S. security in exchange for Saudi oil. When the Saudis are reminded of their vulnerability to Soviet aggression, then our response is critical and, if positive, is most beneficial.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) That we reassure the Saudis by both word and deed that we will not be satisfied with an Egyptian-Israeli peace leaving unsolved the questions of the Palestinians and Jerusalem. Ambassador Linowitz has the key role and we are furnishing him some detailed suggestions.

2) That we continue to work and consult closely with the Saudis on how to counter the Russian threat, much as we have done in the past year. Small gestures, such as expediting arms and equipment to them would be most helpful as a symbolic, as well as practical, gesture. (For example, to speed up deliveries of the F-15 by six months would be very meaningful to the key SAG military and political figures)

3) That we continue to recognize and work patiently with SAG in meeting and solving the problems of modernization at a pace acceptable to their prevailing cultural norms.

John C. West
Ambassador

207. Telegram From the United States Liaison Office in Riyadh to the White House¹

Riyadh, February 5, 1980, 1255Z

305. For the President and Secretary Vance from Brzezinski. Subject: Meetings in Saudi Arabia.

1. Warren Christopher and I met with Prince Saud for a working lunch on Monday, February 4. We met again with Crown Prince Fahd and Prince Saud for two hours on Monday evening.² We spent a further 90 minutes with Prince Saud on Tuesday morning. The following are the highlights of these meetings.

2. The initial meeting with Saud was very general. We briefed him on our talks in Pakistan³ and he gave us his views on the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference.⁴ He was particularly encouraging on the Iranian reaction at Islamabad. According to Saud, the Iranians initially resisted any discussion of the hostage issue, but the other attendees had a thorough discussion with them and made it clear that the regional problems could not be discussed in isolation from the hostage problem, the Islamic states insisted that a role be given to the Secretary General, and the Iranians, after initially resisting, finally got instructions from Tehran permitting them to join in the consensus. Saud felt that the Iranians were surprised at the unpopularity of their position and that this would possibly have its effect in Tehran, despite the fact that the Iranian representatives at the conference were not at the decision making level.

3. Saud viewed the Soviet action in Afghanistan as “aggression and imperialism,” and he said that public opinion and government opinion in the region uniformly oppose the Soviet action and will do whatever is required to resist. They need confidence that the U.S. will help and they need to understand what the U.S. is prepared to do. The

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 2/80. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Printed from a copy that indicates the original was received in the White House Situation Room.

² In telegram 301 from Riyadh, February 5, the Liaison Office transmitted Christopher's brief overview of these meetings. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870047–0869)

³ See footnote 7, Document 51.

⁴ The Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers took place in Islamabad January 27–29. (Telegram 717 from Islamabad, January 27; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800047–0111) In telegram 801 from Islamabad, January 29, the Embassy reported that the plenary session passed a resolution condemning “Soviet military aggression.” In telegram 831 from Islamabad, January 30, the Embassy commented on other resolutions relating to Iran, Palestine, and the Horn of Africa. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800050–1060 and D800053–1064)

Islamic Conference agreed to provide aid to Pakistan, but they will take their lead from the degree of U.S. commitment.

4. Saud was strongly supportive of the movement to boycott the Olympics,⁵ noting that the Islamic Conference had taken its decision on this without serious debate on the second day. He was very critical of the French, particularly Francois Poncet's⁶ statement that the Afghanistan invasion was a problem for the Islamic countries. He found this "amazing" since Poncet is normally very careful with his words.

5. The meeting with Fahd was much more substantive. Fahd was in good form, very friendly, well briefed and very much in command of the discussion. Although he noted that he had warned the U.S. of Soviet intentions during the Nixon administration, nevertheless he was surprised that the Soviets used naked force to accomplish their aims rather than other means. Fahd said he had never witnessed a comparable reaction in the Islamic world to any single act, and he thought the Soviets had not imagined such an intense and deep response.

6. We noted the many economic and military problems facing Pakistan and the need for other governments to help. Fahd noted that Saudi Arabia had for many years been giving Pakistan "very good aid," and that they firmly believed that Pakistan should be supported to the maximum possible extent in both the military and economic fields. Psychologically this is the moment to rally around Pakistan in opposition to the Soviet threat. If we delay now, future steps will be more difficult.

7. In response to our comment that the President was willing to take unprecedented moves to support Pakistan, Fahd said they had felt this change in U.S. policy from the President's statements and he was sure the Pakistanis had felt it as well. The people of the world—and the Soviets—have the feeling that the U.S. "lion was beginning to stir."

8. Fahd noted that the reports coming out of South Yemen were very dangerous and frightening. He provided us a written report on their latest intelligence as follows: allegedly 10,000 Soviet troops have recently moved to the PDRY for an "exercise;" Soviet arms to PDRY are increasing; it is very likely that there are Soviet soldiers in the Yemeni fifth province near Saudi Arabia and in Yemeni territorial waters; some 3000 Cuban troops have gone to Aden; Soviet military reconnaissance aircraft are flying out of Aden throughout the region;

⁵ On January 20, President Carter announced that the United States would boycott the Summer Olympics scheduled to take place in Moscow. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 259.

⁶ Jean François-Poncet, French Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Soviet materiel is arriving at a base named Muntaza Nashwan in South Yemen which is “on the road to Saudi Arabia,” including rocket carriers, guns, transport trucks, and large crates; huge transport ships are coming in to a Yemeni port at night. He recognized that some of this information might not be entirely accurate, but noted that aerial surveillance would help establish its validity. We promised to expedite additional coverage, using U-2s and RF-4s. Prince Saud noted that the options of U.S. RF-4s using Khamis Mushayt or flying from carriers were both open. Fahd thought it would be useful for the U.S. to give a clear signal to the Soviets that the U.S. will not just fold its arms, and telling the Soviets that we doubt that PDRY needs all this equipment for its own defense.

9. Fahd made a strong pitch for more prompt delivery of military equipment from us. He noted they had been waiting more than a year for certain special kinds of arms and parts. “Delay is no longer valid.” We said we would discuss this with Ambassador West and see what could be done to rectify the problem.

10. We briefed Fahd on our efforts to arrange access to military support facilities in the region, noting that the Bartholomew Mission would soon be here to brief them on the status of these talks.⁷ We said we had told Pakistan that we would be prepared to conduct joint air or naval exercises with them if they wished. We would be prepared to do the same with Saudi Arabia if they thought that would be helpful with respect to the situation in South Yemen. We said we are also prepared to conduct large scale military exercises of marines or airborne forces anyplace in the region. We noted three specific areas where we hope to cooperate closely with the Saudis: (1) developing access to facilities in Oman as a means of counterbalancing the Soviet/Cuban presence in PDRY; (2) developing access to facilities in Somalia, which, together with Oman, would help create a strategic position to block Soviet penetration of the region; and (3) the situation in North Yemen which we find thoroughly unsatisfactory at present.

11. On joint operations, Fahd said they were “giving thought to it” and would be willing to discuss it with our people. They want to insure that it will be helpful to their security.

12. On Yemen, Fahd noted that the Prime Minister of North Yemen was in Saudi Arabia two weeks ago for discussions about the growth of Soviet influence. Two nights ago, President Salih had called Fahd and his conversation indicated a change in his position. He said he was giving thought to the Saudi proposals and would “not go outside the framework” suggested by Saudi Arabia. He offered to send the

⁷ See footnote 2, Document 53.

Saudi Ambassador to North Yemen as a special emissary to discuss the situation. The Ambassador had just arrived in Riyadh but they had not seen him yet. Fahd recognized that so far this was just talk, but he was pleased at the apparent transformation of Salih's views. They would wait and see what tangible results emerged. Salih said he had changed his mind about bringing elements of NDF into his government. The reason for this change may be that a number of North Yemen dignitaries had lately visited Salih to warn him of the dangers that the YAR would go the way of the PDRY.

13. On Iran, Fahd noted that Yasir Arafat had visited him last night and Fahd had encouraged him to play an active role in getting the hostages released. Arafat said he would redouble his efforts. Fahd noted that he had appealed to President Assad in the same terms. Assad said he was willing but that there was no one in Iran for him to talk to. Fahd thought that after the Iranian elections it might be possible to do more.

14. Arafat had also told him that Syria was withdrawing all its forces in Lebanon and regrouping them in the Bekka Valley. Arafat had just heard this by cable and did not know the reasons for the move. We said we would check our own information and stay in touch on this.

15. Almost as an afterthought, Fahd raised the Arab-Israeli problem, noting that the recent backing of the U.S. position on Afghanistan by the Islamic Conference provided a golden opportunity for the U.S. to win over the Arab and Islamic world by resolving the Arab-Israel situation. We assured him that we were fully committed to move ahead to solve the problem in all its aspects. Fahd stressed the enormous importance of Jerusalem. He said the problem of the Palestinians should be put on the front burner.

16. Fahd said no one in Saudi Arabia bore any ill will toward President Sadat, but Sadat has unfortunately chosen to resort to insults and mudslinging, including personal attacks on members of the royal family. We replied that we made no excuses for what Sadat said recently and that we hoped it would not be repeated. We noted that Sadat had been sorry not to receive a response to the letter he had written to King Khalid. Fahd said they had not answered the letter since they would have to tell the truth and that might be resented by Sadat. We said we would continue to urge restraint on Sadat since divisions in the Arab world would only postpone solutions to the major problems we face.

17. Fahd terminated the discussion with another plea for us to look carefully at the Saudi arms requests.

18. Prince Saud, on Tuesday morning, made up for Crown Prince Fahd's failure to give equal time to the Arab-Israel problem.⁸ He made a long presentation of the importance of progress on the Palestinian issue if we want a reliable Arab consensus to face the Soviet challenge. Saudi Arabia trusts U.S. motives and wants to work closely with us on security issues, but this is complicated by lack of visible strategy on the autonomy talks. [omission in the original—We expressed?] our determination to press ahead as rapidly as possible, and also outlined the basic strategy which we are following to confront the Soviet challenge in the region as a whole. We emphasized our interest in building relations with other Arab states, including Algeria, Libya and Iraq.

19. Warren recalled the efforts we had jointly made two years ago to persuade the PLO to accept Resolution 242 and wondered if there was some chance that could be revived. Saud thought that it could if we were willing to take the position that the Palestinian problem could be solved on the basis of self-determination. With that, the Palestinians might be willing to take the plunge and, in effect, recognize Israel. We reviewed the reasons for holding to our formulation and encouraged him to keep open the possibility of getting some movement from the PLO on 242 as a possible major contribution to the peace process.

20. On aid to Pakistan, Saud said that Saudi Arabia will provide new aid to Pakistan this year plus some carryover from a prior agreement. Most of this will be economic assistance. In addition, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states have pledged to provide financial assistance to help with the refugee problem. This is still being worked out. On defense assistance, Saudi Arabia had pledged to develop a package of support once the Pakistanis (and the United States) had made a clear determination of their needs. Saud thought that the level of aid being considered by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf was reaching the upper limit, and he hoped that we would succeed in persuading the Europeans and Japanese to join in. (On a very confidential basis he gave us more precise data on the above).

21. On Iraq, Saud said that he thought there was no inhibition on the Iraqis' part to move toward relations with the U.S. We asked him to raise this issue with the Iraqis at the next opportunity.

22. We expressed our appreciation for the Saudi decision to maintain oil production at the 9.5 mbd level, recognizing that this entailed some sacrifice on their part. Saud replied that the decision touches on their own domestic opinion, and it is difficult to explain in view of the

⁸ For the portion of the memorandum of conversation of the February 5 meeting with Saud concerning Arab-Israeli relations, see *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978–December 1980, Document 336.

“contradictions” i.e. the Arab-Israeli problems. Whatever we could do to remove these contradictions would help them enormously.

23. Finally, Saud briefed us on his talks with their Ambassador to North Yemen the previous evening. Their Ambassador had talked to Salih, who recognized the dangers in the course he had been following. Salih was willing to respond to the Saudis views concerning the buildup of Soviet advisors and the training of Yemenis in the Soviet Union. He was willing to put a stop to all of it. He will not bring members of the NDF into his government, although he may send some of them as ambassadors abroad. Salih said he was willing to discuss any of these issues with the Saudis, and they were preparing a letter to Salih regarding the joint military program. When asked whether he believed what Salih was saying, Saud said that Salih had no real alternative unless he was willing to destroy himself.

Gerlach

208. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 6, 1980, 9–10:05 a.m.

SUBJECT

Pakistan/Saudi Arabia

PARTICIPANTS

State

Warren Christopher

David Newsom

Matthew Nimetz

Richard Cooper*

Peter Constable

George Vest*

OSD

Secretary Harold Brown

W. Graham Clayton

William Perry*

CIA

Frank Carlucci

White House

Zbigniew Brzezinski

David Aaron

Henry Owen

Lloyd Cutler

Hedley Donovan

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 108, SCC 269, 02/06/80, Pakistan/Saudi Arabia. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter initialed the first page.

JCS
General David Jones
General John Pustay

NSC
Gary Sick
Thomas Thornton
Robert Blackwill

* Present for last ten minutes only

The meeting was devoted almost entirely to a report by Dr. Brzezinski and Mr. Christopher on their mission to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.² Dr. Brzezinski noted that the assessment of the situation by both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia is graver than ours. They both see Soviet actions as part of a deliberate strategic challenge to the U.S. and the region.

[Omitted here is material related to Pakistan.]

In Saudi Arabia, the mission was struck by the change of mood from a year ago. The Saudi response to our proposals for a closer security relationship was much more positive. Both the Saudis and the Pakistanis seem to have reacted very positively to the President's State of the Union address and the explicit security commitment which it announced.³ The Saudis took an alarmist view of the situation in the PDRY, including a report of Soviet and Cuban troop exercising there which we cannot confirm. [4 lines not declassified]. The Saudis complained about the slowness and inadequacy of the U.S. response to their requests for advanced military equipment. They outlined the levels of aid they were prepared to provide to Pakistan but asked that these numbers be very tightly held and, if necessary, that the actual levels be revealed by the Pakistanis rather than us. They were bitter in their condemnation of Sadat's attacks on the Saudi leadership, and they made a very persuasive argument that progress on the Palestinian issue is critical to progress in security and other fields. (S)

Our side raised with the Saudis and the Pakistanis the possibility of joint military exercises and use of facilities in the region. The Saudis did not reply directly, but Dr. Brzezinski and Mr. Christopher felt that the attitude was basically positive. (S)

[Omitted here is material related to Pakistan.]

² See Document 207.

³ See Document 45.

209. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to Secretary of State Vance and Secretary of Defense Brown¹

Washington, March 14, 1980

SUBJECT

U.S.-Saudi Military Supply Relationship

I would like to draw your attention to the recent cable by Ambassador West² in which he states that Saudi Arabia's recent security assistance requests represent a "litmus test" of the special bilateral relationship that exists between our two countries. He believes that responsiveness to the Saudi effort to obtain their military supply needs is no longer an option; it has become an imperative. To successive recent high-level U.S. visitors, such as the President,³ Duncan⁴ and Christopher,⁵ the Saudi leadership has made it unmistakable—satisfaction of their arms transfer requests is a paramount policy issue of overriding importance. West adds that the option available to the U.S. is not whether, but how to meet Saudi security needs. He emphasizes that our response therefore must be constructive, comprehensive and for the long term since it involves the most vital objectives of U.S. foreign policy and the "privileged relationship" with Saudi Arabia. (S)

I tend to agree with him and this is why I feel we should accelerate our response to the Saudis, striving to accommodate them as much as possible, and on an urgent basis. Let us review this situation at the next V-B-B. (S)

Zbigniew Brzezinski

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 3/80. Secret.

² Reference is to West's discussion of the U.S.-Saudi military supply program in telegram 1674 from Jidda, March 12. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800130-0237)

³ See Document 164.

⁴ Duncan visited Saudi Arabia March 1-4. He reported to the SCC on his trip on March 21. See Document 210.

⁵ See Document 207.

210. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 21, 1980, 4:30–5:45 p.m.

SUBJECT

Follow up on Security Framework in the Persian Gulf—VI

PARTICIPANTS

State

Under Secretary for Political Affairs,
David Newsom
Under Secretary for Economic Affairs,
Richard Cooper
Assistant Secretary Harold Saunders

OSD

Secretary Harold Brown
Deputy Secretary Graham Claytor, Jr.
Under Secretary for Policy, Robert
Komer

JCS

General David Jones
Lt. General John Pustay

CIA

Director Stansfield Turner
Robert Ames, NIO for Near East and
South Asia

[*name not declassified*]

Justice

Associate Attorney General, John
Shenefield

Energy

Secretary Charles Duncan
Assistant Secretary for International
Affairs, Les Goldman

Treasury

Assistant Secretary for International
Affairs, Fred Bergsten

OMB

Deputy Director, John White
Associate Director, Randy Jayne

White House

Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC

William E. Odom
Thomas Thornton
Henry Owen

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting with a brief review of the President's comments on last week's SCC discussion.² The President wants us to be prudent in seeking more military access, avoid publicity, and not press the Saudis. The President also wants to re-define our approach to the Saudis in the military sphere as an effort to enhance national defense cooperation, not to stress internal insecurity. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Meetings File, Box 20, SCC Meeting: #292 Held 3/21/80, 3–4/80. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "Zbig C" in the top right-hand corner of the first page.

² See Document 64 and footnote 2 thereto.

[5 paragraphs (25 lines) not declassified]³

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Saudi Arabia.]

Secretary Duncan's report on his trip to Saudi Arabia

Dr. Brzezinski opened this discussion by asking what followup actions Duncan believed necessary. Duncan answered that he has listed them in a letter to Dr. Brzezinski.⁴ Dr. Brzezinski acknowledged the letter and reported that papers on these actions will be available by April 15th and a PRC meeting to discuss them. (S)

Duncan gave a brief summary of his experiences with the Saudi leadership. They see themselves as responsible in energy matters while others are not. At 9.5 million b/d production, they believe they are using up their resources for inflated dollars. They feel that they would be better off to hold production to 5 or 6 million b/d. All ministers expressed the view that they were sacrificing their own interests for the larger interest of the West. They did not agree that we are compensating them adequately by providing them a national security blanket. Only Fahd gives us credit on that score. (S)

Their pricing goal with the 9.5 million b/d is price "stability." By May they hope to achieve price "predictability" in the longer term. (S)

When told of the President's plan to impose an import fee on foreign oil, the Saudis required several hours of persuasion to accept the view that it is a desirable action. On the SPR, they were adamant that we not increase our demand at the very time they are trying to flood the market and control the price. (S)

Next Duncan mentioned Senator Jackson's hearings, seven of which have occurred in closed sessions where he repeatedly asked what we will do if the present Saudi government falls.⁵ Dr. Brzezinski pointed out that this question is not helpful; it may even contribute to the demise of the Saudi regime. Our answer to Jackson should be two-fold. First, we are doing things to reduce the likelihood of internal collapse of the regime. Second, we are improving our capabilities in the region in the event it does collapse. (S)

³ An undated draft version of a Presidential Finding was provided to Carter who then made a number of textual changes. Brzezinski sent this draft, along with a revised version of the finding that incorporated Carter's changes, to Carter under a March 25 note recommending that the President sign the revised finding. Carter signed the finding as revised. (Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 30, NSC/SCC Minutes, 1/16/80-2/29/80)

⁴ Not found. For Duncan's report to the President on his trip, see *Foreign Relations*, 1969-1976, vol. XXXVII, Energy Crisis, 1974-1980, Document 263.

⁵ Jackson chaired the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Dr. Brzezinski then emphasized that we must publicly confirm our confidence in the Saudi Government. The public worry expressed by us is creating a pernicious upward spiral. All agreed that we should take steps to give the impression of greater confidence in the Saudis.⁶ (S)

Duncan argued that it will take more than assertions. Everywhere he went he heard the same litany: the Shah, South Yemen, Afghanistan, and Pakistan all add up to a frightening trend. Dr. Brzezinski answered that this means we must first, address the sum total of small things we have done to increase our military presence in the Persian Gulf, and second, emphasize that we are holding firmly to our present policy toward the USSR. (S)

Turner argued that we need “tangibles” because no one believes we are going to stick to our present policy. Even the large naval force in the Indian Ocean will begin to diminish in the near future. All agreed that there is a problem but emphasized that we must press the two points Dr. Brzezinski raised. (S)

It was agreed that Hummel be instructed to make both points in Pakistan because others in the region point to our relations with Islamabad as an example that we are not holding firmly. (S)

As a final note, Cooper reported that Duncan established especially good personal ties with Yamani. Cooper also enumerated three problems which we should try to remove from our relations with Yamani. First, the Attorney General’s request for CIDs; second, FTC cases, and three, tax cases. (S)

Next Week

Ambassador John West will meet with the SCC principals next week when he returns to the U.S. for consultations. Secretary Duncan will join the group. (C)

The agenda for next week will include:

- Defense paper on *internal stability* in Saudi Arabia.
- Follow up on Pakistan.
- Tarapur. (S)

⁶ Carter wrote in the left-hand margin next to this and the preceding paragraph: “Maintain privately & publicly our confidence in SAG regime” and “Reader’s Digest will hurt.” The April 1980 issue of *Reader’s Digest* magazine included an article entitled “Saudi Arabia: The Next Iran?”

211. Paper Prepared in the Department of State¹

Washington, April 9, 1980

SAUDI ARMS REQUESTS

The April 2 Mini-PRC on Saudi Arabian Arms Requests² reached general agreement on:

- Responses to specific requests
- Management of the response with the Saudis and with Congress

Summary

The Mini-PRC agreed that positive responses could be given on most systems requested by the Saudis, but noted that careful explanation and engagement of the Saudis in a dialogue on force planning will be necessary if the frustrations and irritations expressed by the Saudis in the past are to be avoided. Final Presidential approval and Congressional review are required where appropriate. In some cases, the responses are informal, with formal commitments to be made later as PD-13³ permits.

The issues of absorption or effects on the stability of the Saudi regime of the sale of these systems were not felt to be major problems given the extended period of time over which the equipment could be delivered.

Specific Requests (More detail in attached Fact Sheets)⁴

It was agreed⁵ that the following items, which had been previously approved for sale to Saudi Arabia, should be examined for accelerated delivery wherever possible, moving Saudi Arabia up in the production queue even when a substantial portion of US needs remained to be filled:

- AN/TAS-4, 5, and 6 night vision devices
- M60 tank product improvement program
- M109 howitzer product improvement program
- 155mm Rocket Assisted Projectile (RAP) rounds

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 43, Saudi Arabia: 1-12/80. Secret. Prepared in advance of an April 12 principals' meeting on Saudi arms requests; see Document 212. Tarnoff sent the paper to Brzezinski under cover of an April 9 memorandum.

² No other record has been found.

³ See footnote 8, Document 199.

⁴ Not attached and not found.

⁵ An unknown hand underlined the word "agreed."

It was agreed that the following items should also be approved but further discussions with the Saudis as to the pace and mode of their accomplishment are appropriate:⁶

- Mechanization of two Saudi Land Forces Brigades
- Blackhawk helicopters
- Commercial alternative to Mark IV Identification Friend and Foe (IFF) for the I-Hawk (unless an arrangement can be made with NSA for FMS sale).

The Mini-PRC agreed we should indicate a positive attitude toward⁷ providing the following, with further discussions and final agreement to sale timed to deployment of the systems with U.S. forces:

- AN/TPQ-36 and 37 locating radars
- Division Air Defense System (DIVADS)
- Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV)
- Roland short range air defense missile system (Saudi Arabia is in the French-German sales territory, however. We should leave to the Saudis whether to buy from Europe or seek European agreement to a U.S. sale. In either case we would support the SAG position.) The Saudis already own the French Crotale; they may wish to acquire more as an alternative to Roland.

—Sale of 1200 additional Redeye, in lieu of Stinger (timing is to be tied to further discussions of how this quantity would fit into Saudi force structure).

The Mini-PRC agreed we should not approve⁸ the following because of prior assurances provided to Congress at the time of the F-15 sale:

- KC-135 tankers to refuel F-15s
- Conformal fuel pods for the F-15
- Multiple Ejection Bomb Racks to the F-15

It was also agreed we should not agree to an E-3A AWACS⁹ sale. Rather than a flat rejection, however, we should agree to conduct the requested airborne surveillance feasibility¹⁰ study. This could be coupled with an offer to deploy USAF AWACS periodically for joint training with the RSAF. If the Saudis were interested, we would also offer to study the possibility of ground data link stations.

⁶ In this paragraph, an unknown hand underlined “agreed,” “should also be,” and “further discussions.”

⁷ An unknown hand underlined the phrase “a positive attitude toward.”

⁸ An unknown hand underlined the phrase “should not approve.”

⁹ An unknown hand underlined the phrase “not agree to an E-3A AWACS.”

¹⁰ An unknown hand underlined the phrase “conduct the requested airborne surveillance feasibility.”

It was also agreed that the General Support Rocket System was not far enough along in the development and selection process to make a decision now. We remain prepared to discuss this system further as development proceeds, however.

Finally, on the issue of Saudi financial participation in U.S. production lines, it was agreed there should be none before a U.S. production decision was made. Once U.S. Services made a decision, however, we could consider Saudi participation on a case-by-case basis where absorption is not a problem. It was also agreed that there should be no Saudi financial participation in R&D.

Management of Our Response

With the Saudis

The response needs to be conveyed promptly and constructively in order to strengthen our overall relationship. At the same time we need to work closely with the Saudis on implementation and to stress realistic delivery schedules, availability of manpower and adequate training and contractor support to enhance Saudi absorptive capacity. We need a strong in-country framework to give continuity to these efforts to deal with issues before they become political irritants. Additionally, we want to avoid the perception of a new dramatic "package" of arms sales at this time. Consequently, Ambassador West should informally brief the Saudis on our response on his return to the Kingdom.¹¹ Harold Brown could then follow-up with Prince Sultan at an appropriate time, placing our response to these requests in a broad security framework. The timing of such a meeting would be influenced, *inter alia*, by progress in the autonomy talks.

With Congress

Despite the reasonably comprehensive response we will give to the Saudis, we are dealing with a number of individual cases.¹² Implementation will occur over a five or six year period. Few if any of these cases are likely to result in Congressional notifications in CY 1980.¹³ Many are logical follow-on or replacement sales to equipment we have already provided. Consequently, if we avoid playing up our response in a dramatic way, no extraordinary reactions by Congress (or Israel) are likely. At the same time we should consult¹⁴ in the normal course

¹¹ An unknown hand underlined this sentence.

¹² An unknown hand underlined the phrase "we are dealing with a number of individual cases."

¹³ An unknown hand underlined the phrase "in CY 1980."

¹⁴ An unknown hand underlined the phrase "At the same time we should consult."

of business to give Congress an overview of expected cases, both annually as called for in the Javits report and as the cases mature. In any event, with the possible exception of Redeye, the agreed items are not of the type which have been opposed by Congress in the past.

212. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, April 12, 1980

SUBJECT

Military Relations with Saudi Arabia (C)

I convened an interagency group today to discuss military relations with Saudi Arabia,² and specifically the most recent Saudi arms transfer requests. Attendees included Harold Brown, Warren Christopher, Charles Duncan, Bill Miller, Stan Turner, David Jones, and Ambassador John West. (C)

John West opened the meeting by providing his views on the overall relationship. His most important observation was that the Saudis are expecting a major U.S. initiative in the event that the autonomy talks do not produce concrete results by May 26.³ The group agreed that John should be prepared upon his return to give the Saudis a better understanding of our views on this issue, namely that we expect by May 26 to have made progress sufficiently tangible to continue the process beyond that date. (S)

The group then reviewed the specific Saudi arms requests, which the Saudis view as the linchpin of our overall security relationship. A mini-PRC held last week⁴ to discuss the Saudi requests recommended a response (Tab A)⁵ that John West believes will be favorably received.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 4/80. Secret. Sent for action. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum: "Zbig—Let John West read Fahd's rude letter & then see me J." An unknown hand drew a line through Carter's notation. Beneath the note, Carter wrote: "Zbig J."

² Formal minutes of the meeting have not been found.

³ See footnote 6, Document 206. Sadat suspended the talks in early May.

⁴ See Document 211.

⁵ Not attached and not further identified.

The group concurred with the mini-PRC recommendations, with one exception that requires your decision. (C)

During the F-15 debate in 1978, Harold told the Congress that we did not intend to sell the Saudis⁶ items that would significantly enhance the F-15's capabilities, and he named specifically: (1) conformal fuel pods; (2) KC-135 tankers; and (3) multiple ejection bomb racks.⁷ The majority of the group recommends that we tell the Saudis that we would be willing to consult with the Congress on the *conformal pods* after the election. This would permit us to give the Saudis some positive news on an issue of great importance to them, even though we are agreeing only to consult with Congress, which we hope would be more receptive because of the increased threat to the region. Harold and Warren Christopher, who were both heavily involved in the initial F-15 debate, expressed skepticism about this approach.⁸ They believe the congressional reaction still could be very adverse, and that if the decision were to leak, it could cause political damage. While this is a close, difficult question, I believe that our relationship with the Saudis is sufficiently important, particularly during this crucial period, to warrant giving this cautiously positive response. If you approve, we would pass the response informally to minimize the chances of a leak. (S)

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve notifying the Saudis of our willingness to consult with Congress early next year on the F-15 conformal fuel pods.⁹ (S)

The group then discussed how to present the response to the Saudis. It was decided that John West would give a general briefing on his return and would encourage Prince Sultan to come here in June to receive a more detailed response from Harold in the context of the broader security relationship. The favorable answers to their arms transfer requests provide an ideal opportunity to engage the Saudis in discussion of larger issues, and also permit the sounding of cautionary notes about Saudi absorptive capacity and managerial capability. (S)

⁶ Carter underlined the phrase "did not intend to sell the Saudis."

⁷ Carter underlined each of the three items. See footnote 11, Document 216.

⁸ Carter underlined the names "Harold" and "Warren" and the phrase "expressed skepticism" in this sentence.

⁹ Carter approved the recommendation, drew a line from the Approve line to the lower margin of the page, and wrote: "You can go this far, but the Saudis must not be misled. If Congressional approval is doubtful, they should know it. J."

213. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, May 1, 1980, 1017Z

2794. Dept please repeat to White House, USCINCEUR Vaihingen GE, USLO Riyadh, CHUSMTM Dhahran SA, and USMTMDDET Riyadh SA. Subject: Saudi Arms Requests: Meeting With Sultan. Ref: (A) State 106679;² (B) Jidda 1173.³

1. (S-entire text).

2. Summary: Sultan reacted constructively, in the main, to the initial USG responses to specific Saudi arms requests, despite his evident disappointment about unmet RSAF requirements. For the latter—including the conformal fuel pods, multiple ejection racks, and tankers—Sultan proposed an exchange of letters of intent by which USG agreement in principle to these sales, subject to congressional concurrence, could be established. While Sultan was willing to put the AWACS issue aside for the present time, and had no objection to deployment of USAF AWACS to Saudi Arabia, he turned down USAF F-15 visits as inopportune. He gave qualified acceptance to Saudi participation in Red Flag exercises with USAF, however. Other items of discussion included Sultan's assertion of necessity to update the bilateral agreement concerning USMTM, his acceptance of the Lawrence visit,⁴ and his non-committal response on a possible visit by the Secretary of Defense. Contrast between our forthcoming responses on land forces requests and our oblique reactions to Air Force needs was not lost on Sultan, who noted that if U.S. would not meet RSAF defensive needs then SAG would be free to seek other sources of supply. However, on balance the meeting produced more positive results than anticipated, and provided the basis for useful continuing discussions with Saudi defense officials. End summary.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870094–0934. Secret; Immediate; Nodis.

² In telegram 106679 to Jidda, April 23, the Department provided West with the initial U.S. response to Saudi arms requests, stressing that the United States “proposes intensified continuing consultations with SAG on security issues, especially arms requirements.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870094–0953) See Document 212.

³ In telegram 1173 from Jidda, February 21, the Embassy referenced the Saudi arms requests, noting: “If until recently unsatisfied arms transfer requests were considered irritants by the Saudis, these unfulfilled perceived needs are now becoming grievances in Saudi eyes.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800091–0326)

⁴ See Document 215.

3. On April 30 the Ambassador met for over two hours in Riyadh with Prince Sultan, Minister of Defense and Aviation. Major General Donnelly, Pol-Mil Counselor Marsh, Dr. Gerlach, and Lt. Col. Ryer, AIRA, participated, as did General Humayd (Deputy Minister, MODA), General Hammad (Chief of the General Staff), and Lt. Col. Fahd Abdallah (Director of Operations, RSAF). The purpose of the meeting was to convey to Sultan the initial USG responses (ref A) to the recent SAG requests for arms transfers (ref B).

4. The Ambassador opened the discussion by expressing his conviction, derived from consultations in Washington earlier this month⁵ that the security of Saudi Arabia is of prime importance to the highest levels of the USG, without exception. Where differences arose was not whether, but how best, to respond to the military requirements of the Kingdom.

5. In this context, the Ambassador indicated that certain technical constraints upon the advisory role of USMTM were being eliminated. Sultan interjected that MODA had under study revision of the bilateral agreement, now nearly thirty years old, under which USMTM conducts its activities. It is necessary to renovate that agreement in order to reflect more fully the present interests of both sides. (N.B. Sultan did not specify what revisions were desired). The Ambassador assured Sultan that the Embassy and USMTM will be happy to work with MODA on this matter.

6. In an additional prefatory statement, the Ambassador informed Sultan that Major General Lawrence would visit the Kingdom soon, in order to make formal presentation to SAG of the USEOPE report. Sultan said that he welcomed the visit, but added his hope that Lawrence would not come with the object of pressing or convincing the Saudis to accept distasteful situations. Generals Donnelly and Hammad should jointly arrange Lawrence's schedule. The Ambassador concurred.

7. Conveying an invitation for RSAF officers to participate in Red Flag training within the US, the Ambassador underscored the rarity of such invitations to non-NATO members. While responding with appreciation, Sultan displayed considerable sensitivity that participating might imply a lack of technical proficiency on the part of RSAF personnel, or might signify an obstacle to further acquisitions by RSAF. The US press had alleged Saudi incapacity to absorb sophisticated weapons systems; the reverse is the case, and SAG wishes to accelerate the F-15 program. The Ambassador is welcome to see for himself how capably the Saudi forces are assimilating their weapons acquisitions.

⁵ See Document 212.

RSAF pilots have and will receive training in the US, including the Red Flag program.

8. After this extensive airing of Sultan's respective viewpoints, the Ambassador addressed the specific arms questions. On the land forces items, Sultan received the responses with restrained gratification. Procedurally, Sultan indicated that USMTM and MODA should work together on modalities and delivery schedules. His specific comments were:

(A) That when Stinger is deployed with US/NATO forces it should be made available to Saudi Arabia, whose defense of vital mutual interests equals the NATO role in importance;

(B) That Sultan will talk with French Defense Minister Yvon Bourges, when the latter visits Riyadh May tenth, concerning Roland and the multiple launch rocket system (ex-CSRS). Sultan said that SAG preferred to rely on the US as source of its military supply but has had and now has close security assistance relationships with France and the FRG;

(C) That SAG remains interested in Lance, although it had not appeared on the latest request list. The Ambassador responded that objective, professional military judgment in the US holds that the Lance is unsuitable for the Saudi inventory, as the Secretary of Defense had advised earlier. It was left that USMTM and MODA would discuss this further.

9. Turning to the Saudi Air Force requests, the Ambassador explained our willingness to explore RSAF needs, to send USAF F-15s and AWACS to the Kingdom, and to undertake appropriate consultations with the Congress in early 1981, respectively. On these subjects Sultan replied vigorously. If Congress objected to meeting the defensive needs of RSAF, then SAG would consider itself free to seek "other sources" for its requirements. Visits of USAF F-15s are not rpt not in the interests of the Kingdom at present—beside this flat turndown, Sultan added the oblique metaphor that "the temperature is now 40 degrees C, and 42 degrees C is fatal."

10. As for AWACS, Sultan said that visits are acceptable. He suggested that the AWACS question be put to one side for the present. However, he urged, the Secretary of Defense and he should exchange letters acknowledging SAG's need for pods, MERs, and tankers, and USG agreement in principle to these sales, subject to congressional concurrence. Sultan pressed this point, and the Ambassador gave an unofficial personal opinion that the Secretary of Defense would not, in all likelihood, be prepared to enter into such commitments now. We had proposed the USAF visits and an airborne air-defense surveillance feasibility study. We would thus explore the requirements and prospects for sale of conformal pods. Sultan asked to communicate further with the Ambassador about the F-15 related requests, which was agreed.

11. At the close the Ambassador reported Secretary Brown's readiness to include Saudi Arabia on his Middle East trip next month. Sultan expressed his personal pleasure over any visit by the Secretary of Defense but responded that a decision was not his to make. He would consult with the Council of Ministers and advise the Ambassador promptly.

12. Comment: It was clear that the contrast between our forthcoming responses on land forces requests and our indirect reactions to air force needs was not lost on Sultan et al. While managing to restrain display of their disappointment, even dismay, over unmet RSAF needs they consider urgent and self-evident, their dissatisfaction is unmistakable. Under these circumstances, the meeting was remarkable for its absence of invective and recrimination. Instead, Sultan authorized a continuation of the dialogue over specifics of the various arms requests. The Embassy and USMTM will undertake that dialogue with vigor and will report developments promptly. End comment.

West

214. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

PA M 80-10217

Washington, May 5, 1980

US ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA

Conclusion

The most likely threat to the Saudi monarchy over the next several years is not a conventional military attack by one of its neighbors, but externally inspired subversion or internal unrest.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 82M00501R, 1980 Subject Files, Box 15, Folder 1, Saudi Arabia. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified]. A typed notation on the first page indicates the memorandum was prepared in the Arabian Peninsula Branch, Near East South Asia Division, Office of Political Analysis, National Foreign Assessment Center, in response to a request from the NIO for Near East South Asia and it was coordinated with the Office of Economic Research and Office of Scientific Research. Sent to Turner under cover of a May 5 note from Helene L. Boatner, Director, Political Analysis. Boatner wrote that she thought Turner "might find it interesting reading." Turner wrote in the margin: "excellent paper—thanks—have asked to condense [less than 1 line not declassified] Stan." National Intelligence Officer for the Near East/South Asia Robert C. Ames also sent a copy of the paper to Turner under a May 6 note, upon which Turner wrote: "I like the conclusion and last part of last paragraph of text." He added: "Excellent paper—ST." (Ibid.)

The sale of many of the more sophisticated weapons requested by Riyadh would not in any case appreciably off-set the large inherent advantages in manpower (Iran, Iraq) or technical expertise (Israel) enjoyed by most of Saudi Arabia's neighbors.

Against South Yemen—the most plausible external threat in the short term—Saudi deterrent capabilities could be more than adequately improved by additional training with little increase in hardware.

The overriding rationale, therefore, for meeting Saudi arms requests is not military but political: to bolster the “special” US-Saudi relationship, which has become badly frayed around the edges.

In addition to the obvious political benefits the US would derive from such sales, there are some potential political dangers. By promoting a large defense program over the next five years (\$115 billion) and purchasing more advanced equipment than the Saudi armed forces can readily absorb, Saudi leaders could lay themselves open more than they already are to charges of wasting the country's resources and increasing Saudi Arabia's dependence on the US.

On the other hand, Washington runs a high risk of creating further misunderstandings and hard feelings among Saudi leaders if it refuses to supply at least some of the more sensitive and sophisticated equipment they have asked for. This would be all the more true if the US were to be more responsive to Israeli and Egyptian arms requests.

From our perspective, it is difficult to judge with any confidence what mix of arms sales might placate the Saudis and still minimize whatever risk there may be of contributing to internal discontent.

Symbolic Importance

The US-Saudi arms supply relationship has taken on great symbolic importance for Saudi leaders. It is at once a measure of the US commitment to Saudi security and a source of prestige. US policy on this issue probably will be an increasingly important yardstick by which the Saudis measure their willingness to cooperate with the US. A quick and sympathetic US response, therefore, to the Saudis' present arms requests is likely to do much more to strengthen US-Saudi relations than it will to augment the Saudi armed forces' limited defense capabilities. Conversely, a lukewarm response will probably further strain bilateral relations.

Indeed, the slowness of the US in meeting outstanding Saudi arms requests already is a major irritant in relations. Rightly or wrongly, Saudi leaders believe that since the Camp David Accords and the fall of the Shah our “special relationship” has become increasingly one-sided in favor of American interests: that Washington has tended to take Saudi support for granted, and to give insufficient support to special Saudi concerns.

This frustration, and even bitterness, results primarily from what the Saudis view as US unwillingness to pay an adequate price for Saudi cooperation on oil by pressing Israel harder on the Palestinian issue. The “favoritism” they feel Washington shows towards Israel and Egypt in filling arms requests has only made matters worse. At bottom, their continued harping on the arms issue reflects their growing frustration with what they view as US insensitivity to the changing equities in the relationship and their desire to be treated less as a client and more as a valued ally, on a par with Israel.

External Threats

The overriding political importance of the arms supply issue is underscored by the fact that Saudi leaders know as well as we do that the Saudi armed forces could not now, or in the foreseeable future, withstand a conventional military attack for long, from any plausible source—except possibly South Yemen—without the aid of foreign combat forces. No amount of new, sophisticated weaponry is likely to significantly alter this basic equation over the short- to mid-term, if ever.

The absorptive capacity of the Saudis’ small 31,500-man Army is simply too limited and the comparative advantages in manpower of most of their neighbors is too large. Moreover, Saudi military leaders have shown little interest so far in dealing with one of their most glaring weaknesses: the lack of adequate training in command and control, logistics management, maintenance, and strategy and tactics. This kind of training would do more than anything else to upgrade the Saudis’ defense capabilities against South Yemen, their only likely military opponent in the near term.

Saudi leaders seem unconcerned about this deficiency probably because, like us, they see little likelihood of a major armed conflict with one of their neighbors over the next several years. Historically, wars between Arab states have been few and relatively brief, often amounting to little more than border clashes. Because of pan-Arab constraints on attacking a fellow Arab, the limited offensive capabilities of most Arab armies and the potential political risks of defeat, most Arab leaders have traditionally resorted to subversion rather than military action to unseat an opponent. Some or all of these constraints exist for potential Arab opponents of Saudi Arabia. In addition, we judge there is slim chance that Saudi leaders would use Saudi regular forces in an aggression outside Saudi Arabia proper.

As the strongest adjacent Arab state, *Iraq* with its well-trained 200,000-man army could easily overwhelm the Saudis. Saudi leaders, however, are not particularly worried at present about a threat materializing from that direction. Over the past year or so, Riyadh and Baghdad have developed closer ties, which include some limited military and security cooperation.

Even if relations turned sour again, there is little reason to believe that renewed political feuding would lead to a military clash. Both the attitude of other Arab states and fear of an American reaction would act as strong constraints on Iraqi adventurism if Baghdad were so inclined.

Because of its new-found revolutionary fervor *Iran* has emerged as a more serious threat to Saudi security. But the military threat is more apparent than real. As long as Iranian leaders remain distracted by internal problems and perceived threats from the US and Iraq, and the Iranian military remains in disarray, the Saudis will have more to fear from Iranian efforts to foment unrest among Saudi Arabia's Shia minority than they will from a conventional military attack from Iran.

As for *Israel*, Saudi military leaders dismiss the possibility of a direct conflict as remote. Even if another Arab-Israeli war broke out the Saudis are not about to attack Israel directly. Instead, they would seek to meet their obligation to the Arab cause by sending an expeditionary force either to Jordan or Syria. And they would expect the US to restrain Israel from striking at vulnerable military installations and industrial targets inside Saudi Arabia.

A border war with South Yemen, on the other hand, is plausible under certain circumstances. If, for example, the Adeni regime thought it could inflict an embarrassing reverse on Saudi forces that would trigger widespread internal unrest or a coup against the monarchy, Yemeni leaders probably would take the risk. Such an attack in the near future, however, would achieve neither goal and probably would result in South Yemen's increased isolation in the Arab world. Thus, it seems more likely that Aden will try to undermine the Saudi regime, if it can, by resorting to subversion and perhaps urban terrorism. Given the inhospitable terrain and climatic conditions, it is questionable in any event whether Yemeni forces could mount a sustained offensive into Saudi Arabia.

Finally, a direct Soviet attack is highly implausible because of the enormous risk of triggering a superpower confrontation.

The Greater Threat

In our judgment the greater threat to the survival of the Saudi monarchy is internally or externally inspired subversion, feeding off domestic discontent. Because of increased popular awareness and dissatisfaction over corruption, government inefficiency and waste, and unresponsive political institutions, the huge Saudi defense budget and the purchase of large quantities of expensive US military equipment—some of dubious utility—could contribute to internal criticism of the regime and serve as a rallying point for the discontented.

The extent of the contribution is difficult to measure. Certainly it is not as great as was the case in Iran. Because of the Saudis' greater

financial resources and smaller population, the Saudi Government can easily afford both guns and butter without fueling inflation or creating shortages that might generate the kind of economic grievances against the regime that contributed to the downfall of the Shah. Additionally, such acquisitions probably would have the positive effect of binding the Saudi military closer to the monarchy, ensuring the continued loyalty especially of senior officers. A US refusal to sell some of this hardware, moreover, would simply prompt the Saudis to turn elsewhere, thus circumventing US efforts to channel Saudi defense spending into what we view as beneficial directions.

On the negative side the purchase of equipment that the Saudi armed forces cannot readily absorb and that would require additional US (or other foreign) personnel to operate and maintain could feed discontent among younger, lower ranking Saudi officers over what some of them already regard as incompetence, corruption and excessive dependence on the US by senior Saudi leaders.

Political Dilemma

The dilemma for the US in trying to decide what weapons to sell, and what to withhold, is that the Saudis are placing a high political premium on our responsiveness to their arms requests. Given the realities of US Congressional resistance to some sales and the Saudi armed forces' absorptive problems—which the Saudis are well aware of—most Saudi leaders might accept with equanimity a US decision to refuse or defer consideration of some of their requests. But after having gone to such great lengths to emphasize the importance to Saudi Arabia of a positive US response, there is a high risk that the Saudis will view US efforts to persuade them to drop their requests for some equipment as either patronizing, or worse, indifference to their sensitivities.

In analyzing the list of weapons Riyadh has requested we cannot determine with confidence the mix of weapons sales that would meet the Saudis' genuine military needs, satisfy Saudi leaders politically, and still minimize any potential harm such sales could do. The Saudi insistence, above all, on obtaining accessories for the F-15, which would meet strong opposition from pro-Israeli elements in the US Congress, underscores the difficulty. *Indeed, the suspicion arises that some Saudi leaders seem to be courting rejection in order to demonstrate that the US is not prepared to grant Saudi Arabia the special status they believe it deserves.* One possibility is that they have already decided on some action that the US will not like, and by pushing us into saying "no" here they hope to put us on the defensive and stifle our ability to object.

215. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State and the Department of Defense¹

Jidda, May 13, 1980, 0945Z

3053. Military addressees treat as Specat Exclusive. Subject: Lawrence Visit—Meeting With Sultan.

1. (S-entire text).

2. Summary. Efforts of M/Gen Lawrence to engage in substantive discussions of non-arms transfer security issues were thwarted by Sultan's insistence upon protesting perceived US unresponsiveness to Saudi equipment requests. Sultan ruled out both discussions on wider security issues and joint military activity within the Kingdom, such as training and exercises, until the Royal Saudi Air Force had obtained its equipment requirements. Sultan confirmed, however, that Saudi personnel will participate in Red Flag and other training activity within the US. The highly charged atmosphere of this session with Sultan revealed the deeply aggrieved sensitivities of the Saudis over the arms question and the critical importance of this issue to our relations with SAG. End summary.

3. Prince Sultan, Minister of Defense and Aviation, used his meeting with visiting Major General Richard Lawrence on May 12 to argue strenuously for US satisfaction of Saudi arms requests. Sultan has done so with every successive American visitor for over three months. This time Sultan's contentions had special conviction, for the meeting came soon after the US decision declining, in Saudi eyes, to give unequivocal assent to conformal fuel pods, MERS, and aerial refueling tankers for the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF). Furthermore, Major General Sabri and Lt. Col. Fahd Abdallah of RSAF participated in the meeting and personified Saudi disgruntlement with the military supply situation. Sultan's often vehement delivery was for their benefit as well as for the American side.

4. The Ambassador and Gen. Lawrence, accompanied by Major General Donnelly, Pol-Mil Counselor Marsh, and Lt. Col. Ryer, AIRA, met for two hours in Riyadh with Sultan, who was flanked by Generals Humayd, Hammad, Sabri, and Omran, in addition to Sabri and Fahd Abdallah. In opening remarks the Ambassador said that Lawrence had come to make formal presentation of the 1979 USEOPE survey report, to have discussions with MODA officials on a wide range of security

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800236-0791. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information to CHUSMTM Dhahran, USMTMDDET Riyadh, USLO Riyadh, and USCINCEUR Vaihingen.

topics, and to obtain Sultan's views on these matters for transmittal to Secretary Brown and Under Secretary Nimetz.

5. Lawrence emphasized the steadfast commitment of the US to the security of Saudi Arabia and US interest in various forms of defense cooperation, such as a continuing dialogue on the spectrum of issues of mutual concern, and activities such as joint exercises and training. At each attempt by the US side to discuss matters other than the unresolved arms requests, Sultan returned to his preoccupation with that problem.

6. In fact, most of the two hour meeting was a heated monologue by Sultan in which he set forth his exasperation and indignation. Most of his arguments were familiar, but he gave them even more than his usual emphasis. He maintained that the US refused to face the facts of genuine Saudi defense needs, given the encirclement of the Kingdom by adversaries with designs on Saudi oil fields. Saudi Arabia was the region's foremost friend of the US but neighboring states had "ten times" the arms possessed by the Kingdom. Not only had this friendship brought the Saudis much criticism from within the region, but it had not induced the US to respond to Saudi defense requirements either. The Kingdom needs visible evidence of US support to offset the political liability of its close association with us.

7. Sultan enumerated the benefits derived by the US from cooperative Saudi policies. In oil production and pricing the Kingdom had shown itself responsive to US interests. Unlike certain NATO countries, Saudi Arabia constitutes no drain on US defense resources but seeks only to provide for its own requirements, incidentally by cash purchases helping to sustain the US economy. Sultan protested that in return for such dependable self-reliance the Kingdom must cope with both USG reluctance to provide modest arms needs and a series of US media calumnies denigrating the country. Such attacks included distortion of the Mecca incident into an alleged sign of internal instability, and disparagement of Islam itself through the showing of "Death of a Princess."²

8. Sultan turned down joint contingency planning, joint exercises, and other kinds of cooperative activity. No American forces, even of small scale, should be brought into the Kingdom nor should contin-

² Reference is to the television movie "Death of a Princess," which aired on Public Broadcasting Service stations across the United States on May 12. Saudi officials vigorously protested the showing of the film, "based on the execution of a Saudi princess and her commoner lover," in both the United Kingdom and the United States. The Department of State and Mobil Corporation intervened in order to air an hour-long panel discussion following the broadcast. (C. Gerald Fraser, "Princess' Film Discussion to Run for Hour After Showing Monday," *The New York Times*, May 10, 1980, p. 48)

agency planning occur prior to actual times of crisis. (French Defense Minister Bourges had proposed joint exercises to Sultan only the day before, and had met with a similar refusal). Sultan indicated that Saudi personnel would go to the US for Red Flag and other training activity, but in all other instances of proposed defense cooperation there is a *sine qua non*—providing RSAF the equipment it needs. Only after that prerequisite is satisfied will it be prudent or opportune even to discuss joint planning and exercises.

9. Gen. Lawrence will attempt to hold discussions with the Saudi service chiefs on the USEOPE report and other topics. Clearly, however, Sultan's ire about the RSAF equipment requests overcame his respect and appreciation for Lawrence's survey. We conclude, regretfully, that the meeting was wholly inauspicious for productive subsequent staff-level discussions.

10. Comment. It is unmistakably clear that Sultan considers the RSAF requests the major current test of US good faith in the defense sphere. His staff and he are affronted by our seeming unresponsiveness—and Sultan remarked twice during the meeting that SAG "patience is limited." (In this vein, we have heard reports that some RSAF officers are seriously considering urging SAG cancellation of the F-15 purchase and acquisition of more fully equipped first-line aircraft from another country). We cannot induce the Saudis to address wider security concerns nor can we pursue regional defense objectives requiring their cooperation, until this equipment issue is resolved satisfactorily. In the aftermath of the Iranian crisis, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the Mecca incident the Saudis are in search of tangible US reassurance of commitment to their security. Their air force requests epitomize the reassurance they seek. Failure to meet these needs—for the military equipment and the political support it also represents—can have a profoundly adverse impact upon our overall relationship. And, as all concerned are aware, that relationship is already strained because of other bilateral and regional policy issues. End comment.

West

216. Letter From the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West) to President Carter¹

Jidda, June 3, 1980

Dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing an assessment of our relationship with Saudi Arabia. I regret that it is so pessimistic. Frankly, I am as concerned as I have been at any time during my three years here. There is one positive factor which I purposely did not include in this paper—namely that I do not believe the Saudis will take any action which might endanger your reelection prospects. The entire government leadership, including Fahd, Abdullah and Sultan are outspoken in their support. They believe that without your reelection, there is no hope for peace in the Mid-East.

For example, I referred in the assessment paper to my meeting with Prince Abdullah two days ago. At the close of the meeting, he asked my opinion as to whether Saudi Arabia was producing too much oil. I replied that I didn't think so for we needed a continuation of the present surplus to stabilize the market. He persisted by saying, "You really wouldn't object too much if we cut back, would you?"

I replied, "I hope you don't but if you decide to do so, for goodness sakes wait until after the election!" He laughed and said, "No, we've got to have President Carter reelected—it means as much to us as it does to you . . ."

Harold Brown's meeting with Prince Sultan later this month could be very important.² If we could indicate a favorable response on the additional equipment requested for the F-15, it would be most helpful. I have sent Harold in some detail our thoughts about the meeting.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 6-7/80. Secret. The letter is handwritten. Brzezinski sent the letter to Muskie and Brown under cover of a June 12 memorandum, in which Brzezinski noted: "The President asked me to share the enclosed letter and paper with you. It raises some very serious issues that are germane to our luncheon discussion on Wednesday." The luncheon discussion in question refers to a Muskie-Brown-Brzezinski lunch, during which arms transfers to Saudi Arabia were discussed. The three decided "(a) that Multiple Ejection Bomb Racks (MERs) were out for now, (b) to leave open the issue of conformal fuel pods and (c) that we would go ahead with KC-130 tankers with booms provided there were advance intensive Congressional consultations and that Israel was also offered the KC-130/boom." (Memorandum from Tarnoff to Muskie, June 12; National Archives, RG 59, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Subject Files of Edmund S. Muskie, 1963-1981, Lot 83D66, Box 3, 1980 Muskie Breakfast) Carter wrote the following handwritten notation on the first page of West's letter: "Zbig—Let Ed & Fritz & Harold read." A notation in an unknown hand reads: "Done."

² See Document 217.

Congratulations on winning the renomination—I hope the results of today’s primaries³ cause Sen. Kennedy to withdraw—at last.

Your choice of Sec. Muskie was superb. I am sending him separately a copy of this assessment.

Faithfully,

J. West

Attachment

Report Prepared by the Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West)⁴

Jidda, June 1, 1980

SAUDI ARABIA—AN ASSESSMENT AS OF JUNE 1, 1980

SUMMARY: A major crisis is coming in U.S.-Saudi relations. Indeed, it has probably already begun, and is simply now increasing in intensity and severity. Expressions by Saudi government and private sector leaders indicate a growing concern and uneasiness about the future of USG–SAG relations. Likewise, recent events clearly show the beginning of a serious deterioration in the special relationship. Two reasons emerge: (1) The Saudis see the relationship with U.S. as one-sided, with the SAG’s actions on oil pricing and production far outweighing any quid pro quo coming to Saudi Arabia, and (2) The Saudis are increasingly convinced that Israeli interests are paramount in USG policy decisions in the Mideast, a conclusion which strikes at the very heart of the bilateral relationship as viewed by the Saudis. END SUMMARY.

SAUDI DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE “SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP”

Since my return from consultations in Washington six weeks ago, I have noted increasing concern by normally pro-Western Saudis about the future of the U.S.-Saudi relationship. I have travelled extensively throughout the country and have talked to a wide spectrum of people, including numerous members of the royal family both within and without the government, ministers, deputy ministers, provincial governors, and Saudi business leaders, most of whom are Western educated and generally pro-Western in their sentiments. In addition, I have

³ The last Democratic primaries of the 1980 campaign took place in California, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and West Virginia.

⁴ Secret.

talked with U.S. business leaders with long experience and many contacts here in the Kingdom. The conclusion is unanimous and inescapable: our bilateral relationship is deteriorating badly.

Recent public statements and declarations by Saudi leaders have had a common theme—dissatisfaction with U.S. policies in the Mideast and disillusionment with the special relationship. There was official condemnation of the use of force to attempt to rescue our hostages.⁵ Foreign Minister Prince Saud's speech at Islamabad which criticized almost equally both the U.S. and the USSR, Minister of Industry and Electricity Qusaybi's address to The Arab-American Society, and Fuad al Farsi's articles in the local press all have a similar ominous note. These three SAG officials, all products of America's best colleges and universities, are sending us a signal loud and clear that all is not well. Perhaps most significant of all is Crown Prince Fahd's recent interview in a Kuwait paper which quoted him as saying that the SAG would not rule out use of the oil weapon. It is the first such public statement by the Crown Prince. A careful reading of the statement indicates that it was probably reluctantly made; however, its significance cannot be over-estimated.

From all of our public and private sources, there has been a nearly unanimous opinion that U.S.-Saudi relations have clearly worsened in recent times and are fast approaching a critical stage. There is general agreement that U.S. policies of the past several months have taken away much of the Saudi confidence and satisfaction with the "special relationship." There is a generally-shared feeling that all Saudis now feel that the special relationship is one-sided, with the U.S. receiving far more than it is giving.

In virtually every conversation, these typical Saudi questions and comments are heard: "Why do we continue to produce twice as much oil as we need just to accommodate the U.S.?" "Why do we continue to sell our oil at \$6.00 to \$10.00 per barrel less than other countries are receiving?" "We do these things for you and yet we receive no thanks—only continued attacks in your press. What are we receiving from our friendship with the U.S.?—problems with the Arab world, a draining of our natural resource (oil) with no compensating concern for our position, our needs and concerns."

THE ISRAEL FACTOR IN U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONS

The answer which we often give to the above questions is that the U.S. security system is Saudi Arabia's primary protection from Russian

⁵ Reference is to the failed attempt by U.S. forces on April 24 to rescue the hostages being held in Tehran.

aggression, along with a reminder of the sale of the F-15s and of USG's response during the Yemen crisis of early 1979. Those answers are no longer effective, for events of recent months have weakened our position as a friend, ally, and reliable arms supplier. We are forced to conclude that the basic cause of the present deteriorating status of the U.S.-Saudi special relationship is the Arab-Israeli problem. This conclusion is particularly serious in that many influential Saudis have heretofore viewed the U.S.-Saudi "special relationship" as equal to the ties the U.S. has with Israel. Now, however, there is a growing perception among Saudis that this evenhandedness has vanished.

There is unanimous agreement among all Saudis with whom we have talked or with whom we have contact:

(1) That the autonomy talks have failed and that the U.S. does not now have the will or capacity to cause Israel to make the concessions necessary to solve the Palestinian problem. In the absence of such a solution, Saudi Arabia's continued support of U.S. interests, especially in oil production and pricing, subjects Saudi leaders to increasing internal pressure and at the same time isolates Saudi Arabia from the rest of the Arab world (except possibly Egypt), a position they consider completely untenable;

(2) That U.S. foreign policy is Israel-oriented and that no action will be taken by the U.S. which is considered to be pro-Arab or anti-Israel. Such a conclusion frightens the SAG political and military leadership and undermines confidence in the U.S. as a reliable friend, arms supplier, and military ally. These conclusions are cancerous and strike at the very heart of our special relationship.

The Saudis have contended from the outset of the current peace process that the Camp David accords would never result in a real solution to the Palestinian problem. Early on, they responded to our assertions that autonomy for the Palestinians would be the first step toward that solution with the rejoinder that there would never be any real autonomy as long as Begin's government was in power and unless the U.S. was prepared to exercise pressure upon the Israelis. Unfortunately, events since Camp David seem to have proven the Saudis right. With the passage of the May 26 deadline,⁶ they are more convinced than ever that a separate peace has been accomplished between Egypt and Israel; that Egypt has been effectively removed from the Arab orbit; that the Palestinian problem has been shunted aside; that Israel is now moving forward to legalize and finalize its occupation of Arab territory seized in the 1967 war; and, as a final blow and insult to the Arab world, that Israel is moving to make its occupation of Jerusalem

⁶ See footnote 3, Document 212.

a non-negotiable issue with the Arabs, a step which would be in conflict with U.S. policy and contrary to the understandings of Camp David.

With regard to the present Saudi conviction that U.S. foreign policy is Israel-oriented, there have been a series of events over the last months which, in Saudi eyes, have substantiated this belief. These events include the resignation of Ambassador Young,⁷ the repudiation of the UN vote on Jewish settlements,⁸ the abstention on the votes on UN resolutions condemning Israel for its incursions into Lebanon and the expulsion of the three Arab notables,⁹ and, most disappointing of all, the failure of the U.S. to respond affirmatively to all of the SAG's recent arms requests.¹⁰

With typical Bedouin frankness, Prince Abdullah, the third ranking member of the royal family, told me on June 1, "Arabs all over the Mideast are now convinced that your policies are set in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Can't you do something to give your friends in Saudi Arabia a basis to deny that charge?"

THE LITMUS TEST OF U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONS: THE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP

The Saudis have seized upon their arms requests as the litmus test of the U.S.-SAG relationship. Well aware of the open-ended military assistance the U.S. has given to Israel in recent years and concerned with their own security needs, the Saudis have included in their military equipment requests many of the weapons and systems that we have supplied or promised to supply to Israel. U.S. refusals to grant certain equipment are now being challenged heatedly, and the same requests are being raised again and again.

A leading case in point concerns supplemental equipment for the F-15s. The SAG is again insisting upon the acquisition of conformal pods and multiple ejection racks (MERs) for these advanced fighters, plus KC-135s to permit aerial refueling. We have learned that the SAG military was not consulted when the Saudi government concurred in Secretary Brown's letter to the Congress in April 1978, saying that the

⁷ Reference is to Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young's resignation on August 15, 1979, due to a controversy that had ensued after he held a meeting in his apartment with a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization. More information on this episode is in Carter's memoirs, *Keeping Faith*, p. 491.

⁸ See *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, September 1978-December 1980, Document 345.

⁹ See *Foreign Relations*, 1977-1980, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, September 1978-December 1980, Documents 360 and 367.

¹⁰ See Documents 213 and 215.

conformal pods and MERs would not be included in the F-15 package.¹¹ This decision has been a source of frustration and anger within the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF), and has been the subject of considerable discussion among Saudi political and military leaders.

The Saudis feel even more strongly that the restrictions should be removed in view of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Their contention is that there is now complete military justification for this additional equipment but that political constraints (read Israel) are preventing the U.S. from furnishing these needed items. The feeling that they are being given only second class consideration by the U.S. creates bitter resentment and unconcealed frustration.

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

Thus far, the Saudi response to these forces has been restrained. However, the SAG has repeatedly hinted that its patience with U.S. policies has its limits, and there are now strong indications that other options are indeed being actively considered. The French seem to be the leading benefactors, and the significance of growing Franco-Saudi defense ties (which have included during the past year a visit by Sultan to Paris and two visits by French Defense Minister Bourges to Saudi Arabia) should not be underestimated. The Saudis believe they can get whatever they want from the French in terms of equipment, advisors, and support for Saudi political positions. As Prince Sultan remarked to a local journalist on May 11, "Our friends in France will not refuse us anything that we might ask from them in the future."

THE ROAD BACK: REASSURING THE SAUDIS AND THE CONSEQUENCES IF WE DON'T

The Saudis, therefore, see themselves buffeted by four forces: (1) the threat of military aggression by the Soviet Union and/or its proxies; (2) internal political and military pressures; (3) the anti-U.S., anti-monarchical tendencies of the Arab world; and (4) the efforts of the Western Europeans, chiefly the French, to replace the U.S. as the principal security partner of Saudi Arabia. The end result of this buffeting is to call into serious question the U.S.-Saudi special relationship. Thus, the two questions which next arise are what can be done to preserve this relationship, and what will be the consequences of continuing deterioration if strong remedial action is not taken immediately.

¹¹ Reference is presumably to Brown's letter of May 10, 1978, addressed to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which gave assurances that the F-15s that the administration wished to sell to Saudi Arabia would not be equipped with auxiliary fuel tanks or MERs. (Bernard Weinraub, "Brown Says Saudis Will Accept Curbs on the Use of F-15's," *The New York Times*, May 11, 1978, p. A1)

The most obvious answer to the first question is some clear indication that the U.S. is acting to move the peace talks forward by securing meaningful concessions from Israel on the core issues of the Palestinian problem. Failing that, the administration should make a commitment to explore with the next Congress the furnishing of the additional F-15 equipment including KC-135s. The consequences of doing nothing and seeing the continued deterioration of the relationship has, potentially, both short-term (6 months–2 years) and long-term (2–5 years) consequences.

The major short-term consequences concern oil. The Saudis may have already started to relinquish their role as a moderate on oil prices and to allow market conditions to determine the price. This action could well be followed by a substantial Saudi reduction in oil production. We do not, however, believe this will occur prior to the fourth quarter of 1980. We also anticipate that there might be a gradual termination of the relatively favorable treatment of U.S. firms in the Kingdom. The accommodation presently being made by SAG officials to avoid disruption in U.S.-Saudi business dealings by moderate application of the anti-boycott laws would begin to disappear.

Another short-term consequence, and one which is already underway, is the Saudi move to other suppliers for military equipment. Recently, for instance, the Saudis informed us they do not wish to purchase U.S. M-60 tanks for the next stage of their army mechanization program. The Saudis have agreed with the French on a mammoth coastal defense package, and several other arms deals are in the offing. The net long-term significance of these developments is of crucial importance, as the SAG appears to be seeking a new security strategy. This new strategy is still not well defined but, even so, two elements have emerged. The first element, noted earlier, is that the Saudis are seeking an alternative to the U.S. as principal arms supplier—enter the French connection; the second element is Saudi interest in forming an alliance with other Islamic countries to pursue a non-aligned course. This new tack could include exploration of a new relationship between Saudi Arabia and the USSR in the reasonably near future.

The adoption of such a strategy—even if over the long term—would have a profound and injurious impact on U.S. vital interests. Heretofore, the U.S.-Saudi special relationship has largely traded oil for security. For the Saudis to decide that their security is now best guaranteed elsewhere would deprive us of what is, in the final analysis, the only card the U.S. can play effectively in a game where the stakes involved affect, to a significant degree, our economic and political well being.

The U.S. must not, therefore, permit our relationship with Saudi Arabia to deteriorate further. Instead, we must make the difficult politi-

cal decisions necessary to restore our credibility with the Saudis and the rest of the Arab world. The Saudis need to be reassured that close friendship and cooperation with the U.S. need not prejudice their own vital political and economic interests as they are now increasingly inclined to believe.

John C. West
Ambassador

217. Report of Discussions¹

Geneva, June 26, 1980

REPORT OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DR. HAROLD BROWN AND PRINCE SULTAN BIN ABDUL- AZIZ AL-SAUD, MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION OF SAUDI ARABIA IN GENEVA, JUNE 26, 1980

The June discussions lasted seven hours and included four hours of private conversation between the principals, followed by a working luncheon at which they were joined by Amb John West and ASD David McGiffert on the U.S. side and Amb Faisal Alhegelen and COL Fahad bin Abdullah on the Saudi side.

The atmosphere of the talks was reasonably friendly and both sides consider them to have been successful. From the U.S. point of view, the following points and conclusions are worth highlighting:

A. It had been sixteen months since the last SecDef-Sultan meeting in February 1979.² The overall U.S. objective of building greater Saudi confidence in the US-Saudi security relationship was achieved. Sultan welcomed Dr. Brown's reaffirmation of the U.S. commitment to modernize and develop Saudi Arabia's defense forces and to provide them with the equipment needed to defend the Kingdom against regional threats. He also welcomed the Secretary's recognition and support for Saudi Arabia's leadership role in the region.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 81B00401R, Subject Files of the Presidential Briefing Coordinator for DCI (1977–1981), Box 13, Folder 1, SCC Meeting ME Security (No. 13). Secret. The Summary of Conversation was included in a briefing packet for the July 15 SCC meeting (see Document 86). Brown arranged to meet with Sultan in Geneva as part of a trip that also took him to Italy and France.

² See Documents 185 and 186.

B. A broad measure of strategic agreement was reached on the nature of the Soviet threat to the area in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Dr. Brown congratulated Sultan on Saudi Arabia's firm stand against the invasion at the Islamabad Conference of Islamic states,³ and it was agreed that both sides would work to strengthen Pakistan militarily and economically. Sultan pressed for greater U.S. assistance to Turkey, Somalia, Bangladesh, Yemen Arab Republic and the Afghani rebels.

C. Dr. Brown described U.S. efforts to increase its military presence in the Indian Ocean area, including greater access to facilities in Oman, Kenya, Egypt, and Somalia; upgrading and prepositioning at Diego Garcia; and planning to upgrade air and sea transport capability. He noted, however, that the U.S. would have difficulty countering a Soviet thrust toward the Gulf without access to facilities in the northern Gulf. To Sultan's relief, the Secretary stated that the U.S. was not seeking bases in Saudi Arabia, but the Secretary also asked Sultan to think about the fact that Diego Garcia was over two thousand miles away and what this would mean if military action against Soviet forces were required. He thus left a marker for future, more specific discussions.

Sultan made clear that in the Saudi view, the most important thing the U.S. could do to assist regional stability and security would be to press for a just and comprehensive solution to the problems of Palestine and Jerusalem. Beyond that, he said, strengthening Saudi Arabia and assisting other moderate states in the area would have more effect than facilities. He did acknowledge that a U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean, in areas near where the Soviets were, was a good thing.

D. The Secretary asked Sultan for Saudi good offices in improving U.S. relations with Iraq. Sultan noted that Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States were working to encourage greater Iraqi moderation.

E. The Secretary expressed appreciation for Saudi Arabia's efforts to maintain production and price levels at the Algiers OPEC Conference.⁴ Other oil producers, he said, obviously did not understand the damaging effect of high oil prices on common defense and security efforts.

F. The F-15 accessories/aerial refueling issue was defused. The Secretary said that the U.S. could not make commitments now and that it would not be possible to move on all the items at once. Sultan agreed that Saudi Arabia would not push its request for these items

³ The Eleventh Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers took place in Islamabad May 17-21. (Telegram 3154 from Jidda, May 18; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800245-0083) The Saudis played a key role in keeping the Afghanistan invasion in the forefront during the conference. (Telegram 3344 from Jidda, May 28; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800261-1002)

⁴ OPEC members met in Algiers June 9-11.

at this time but insisted it was not withdrawing its request either. It was agreed, as SecDef later told the press, that no decisions were imminent, that these requests would remain under study and that any future decisions regarding them would be preceded by consultations with the Congress.

G. Third country programs were discussed at some length with the U.S. side urging greater coordination and more frequent consultations, and the Saudi side exhorting the U.S. to provide more assistance to specific countries, particularly, Pakistan and Somalia. Sultan by implication endorsed U.S. efforts to acquire access facilities in Somalia. Sultan also stated he favored the continuation of a Jordanian training role in Yemen but at the same time hoped more Yemenis could receive military training in the U.S.

H. Sultan endorsed the Secretary's suggestion that they meet at least once a year and that regular high-level military and security consultations occur in the interim through the establishment of a joint military (or security) commission. It was agreed that the U.S. side would follow up with a specific proposal. Sultan acknowledged the Secretary's invitation that he visit Washington and said he hoped to do so in February or March 1981.

I. COL Fahad bin Abdullah pushed for rapid conclusion of an AWACS⁵ study, followed by U.S. agreement to sell AWACS to Saudi Arabia. The Secretary noted that further study of the projected ground based systems, interoperability, and a command and control analysis would be required. The AWACS exchange pointed up that while the U.S. side was able during this meeting to subsume equipment issues within the broader focus on regional security and US-Saudi cooperation, there could be no assurance that equipment issues would not dominate future discussions.

⁵ An unknown hand underlined "AWACS."

**218. Letter From Director of Central Intelligence Turner to the
Ambassador to Saudi Arabia (West)**

Washington, July 3, 1980

[Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of Central Intelligence, Job 82B00162R, Subject Files, Box 11, Folder 71, Near East/South Asia—General—Jidda—Saudi Arabia. Secret. Two pages not declassified.]

219. Memorandum Prepared in the White House Situation Room¹

Washington, August 7, 1980

THE SITUATION ROOM CHECKLIST

1. *Opportunity Knocks in Saudi Arabia:* Ambassador West alerts you, Secretary Brown and Deputy Secretary Christopher to what he terms is the political, military and commercial opportunity of the decade in Saudi Arabia—the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG) medical/health care project. A U.S. army medical team, which is to return to the U.S. today, has found it feasible and advantageous for the U.S. to supervise operation² of two newly completed SANG hospitals, construction of 15 health clinics, provision of medical/health care delivery and establishment of a SANG medical/health service. The U.S. role would largely consist of letting and administering the contracts for these activities, under a government-to-government agreement. U.S. contractors are ready and eager to undertake the work, and SANG commander Prince Abdallah favors U.S. direction of the program. However, an October first deadline for the opening of the two hospitals requires that we expeditiously draw up and approve a letter of offer and begin congressional notification within a matter of days. Aside from the \$8 billion which will accrue to U.S. sources over the next decade, the project would provide us the means for making an incalculable humanitarian and psychological impact on Saudi society. Another attractive feature is that while the medical/health services program would meet both Saudi and U.S. objectives, it could be done without a cent of U.S. expenditure. West concludes with a plea that this unique opportunity not be forfeited to the various other nations competing

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850112–1436. Secret; Sensitive. Carter initialed the memorandum which summarizes telegram 4805 from Jidda, August 6. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800377–0020) Carter's other comments are illegible, except for Brzezinski's first name. Sent to Vance and Brown under cover of an August 7 memorandum from Brzezinski, in which he asked them to "consult on the steps that ought to be taken, and provide a report to the President by some time next week on how we should proceed."

² Carter drew a line in the margin next to this section of the paragraph.

for it. The lasting benefits will more than warrant your attention and efforts to expedite insurance of the FMS case.³ (Jidda 4805, PSN 30219) (S)

³ Carter wrote in the left-hand margin: "Expedite this. Keep me informed regularly." On October 9, West discussed with the SANG Commander, Second Prime Minister Prince Abdallah, a U.S. proposal for providing assistance to the SANG medical/health care project. (Telegram 6202 from Jidda, October 11; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800486–0539) On December 22, the Embassy reported that it had "ascertained" that the SANG staff would "recommend" to Prince Abdallah that the U.S. proposal be "disregarded" as it did not "meet the SANG requirement for a comprehensive government-to-government agreement encompassing all elements of the planned program." (Telegram 7749 from Jidda, December 22; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800606–0882) At a meeting with Abdallah, December 23, West informed him that he "felt" the U.S. Government "might reconsider and submit a proposal under FMS," but "that no complete assurance could be given until after the new administration took office on January 20." (Telegram 7792 from Jidda, December 23; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800609–0038)

220. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, September 27, 1980, 5:30–7 p.m.

SUBJECT

Iran-Iraq Conflict

ATTENDEES

State

Warren Christopher

David Newsom

Harold Saunders

Reginald Bartholomew

Defense

Harold Brown

Graham Claytor

David McGiffert

Walt Slocombe

JCS

Gen. Barrow

Gen. Gorman

CIA

Stansfield Turner

Frank Carlucci

White House

The Vice President

Denis Clift

Zbigniew Brzezinski

NSC

William Odom

Gary Sick

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 116, SCC 344, 9/27/80, Iran/Iraq. Top Secret; Eyes Only. Attached but not printed is a September 27 covering memorandum from Brzezinski to Carter.

Dr. Brzezinski opened the meeting by reporting that the President had approved the cable to Oman which was proposed in the Mini-SCC earlier in the day and that that message had been sent.² The President believes it is essential to differentiate between actions which are escalatory and those which are essentially defensive in nature. Our objective should be to terminate the conflict as soon as possible, to prevent an increase of Soviet influence, to prevent other Arab states from joining in the hostilities, to preserve the territorial integrity of Iran particularly with regard to the Soviet Union, to protect the hostages, and to work toward the eventual improvement of relations with all parties. The immediate question is what to do with respect to Saudi Arabia which has asked for information which could be useful for offensive purposes and for other help which could involve a U.S. presence. Can we influence Saudi Arabia to exercise restraint while adding to the substance of our security relationship? Additionally, should we consider moving our naval forces to the Persian Gulf to prevent the parties from widening the conflict? The Department of State had prepared a message to Ambassador West in Jidda which served as the basis for discussion.³

Message to Fahd

After some discussion, it was agreed by all members of the SCC that our initial message to Fahd should focus on our concern about the Omani cooperation with Iraq and the danger of escalation and also sound out Fahd about his awareness of and support for the requests for assistance which we have received through Prince Bandar and Prince Turki.⁴ We will be prepared to respond very quickly if Fahd indicates that these requests are endorsed by the highest political levels in the Kingdom. A copy of the proposed message is attached.

Specific Requests

In preparation for a quick response to Fahd if that is required, the group reviewed the requests as we now understand them. Differences of view on each item are reflected below.

² Material on the September 27 Mini-SCC meeting on the Iran-Iraq war is in the Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 123, SCM 147, 09/27/80, Mini-SCC, Iran/Iraq. The war began on September 22 when Iraq invaded Iran.

³ Attached but not printed is a draft telegram to West providing instructions as to how to proceed regarding the Saudi requests.

⁴ West met with Turki on September 27. When West asked Turki if the Saudi Government needed assistance due to the Iran-Iraq conflict, Turki responded that "the matter was being discussed and that probably some assistance was needed." (Telegram 5840 from Jidda, September 27; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870094-0793)

1. AWACS

Dr. Brzezinski proposed the following response to the Saudis if this request is validated: "We are prepared to deploy AWACS as we did before if Saudi Arabia can assure us it will take no steps toward supporting Iraq in the present conflict in a way which would violate Saudi status of neutrality and the SAG will encourage the smaller Gulf states to take the same posture." Harold Brown supported this, but suggested adding the following: "Four AWACS could arrive within 48 hours. They would require 350 men on the ground and about 12 C-141 flights to support them." The JCS also supported this approach.

Mr. Christopher proposed the following alternative response to the Saudis: "We do not believe it would be either in SAG or U.S. interest to provide AWACS in the present circumstances. Fahd should recall how conspicuous an AWACS would be, both its actual presence and through its extensive logistic support requirements." He believed that the introduction of a command and control aircraft at this point would give the impression that we were aligning ourselves with the Arabs vs. Iran. It would not be consistent with our position of neutrality. It would be helpful if we could offer alternative means of providing the kind of early warning information to the Saudis without such a large U.S. presence. Admiral Turner suggested two alternative possibilities: (1) E2 aircraft off the carriers, refueling in Dhahran or other Saudi airfields, then flying reconnaissance in the Gulf over international waters; or (2) placing one of the U.S. destroyers with an air traffic control capability in the vicinity of Dhahran to provide early warning and target location. He agreed with Harold Brown that each of these would be "second or third class" in comparison with the AWACS, but could provide some alternative capability. Harold Brown said the greatest visibility was not the nature of the assistance we provided but the way it is portrayed in the newspapers.

2. *HAWK Missiles*

Secretary Brown outlined three types of assistance we could provide to the Saudis. We could do any or all.

(1) Provide a command and control team to improve Saudi communications and control between their own sites. This is something they badly need to be effective. In some respects, it is more important than materiel.

(2) Provide U.S. training personnel to replace Saudis who would man operational missile batteries.

(3) Send additional missile battalions to replace those on the West Coast of Saudi Arabia (out of the conflict area) which are now being moved to the northeast.

Secretary Brown recommended (1) and (2) if the Saudis request assistance. We should reserve (3) since there is no clear evidence they are actually requesting it and because it would be the highest visibility. The JCS and Dr. Brzezinski also supported this.

Mr. Christopher supported (2), and opposed increasing the U.S. presence on the ground. He noted that (1) would make more sense if we decided to provide AWACS since it would enhance the ability of the two systems to function smoothly together. Secretary Brown agreed, but noted that the command and control team would be helpful to them with or without AWACS since it added to the effectiveness of the entire system.

3. *Targetting Data*

Dr. Brzezinski proposed a formulation to the Saudis as follows: "We are prepared to continue to provide the SAG with intelligence on the progress of fighting between Iran and Iraq and would be prepared to provide information on Iranian targets if Iran attacks Saudi Arabia." Secretary Brown agreed, but preferred to say that necessary targetting information would be in the hands of U.S. personnel coming with the AWACS and HAWK command/control groups and would be available if required. That, of course, presupposes a prior positive decision on providing AWACS or HAWK assistance.

Mr. Christopher originally proposed to say that we are not prepared to provide specific targetting information. He never expressed a final position, but reserved the State Department position for a subsequent meeting.

Admiral Turner argued strongly for providing the information to Saudi Arabia. He believed the Saudis would see the proposed Brzezinski formulation as not forthcoming. [1½ lines not declassified] The kind of information we propose to provide is not particularly sensitive, since it could be derived from open sources in most cases. This was a litmus test of our relationship with the Saudis, and we should be as forthcoming as possible.

Secretary Brown disagreed that the information was not sensitive since it included radar types and locations and gave locating data on civilian and industrial targets which was, by its very nature, sensitive. All agreed that the revelation of U.S. offers of targeting data—however bland—would be viewed by Iran as extremely serious.

U.S. Action vs. U.S. "Neutrality"

Mr. Christopher argued that the U.S. policy of neutrality is clear. We could not remain consistent with that policy and at the same time assist a party which is aligned with one side of the dispute. Saudi Arabia has publicly identified itself with Iraq, and any U.S. assistance of a tangible and visible nature will be seen as taking sides.

Dr. Brzezinski maintained that our policy of neutrality is not an end but a means. We have adopted a position of neutrality in order to be able to accomplish certain things, but it is not an end in itself. He agreed that the Arabs have begun lining up with Iraq. However, we have our own vital interests to protect, and we cannot renounce our responsibilities in the interest of maintaining a posture of neutrality.

Admiral Turner said that there was a very real possibility that Iran would launch an attack on the oil installations on the Arab side of the Gulf as a desperation measure to draw in the West and attempt to persuade the West to intervene to stop the Iraqis. We must be concerned with the physical security of the oil facilities as a first objective.

Secretary Brown said that neutrality is important, but not in comparison to the magnitude of the interests involved in the oil flow from the Gulf and the protection of production capacity. Although it could be argued that a U.S. presence would serve to draw Iran into attacks on Saudi Arabia and others, it could be argued just as well that a U.S. presence to assist Saudi Arabia defense itself would act as a deterrent on the Iranians. He tended to the latter view.

The Vice President said that we could not be neutral with regard to the defense of Saudi Arabia and the Saudi oil production facilities, but we should be neutral with regard to the conflict between Iran and Iraq. Our problem was to deal with the first without making it appear that we were abandoning the other. He felt there was a chance that the Iraqis would achieve their principal objectives and stop in the next few days. Then there was a chance of a ceasefire and a reduction of tension. If we appear to be in cahoots with those opposing Iran, we provide a pretext for Soviet mischief-making. The great danger, however, was that Iraq would launch an attack on the islands from Oman, thereby escalating the conflict.

Secretary Brown noted that we are already providing assistance on the ground to Saudi Air Defense. In that sense we are not neutral. He doubted that anyone would suggest that we withdraw our assistance at this point in the name of neutrality. He recognized that the Soviets could portray our assistance to Saudi Arabia as helping the Arab side, but he thought they would be very cautious about that since they are also providing arms to Iraq. They would also be cautious about identifying us with the Arabs, which would leave them the less attractive alternative of appearing to side with Iran.

Dr. Brzezinski noted that Iran may decide to strike at Saudi oil for their own reasons. It is in the U.S. vital interest to preserve that oil, and he thought people would understand that basic fact if we took defensive precautions. If Iran should strike the oilfields, we would certainly not preserve our neutrality, but we might also be too late to protect the fields unless we took certain steps in advance.

Mr. Christopher said that an Iranian air attack was unlikely to do much real damage. It was more likely to be a symbolic attack by a few aircraft than a sustained attack with massive damage.

Secretary Brown challenged this view, pointing to the damage done to Basra by the Iranian air force. Dr. Brzezinski noted that if Iran hits Saudi oil fields, our position is gone. In his view, we have two objectives: (1) to rein in the Saudis from associating with any escalation of the fighting; and (2) to send a signal that we consider the oilfields a vital zone.

Mr. Christopher said that our actions would serve as a provocation to Iran and would risk expansion of the conflict when our objective was to confine it. Secretary Brown wondered whether a positive signal (action) or a negative signal (doing nothing) was more likely to provoke an Iranian attack.

Admiral Turner commented that Iran did not require a "cause" to strike at Saudi Arabia. Its own desperate position was enough reason to lash out. In the total humiliation of the position they face soon, they could strike at Saudi Arabia, attempt to close the Strait, or take it out on the hostages.

Dr. Brzezinski said we owe it to ourselves to be there to shoot down the planes as they come in. Not being there is a greater danger than being there.

Movement of U.S. Forces

Dr. Brzezinski asked whether we should move our naval forces closer to the Gulf or to the islands as a means of deterring action by Iraq or others in the southern Gulf. Secretary Brown said that our aircraft are already within range, and we have four ships off Bahrain. He did not think that moving our ships would have much effect except to risk greater U.S. involvement in any conflict. He believed that if the Iraqis move to take the islands, we should stay out of it.

Dr. Brzezinski wondered what would then happen if the Iranians launched strikes against the islands or against shipping in the area. Secretary Brown replied that we would then provide escorts for shipping and take whatever steps were required to protect them.

There was no support for a movement of U.S. forces to the Gulf at this time.

Other Support for Saudi Arabia

Secretary Brown noted that there were two other steps which we might wish to take to improve the defense of Saudi Arabia. The Saudis had not asked for these, but we should at least note them.

1. We could provide a command/control/communications and intelligence team which would improve present weaknesses in the

Saudi command structure and information handling. This would consist of about 200 U.S. personnel.

2. We could deploy a U.S. squadron of F-15s to Saudi Arabia. If it became necessary to defend against attacks by F-4s, the F-15s would be far more effective than the Saudi F-5s. This would, of course, be a considerable increase in U.S. presence and would have implications under the War Powers Act.

In addition, he noted for the record that we should consider what kind of quids we might want to ask from the Saudis in return for our assistance. This could provide leverage, perhaps, to get them to address the question of overbuilding their own facilities, to accept U.S. freedom to conduct naval patrols in the gulf with support from Saudi ports, and perhaps even to ask for an increase in oil production. All agreed we should keep these in mind as we proceed.

221. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, October 1, 1980

SUBJECT

Assistance to Saudi Arabia (U)

(S) The hectic negotiations of the last 5 days have resulted in constructive results. These not only appear to be pleasing to the Saudis but also provide an entree to the increased security cooperation with Saudi Arabia so essential in the long run to the viability of our military posture in Southwest Asia. Dave Jones, who worked patiently and with great skill, deserves much of the credit for this outcome. Briefly, here are the results:

—The Saudis requested and we have deployed four AWACS with supporting equipment and personnel, including emplacement of secure communications.²

¹ Source: Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 20, Alpha Channel (Miscellaneous)—[9/80–10/80]. Secret; Eyes Only for the President; Alpha Channel. A copy was sent to the Acting Secretary of State. Carter wrote “Good J” in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum.

² For the Department of Defense statement announcing the temporary deployment of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia, at Saudi request, which was read to reporters on September 30, see the Department of State *Bulletin*, November 1980, p. 54.

—The Saudis asked for rapid enhancement of Saudi air defense capability. Dave Jones was “authorized to discuss other possible temporary U.S. contributions to Saudi Arabia’s ground based air defense” except U.S. combat units (e.g., U.S. Hawk batteries, U.S. air defense aircraft).

—Along these lines, the Saudis requested two U.S. mobile land based (TPS-43s) radars to augment their three similar radars. We have agreed and will be shipping the two radars in a day or so. We will operate them as well as one of the Saudi radars.

—The Saudis also asked for rapid enhancement of other items of command, control, and communications. We have agreed to this in principle and are sending a follow-on team this weekend to define their requirements more precisely.

—The Saudis are not asking at this time for U.S. combat units such as interceptor aircraft or I-HAWK battalions (I doubt if they will do so unless their perception of the threat changes for the worse).³

—The Saudis agreed to participate in a multinational naval patrol in the gulf should one prove necessary; the follow-on team will deal with this in more detail.

(S) Linked, although not explicitly, to the forthcoming way in which the Saudis perceive the United States to have responded to their requests, is the Saudi decision to raise oil production by one-half million barrels a day (there are indications that this could be one million a day or even more) and immediately to solicit increases from other gulf producers sufficient to make up for the loss of oil from Iran/Iraq.

(S) In addition to sending the follow-on team and expediting the flow of air defense related material to Saudi Arabia, we are within DoD examining how we might respond quickly in the event a similar threat to the oil fields or to AWACS appears to be developing. Threats to AWACS are probably less likely, since their tactics can assure their safety quite well in the air, and on the ground they are 150 miles inland. Deployment of F-15s would probably be the most militarily effective solution. In the interim before their arrival, we could use F-14s from the fleet, aerial refueled either from the fleet or from KC-135 tankers based in Saudi Arabia. We are looking at these and other alternatives.

Harold Brown

³ Carter wrote “quite ok w/me” in the margin next to this paragraph.

**222. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination
Committee Meeting¹**

Washington, October 3, 1980, 9:15–9:55 a.m.

SUBJECT

Saudi Request for Military Assistance

PARTICIPANTS

State

Secretary Edmund Muskie
Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher
Assistant Secretary Harold H. Saunders
Reginald Bartholomew, Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs

Defense

Secretary Harold Brown
Deputy Secretary W. Graham Claytor
Deputy Under Secretary Walter Slocombe

Energy

Secretary Charles Duncan
Assistant Secretary Les Goldman

JCS

Admiral Thomas Hayward
General Paul Gorman

DCI

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Martha Kessler

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

The Vice President's Office

A. Denis Clift

NSC

General William Odom
Gary Sick

[Omitted here is a paragraph on discussions with the British, French, and West Germans regarding naval planning.]

Military Assistance to Saudi Arabia

Harold Brown summarized the situation and proposed follow-on actions. In accordance with the President's instructions, we should

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 37, Special Coordinating Committee (SCC) Meetings, 10/80–1/81. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. In the upper right-hand corner of the first page, Carter wrote: "Zbig J."

send a political-military team to Saudi Arabia.² A technical air defense team from Eucom has already been dispatched, but we need a team with political representation to follow on with more than technical problems of deliveries and the like. He thought the team should not be too visible politically, perhaps at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level. An air defense team was previously scheduled to visit Bahrain and will arrive imminently. The team to Saudi Arabia should be able to reinforce what the Saudis now perceive to be a weakness in their air defense in the Eastern Province and identify ways that could be improved. They should also carry on with specific contingency preparations which would permit us to respond smoothly in the event Saudi Arabia found itself under immediate military threat. The team should continue the discussions concerning possible naval cooperation in the event the Gulf is closed or shipping is threatened. We will also need to work our cooperative relations with Kuwait, Oman and perhaps other Gulf states who are now interested in getting the advantages of air defense warning which AWACS provides. It will not be necessary for the AWACS to operate outside Saudi airspace, but we may be able to provide terminals in other countries which would be of assistance in coordinating air defense on the Arab side of the Gulf. (S)

The essential question is how much we want to put into Saudi Arabia. For six months or more we have been talking about overbuilding Saudi facilities and other steps which would be of long-term importance to us in confronting a Soviet threat in the area. Until now, the Saudis have kept us at arms length, arguing that the Arab-Israel problem needs to be resolved first. Now they are aware of the threat and they appear willing to be cooperative. It appears likely that they would now accept, for example, pre-positioning of some U.S. equipment, provision of water storage, and some overbuilding. They will probably be amenable to this while their awareness of the threat is high. During this period we should try to institutionalize our dialogue on security matters and attempt to reinforce Saudi cooperativeness. (S)

A further problem is what we may wish to do to counter a possible "out of the blue" Iranian air attack on Saudi Arabia. We should be cautious.³ (C)

Secretary Muskie noted that until now our posture and intentions have been clear to all—to the Saudis, to the Congress, to the combatants

² In his memoirs, Brzezinski noted that Carter had approved the AWACS deployment to Saudi Arabia during a National Security Council meeting convened on September 29 to address the Iran-Iraq conflict. (*Power and Principle*, p. 453) The minutes of this meeting are scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1981–1988, vol. XX, Iran; Iraq, April 1980–January 1984.

³ Carter underlined this sentence and wrote "I agree" in the margin.

and to the Soviets. They have understood that our various steps were taken in the context of a neutral posture on the conflict, and except for the wild charges coming out of Iran, we have heard no challenge to our neutral position. AWACS is seen for what it is and what we say it means. He believed that our neutral position was well established after his press conference the day before when a number of questions attempted to test that position.⁴ He now felt that we faced two concerns:

—To consider limiting our steps to whatever is covered by the present understanding of our position; and

—If more is needed, to think very carefully about its implications. (S)

At present, there is no evidence of an imminent attempt to threaten the sea lanes or the oil fields, although this could change. Both parties to the conflict appear to want to contain the fighting. We should be very careful about the temptation to ride in on this crisis to put in place what we want in terms of the long-term crisis. What we do cannot be hidden. If we attempt to take long-term steps while hiding under the cloak of neutrality, this could be seen as provocative by the Soviets. The Secretary recalled that he had handed a non-paper to Gromyko prior to the outbreak of the present crisis which stated our intention not to invade Iran.⁵ If we now move to build up our capabilities while this crisis is going on, the Soviets will perceive that we are making preparations to take advantage of Iranian weakness, possibly as preparations for an invasion. We need to be very careful to think through the Soviet reaction. The objective of getting the Saudis to provide military facilities and to overbuild is something that would have been done over a longer period of time. The main purpose of his meeting with Gromyko had been to stabilize our perceptions of each others' interests, and that should not be jeopardized. (Secretary Muskie then left at 9:32 for a previously scheduled appointment.) (S)

Dr. Brzezinski noted that the Secretary had made some very important points. He did not think there was any serious difference of views since the Secretary seemed to be saying that we must take steps to insure that what we do is not misunderstood in the region and by the Soviets. On that, there is no disagreement. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski then reviewed the proposed terms of reference for a team to Saudi Arabia, noting that most of the items had already been approved by the President. He suggested that an interagency group

⁴ For the transcript of Muskie's October 2 press conference in New York, see the Department of State *Bulletin*, November 1980, pp. 40–43.

⁵ Muskie gave Gromyko the paper at a September 25 meeting. See *Foreign Relations*, 1977–1980, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 302.

get together today to work out an agreed set of terms of references for the team. If serious differences arise, we could have an SCC meeting at noon on Saturday⁶ to review the issues and seek the President's decision as required. In addition, we would plan to have a meeting next Tuesday to review the broader questions associated with our relationship with Saudi Arabia. Secretary Brown agreed and pointed out that even discussion with the Saudis about overbuilding would not provide any early visible actions on our part which could be misinterpreted by the Soviets or others. (S)

Admiral Hayward commented that we had spent nine months now looking at the situation we would face in developing a viable military capability in the Middle East. Every study had shown that access to Saudi Arabia was essential. We should take advantage of the present circumstances to begin developing the kind of relationship with Saudi Arabia on security that will be required if we are to establish an effective military capability in the region. (S)

Radars to Saudi Arabia

Mr. Christopher inquired about the proposed transfer of radar equipment to Saudi Arabia and wondered if that had been specifically approved. Secretary Brown said it consisted of two mobile TPS-43 air defense radars which the Saudis had requested. In their talks with General Jones,⁷ the Saudis had asked for two U.S. radars and personnel to man a third which is presently in storage in Saudi Arabia in order to fill an existing gap in their air defense. This is a matter of tying the AWACS together with the Hawk missiles. He had interpreted the President's approval to move ahead on AWACS and improvement of Saudi air defense as authority for General Jones to agree to this specific request from the Saudis which was fully justified in terms of their air defense weaknesses. It may be sufficient to provide a single radar and to assist them in installing the radar they have in storage. Temporary U.S. manning of radars is entirely consistent with the decision to provide the airborne radar of AWACS. (S)

_____ Approve proceeding to provide TPS-43 radar to Saudi Arabia as necessary, including U.S. personnel to man at least one of our own radars and one already in Saudi Arabia, as worked out with the Saudis by General Jones.⁸

_____ Disapprove.

⁶ October 4. See Document 223.

⁷ See Document 221.

⁸ Carter checked and initialed this option.

U.S. Replacement of Hawk Instructors

Mr. Christopher asked what had happened to the proposal for the U.S. to provide Hawk instructors to free up Saudi personnel. Secretary Brown said that the Saudis had not pursued this issue and it was no longer under discussion. (S)

Ship Transfer for Middle East Force

Secretary Brown said he would like to put a cruiser from the Task Force into the Middle East Force in the Gulf in place of a destroyer, which would be removed. These two ships are not very different in size, but the cruiser has a better air defense capability which would make it more valuable in the event we needed to provide some seaborne air defense off Ras Tanura on short notice. Normally, this kind of transfer would be something we would do routinely, but he wanted to raise it with the SCC. (S)

Hal Saunders noted that we had never had a cruiser in Middle East Force, and this would be seen as a sign that we are changing the composition of the force in the Gulf. Mr. Aaron said that it was primarily a question of appearances, and we should make sure we get the story out right, rather than letting it come out through sensational leaks. Secretary Duncan thought it would be better to say nothing at all since it was a routine transfer which would scarcely be visible to anyone in the Gulf. Secretary Brown disagreed, arguing that it would certainly leak and we should put out the story ourselves. (S)

_____ Approve replacing one Mideastfor destroyer with a cruiser.⁹

_____ Disapprove.

Additional Steps

Secretary Brown reviewed some additional steps. He was not proposing these at present, but the SCC should be aware of the possibilities. (U)

One way to increase air defense capabilities in the Gulf would be to use F-14s from the Eisenhower, controlled by carrier-based E-2s and refueling from KC-135s operating from Riyadh. The KC-135s are presently at Diego Garcia but could be positioned in Riyadh within hours if necessary. The F-14/E-2 operation could not be sustained for more than about a week, but it would provide a very quick means of responding to an imminent threat. Admiral Hayward added that we may need to place two KC-135s in Riyadh in any event to support the

⁹ Carter checked this option and wrote in the margin: "If announced, do it in a *very* routine manner."

AWACS. All agreed that such a move should be reviewed by the SCC in advance. (S)

Secretary Brown also noted that we could deploy a squadron of F-15s to Egypt, which would put them within a few hours of Saudi Arabia if required on short notice. He noted President Sadat's open invitation for the U.S. to use Egyptian facilities. Mr. Christopher commented that Sadat had also made a point of noting publicly that the F-4 deployment was not permanent. There may be more sensitivity on this issue than appears on the surface. (S)

Finally, Secretary Brown noted that the greatest weakness of the Saudi air defense was the lack of command/control/communications to tie it together. He felt this was the area where we could make the most effective contribution. Mr. Aaron commented that the expressed fears that we were turning Saudi Arabia into another Iran was only justified if we attempted to build up the Saudis to try to take care of the security problems entirely on their own. That would put great pressures on manpower and absorptive capacity. Trying to build them up is more dangerous than if we do it ourselves. (S)

223. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, October 4, 1980, 12–12:50 p.m.

SUBJECT

U.S. Assistance to Saudi Arabia

PARTICIPANTS

State

Secretary Edmund Muskie
Warren Christopher
David Newsom
Harold Saunders
Reginald Bartholomew

Energy

Les Goldman

White House

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 116, SCC 347, 10/04/80, Saudi Request for U.S. Military Assistance. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Attached but not printed is an October 4 memorandum from Brzezinski to Carter, which provided a more succinct summary of the meeting.

OSD

Secretary Harold Brown
W. Graham Clayton, Jr.
David McGiffert
Walter Slocombe

NSC

General William Odom
Captain Gary Sick

JCS

Admiral Thomas Hayward
General Paul Gorman

Secretary Brown opened the meeting by describing the five points in the proposed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the political-military team which the President had asked to be sent to Saudi Arabia. These were as follows:

1. To expand the efforts of the technical team from EUCOM to identify measures of supply, assistance, and advice and training which would have the greatest immediate impact on Saudi self-defense capabilities against air attack.

2. To engage in contingency planning with respect to possible deployment of U.S. active air defense capability, to include F-14s, F-15s, and HAWK battalions in the event of an attack on Saudi Arabia. The team would be directed to identify and discuss with the Saudis those forms of pre-deployment preparation which would contribute to rapid and effective response. The team would make clear that we do not regard such deployments as justified by present circumstances, and any steps on pre-positioning would require prior approval by Washington.

3. To explore in principle with the Saudis the need for and feasibility of an integrated regional air defense system, linking Saudi air defenses with those of the Gulf states. The team can outline possible forms of cooperation, but is not authorized to confer with other Gulf states on this matter or to agree that the Saudis should do so.

4. To plan for Saudi participation in international naval freedom-of-navigation patrols, following up Saudi expressions of support to General Jones. The team is to emphasize the contingency nature of the planning, making clear that any decision to institute such activity would have to be made at the political level and that we are making every effort to insure that no such activity is needed.

5. To explore with the Saudis continuing U.S. and Saudi operational and logistic planning for future contingencies, to include prepositioning, Saudi overbuild, and other measures to enhance possible U.S. assistance in the defense of Saudi Arabia and the region at Saudi request. However, the team should *not* initiate discussions on this issue until it has worked several days on the first four and has made a recommendation to Washington on whether it would be productive to raise these issues. (S)

Secretary Brown stressed that the TOR do not approve any actions by the U.S. They are intended to explore a number of issues which we have attempted to raise with the Saudis over the past year and a half. (S)

Secretary Muskie said he wished to focus on the foreign policy implications of a visit by such a team. He had a question whether we should not ascertain in advance whether the Saudis are interested in pursuing these kinds of options. Ambassador West thinks any kind of team is a bad idea. The Secretary thought it was possible we would push the Saudis too hard by riding this war, to the detriment of other objectives. He had met two times with Prince Saud who was very cautious about going beyond what we have already done.² The Saudis have begun to show concern that they overreacted in their support of Iraq. (S)

The effect of these actions on our relations with Israel had not been discussed. He was raising this as a red flag. They may see this as building a close relationship with Saudi Arabia under the pressure of the crisis and suggest that we are taking advantage of the crisis to achieve at their expense a security relationship that we have been unable to do under other circumstances. (S)

We must also consider the reaction in Iran. Although the situation is volatile, it now appears that the Iranians and the Iraqis are focusing on the other end of the Gulf, and we should not provoke them to refocus their attention. Ambassador Lang had delivered our message about AWACS and our continued neutrality to Ali Agha at the Foreign Ministry.³ Ali Agha had said it was ridiculous and that Iran violently rejects the U.S. position. Prime Minister Rajai⁴ was quoted in *Le Monde* as saying he will pay no attention to U.S. claims of neutrality. (S)

This morning, the Secretary had met with Dobrynin to deliver a non-paper on issues not covered in the previous meeting with Gromyko.⁵ Dobrynin also provided a non-paper reminding us of our pledge of neutrality and non-intervention, drawing attention to the numerous statements regarding possible use of armed force to protect free navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, citing official U.S. confir-

² Muskie met with Saud on September 25 and October 1 in New York. Muskie summarized the September 25 meeting in telegram Secto 8018 from New York, September 26, and the October 1 meeting in telegram Secto 8055 from New York, October 2. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P890018-0480 and P890018-0484)

³ *The New York Times* reported that on October 1 the United States had sent a message to Iran asserting that the deployment of AWACS to Saudi Arabia was consistent with American neutrality. (Bernard Gwertzman, "U.S. Reassures Iran On Help For Saudis," *The New York Times*, October 2, 1980, p. A16)

⁴ Mohammad-Ali Rajai was Prime Minister of Iran from August 15, 1980, until August 4, 1981.

⁵ See *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 303.

mation of the deployment of AWACS and noting that the U.S. appears to be moving a second carrier to the Gulf area. This was not understood, and the Soviets ask for prompt clarification giving our clear and exact views. The Soviet position remains the same, that the USSR will continue to adhere to the policy of non-intervention on the understanding that all others will do the same. There would be far reaching consequences if others should interfere in the Iran-Iraq conflict or in the affairs of the nations of the area as a whole. (S)

It is important to consider the reactions of Saudi Arabia, Israel, Iran and the USSR if we are perceived to be using the cover of neutrality to build a military posture in the Persian Gulf which may have long-term consequences. He wondered what, if anything, we need to do to deal with the immediate crisis, beyond what we have already done. He thought sending a political-military team would be a very visible act. It will be leaked. How it will be presented and perceived is a legitimate question. Sending a team may be harder to rationalize than sending AWACS. He could not forget the difficult discussions about Iran's borders. In the absence of this war, there would be no question in the area about what nation was the aggressor in the region (the USSR), and we are in a position to build a worldwide response against them. But if our acts are seen as taking advantage of this conflict to build up a military presence, then it is we who will be on the defensive. The outcome of the present conflict is uncertain, but if we are seen to contribute to a particular result, our position will be subject to the test of credibility. (S)

He felt that we should first see if the Saudis want to receive a team. This will give us time to examine what our long-range goals are relative to Saudi Arabia. That has not been done since he has been here. He was aware of no interagency meeting to examine our plans and goals to establish a military presence in the Persian Gulf.⁶ (S)

Dr. Brzezinski asked if we knew whether the Saudis wanted a team to visit. Secretary Brown said this had been discussed with them by General Jones after the President had said to send such a team, and they are expecting a team of air defense experts from Washington. The present technical team from EUCOM does not meet that expectation. We could, of course, send a purely military team, e.g. a general from NORAD, if the SCC decides that political representation is not desirable. We could defer discussion of the fifth task while we further consider whether we are committed to resist Soviet penetration of the region. (S)

⁶ An unknown hand wrote an exclamation point in the margin next to this sentence.

Dr. Brzezinski said he did not object to a broader review of our goals, but he thought that should be in an NSC meeting with the President. What we are concerned with at this time is implementing a series of steps which the President has directed. (S)

Secretary Muskie wondered if the team should be authorized to talk about cooperation on freedom-of-navigation patrols of the Strait. Prince Saud had expressed objections in his meeting in New York. Secretary Brown said that we had all agreed previously to discuss this with the Saudis, and we have solid indications from General Jones' conversations with the Saudis that they are prepared to discuss it. (S)

Secretary Muskie said he was confused about what the President had directed. He had said we would do "AWACS period" and then send a political-military team to see what we could do about further cooperation. Secretary Brown said that was precisely what this team was intended to do. None of its tasks involve approval of any new actions by us, only discussions with the Saudis in advance of possible contingencies. He said it would be a tragedy not to discuss the fifth task with the Saudis, but perhaps it did not have to be done this weekend. If that was the concern, the TOR had called for further review even before the issue was raised with the Saudis. The Saudis do expect us to send a group. (S)

Secretary Muskie said he had trouble with Secretary Brown's terminology. What did we mean by "expect"? Have the Saudis requested discussion of all five of these points? Have the Saudis thought through the risks? Secretary Brown said the Saudis had asked General Jones in general terms to discuss the first four, not the fifth. Mr. Christopher wondered if discussion of these was consistent with U.S. neutrality. Secretary Brown said we were neutral as between Iran and Iraq, not with regard to Saudi security. Mr. Christopher noted that U.S. advanced aircraft in Saudi Arabia would not be seen as neutrality. Secretary Brown replied that the discussions on that are entirely contingent on a prior attack on Saudi Arabia. General Hammad in Saudi Arabia had specifically mentioned their willingness to consider prepositioning F-15 materiel in advance of any deployment. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski suggested breaking down the list and examining objections to each part of the package. Secretary Muskie said he was aware of that technique. He had often used it himself. His problem was not with the individual elements so much as the totality of the package and the perceptions flowing from it. Dr. Brzezinski asked how he proposed we proceed. Secretary Muskie said he thought we should start cleanly through regular channels on the military and political sides and ask the Saudis what it is they wish to pursue. Secretary Brown noted that General Jones had gone through that with the Saudis. He wondered if Ambassador West would be more cautious in his approach than General Jones had been. (S)

Dr. Brzezinski said he would not object to asking the Saudis at the political level whether they wanted to have such a team to discuss these issues. All agreed that such an approach was acceptable on the first four items. To raise item 5 would go beyond what was recommended for the team. (S)

A drafting group was to meet immediately following the SCC meeting to draft a message to West.⁷ Dr. Brzezinski said he saw no need to go to the President at this point since a message to West did not change the original decision. (S)

⁷ The draft is attached but not printed. The message to West was sent in telegram 265582 to Jidda, October 4. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870094–0758)

224. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, October 13, 1980, 1452Z

6231. Subject: U.S.-Saudi Military Cooperation—Discussion With Fahd.

1. (S-entire text).

2. A long meeting with Crown Prince Fahd on October 13 covered a number of topics, among them the subject of increasing bilateral military cooperation. There was insufficient time to deal with this subject in considerable detail, but the important result was that we obtained Fahd's approval for moving ahead in our security dialogue.

3. Fahd agreed that it is advisable to hold expert-level discussions on contingency planning. I mentioned that such talks would cover items like availability of landing facilities and fuel, prepositioning of ammunition and other support for U.S. forces if sent here in an emergency situation. He said that this was very important, and he would tell Sultan to have these discussions undertaken. Fahd cautioned that the talks should be conducted with utmost secrecy.

4. Concerning security of shipping in the Gulf, I told Fahd that this meeting was the first opportunity to inform him about our thinking

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P900077–1446. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis.

on this vital subject. We were consulting with the Saudis and countries allied with us about the possible need for coordinated naval activity in the Straits and Gulf, because of our concern about a possible situation in which harassment of shipping, closure of waterways, deterrence of neutral shipping due to high war risk insurance, or other contingency disrupted the normal flow of neutral shipping.

5. Fahd responded that the consultations between the U.S. and maritime nations have had a salutary effect, e.g. upon the insurance companies. He did not address the matter of concerted international naval action itself, but he did volunteer his appreciation for recent U.S. naval actions positioning vessels closer to the Straits and in the Arabian Sea.

These actions served to bolster the confidence of SAG and the Gulf states, and demonstrated the critical importance of regional defense. In this view, he was highly gratified about the AWACS deployment, for that system had an "excellent reputation" in the Kingdom and among the Gulf states for its contribution to air defense. He said that the early criticism of the AWACS at the UN by the Foreign Minister of Iraq was undertaken without instructions from Baghdad, while on October 11 the Iraqis had stated that they understood the role of AWACS and the security relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. Fahd said that the Iraqis now realize the fundamental nature of that relationship and its benefits to the entire region.

6. Comment. Our exchange of views on security cooperation was brief and somewhat discursive, admittedly, but very significant. We have the Crown Prince's assent to strengthening our military cooperation, and, moreover, his intent to see to it that SAG implements his determination to improve the Kingdom's preparedness in defense matters. With this significant mandate—his agreement in principle to the course of increasing bilateral involvement in regional security measures—we have the wherewithal to begin military-to-military talks. His admonition that we must maintain the confidentiality of these discussions is one that we must observe, or we will jeopardize what we are about to achieve in the present Saudi readiness for close but discreet association with us in defense matters. I will be meeting with Sultan at an early opportunity to go into these aspects of security cooperation more extensively. End comment.

7. Dept pls repeat to USMTMDET Riyadh SA for Major General Donnelly, and elsewhere as desired.

West

225. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, October 17, 1980, 1029Z

6364. White House for Brzezinski. Subject: U.S.-Saudi Military Cooperation (S). Ref: (A) Jidda 6231,² (B) Jidda 6358,³ (C) Jidda 6203,⁴ (D) Jidda 6209.⁵

1. (S-entire text).

2. Summary: Based on meetings with Crown Prince Fahd (ref A), Minister of Defense and Aviation Prince Sultan (ref B), and conversations with close aides and associates including Director of Intelligence Prince Turki, Director of Operations of RSAF Prince (Colonel) Fahd Bin Abdullah and Prince (Major) Bandar Bin Sultan (please protect these latter three), we are satisfied that agreement has been reached and approval secured for complete USG–SAG cooperation in three key areas: (1) contingency planning for use of SAG facilities by USG to include prepositioning of supplies and equipment, stationing of troops in event of necessity for U.S. intervention, as well as all other possible contingencies; (2) SAG approval of and assistance with planning for overall defense of the Gulf to include both military and political aspects; (3) SAG approval of USG actions including contingency planning with other Western nations designed to insure that the Straits of Hormuz are kept open under all circumstances. End summary.

[Omitted here is the body of the telegram.]

West

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P870094–0677. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to the White House.

² See Document 224.

³ Not found.

⁴ In telegram 6203 from Jidda, October 11, the Embassy described a meeting between West and Abdallah during which the two discussed the AWACS coverage, oil output, and Saudi air defense. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800489–0819)

⁵ In telegram 6209 from Jidda, October 11, the Embassy summarized West's meeting with Turki, during which they discussed U.S.-Saudi military cooperation in the face of the ongoing Iran-Iraq war. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800486–0596)

226. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, October 22, 1980

SUBJECT

Command Relationships in Saudi Arabia (U)

(S) This memorandum responds to your request for an outline of the current command structure and communication routing between AWACS over Saudi Arabia and our military forces in the Middle East-Persian Gulf region.² These are outlined in detail at Tabs A and B, respectively.³

(S) *Command Structure.* In essence, our current command relationships are those provided in the Unified Command Plan. Operational control of the deployed AWACS and associated ground radar and support units in Saudi Arabia is exercised through CINCEUR by his USAF component commander's representative in Saudi Arabia (ELF-ONE). Operational control of naval forces in both the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea is passed from CINCPAC through COMSEVENTHFLT to Commander Task Force 70 (CTF-70). For the air defense mission, CINCEUR has been designated the supported commander, with CINCPAC supporting him. Those roles would be reversed in the event of a maritime mission; e.g., mine clearing or active protection of shipping.

(S) *Communication Routing.* Air defense resources currently in the region consist of an integrated air defense net which includes AWACS, Saudi and US ground radars, Saudi Hawk facilities, Saudi and US Navy fighter aircraft, and a US fleet air defense cruiser deployed within the Gulf. All these units can communicate by voice. Additionally, the AWACS can relay radar data to US ships and aircraft of TF-70, as well as to its own ground processing center, which provides the link to Saudi forces. Direct communications circuits (via satellite) have been established between the National Military Command Center (for the National Command Authorities) and ELF-ONE, AWACS, and TF-70 in the area.

(S) *Summary Evaluation.* Although the current command relationships are naturally more complex than a single-CINC operation, both

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, General Odom File, Box 28, Middle East Command Post: 4-10/80. Secret.

² Not found.

³ Attached but not printed are two routing charts entitled "Command Relationships (Saudi Arabia/Adjacent Waters)" and "Comm/Data Flow."

the JCS and I believe they are working satisfactorily at the current level of operations. Should our involvement in the region become markedly greater, we would consider a gradual transition of responsibility by introducing the Headquarters, Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) into the area to command all forces in the region in accordance with the RDJTF command relationships approved this summer.⁴

Harold Brown

⁴ See Document 88.

227. Memorandum From Secretary of Defense Brown to President Carter¹

Washington, November 5, 1980

SUBJECT

Acceleration of F-15 Deliveries to Saudi Arabia

On a number of issues, it is very important to U.S. security for this Administration to take actions during the transition period that the incoming Administration (a) may find it much harder to take, and (b) may even publicly disagree with, but which (c) they and the country will be glad we have taken. Our relations with Saudi Arabia fall into this category. As a result of your and my statements, the Saudis (particularly Defense Minister Sultan) have concluded that the United States is an unreliable partner in arms supply. Prince Sultan himself appears to believe that we have gone back on my commitment to him last June to review all their F-15 enhancement requests.² Sultan has already curtailed some of our cooperative arrangements—e.g., joint cooperative planning—and he is reported to be on the verge of further curtailments, possibly asking for the withdrawal of our AWACS and even of turning away from the U.S. entirely as Saudi Arabia's source of aircraft and air defense equipment and training in favor of the French. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 11/80–1/81. Secret; Via Alpha Channel. A copy was sent to Muskie.

² See Document 217.

Our special relationship with Saudi Arabia is already damaged, but could become more so as a result of these actions. Not only would our influence over Saudi oil decisions be lessened, but our vital need to develop assured access to Saudi facilities, including prepositioning, in order to deter or meet a Soviet threat to the Gulf, would be set back—perhaps irreparably. Without these Saudi facilities, our whole Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean strategy would be undermined. (S)

I am responding to a letter sent to me by Prince Sultan; in it, I indicate to him that our attitude is the same as I conveyed to him in Geneva in June.³ But this will not solve our problem. (S)

I believe, therefore, that if we are to prevent further deterioration of our relations with the Saudis over the next few months, it is necessary to take some additional action almost immediately. The most promising one that we have been able to find is an acceleration of deliveries (without any of the additional equipment the Saudis have requested) of the F-15s already approved by the Congress.⁴ The present delivery schedule calls for six aircraft to be delivered to the Saudis in the third quarter of calendar 1981 for training use in the United States, with nine more to be delivered during the first quarter of 1982 in Saudi Arabia itself. By diverting some deliveries now scheduled for the USAF and paying them back later, it would be possible to deliver the first six aircraft to the Saudis during the first quarter of calendar 1981. By putting these in Saudi Arabia we could speed deliveries in-country by a year, although the first deliveries to Saudi ownership would be accelerated by only six months. The training and maintenance in Saudi Arabia itself would have to be done by U.S. military and civilian personnel. In addition to being seen by Sultan as a positive gesture and very likely calm him down from the affront, this would provide us a foot in the door to prepositioning and joint operations. (S)

We could take six F-15s from the normal production line destined for the USAF and deliver them to Saudi Arabia in January 1981. A small initial cadre of Saudi F-5E pilots could be expeditiously trained on these six aircraft in-country at Dhahran rather than coming to the U.S. The scenario would envisage the following USAF training team:

- one detachment commander.
- seven highly qualified USAF instructor fighter pilots.
- one maintenance officer with 125–150 maintenance personnel (a mix of USAF and contractor people). (S)

³ Neither Sultan's letter nor Brown's reply was found. For the June 26 discussion, see Document 217.

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 172.

This combination of early aircraft delivery and early Saudi training would provide not only meaningful support to the Saudis at a critical time in our relationship with them, but also a near-term enhancement to their air defense capability. (S)

Congress has been told about the existing delivery schedule, but no promise was made to consult before changing it. As part of the same package that went through the Congress in 1978, Israel was supposed to get the first of six F-16s in the fourth quarter of 1981. We accelerated this to the first quarter of 1980 without consulting the Congress. In this case, I believe we should notify Congress after we discuss the matter with the Saudis but before the deliveries are actually made.⁵ (S)

This is not an alternative to dealing later with the Saudi requests for conformal pods and aerial refueling for F-15s, let alone the question of bomb racks. After the decision on acceleration is made, we still must promptly consider the timing and nature of consultation with Congress on those issues. (S)

Dave Jones had extensive discussion in Saudi Arabia in September with Sultan which convinced him we are at a crossroads in our relationship.⁶ The quick response on AWACS and other air defense assistance created new opportunities, but the strong negative reaction to the comments on bomb racks has incensed Sultan because he believes his personal reputation is on the line.⁷ He needs a quick positive action by the United States to take him off the hook. This is particularly important to us because Sultan has been the chief supporter in the Saudi government of closer military relations with the United States. All of the Joint Chiefs strongly support quick action. Zbig concurs. Ed⁸ agrees with the need but has some concerns which he will express separately to you with respect to Israeli and Congressional reaction. (S)

⁵ In a November 6 memorandum to Carter, Muskie recommended that Carter approve Brown's recommendation regarding congressional consultations. Carter wrote "I called H. Brown J" in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 68, Saudi Arabia: 11/80–1/81)

⁶ See Document 221.

⁷ In an interview on October 24, Carter was asked about selling Saudi Arabia equipment for the F-15s, such as bomb racks, that would give them an offensive capability against Israel. Carter answered: "There will be absolutely no change in the assurance given to the Congress in 1978 by Secretary Harold Brown, acting under my instructions, on the sale of F-15's to the Saudi Arabians. In accordance with those assurances, we will not agree to provide offensive capabilities for the planes that might be used against Israel, and that obviously includes bomb racks." (*Public Papers: Carter, 1980–81*, Book III, p. 2431)

⁸ Reference is to Muskie.

My own belief is that while the Israeli reaction might risk having some adverse impact on the autonomy negotiations, we should be able to give the Israelis a satisfactory explanation of what we are doing and why. In any event, the prospect of averting a major breach with the Saudis must take precedence. (S)

If you agree, I would propose to have Dave Jones who has developed a positive relationship with Sultan as a result of his September trip and the AWACS deployment, convey the proposal personally to Sultan in the next few days. Dave will leave on Saturday to visit General Evren in Turkey and could easily divert into Saudi Arabia during this trip.⁹ (S)

Harold Brown

⁹ In a November 11 memorandum to Muskie, Brzezinski noted that Carter had "approved the acceleration of F-15 deliveries to Saudi Arabia as described in Secretary Brown's memorandum of November 5." (National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, General Program Country Files Concerning Security Assistance (arms) Programs (1980-1984), Lot 86D371, Box 2, Saudi F-15 1980)

228. Briefing Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Saunders) to Secretary of State Muskie¹

Washington, December 18, 1980

SUBJECT

Update on U.S. Security Assistance Efforts in Saudi Arabia

We recently met with the head of the United States Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia, Major General Charles Donnelly, USAF, who was in Washington for consultations. During our discussions with General Donnelly, we discussed the status of ongoing U.S. military programs in Saudi Arabia.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, General Program Country Files Concerning Security Assistance (arms) Programs (1980-1984), Lot 86D371, Box 2, Saudi Arabia 1980. Secret. Drafted by Arietti; cleared by Countryman, Gibney, Twinam, and Edgar.

F–15 Enhancement Items

We understand DOD has completed its analysis of the F–15 enhancement items.² This study, designed for internal U.S. Government use only and not to be given to the Saudis, could provide the technical background for any future consultations with the Congress on the F–15 items. The final section of the study discusses the threat to Israel that would be posed by increasing the F–15's range. While making clear the more than adequate Israeli capability to defend against F–15 penetration and to retaliate massively against the Saudis, the study does point out that with conformal fuel pods and air refueling capability, the Saudis could reach the Israeli heartland from their main operating bases. This conclusion could make winning Congressional assent on the enhancement issue more difficult.³

A second DOD study analyzing Saudi needs for an air defense early warning system is also being completed by DOD.⁴ This second study is being funded by the Saudis and will be provided to them after being reviewed by DOD and State. It discusses, we understand, the relative merits of an all ground radar early warning system vis-a-vis a mix of ground and airborne (AWACS) systems.

The Current AWACS Deployment

General Donnelly reports that the current deployment of four U.S. AWACS to Saudi Arabia is proceeding smoothly. In response to our advice, the Saudis have adjusted the locations of their ground-based radar systems in the Eastern Province and an improved communications system has been put into effect.

U.S. Contingency Planning and Regional Security Discussions

General Donnelly explained that he had briefed Saudi military officials on the general outlines of the U.S. concept for air defense, naval coordination, and joint contingency planning and was awaiting a Saudi reaction when Prince Sultan directed a Saudi pull back from talks in reaction to our public statements on the F–15 enhancement items. These discussions remain in abeyance and it is unlikely that they will be resumed until the F–15 enhancement item issue is resolved. These talks did, however, result in one positive forward step in regional air defense; a Saudi early warning radar has been deployed to Bahrain.

² Not found.

³ An unknown hand underlined the portion of the paragraph that begins with "the study does not point out" to the end and placed a vertical line in the margin next to this portion of the paragraph.

⁴ Not found.

Future Saudi Arms Requests

The Saudi arms list given to Zbig during his February 1980 visit to Saudi Arabia contained most of the anticipated Saudi requests for the near to mid-term.⁵ We have put off final decisions on many of these items on the grounds that they are not yet deployed with U.S. forces, but the USG will need to take policy decisions as individual items come into the U.S. inventory.

In addition, General Donnelly believes the Saudis will want to station advanced fighter aircraft at Tabuk, the Saudi military facility closest to Israel. In his 1978 letter to Congress, Secretary Brown stated we had received Saudi assurances that the F-15 would not be stationed at Tabuk and that the Saudis would not acquire additional advanced fighter aircraft while preparing for and receiving the sixty F-15s.⁶ If the Saudis seek to eliminate the restriction on F-15 basing at Tabuk or move to acquire a third-country aircraft (perhaps the French MIRAGE), this will raise further Congressional concern. The next Administration will need to pay careful attention to this potential problem.

⁵ See Document 207.

⁶ In this sentence, an unknown hand underlined the year "1978" and the words beginning with "Brown stated we had received Saudi assurances" to the end of the sentence. In his letter of May 10, 1978, to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Brown asserted that Saudi Arabia had agreed on restrictions so that the F-15s would not be used against Israel. See footnote 11, Document 216.

The Yemens

229. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, February 15, 1977, 1405Z

677. Subj: President al-Hamdi on Saudi/Yemeni Relations.

1. During my February 13 meeting with President al-Hamdi in Taiz, he described the current state of Saudi/Yemeni relations as excellent, noting particularly that Prince Sultan has become especially understanding of Yemen's needs and problems. He emphasized that the military relationship, for example, is moving quite well despite the fact that at the working levels there are occasional problems which he said in some cases stem from the Yemeni side and in others from the Saudi.

2. In response to my question about Saudi intentions with regard to the Yemeni Air Force, al-Hamdi said that so far the Saudis have not discussed this subject with him although he understands the Saudis are considering furnishing the Yemeni Air Force with new helicopters.

3. As he has in the past, al-Hamdi expressed the hope that in addition to the many vehicles which the Saudis have promised and which are now arriving in Yemen, some of the other heavier equipment (read artillery) would also arrive quickly. In this connection he said that a major problem facing the Yemeni Army is training and here again he hoped that both the Saudis and the Americans will provide more in this area.

4. I told the President that we are pleased to see Yemen and Saudi Arabia coordinating so closely and consider this cooperation a major success for moderation and stability in the Arabian Peninsula. Al-Hamdi replied that he and the Yemeni Government are most appreciative of US efforts as a friend working behind the scenes. He noted that in most cases Yemen and Saudi Arabia prefer to deal directly on most issues but that it is reassuring that the US is there ready to help if needed. I assured the President that the US Government has no intention of getting between two brothers but that as a friend of both we are prepared to help if necessary.

5. Comment: Al-Hamdi's words only confirm what we have heard from Foreign Minister Al-Asnaj and others in the government. Saudi/Yemeni relations continue to move ahead in the way in which we

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770054-1057. Confidential. Sent for information to Cairo, Jidda, and London.

envisaged when we resumed relations with Yemen back in 1972.² While we should obviously continue to monitor the situation closely, it appears that the channels of communications between the two sides are now good and for this we can take a great deal of satisfaction.

Scotes

² The Yemen Arab Republic had broken off relations with the United States on June 6, 1967, due to the Arab-Israeli war. Secretary of State William P. Rogers restored relations following a July 1972 visit to Sana.

230. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, April 5, 1977, 1200Z

1311. Subject: YAR President on MiG 21s to Yemen.

Begin summary. President al-Hamdi informed me April 4 that unless he has firm commitment from Saudis re provision of new aircraft to Yemeni Air Force he will be forced to accept Soviet offer of MiG 21s, if Soviet offer materializes. End summary.

1. During April 4 conversation (other subjects being reported separately)² President al-Hamdi took initiative to raise subject of the possible

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770119-0512. Confidential. Sent for information to Jidda, London, Amman, Cairo, Moscow, USCINCEUR, COMIDEASTFOR, and CHUSMTM Dhahran.

² In telegrams 1312, 1313, and 1314 from Sana, April 5, the Embassy reported on Scotes's discussions on April 4 with al-Hamdi. Telegram 1312 described al-Hamdi's assessment of the March 22-23 meeting in Taiz of the heads of state of the two Yemens, Somalia, and Sudan to discuss Red Sea security issues and how to work together against Israel. In telegram 1313, the Embassy relayed al-Hamdi's belief that Somalia "is now seriously considering making a major change in its foreign policy alignment away from the Soviets." In telegram 1314, Scotes noted that he had conveyed to al-Hamdi that U.S. policy in the Horn of Africa was undergoing an intense review, while al-Hamdi pointed out that the Soviets were making a concerted effort to strengthen their position in Ethiopia and seek a rapprochement between Ethiopia and Somalia. In telegram 1345 from Sana, April 6, the Embassy reported that al-Hamdi had "asked for continued US efforts to impress on Saudis Yemen's support for Saudi policies in region in context of full Saudi support for al-Hamdi's regime." The telegrams are in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770118-0394, D770119-0474, D770119-0480, and D770119-1177, respectively.

arrival of MiG 21s in Yemen. Speaking in the context of this admiration for and support of the current Saudi policy of weaning PDRY and Somalia away from the Soviets, al-Hamdi noted that while Saudi leadership is wise and effective, in its lower echelons the Saudi Government is not of the same caliber. Al-Hamdi said that in Yemen, for example, the Saudi Embassy is manned by individuals who, instead of trying to understand Yemen's problems and of trying to put these problems into regional context, see everything in a narrow manner and report in a similar manner to Jidda.

2. Al-Hamdi continued that recently the Saudi Embassy has been reporting the arrival of major Soviet arms into Yemen when in reality only a few armored vehicles and spare parts have been involved—items about which he had spoken to the Saudis over a year ago when he was in Saudi Arabia on the Haj.³ The Saudi Embassy has also been reporting the arrival of MiG 21s, which is not the case. Al-Hamdi went on to say, however, that he must be frank, as he has already been in the past, and state that if he is unable with Saudi help to provide new aircraft for the weak Yemeni Air Force, he will be obliged to accept new aircraft from wherever he can get them including from the Soviets. Al-Hamdi interjected to stress that Yemen's arms are strictly for the purpose of establishing internal security in the country and not intended for use in any other manner. He stressed that Yemen is an enemy of no one. He went on to say, however, that he and his colleagues are working for the establishment of a strong central government in Yemen and that without a strong army the extremists on both the left and the right will be encouraged to continue their attempts at sabotage, cutting of roads and political assassination. The Saudis should understand this.

3. Al-Hamdi stated that the Saudis know if they can present him with a firm commitment for provision of aircraft for the Yemeni Air Force, as well as a time table for delivery, he has no intention of accepting Soviet aircraft. He said he is like a man in the desert who on the one hand is being promised a glass of orange juice, which never seems to appear, while on the other being told to refuse a glass of plain water which is almost in his grasp.

4. I told al-Hamdi that the Saudi Government has recently inquired of the USG about the possibility of supplying the Yemeni Air Force with F-5s. The USG has this question under study but no decision has been made and I had no idea when a decision would be made. I told him that as a friend I had to be frank and tell him that if the YARG

³ The Hajj is the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The Hajj is a religious duty that every able-bodied Muslim must undertake at least once in his lifetime as long as he can afford to do so.

goes ahead and accepts MiG 21s it is doubtful USG will ever agree to the sale of F-5s. I commented that apart from political considerations, it seemed to me unlikely that the Yemeni Air Force could absorb at the same time a squadron of Soviet and a squadron of American aircraft, given the lack of trained personnel in both the flying and the maintenance areas.

5. Al-Hamdi replied by asking the question what would the US do if it found itself in a situation of immediate need for equipment and had no idea as to when that immediate need would be filled, if ever. Al-Hamdi went on to say that he could always turn down the Soviet offer but he had to have something firm in hand in order to do so and not be simply told that aircraft will be provided after five years. Al-Hamdi also noted in an aside that thus far he has no idea when and if the Soviets will ever deliver on their promises either. He concluded, however, that if the MiGs are delivered and if he has no other firm alternative, he will accept them.

6. Comment: Al-Hamdi obviously spelling out rationale for eventual acceptance of MiGs. While no doubt there strong element of pressure in al-Hamdi's presentation, his main concern has always been the internal security situation of Yemen. The loyalty of the armed forces figures highly in his assessment of that situation. Continued inability to modernize Yemen's Air Force remains major preoccupation of Al-Hamdi which we and Saudis will have to take into consideration as we decide either to preempt acceptance of MiGs or to live with their eventual delivery. Further policy comment being made by septel.⁴

Scotes

⁴ In telegram 1315 from Sana, April 5, Scotes discussed the possibility of a Yemeni purchase of MiG-21s, warned that this could "entrench Soviet military mission in the Yemeni Air Force for next decade," requested that a decision on arms sales to Yemen be made as soon as possible, and asked for guidance on any new policy decisions. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770119-0515)

231. Telegram From the Department of State to Secretary of State Vance in Paris and Multiple Posts¹

Washington, June 23, 1977, 0028Z

Tosec 70004/145783. Subject: Atherton Meeting With PDRY UN Ambassador. Ref: State 144046.²

1. At our initiative, Assistant Secretary Atherton met in New York June 22 with PDRY Permanent Representative Ashtal.³ Atherton asked Ashtal to convey to his government that, in accordance with President's policy of seeking to improve relations wherever possible, we would like to enter into a high-level dialogue with a view to improving relations with South Yemen looking toward the restoration of diplomatic relations. To that end, we proposed a meeting of senior officials of our two governments in Aden, Washington, New York or wherever the Yemenis found convenient.

2. Ashtal noted that during meeting with PDRY Foreign Minister in New York during 1975 General Assembly, Secretary Kissinger had indicated he would send representative to Aden to discuss resumption of relations.⁴ For various reasons this had not worked out, and Ashtal said he welcomed this renewed initiative for which he thought present circumstances were auspicious. In response to Ashtal's question about level of U.S. representative for proposed meeting, Atherton said we had not decided precisely but it would be a senior official, possibly

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemen: Democratic Republic (South): 2/77–9/80. Secret; Exdis. Drafted and approved by Atherton. Sent to Jidda, Tehran, Muscat, Sana, Cairo, London, Amman, and Damascus; sent for information to the Secretary's delegation and USUN. Vance was in Paris June 22–24 for the OECD Ministerial meeting.

² In telegram 144046 to multiple Middle Eastern posts and London, June 21, the Department requested that U.S. Ambassadors to Saudi Arabia, Iran, Oman, North Yemen, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Jordan, and Syria inform their host governments that the United States believed "the time has now come for us to take the initiative to explore whether the South Yemeni Government is prepared to move toward restoring relations with the U.S. To this end, we are approaching the South Yemen Ambassador in New York to suggest a high level meeting either in Aden, the U.S. or elsewhere, for the purpose of beginning a dialogue looking toward the reestablishment of U.S.–PDRY diplomatic relations." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770221–1063)

³ In a June 3 action memorandum to Vance, sent through Habib, Atherton proposed meeting with Ashtal regarding the reestablishment of diplomatic relations and informing regional governments of this initiative. Atherton also attached a draft cable, which the Department transmitted as telegram 144046 (see footnote 2 above). An unknown hand initialed Vance's approval of Atherton's proposal. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840877–0632)

⁴ Kissinger met with Foreign Minister Muti at the UNGA on October 1, 1975. (Telegram 236570 to Jidda, October 3, 1975; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850011–2018)

Under Secretary Habib who had recently visited Baghdad for similar mission.⁵ Ashtal asked about timing and Atherton said whenever it was convenient for PDRY but from our point of view, the sooner the better. Ashtal said he wanted to inform us that there would be opportunity for high-level contact this fall since the Chairman of the PDRY Presidential Council, Salim Rubayya Ali, would be coming to New York following a visit to Cuba to address the UNGA on September 29. Meanwhile, he would convey our suggestion to Aden and was certain he would receive an early reply. Ashtal indicated his hope that today's meeting would be kept confidential. Atherton said this was our intention. We also would try to keep any high-level meeting confidential if PDRY so wished but could not of course guarantee it would not come to public attention.

3. In general discussion that followed, Ashtal noted recent publication of Department letter to Congress on terrorism which had mentioned PDRY and said this had created a bad impression with his government. Atherton said we were responding to a congressional inquiry and had to provide factual information as we knew it.⁶ This was the kind of thing that could be discussed privately between us if we had a better dialogue.

4. In response to Atherton's query about PDRY relations with its neighbors, Ashtal said they were much improved and cited in particular Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and North Yemen. PDRY wanted to pursue its own independent national policy and to focus its efforts on internal economic problems. Ashtal said his government hoped U.S. companies would become interested in PDRY; he acknowledged that reestablishment of relations might encourage such interest. Ashtal then commented that situation "in our area" was becoming explosive. He made particular reference to Horn of Africa and situation between Ethiopia and Somalia.⁷ PDRY, he said, has good relations with both and is trying quietly to be helpful. Atherton said U.S. hoped regional problems could be resolved by regional states without outside power seeking to take advantage of situation.

⁵ Habib met with Iraqi Foreign Minister Hammadi on May 16 to discuss the normalization of U.S.-Iraqi relations. See Document 132.

⁶ Reference is to a letter and supplementary materials prepared in the Department of State and furnished to Javits. The April 27 letter, made public on May 8, identified South Yemen, Libya, Iraq, and Somalia as countries that actively supported terrorist groups. In February, Javits had requested that the Department of State inform him of what the United States "intended to do to combat hijackings and other international violence." ("U.S. Says Libya, Somalia, Iraq and South Yemen Aid Terrorists," *The New York Times*, May 9, 1977, p. 4)

⁷ Documentation on the Ethiopia-Somalia situation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. XVII, Part 1, Horn of Africa.

5. Finally, Atherton described briefly our Middle East peace efforts, citing in particular Vice President Mondale's recent San Francisco speech⁸ and stressing that we are determined to continue to work for just Middle East settlement.

Christopher

⁸ On June 17, Mondale delivered a speech on U.S. Middle East peace policy to the World Affairs Council of Northern California, meeting in San Francisco. For the text, see the Department of State *Bulletin*, July 11, 1977, pp. 41–46.

232. Telegram From the Department of State to Secretary of State Vance in New York¹

Washington, October 4, 1977, 1958Z

Tosec 100096/238800. Eyes only for Atherton. Subject: The Secretary's Conversation With PDRY Foreign Minister Muti'.

1. Following is suggested text for reporting to Embassies Jidda and London Secretary's PDRY bilateral.²

2. Summary: Secretary held talks in friendly atmosphere with PDRY Foreign Minister Muti' focusing on absence of formal diplomatic ties as impeding understanding and furthering of our mutual interests. At close of talks both sides declared they had decided to restore relations. Secretary agreed to Muti's suggestion we send an appropriate level delegation to Aden within the next two months to discuss further timing and implementation. We agreed to Muti's request to keep in confidence the fact we would be sending a delegation for this purpose. End summary.

¹ Source: Department of State, Office of the Secretariat Staff, Cyrus R. Vance, Secretary of State—1977–1980, Lot 84D241, Box 10, Vance NODIS MemCons, 1977. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Countryman; cleared by Sydney Goldsmith (S/S); approved by Sober. Attached but not printed is an October 5 covering memorandum to Wisner from Reddy, noting that the "Secretary undertook to send a delegation to Aden in the next two months to discuss US/PDRY relations" and that NEA was preparing a recommendation for Vance concerning arrangements for this mission. Vance was in New York attending the UN General Assembly.

² The Department transmitted the text of this telegram in telegram 245537 to London and Jidda, October 13. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770372–0954)

3. The Secretary met with PDRY FonMin Muti' October 3. He was accompanied by Under Secretary Habib, Sabbagh as interpreter and Countryman of ARP as notetaker. PDRY PermRep Ashtal also sat in. Secretary began noting he had been looking forward to meeting with Muti' and having a chance to talk about improving relations. We have not had any real communication and it would be of mutual benefit if we could change this situation by discussing issues which tend to push us apart.

4. Muti' said he was grateful for meeting and had been looking forward to it. We have not had relations in the past but he hoped situation would improve. One of the main reasons for our differences has been the Palestinian question. The Israeli attack on the Beirut airport in 1969 was a major reason for the break of relations.³ During the intervening period PDRY has kept current on all positive and negative developments in the Middle East including US attitude toward Palestinian question and the Middle East as a whole. He hoped developments will move toward establishment of a just and lasting Middle East peace which cannot happen without settling the Palestinian question. Muti' hoped US attitude toward PLO would improve as PLO has been recognized by all Arabs as the sole representative of the Palestinians.

5. As to our bilateral relations Muti' said we can always study what we should do to improve them and go into the timing of implementation.

6. Secretary then gave Muti' rundown of our current Middle East efforts focusing on moving toward a Geneva conference. Secretary stressed that Middle East peace was made an item of highest importance in the new administration's foreign policy agenda. There is general agreement there should be a united Arab delegation including Palestinians. This is a step forward although considerable work remains to be done to get agreement how the conference would be organized.

7. Secretary then suggested Muti' might wish to discuss bilateral issues which have separated us to see how we might resolve them and develop a time schedule for further improvement.

8. Muti' then noted things which did not help good atmosphere between us with Secretary responding accordingly:

(A) There have been congressional reports naming PDRY as among countries which encourage terrorism. PDRY leadership was surprised to learn this and objected strongly to inclusion. Secretary read from Department's April 27, 1977 letter to Senator Javits which noted "some public evidence that the PDRY has on occasion allowed its territory to

³ The attack took place on December 28, 1968. For information, see *Foreign Relations*, 1964-1968, vol. XX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1967-1968, Documents 369, 370, and 375.

be used as a sanctuary for terrorists,” emphasizing at the same time our further comment “the absence of any US representative in South Yemen and the general restrictions placed on the movements and contacts of foreigners there makes it difficult for the US to verify the existence and extent of PDRY support for terrorists.”⁴ Muti’ then explained that in recent hijackings West Germany and Japanese Governments had earnestly and persistently appealed to PDRY to permit terrorists to land giving PDRY Government no choice but to accept them.

(B) US had issued notice to mariners that it is not safe to anchor at PDRY ports due to danger of arrest to US citizens. PDRY considered this notice to constitute practically a blockade. Secretary reviewed details of a 1976 incident in which American yacht landing in Socotra under emergency conditions had been seized and its crew imprisoned.⁵ Because it took several weeks of concerted diplomatic efforts by our protecting power, the UK, to secure the release of the vessel and crew, we had no other choice but to issue this warning.

9. Secretary said he would like also to note problem of expropriated US property as being outstanding between our two countries. Existence of these various issues points up need for establishing mechanism to discuss problems in order to move eventually toward establishing relations.

10. Muti’ agreed and said PDRY would welcome a US visit to Aden in the next two months to discuss our relations. (In an aside to Under Secretary Habib, Secretary asked that we take necessary steps to send such a delegation.)

11. At close of meeting Muti’ said his government had decided to restore relations with the US. The Secretary said we had made same decision. It was also agreed at Muti’s request to keep in confidence the fact we would be sending a delegation to the PDRY.

12. For London and Jidda: You should brief host govts on Secretary’s conversation stressing following points:

(A) We believe it is necessary at this point in time to give the PDRY an alternative to its present reliance on Communist and radical governments;

(B) We will keep British and Saudis informed of our further contacts with the PDRY and will be particularly anxious to have their counsel prior to sending a delegation to Aden.

⁴ See footnote 6, Document 231.

⁵ Reference is to the arrest of a U.S. citizen, his wife, and three crew members by PDRY authorities on April 14, 1976, detailed in telegram 90488 to Sana, April 15, 1976. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D760143–0241)

(C) We are informing other area posts of the fact of the Secretary's meeting with Muti' noting, however, only that we discussed ways in which we might improve our current relations. NEA Assistant Secretary Atherton briefed Foreign Ministers Suwaidi of the UAE and Zawawi of Oman along these lines.⁶ You should stress to your host governments need to closely hold fact we intend sending a high level delegation to Aden.

Christopher

⁶ Atherton's meeting with Suwaidi and Zawawi took place on October 3. (Telegram Tosec 100095/238803 to Secretary of State Vance in New York, October 4; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770362-0070)

233. Briefing Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Atherton) to Secretary of State Vance¹

Washington, October 20, 1977

SUBJECT

Weekly Issues Report

Yemen Arab Republic

Following the assassination of President al-Hamdi on October 11,² North Yemen has remained outwardly calm. Nevertheless, reports Embassy Sana, former armed forces CINC, and now President, al-Ghashmi faces acute security and political problems in his efforts to consolidate his rule of the country. He has reported an assassination

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P770185-1905. Secret. Drafted by David M. Winn (NEA/ARP).

² The Embassy in Sana reported on events in the Yemen Arab Republic and the issues facing the new al-Ghashmi regime in telegrams 4016, 4026, and 4027, October 12; telegram 4032, October 14; telegram 4080, October 17; telegrams 4096 and 4097, October 18; and telegram 4126, October 19. In telegrams 4026 and 4027, it is also noted that al-Ghashmi himself seemed to be the prime suspect in al-Hamdi's assassination. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770371-0310, D770372-0590, D770372-0902, D773081-0200, D770381-0030, D770382-0764, D770382-0799, and D770385-0574, respectively)

attempt on himself. Popular confidence has been undermined by persistent rumors claiming that al-Ghashmi was personally responsible for the murder of al-Hamdi and his brother. Potential remains for intra-army conflict. Finally, al-Ghashmi is reported as having little interest or understanding of economic matters, and little savvy or sense of organization. Acknowledging that he is anti-Soviet and pro-US, Embassy Sana concluded a recent assessment, "Nothing we know about al-Ghashmi makes it easy to believe he is quick enough or adroit enough to stay on top by himself, as Hamdi did."

234. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, October 27, 1977, 0905Z

4220. Subject: President Ghashmi on Internal/External Situation. Ref: Sana 4215² (Notal).

1. Begin summary: During Oct 26 meeting, Ghashmi emphasized that internal situation is under control. Despite some anti-regime activity by leftists in the South. Acknowledging continued rumors blaming him for Hamdi's death,³ Ghashmi firmly denied them while promising to continue Hamdi's policies, particularly close relations with the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. Ghashmi conveyed impression of confident man. Given Yemen's history of intrigue and instability, however, it is still difficult to state categorically that Ghashmi can succeed in remaining in power even though it appears for now that he is determined to consolidate both his political and military positions. End summary.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770394-1280. Confidential. Sent for information to Jidda, Cairo, Amman, Mogadiscio, Khartoum, Muscat, Manama, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Tehran, Kuwait, Dhahran, Baghdad, Tel Aviv, Tripoli, Addis Ababa, Beirut, Tunis, Rabat, London, the Department of Defense, COMID-EASTFOR, and USCINCEUR.

² In telegram 4215 from Sana, October 26, Scotes summarized his October 25 discussion of Saudi-Yemeni relations with al-Asnaj. Al-Asnaj informed Scotes that he planned a "quick trip" to Saudi Arabia in order to "bring Saudi leadership up to date on current Yemeni developments." Asnaj also noted "rumors in town linking Saudis and US to Ghashmi as the forces behind Hamdi's death. Asnaj said that for that reason Saudis and Yemenis must work together to convince the public that these rumors are not true. At the same time, over-cooperation might also backfire." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770394-0520)

³ See Document 233.

2. On Oct 26, at my request, President Ahmad al-Ghashmi received me in his office at the military command headquarters. Primary purpose of my call was to deliver Presidential message (see reftel)⁴ but also I took occasion to engage in tour d'horizon with Ghashmi over a variety of internal and external matters.

3. At the onset of the half hour conversation, Ghashmi apologized for not seeing me more often during the last two weeks, but that press of work prevented him from doing so. He also admitted that he did not wish to give the excuse to other Ambassadors to ask for call because this would have wasted his time. He hastened to add that I should, however, never hesitate to come to see him whenever I wished because he considers the US and the American Embassy as sincere friends of Yemen not bound by usual protocol.

4. I replied that I fully realized his time has been limited and that I, too, had no desire to impose on him during these difficult days. I noted jokingly that I was sure he has been besieged by all sorts of people over the last few weeks offering advice and expressing their opinions. (He laughingly agreed saying he didn't realize Yemen had so many specialists in government affairs.) I continued that as in the past I was not calling on him to offer advice or to interfere in Yemen's affair in any way. The US Government and people wish to reaffirm their desire to see stability and prosperity obtain in Yemen and thus my Embassy and I stand ready to help in any way we can to achieve these goals in cooperation with Yemen as well as with Yemen's other Peninsular friends. With the US, "it will be business as usual."

5. As an example of our support for Yemen I then went through the kinds of programs we are presently engaged in in both the developmental and military areas. I noted several aid projects as well as the continued deliveries of arms under the terms of the Yemen-Saudi-US agreement. I also expressed the USG's readiness to consider modernization of the Air Force at such time as the Saudis and Yemenis work out the details.⁵ In this latter regard, Ghashmi said that Saudis have not yet raised the subject but that he intends to do so at the appropriate time.

6. Ghashmi thanked me for my words of support and stated that he fully appreciates what the USG and the American Embassy have done in the past for Yemen and that now his only hope is that Yemeni-US relations will even get better. In this context, he added that Soviet Ambassador has already called on him to express desire for good relations between Soviet Union and Yemen. But Ghashmi dismissed

⁴ Telegram 253882 to Sana, October 21, transmitted a message expressing President Carter's "best wishes" to al-Ghashmi. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770390-0718)

⁵ See Document 230.

this desire as “empty words.” He continued that Russians “are unhappy with me because they know what my true feelings are.” Ghashmi also emphasized need for good relations with Saudi Arabia and stressed that these relations should be marked with candor and sincerity, where a “yes” means “yes” and a “no” means “no.” He pledged to work closely with the Saudis and also expressed understanding that while U.S. does not play mediating role, it is a friend of both and therefore available as needed.

7. Ghashmi then went on to stress that the internal situation in Yemen is under control and that the army and government are working together to ensure security and stability as well as to continue the programs and policies of the late President Hamid. Ghashmi acknowledged that rumors persist in the country connecting him with the death of late President Hamdi. Ghashmi emphasized that his conscience is “clear before God” and that he is not going to dignify these charges by rebutting them.

8. Ghashmi then told me that investigations continue on the murder of the President and said that there have already been “many arrests.” (He noted in an aside that the arrests are being kept secret.) In this connection, he noted that an effort is being made to see if there is any link between the resignation of the Minister of Social Works Ahmad Qasim Dahmash and his subsequent pamphlet attack on the President shortly before the assassination. In addition he said that associates of Kibsi, his would-be assassin,⁶ have also been rounded up.

9. Ghashmi continued that leftist parties in Yemen are trying to take advantage of the situation and admitted there has been trouble in the South, particularly around the town of Damt. He insisted, however, that the army is ready to repel trouble from any source if Yemen is attacked or threatened. He denied rumors that the Amaliqa Brigade (President Hamdi’s brother’s unit) has in any way diminished its support of the government and characterized it as the “best unit we have.” He noted, however that the deputy Ali Hubayshi and one other of the senior officers of the brigade fled to the South after the assassination of the Hamdi brothers and after they had stolen almost one million riyals from Abdullah al-Hamdi’s office in Dhamar. PDRY has been asked to return these men but thus far no reply has been given. Ghashmi emphasized that Yemen wants good relations with PDRY but that at the same time it will not be deterred by threats or subversion coming from PDRY.

⁶ An attempt on al-Ghashmi’s life occurred on October 17. (Telegram 4080 from Sana, October 17; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770381–0030)

10. Addressing himself to future political developments, Ghashmi stated that it is necessary to build a governmental system in Yemen so that rule is not dependent upon one man's existence. He admitted that if he had been assassinated last week, Yemen would have fallen in chaos. He went on to say that he hopes to see the eventual establishment of a "majlis" as well as other institutions in order to strengthen the government when it faces crises like those of the past two weeks. He also observed that no efforts will be made to do anything about Abdallah al-Ahmar for the time being lest it be concluded that a reconciliation between al-Ahmar and the central government is the payoff of a Saudi plot against the late Hamdi. Thus, he saw no change in the situation in the North for the next few months but at the same time he expressed confidence that situation there presents no threat to the central government.

11. Expressing deep appreciation for President Carter's message, he urged me to convey to President Carter and the American people his best wishes as well as his assurances that Yemen values its friendship with the United States and that he personally will do everything in his power to "double" the extent of that friendship and of the cooperation between the two countries.

12. Comment: As to be expected, Ghashmi said all of the right things, particularly re relations with U.S. and with Saudi Arabia, while also clearly revealing his oft expressed leanings to the right. In latter connection, it is noteworthy his statement re Saudi Arabia repeated that of Asnaj to me yesterday word for word (see Sana 4215), which tends confirm he is listening to his advisors. In any case, Ghashmi conveyed a strong sense of a man in control both of himself and of the situation. He appeared confident of his present position as well as of his plans for Yemen's future. The only concern I could detect was over the possibility of anti-regime activities by PDRY but even here he gave no sign of being unwilling to deal with them. Looking me straight in the eye he certainly gave a convincing affirmation of his innocence in Hamdi's death. Only time will tell, however, if he can convince both the Yemen Army and the Yemeni people of this innocence because as he admitted himself, rumors continue in Sana and all over Yemen blaming him for the assassination. Nonetheless, so far he has been quite successful and the top Yemenis, whether in the army or the government have apparently decided either to bide their time before moving against him or to support him because of the widespread belief that there is no one on the political scene at present who can take Ghashmi's place. Yet, one has to be realistic and admit that whether Ghashmi can hold the present consensus together is still problematic, given Yemen's long and dolorous history of political intrigue and instability. But, at this time Ghashmi appears to be determined to

consolidate his political and military position to face whatever the future may hold.

Scotes

235. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, November 7, 1977, 0530Z

4394. Subject: YAR Regional Dilemmas.

Begin summary: We are conducting “business as usual” in Yemen, per instructions, but questions about ability [*stability?*] within Yemen and particularly Ghashmi’s ability to survive deserve attention from Department. This is true not just in terms of internal politics of YAR but also in terms of regional developments in which YAR plays a role. These roles concern PDRY, Saudi Arabia, and Horn of Africa, and affect directly the efforts of radicals and Soviets in this corner of Peninsula. We face policy dilemma. Gains made under Hamdi have been endangered. Our policy should be to watch and wait, and seek Saudis to level with us. End summary.

1. I concur fully with instructions of Department to us to conduct “business as usual” if at all possible in place like Yemen. I have conveyed that impression to Yemenis here but privately I am concerned by after effects of assassination of Chief of State and possible succession crisis here. The Embassy and I have tried to convey reasons for our concern to interested parties in Washington and Jidda. The reasons are prospects of instability here and questions about Ghashmi’s ability to survive.²

2. We will continue to report on latter questions. During Sixties, Yemen became major and unwanted preoccupation of Middle East politics and US diplomacy. It threatened Kingdom³ directly in military terms and indirectly in terms of broader ideological conflict between conservative and progressive Arab states. Polarization of Arab world helped to frustrate any efforts which were undertaken to limit Arab-

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770413–1083. Secret; Limdis. Sent for information to Jidda, Cairo, and London.

² See Document 233.

³ Reference is to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Israeli conflicts. Issue of Yemen was used in broader and rather successful effort to convince Arabs that Soviet Union was best friend, trading partner, development model. Yemen actually led to U.S. military deployments like Hard Surface and diplomatic efforts like Bunker Mission.⁴ Both of which were extraordinary moves at time. Finally, fighting here produced death and destruction on scale which—despite primitiveness of country—still rivals Arab-Israeli wars.

3. In absence of Egyptian Army to occupy country, we do not foresee scenario in 70's like one in 60's. Leftist military regime is possibility, given proximity of PDRY, and therefore we think bureaucratic temptation to treat Yemen as unimportant is probably not rpt not justified. For that reason we have not yet acted on request of Department (arriving while tanks in streets here and Ghashmi regime focused on possibility of shoot-out) to investigate alleged desecration of Jewish cemetery in Taiz and inquire (if we thought it appropriate) whether anyone here would object to removal to Israel of remains of locally revered Yemeni Jew who wrote poetry in Arabic.⁵

4. On other hand, we put aside questions we had about bidding our time with new regime when—after routine condolence from Secretary—letter arrived from President Carter to President Ghashmi, congratulating him on his new appointment as Chairman of Command Council and saying we looked forward to close and friendly relations.⁶

5. While we can maintain “business as usual” posture, and “welcome Ghashmi’s assurances that US-Yemeni relationship will not be affected by al-Hamdi’s unfortunate death,” we will continue to report on potential threat here. Sana 4331⁷ was our assessment of internal security and political situation. Situation is not matter of Yemen qua Yemen, however. In this cable we will try to step out of our preoccupation with local politics and trace links to region.

⁴ In February 1963, Ellsworth Bunker undertook a mission to Saudi Crown Prince Faisal with the aim of ending Saudi support of the royalists in the Yemeni civil war in order to bring about Egyptian troop withdrawal from Yemen. In Operation Hard Surface, approved by President Kennedy in June 1963, a U.S. air unit was deployed to Saudi Arabia to provide a limited air defense capability to deter possible Egyptian air operations over Saudi Arabia. For documentation, see *Foreign Relations, 1961–1963*, vol. XVIII, Near East, 1962–1963.

⁵ The request is in telegram 249534 to Sana, October 18. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770381–1170)

⁶ See footnote 4, Document 234.

⁷ In telegram 4331 from Sana, November 2, the Embassy reported that threats from the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen and internal dissension within the Yemen Arab Republic Command Council were major sources of concern for the new al-Ghashmi regime. Scotes however believed that al-Ghashmi had bought himself a few months in power. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, D770404–0982)

6. First point concerns PDRY. Up until spring of this year this Embassy produced a series of cables suggesting that variety of forces in area were creating potential for change in PDRY.⁸ Among these changes were growing strength of moderate regime in YAR, Saudi blandishments to Aden, Iranian and British military forces in renascent Oman, eclipse of Soviets and radical Arabs in MidEast dispute, failure of Communism to provide for welfare of South Yemenis or success of revolution in Gulf. We thought that Salim Rubayya Ali was leading most important military and government factions in search for new ties with Arab moderates and new start on development. Radicals like Abd al Fattah Ismail, with ties to Soviets and party figures, were likely to lose out over period of time which might leave South Yemen socialist but not hostile. Key change which we cited was virtual abandonment of policy of export of revolution—in Oman, YAR, Gulf.

7. Pendulum now seems to be swinging in other direction, probably because of ability of Soviets and determination of Abd al Fattah to align PDRY with Ethiopia. South Yemeni equipment is being sent into Ethiopia along with some troops, while Soviets are replacing old equipment with new. PDRY speech in UN,⁹ Abd al Fattah speech day after Hamdi killed, apparent resurgence of subversives in Southern part of YAR, and new support for PFLO all bespeak new efforts to export revolution. Terrorism is another possibility for increase at PDRY instigation. Fact that former Yemeni Prime Minister Abdallah al-Hajri was killed in London last spring¹⁰ by same man who hijacked Lufthansa airplane¹¹ and that both incidents can be tied to South is ominous indicator of what South could do if it once again set its mind to task.

8. We think that Hamdi was going to Aden in mid-October with agreement of Saudis to try to pull Salim Rubayya Ali back toward Arab orbit, toward new initiatives toward Oman and reduced involvement with Ethiopians, and away from terrorism like Hajri murder.

⁸ Reference is to a series of telegrams from the Embassy in Sana updating the Department of State on positive developments in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. These include telegram 607, February 12; telegram 626, February 13; telegram 679, February 15; and telegram 700, February 17. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770051-0370, D770051-0568, D770054-1045, and D770056-1179)

⁹ USUN summarized the October 3 address by Salim Rubayi Ali before the UN General Assembly in telegram 3488 from USUN, October 4. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770361-0049)

¹⁰ Yemeni political leader Abdallah al-Hajri was assassinated in London on April 10. (Telegram 1388 from Sana, April 11; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770126-0246)

¹¹ A number of men hijacked a Lufthansa flight on October 13, forced the plane to land in the United Arab Emirates, and demanded the release of "comrades" incarcerated in West Germany. ("Hijackers Force West German Airliner to Mideast, Demanding Freedom for Terrorists in Bonn's Jails," *The New York Times*, October 14, 1977, p. 3)

Hamdi saw Taiz summit last spring¹² as forum in which PDRY could reorient its policy, so as not to be on losing side in Ethiopia and not to side with non-Arab side against self-determination and long term Yemeni interests in lower end of Red Sea. This would have been real meaning of new symbols of Yemen unity—like single flag and national anthem—which were supposed to have been announced during October 14 celebrations.¹³ Certainly no PDRY leader could have brought about reorientation of policy simply because Saudis offered to pay handsomely.

9. For these reasons we have by no rpt no means ruled out possibility that extremists in PDRY killed Hamdi, in part to check growth of strong YAR, in part to check Salim's flirtation with YAR. Strong state in Yemen, economic dynamism, diplomatic initiatives by populous North and popular northern President were all threats to party officials in South. Pull exerted by YAR, plus bounteous Saudi aid, must have conjured up thoughts of Trojan Horse to leftists in their Adeni bastion.

10. Be that as it may, rapprochement between North and South Yemen has probably died with Hamdi. Ghashmi isn't going to be interested. Saudi reluctance to proceed with aid—while understandable and probably necessary—may give radicals excuse to push PDRY even farther away from Salim's earlier policy of relative moderation and may also mark the beginning of return to former Saudi policy of political and possible military confrontation with PDRY.

11. What PDRY and its backers do is of immediate concern for Saudi Arabia. This is second point in regional implications we trying to trace here. Only reason why radical state—even one as poor and backward as South Yemen—wants to topple state as poor and backward as YAR is of course that YAR could again be threat and distraction to Saudi Arabia. Latter is key to any MidEast settlement which the Libyans, Iraqis and radicals and South Yemen have long opposed. These rejectionists with their Palestinian cohorts cannot get at Saudi Arabia frontally. Yemen, however, provides a backdoor to the Kingdom. It is not difficult to imagine, therefore, an effort to move against Saudi Arabia through the destabilization of Yemen, by any one of the above, either alone or singly. This has already been tried, thus far unsuccessfully, in Egypt, Sudan and Syria, but primitive and underdeveloped Yemen may now appear to offer a more promising opportunity.

¹² See footnote 2, Document 230.

¹³ October 14 is the anniversary of the 1963 beginning of the South Yemeni revolution against British rule.

12. The Soviets can be expected to move more circumspectly than their extremist Arab friends. It must be remembered, however, that for many years they have pursued an opportunistic and long term policy in the Middle East. In the short run, the Soviets will doubtless cooperate with the U.S. for an Arab-Israeli settlement, if it appears that such a settlement has never changed since the days of Molotov when he told Ribbentrop that Soviet interests lay to the south towards the Persian Gulf. If this was true in pre-OPEC days, it is certainly even truer in these days. In our view at least, the Soviets have hung on in North Yemen tenaciously over the last few years despite serious setbacks because they see, as they saw in 1927 when relations were first established with the Imam, that this Peninsular toehold holds promise for the future. The Soviets will, therefore, arrange to see that their friends are helped here and PDRY affords them an excellent surrogate.

13. Third point to be made here is that Yemen was also developing diplomatic role in Horn, role quite out of proportion to its wealth and power. As noted in para 8 it was one key to detaching PDRY from radical foreign policy. Its ties to Sudan and Egypt and Somalia and Saudis made it part of larger group which sought changes at expense of Soviets and radicals at lower end of Red Sea. Taiz conference and plans for further Red Sea conferences were major liabilities for South Yemenis, who depended on Arabism in their appeals much more than on socialism. This larger group is now facing blunt challenge from Soviet Union in form of massive arms shipments to Ethiopia, shipments we are apparently doing nothing to oppose, even with words. Somali defeat when PDRY is strengthened and YAR weakened will leave situation in Horn very much against our interests and favoring those of USSR. It could be other way around if we wanted. Anyway, prospects are that YAR will have to forego any further, useful diplomatic role in Horn.

14. In conclusion, while I do not wish to appear to be investing Yemen with more importance than it deserves, I want to underscore the fact that Yemen is a strategic, albeit a small, piece of the Peninsular puzzle which must be understood and considered seriously when looking at the region as a whole. We and our friends have come a long way in Yemen since the mid-60's. With the assassination of Hamdi, however, this success is now endangered. Moreover, we are identified with Saudis and with Ghashmi government when Ghashmi may not survive and when Saudi purposes and actions here have not been made clear to us. For the moment, our policy should be, and frankly can only be, to watch and wait. There is nothing we can now do in Yemen to influence coming events, except expressing our moral support for the regime. Our Saudi friends, however, can and must play a subtle and careful role. The problem is that in the past they have not always

been able or willing to play such a role. Moreover, they have not always told us what they were doing because they believe they know Yemen better than we do. This is a debatable point. Be that as it may, however, I think we must continue to provide the Saudis with our frank assessments about and our candid opinions on Yemen, while at the same time expecting the Saudis to level with us in the context of our so-called policy of regional cooperation. Only in this way can we maintain the heretofore successful momentum of weaning Yemen away from radicalism as the first step toward the eventual and necessary deradicalization of PDRY. In both the long and short runs, these goals are of critical importance for Saudi Arabia and by extension for us, if we wish to protect our interests in the Peninsula now and in the years to come.

Scotes

236. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, December 30, 1977, 0156Z

310045. For Ambassador West from Harold Saunders. Subject: Soviet Role in South Yemen.

1. You will recall that, during his visit to Riyadh, the Secretary promised to give the Saudis our current information on Soviet activities in South Yemen.² You may pass the study in the following paragraphs to them in whatever way you consider appropriate.

A. The Soviet Union, last summer, began increasing its interests in South Yemen (PDRY) as a consequence of Moscow's changing allies in the Horn of Africa. At that time, the Soviets, in return for limited use of port and airport facilities and overflight rights were providing military assistance and modest economic aid. This assistance has included about 300 military advisers and 500 or so civilian economic development technicians. We believe the military personnel are

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemen: Democratic Republic (South): 2/77-9/80. Secret; Priority. Drafted by Griffin (INR/RNA); cleared by Twinam and Wisner and in CIA/NIO/NE; approved by Saunders.

² Vance visited Riyadh December 14-15. He met with Saud, Fahd, and King Khalid. For Vance's December 14 meeting with Fahd, see Document 161. For Vance's meetings with Saud and Khalid on December 14, see footnote 1, Document 161.

engaged principally in equipment maintenance, providing technical and perhaps some supervisory services in the fields of agriculture and medicine. The Soviets also induced the Cubans to send approximately the same number of personnel, of whom about half are training the PDRY militia and the rest are civilians. The GDR has provided assistance to South Yemen, particularly in the field of internal security.

B. In August, the Soviets, evidently anticipating further restraints on their access to ports and airfields in Somalia and viewing the relative decline in Soviet interests in YAR, again approached PDRY about obtaining broader use of Aden's facilities, under the terms of the proposed base agreement discussed with PDRY. The Soviets would be permitted to establish offices and workshops ashore and to set up fuel and water lines within the harbor. The Soviets already have access to anchorage near Socotra Island and the right to make port calls at Aden, but this access does not provide the storage, repair, and aerial resupply options that Berbera offered. There is no evidence to confirm a recent Kuwaiti press report that the Soviets are building facilities on Socotra Island. We do not believe that the South Yemenis have yet accepted the proposed base agreement.

C. Following Moscow's ouster from Somalia,³ the number of Soviet naval vessels in Aden jumped to about 30, as well as one Soviet floating dry dock repair facility. A month later, however, the number of ships in port dropped to the usual level of about a half dozen, suggesting that the large number of Soviet vessels observed in mid-November may have been only a temporary situation arising out of the hurried Soviet departure from Berbera. In this connection, we can assume that a sizable number of the Soviet personnel formerly stationed at Berbera have been relocated to Aden, at least temporarily.

D. We think that the Soviets are uncomfortable about relying very heavily on a regime as unreliable as that of the PDRY, especially after the loss of their substantial military investment in Somalia. However, to maintain their current naval operations in the Indian Ocean, the Soviets need access to docking and repair facilities, and possibly landing rights for reconnaissance flights and a secure communications site at Aden.

E. The PDRY leadership, for its part, realizes that the Soviets could not easily find satisfactory alternative port facilities in the entire Indian Ocean. Iraq and Mozambique are too far away for convenience and Ethiopia's regime is too unstable politically and its ports of too limited

³ The Somali Government renounced its Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union on November 13, ending Soviet use of naval facilities at Berbera.

access and capacity. Thus, PDRY probably feels that it can drive a hard bargain in future PDRY-Soviet relations.

F. As a result, we believe that Soviet use of PDRY naval and air facilities will be expanded and possibly will include a communications site north of Aden. We already note some increased Soviet use of storage facilities, but we do not anticipate a Soviet military buildup in PDRY as great as that which occurred over the past four years in Somalia. In return for expanded privileges, the Soviets will probably give PDRY more arms and possibly increased, though still modest, economic aid. We have recently observed new SA-2 surface-to-air missiles in Aden; these missiles could be part of the Soviet inducement for greater access to South Yemeni facilities. There is evidence that the Soviets have arranged to send some PDRY military equipment to Ethiopia (three MI-8 helicopters, and probably small arms), and will replace such equipment with new deliveries.

G. In addition to interest in PDRY naval and air facilities for its own needs, the Soviet Union has also come to depend on Aden as a major staging area for its air and naval supply link with Ethiopia. Important as the airlift is to Ethiopia, however, it is still relatively modest. Since the end of November, the Soviets have sent over 40 flights through Aden to Ethiopia. All of the Soviet flights to Ethiopia have been via Aden. The preferred Soviet route, at least for the moment, appears to be through Iraq via the Gulf to Aden. Most of the Soviet flights have been military transports carrying what we believe to be aircraft, ammunition, spare parts, and various other items of military equipment. In addition, nearly a dozen of the flights have been passenger aircraft, probably carrying Soviet advisory personnel to Ethiopia. We estimate that as many as 1,400 Soviet personnel could have been sent in this fashion.

H. The use of Aden as a staging area for the Soviet supply of Ethiopia benefits both governments. For the Soviets, Aden is a secure and well equipped facility whose use enables them to deliver supplies near the final destination and to conserve on scarce fuel supplies in Addis Ababa. It also offers limited facilities for ship repair. On the other hand, we believe it would take perhaps six months for the South Yemenis to refurbish the facilities at Aden's port to raise them to the standard of services required by the Soviet fleet. From the PDRY's viewpoint, cooperating in the Soviet airlift provides a demonstration of its ability to support progressive regimes and improves its case for greater Soviet aid, while still not allowing the Soviets too great a presence on PDRY soil.

Christopher

237. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RPM 78–10005

Washington, January 5, 1978

SUBJECT

Saudi Arabia-South Yemen—New Chill in Relations

Saudi Arabia has reverted to a hard line, less conciliatory policy towards South Yemen after trying for the past few years to induce a moderation in Aden's policies through promises of economic aid. Associated with this renewed hard line policy is a recent buildup of regular Saudi military forces along its border of South Yemen and a regrouping of the old, *[less than 1 line not declassified]*, Saudi-supported South Yemeni exile groups.

Until recently, Saudi policy towards South Yemen was based on the belief that Aden's radical, leftist policies could be best moderated through inducements of economic aid. *[4½ lines not declassified]*

Saudi policy under Fahd and Saud was to promise substantial financial aid to South Yemen and to encourage other Persian Gulf states to do likewise. The Saudis agreed to supply crude oil to Aden's refinery, and Saudi Arabia and South Yemen established diplomatic relations for the first time earlier this year. In addition to a general moderation of its policies, Saudi Arabia sought three specific responses from South Yemen:

—An end to its support for the Dhufari rebellion in neighboring Oman.²

—An end to its support for international terrorists.

—An end to aid and support for Ethiopia and a withdrawal of its advisers from the conflict in the Horn of Africa.

Since late last October, however, it has become evident that Saudi Arabia has reassessed its policy toward South Yemen and that those Saudi leaders—*[less than 1 line not declassified]*—who favor a tougher, less conciliatory policy towards Aden are again in the ascendancy. Economic aid and crude oil supplies have been halted, and Saudi financial aid to numerous development projects has been suspended. Among the causes for this change in policy are:

—Increased South Yemeni support for Ethiopia, in alliance with the Soviet Union and in opposition to Saudi Arabia's policy of support for Somalia.

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A, Production Case Files (1978), Box 13, Folder 2, Saudi Arabia-South Yemen—New Chill in Relations. Secret; *[handling restriction not declassified]*.

² Reference is to a rebellion that began in 1962 in the Omani province of Dhofar against the Sultan of Oman that lasted until 1976, with sporadic fighting lasting into 1979.

—South Yemen's failure to cooperate with Saudi efforts to reconcile South Yemen and Oman.

—Sharp attacks on Oman at the UN General Assembly by South Yemen's President and his declaration of support for Dhufari rebels.

—[2½ lines not declassified]

Saudi Military Buildup

The most serious aspect of the change in Saudi policy, in the short-term, is the buildup of regular Saudi military forces at Sharurah, close to the South Yemen border, which began late last year. Sharurah is the site of a brief border skirmish between Saudi Arabia and South Yemen in 1969,³ and periodic clashes since then between South Yemeni troops and either Saudi army units or Saudi-supported exiles from South Yemen.

[1 paragraph (6 lines) not declassified]

[2 lines not declassified] Renewed cross border attacks by the exile groups would be a nuisance but not a threat to the regime in Aden. The build-up of regular Saudi forces, however, is potentially more serious. We assume that, for the moment, the increase in the strength and readiness posture of the regular Saudi garrison at Sharurah is a defensive precaution while Sultan considers Saudi Arabia's next move toward Aden. At the very least, the buildup will send an unmistakable message of Saudi displeasure to South Yemen.

³ See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XXIV, Middle East Region and Arabian Peninsula, 1969–1972; Jordan, September 1970, Documents 175 and 176.

238. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RPM 78–10006

Washington, January 5, 1978

SUBJECT

Saudi Arabia–North Yemen—Ambivalent Relations

Saudi Arabia's ambivalent policies toward the Hamdi government reflected its mixed feelings about North Yemen in general. While Crown Prince Fahd dominated policy towards the Yemens for the past few years, the Saudi government appeared to recognize that Hamdi was probably the most moderate national leader they could hope for in Sana and that his efforts to modernize and strengthen the central government deserved their support. This fairly enlightened policy of Fahd's, however, never erased the other strain in Saudi thinking about North Yemen: deep suspicion—dating from the prolonged Yemeni civil war of the 1960s when Saudi Arabia supported the royalists—that any non-tribal government in Sana could not be trusted because it had too many close ties with leftists and other opponents of Saudi Arabia. As a result, while they kept the Hamdi government afloat financially, the Saudis also kept it weak by never giving it enough aid and support to defeat or control the independent northern tribes which resisted any central control from Sana.

Several factors color Saudi thinking about the Yemens and have contributed to their desire to keep their hand in North Yemen's internal affairs. Because it is their "backyard," the Saudis have always felt free to meddle in North Yemen and have traditionally used the northern tribes as their instrument. The Saudis also remember the series of leftist regimes in Sana before Hamdi took power in 1974 and fear a united North and South Yemen dominated by the Marxist regime in Aden. Powerful elements in the Saudi government believe that the best insurance against such an unpleasant eventuality is to keep the central government in Sana perpetually weak by supporting the tribes.

In retrospect, it is evident the Defense Minister Sultan—a hardliner who always distrusted Hamdi and strongly supported the tribes—began to seriously challenge Fahd's moderate policy last July.² [6 lines not declassified]

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 80T00634A, Production Case Files (1978), Box 13, Folder 3, Saudi Arabia–North Yemen—Ambivalent Relations. Secret; [handling restriction not declassified].

² In telegram 2662 from Sana, July 13, 1977, Scotese reported on the meeting between al-Hamdi and Saudi officials. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D770248–1179)

Sultan's campaign to prove that Hamdi was soft on the Yemeni left undoubtedly received powerful support from Khalid ibn Sudayri, an uncle of Crown Prince Fahd and Sultan. The Sudayris, a powerful tribe long closely aligned with the House of Saud, have traditionally governed Najran Province, on the North Yemen border, provided the ambassadors to Sana, and have been the conduit for Saudi support to the Yemeni tribes. Involvement of the Sudayris is, and undoubtedly will remain, an inescapable element in Saudi-Yemeni relations.

Hamdi's Assassination and its Implications

We do not know who, if anyone, was behind the assassination of Hamdi, but it is widely believed in North Yemen that the Saudis were involved.³ [2 lines not declassified]

[1 paragraph (7½ lines) not declassified]

What is more important than who actually killed Hamdi, however, is the implication of his murder for Saudi-North Yemeni relations. In late October, Sultan took back control of Saudi relations with the Yemens from Fahd and his supporters. Ironically, Sultan may well find that while dealing with Hamdi was frustrating, he was probably preferable to the period of upheaval that may lie ahead in Sana.

The Saudis appear to be concerned that Ghashmi lacks popular support. Should they begin to distance themselves from Ghashmi, he will lose his major pillar of outside support and his downfall might become a self-fulfilling prophecy for the Saudis.

The Saudis, meanwhile, are maintaining close contact with an old favorite of theirs, Abdallah al-Ahmar. Ahmar, a conservative [*less than 1 line not declassified*] tribal leader from the north, is totally unacceptable to the moderate and leftist portions of the North Yemeni population. Sultan may find that his tougher policy towards North Yemen does not produce any more satisfactory results than did Fahd's more moderate one.

³ In telegram 15 from Sana, January 2, the Embassy reported the latest information concerning al-Hamdi's assassination and the question of Saudi involvement, noting that "Embassy Sana is now prepared to go on record as saying that former YAR President Hamdi was killed by fellow officers in coup." The Embassy also reported that President al-Ghashmi played a part in the assassination, and that Lieutenant Colonel Ali Abdallah Saleh was one of the killers. The Embassy commented: "Motive was belief in Hamdi's waxing relationship with South and waning one with Saudis." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840139-2529)

239. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, March 10, 1978

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

2. *Saudi Views on US-South Yemen Relations.* The Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister has reiterated the Saudi desire that we not take steps to normalize relations with South Yemen until King Khalid has had an opportunity to review Saudi policy toward South Yemen. He summarized current Saudi views by saying they are pessimistic about the trend of events in South Yemen, believe the more radical elements in the PDRY regime are consolidating their power,² and increasingly concerned over the active South Yemen role in the Horn. The Saudis will find it difficult to understand if we decide to send a delegation to Aden as previously agreed with the South Yemenis³ until we have a firm Saudi reaction. I have talked to John West about this and he shares my view that we should defer a decision.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 38, State Department Evening Reports, 3/78. Secret. In the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum, Carter wrote: "Cy J."

² Carter underlined the phrase "the more radical elements in the PDRY regime are consolidating their power," and wrote in the left-hand margin "I don't agree, but will yield to your opinion—This is a good way to insure this will happen," with an arrow pointing toward the underlined passage.

³ See Document 232.

**240. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to
President Carter¹**

Washington, April 6, 1978

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

Saudi Attitude Toward U.S.-South Yemen Relations. As you know, the Saudis had asked us to defer any initiative toward improving relations with South Yemen until the King had reviewed Saudi policy toward South Yemen. On Tuesday the Deputy Foreign Minister told our Charge in Jidda that Prince Fahd now believes it would be useful for the United States to have an embassy in Aden.² The Deputy Foreign Minister gave an optimistic appraisal of recent developments in South Yemen that is at variance with the views Fahd had earlier provided to John West, and which John related at our meeting last month. Therefore I am asking John to confirm this recent information when he returns to Jidda, and to tell the Saudis how we intend to proceed.³

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 38, State Department Evening Reports, 4/78. Secret. Carter wrote "Cy J" in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum.

² Reference is to an April 4 conversation between the Chargé and Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister al-Mansouri during which al-Mansouri indicated that Fahd also supported the "idea of resumption of US-PDRY relations." (Telegram 2607 from Jidda, April 6; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780148-0631)

³ In the left-hand margin next to this paragraph, Carter wrote: "As you know, I think we should move toward S. Yemen."

241. Memorandum From Acting Secretary of State Christopher to President Carter¹

Washington, April 21, 1978

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

South Yemen. The Saudis have finally come around to your view that it would be helpful if we restored diplomatic relations with South Yemen. We are assessing the timing and tactics of doing so.²

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 38, State Department Evening Reports, 4/78. Secret. Carter wrote “Warren J” in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum. Vance was in Moscow April 19–23; Christopher served as Acting Secretary in his absence.

² In the left-hand margin next to this point, Carter wrote: “I’m glad we finally got permission to carry out my ‘views.’”

242. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, June 17, 1978

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

6. *Mission to the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen*—The People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) Government has agreed to receive the Department’s team late this month for exploratory discussions. This will be our first opportunity in almost a decade for extensive exchange of views with the PDRY Government.

The team will cast its approach in the context of your general policy of trying to normalize relations with all countries and our long term objective of having a constructive relationship with the PDRY. The team will also hold discussions on a number of key substantive issues on which our views differ significantly from those of the PDRY leadership. These include human rights, support for terrorism, cooperation among Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf states in the interests of

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 38, State Department Evening Reports, 6/78. Secret. Carter initialed the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum, indicating that he saw it.

regional security, and the role of the Soviet Union, Cuba and other communist states in the region.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

**243. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to
President Carter¹**

Washington, June 24, 1978

1. *YAR President al-Ghashmi Assassinated.* YAR President Ghashmi was assassinated this morning. According to our Embassy, Ghashmi was killed by a bomb while he was receiving a man purporting to be a South Yemen representative. The visitor, who also died, has tentatively been identified as the bomber. Sana is quiet although the military headquarters where the incident occurred is sealed off from the rest of the city by tanks and troops. Our Embassy notes that suspicion is focused at the moment entirely on South Yemen and that Ghashmi's successor is likely to be chosen from his immediate entourage.²

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 38, State Department Evening Reports, 6/78. Secret. Carter initialed the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum, indicating that he saw it.

² In telegrams 3054, 3055, and 3057, all from Sana, June 24, the Embassy reported the details of the assassination and its immediate aftermath. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780263-0904, D780263-1003, and D780263-1039)

244. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, June 27, 1978, 0900Z

3116. Subj: Reported Execution PDRY President Salim Rubayi Ali.

1. We have no reason to doubt reports reaching us by radio from Aden that Salim Rubayi Ali and two others have been executed.² We doubt that rebellion can continue without his leadership.³

2. It is clear that our major and perhaps only hope of manipulating South Yemen from within has been destroyed along with Salim. It is also clear that rivalries within South Yemen were not rpt not play-acting but real and mortal differences within top of leadership in PDRY.

3. Observers in Middle East will draw little comfort from fact that two Chiefs of State in Middle East who sought to limit cooperation with Soviets were killed in same week. We believe it inevitable that any Middle East leader thinking of opposing Soviets will be given pause by these events, and that Soviets now loom larger in this part of the world.

4. From perspective of Sana, events can be read in two ways. One is that rebellion will inevitably be followed by purges in army which will weaken PDRY in any effort it may wish to launch against YAR. Repression which will follow murder of only PDRY leader with any popularity will also stay the hand of Abd al-Fattah Ismail in his efforts to export revolution. Alternative view is that al-Fattah has at last cleared last obstacle to completely radical policy of subversion against Dhofar and YAR and cooperation with Soviets and Cubans in major military efforts. Yemenis, of course, expect rapid increase of pressure from South; that is, they subscribe to second view expressed above. Embassy Sana is divided in its opinion this subject but, whichever reading of future events is adopted, it is clear that something, sooner or later, will have to be done to contain South Yemen and its backers.

Ransom

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780265–1200. Secret; Priority. Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Amman, Jidda, Kuwait, London, Manama, and Muscat.

² Fighting broke out in Aden days after al-Ghashmi's murder in Sana. *The New York Times* reported that on June 26, a pro-Soviet "people's militia" led by Abdel al-Fattah Ismail defeated troops loyal to Salim Rubayi Ali, who was arrested and executed. ("South Yemen Chief Reported Slain, But Pro-Red Group Stays In Power," *The New York Times*, June 27, 1978, p. A1)

³ Salim Rubayi Ali had been a moderating influence in Marxist South Yemen. Reference is to his efforts at softening the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen's Marxist stance and moving toward a rapprochement with North Yemen.

245. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, June 28, 1978

SUBJECT

The Yemen Coup and Assassination

Current Situation

The facts that we have are scanty, but they seem to be holding up well. The South Yemenis apparently rigged the assassination of President Ghashmi of North Yemen, probably for two reasons: (1) to throw the YAR into confusion and prevent any military reaction to their own coup which was already planned; and (2) to discredit PDRY President Ali and provide at least a superficial motive for removing him from office. It worked. Subsequently, the party leadership either staged a coup attempt by Ali, or else took advantage of such an attempt, to bombard the Presidential palace and execute Ali. The effect was to leave Abd al-Fattah Ismail, the hard-line Marxist party chief and ideologue, as the key power in Aden. In Sanaa, the North Yemenis have pulled themselves together quickly, have installed an interim President, and are now considering next steps. (S)

What It Does NOT Mean

The PDRY was already the most radical² Marxist state in the Arab world. The change of leadership will not mean a loss to the free world, only more of the same. Even with the leftist "pragmatist" Salim Rubaya Ali in office, the Saudis had given up on Aden as much as six months ago, considering it a lost cause and beyond the reach of their moneyed entreaties. A power struggle has been going on between Ali and Ismail almost from the day they took collective command of the PDRY. They were both committed Marxists. The PDRY has been following a Marxist policy actively and openly for years, including unblushing attempts to interfere in the policies of conservative states throughout the area. The Ghashmi assassination was their first successful murder of a head of state, but not for lack of trying. They have numerous notches on their sword handles for the killing of lesser political figures in their own nation and elsewhere. The change in policy may make them

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 94, Yemens: Temporary: 6/78. Secret. Sent for information.

² An unknown hand crossed out the words "most radical" and substituted the word "only."

marginally worse, but barring a relinquishment of their prized nationalistic credentials in the form of base rights to the Soviets, it is difficult to see how Ismail acting on his own can surpass his past performance with Ali as partner. (S)

What It Will Mean

—The Saudis, the North Yemenis, the Shah, and others in the region will see this as further confirmation of their deepest fears, viz. the Soviets, having installed their crew in Kabul, having attempted the same in Baghdad, with Addis in their pocket, have now added another link in the ever-tighter chain encircling the moderate Arabs. The regional moderates will press us to do something, and they may be tempted to try to do something themselves. We have reliable indications that the Saudis are seriously considering going to war with the PDRY and are seeking regional support. (S)

—With regard to the Soviets, it is not clear at this point that they will enjoy any greater access to Aden than before. The Soviets have been pressing the Adenis for years to give them base facilities—and have been rejected in each case. Those decisions were taken while Ismail was in a strong position in the government and almost certainly reflected a collective view with strong nationalist overtones. Ismail may prove to be more susceptible to Soviet blandishments, but that is far from certain at this stage. (S)

What To Look For

In measuring the extent of Soviet gains, there are three possible yardsticks:

1. *Base Rights.* Return of the Soviet repair ship or floating dry dock to Aden would be a clear indication of a change in policy. Soviet use of Aden airfields for *military* (as opposed to transport) flights would be a major deviation from past PDRY policy. A significant increase in Soviet or Cuban military presence would be in the same category.

2. *Intervention in North Yemen.* Active PDRY military intervention across the border or encouragement of tribal dissidence on a large scale would reverse the live-and-let-live pattern which has characterized the uneasy relations between the two Yemens over the past several years. It could prompt the Saudis to intervene directly.

3. *Dhofar.* A concerted attempt to reignite the Dhofar rebellion in Oman³ would mark a sharp policy change. (S)

These are listed in descending order of probability. The PDRY did not stop supporting the Dhofar rebels because they lost interest in the

³ See footnote 2, Document 237.

export of revolution. They stopped because they were roundly defeated and had nothing to gain by going back for another round. With regard to North Yemen, it is not clear that Aden has enough tribal or political assets to be more than a nuisance, and the threat of energizing the Saudis into a major confrontation is not likely to be appealing. There are, however, more hard core communists of the card-carrying variety in the North than the Marxist South.⁴ This, plus the tangled tribal relationships, will continue to give Aden the ability to interfere in the internal affairs of North Yemen almost at will, a capability reciprocated by Northern assets in the South. (S)

U.S. Interests

Our ultimate concern is the stability of Saudi Arabia. The presence of a Marxist state on the corner of the Peninsula is not a factor for stability, but its extreme poverty, total political isolation, and preoccupation with its own internal power struggles have kept it from wielding any significant influence beyond the borders of its equally impoverished neighbor to the north. This is not a desirable situation, but it must be weighed against the risks in attempting to change it by force. (S)

The PDRY regime is fully in command of its own government and people so far as we can tell. It will not topple easily, and it controls a respectable, blooded military force. The worst possible outcome of this affair in terms of our own interests would be an intervention attempt by the Saudis which failed and tended to discredit the Royal Family. There was a lot of talk in North Yemen and Saudi Arabia in the days immediately following the Ghashmi assassination about North Yemen launching a war against the south, backed by Saudi Arabia, with such states as Iran and Jordan standing at the ready.⁵ That may have been merely frustration and rage in the heat of the moment, but it is dangerous in the extreme. There is no realistic prospect that North Yemen—with or without Saudi assistance—could in fact bring down the Aden regime. It is more likely to reveal Saudi (and Yemeni) military shortcomings and embroil the entire Peninsula in a war no one can win. (S)

We and the Saudis have everything to lose in widening the conflict, and we should not encourage it in any way. The British intend to issue a formal statement today counseling restraint on all parties. Although it may not be what Prince Turki and the Shah want to hear, we should take the same line. (S)

⁴ An unknown hand placed a question mark in the right-hand margin next to this sentence.

⁵ In telegram 3110 from Sana, June 26, the Embassy reported on Ransom's conversation with al-Asnaj, in which the latter informed Ransom that he planned to "call on Saudis and Omanis to join YAR in intervention in South Yemen." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780264-1077)

246. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic and the Department of State¹

Jidda, June 29, 1978, 1013Z

4834. For Assistant Secretary Saunders from Twinam. Subject: Comments on Visit to YAR.

1. Mood: In over four hours of discussions with YAR leaders July [June] 27–28² I found them trying hard to convey impression of calm determination to press on with building, and defending, the country. Beneath the brave front they are obviously extremely worried about their chances for forging a viable new regime and about the Soviet threat emanating from Aden. The possibility of further PDRY terrorism against YAR obviously is heavy on their minds, and they do not appear to find relief in the present disarray in PDRY because they describe the situation there, and would certainly have us see it, as consolidation of the Soviet grip on South Yemen.

2. What YAR wants: Council Chairman and Prime Minister made quite clear YAR's desperate sense of need for US and Saudi support. They obviously consider our sending someone to Sana with President's letter of condolences and support a very significant symbol of US willingness to stand by YAR in time of need, and thus I feel my visit made real initial contribution to bucking up YAR leadership. In my talks I emphasized my impression of intensity of Saudi concern for welfare of North Yemen, and I believe this was fully noted and helped. Chairman Arashi in particular, however, made it abundantly clear to me that YAR needs from us and from Saudis more than mere words and is looking for concrete manifestations of US-Saudi willingness to back YAR. (Of course, as always, North Yemenis would be happier if US help were not so closely tied to what they regard as the turgid pace of Saudi support, but they appear realistic in accepting the fact that we intend to keep the Saudis out in front in the trilateral relationship.)

3. What YAR intends to do: During my visit Ransom and I did not have best opportunity to press on this point, because of need to set overall tone of visit with Prime Minister Ghani and essentially formal nature of exchange with Council Chairman Arashi. Foreign Minister Asnaj, with whom we had intended to probe YAR intentions fully,

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780269–0119. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis.

² Twinam was also scheduled to visit Aden, but cancelled the visit after the coup and President Ali's assassination. He went to Sana to reassure the new leadership of U.S. support and to press them to continue to build upon the Yemen Arab Republic's relationship with the United States and Saudi Arabia. See Document 242.

kept being dragged off to high priority task of investigating Ghashmi assassination in preparation for Saturday's Arab League meeting,³ having to cancel the scheduled meeting with us evening June 27 and having to send Western Affairs Director al Kibsi and Ambassador to US Muttawakkil to sub-hosting luncheon prior to my departure June 28. He was present only during my meeting with Arashi and, in accordance with Peninsular protocol, did not participate independently in discussion, confining himself to interpreting. In response to direct question, Ghani admitted YAR sees ongoing PDRY threat primarily as one of terrorism and political subversion rather than military intervention in YAR. Both he and Arashi emphasized YAR's need to demonstrate strength in response to Soviet threat from South Yemen. But neither Ransom nor I interpreted anything they or other YAR officials said as suggesting immediate possibility of YAR intervention into PDRY. Arashi asked for US help in assessing how to deal with the threat. My overall impression is that YAR has not yet figured out what to do, is focusing now on this weekend's Arab League meeting as forum for making its case against PDRY and building support for whatever action it may decide to take, and in any event, will look to Saudis for advice, support and leadership in responding to Ghashmi assassination. We must bear in mind, however, the intensity of the feeling among YAR leaders that they must do something to respond to PDRY, and we cannot rule out their doing something foolish. Ransom will, of course, be probing further on this question.

4. U.S. response: YAR leaders, despite their reference to "practical steps" which they would like to see us take in support, obviously find some advantage at this stage in being just as vague about the extent of U.S. support desired as was Saudi Prince Turki al Faisal when he called in Ambassador West and his British, French and Iranian colleagues June 25.⁴ Both Saudis and YAR would obviously prefer an open-ended commitment from us, and undoubtedly over time YAR will seek to use present situation to push us further into military supply relationship than we have to date determined to go. At the moment, however, we seem to be in the fortunate position of having already agreed with Saudis (and Congress) on a YAR military modernization

³ An emergency session of the Arab League Council took place in Cairo July 1-2 at the request of the Yemen Arab Republic, which accused South Yemen of assassinating President al-Ghashmi. See footnote 6, Document 247.

⁴ Reference is to a meeting between Turki and West on June 25. In telegram 4704 from Jidda, June 25, the Embassy reported that Turki noted that the Saudi Government "will do everything in its power to maintain the integrity and security of North Yemen following the assassination of President Ghashmi." Turki also asked for assurances of U.S. support for "actions that maintain the integrity of the YAR." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780264-0193)

program which has had as yet virtually no tangible impact. We are at point where effective implementation of presently agreed program, including the transfer of F-5B's, is matter of urgency. If we can get our act together with Saudis, an admittedly formidable task, we should be able over the next year or so to go a long way in providing tangible manifestations of our policy of supporting YAR in cooperation with Saudi Arabia. At same time, by pressing Saudi leadership to get on with implementing the YAR military supply program to which it long ago agreed, we can to some extent answer the Saudi request for US support in its as yet unspecified help to North Yemen. In addition to intensifying efforts to move infantry modernization and F-5B transfer along promptly and effectively, this would seem to be the time to go ahead with approval of the F-5E's for North Yemen.

5. Charge Ransom may wish to comment on above impressions.

6. Department may wish to pass this message to appropriate Middle East posts and military addressees, including CHUSMTM Dhahran.

West

247. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia and the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic¹

Washington, July 8, 1978, 0010Z

172366. Subject: U.S.-Saudi Cooperation in Support of North Yemen. Refs: (A) Sana 3215,² (B) Sana 3216,³ (C) Sana 3217,⁴ (D) Jidda 4704.⁵

1. Recent assassination of President Ghashmi and coup in Aden and resultant potential for increased instability in region suggest a reexamination of our overall policies and programs in South Arabia. Of most immediate concern is the defensive capability of North Yemen and the need to demonstrate tangibly our support for the integrity of that state. Following is based on Twinam's consultations with Embassies Jidda and Sana and the comprehensive suggestions of Embassy Sana in refs A-C.

2. For Ambassador West: Request you seek earliest opportunity to meet with MFA Prince Saud, MODA Prince Sultan, and other SAG officials you deem appropriate, to convey following points, stating you are speaking under instructions from Washington.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780280-0127. Secret; Immediate; Limdis. Drafted by Bodine; cleared by Leslie Brown (T), Brian Atwood (H), Richard Ericsson (PM), Ted Borek (L/PM), Crawford, Sick, and Kreisberg and in DOD/ISA and DOD/DSAA; approved by Newsom. Sent for information Immediate to USLO Riyadh.

² In telegram 3215 from Sana, July 1, the Embassy suggested the manpower shortage within the YAR armed forces would most likely remain without an increase in military pay, noting: "Saudis, if they want to see YAR Army maintain manpower base for expensive equipment purchases already undertaken, are going to have to consider pay subsidy." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780272-0772)

³ In telegram 3216 from Sana, July 1, the Embassy insisted that rather than pursuing a broad program, the United States "should focus our efforts on anti-tank and anti-air defenses plus effectiveness of artillery. This should be done along with plan to support forward elements of YAR Army along PDRY border." YAR officials also believed that it was necessary to replace the Soviet military mission in North Yemen with a contingent of Arab nations familiar with Soviet equipment, such as the Jordanians, Egyptians, and Pakistanis. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780272-0787)

⁴ In telegram 3217 from Sana, July 1, the Embassy highlighted some of the ongoing difficulties with the U.S.-Saudi-YAR tripartite military supply relationship. The Saudi financing of Yemeni purchases of equipment from the United States and France had been a political success: "It has, at any rate, provided alternative to Soviet commitment to security of YAR and averted large-scale influx of new Soviet weapons. At same time, it has been administrative disaster and one rpt one of the reasons why Yemeni Army is weaker now than ever before in last decade." The Embassy described the reasons for this outcome, noting: "This is all prelude to saying that any US desire to see existing program prosecuted more effectively depends on prior agreement with Saudis—starting with Sultan and running through MODA—to admit US to new role." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780272-0793)

⁵ See footnote 4, Document 246.

(A) We share Saudi concern about recent events in South Arabia—both North and South Yemen—and would appreciate hearing the Government of Saudi Arabia's latest assessment of Yemeni situation and its view of immediate and longer-term implications for the region.

(B) We are impressed by Saudi leadership in rallying support for YAR in League's condemning the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen for its role in the assassination of President Ghashmi and recommending a general "freeze" in relations against the regime by member states.⁶

(C) It is our initial impression that the League's decision to isolate the PDRY coupled with the internal divisions still present after and exacerbated by the June 26 coup have weakened the Adeni regime's ability to threaten its neighbors either militarily or politically. USG feels isolation of the PDRY will be more effective in limiting danger to the region than precipitous military intervention against it. Intervention, on the contrary, could result in quite the reverse—a consolidation of PDRY regime's support in South Yemen and perhaps even desperate retaliatory action against North Yemen or Oman, thus beginning a cycle destabilizing to the entire region. A more active Soviet military role in South Yemen could result.

(D) We are prepared to work closely with the SAG to insure that an adequate defensive posture against South Yemen is developed and maintained. FYI: You should not rpt not volunteer following but if SAG raises question you may reply as follows: If the threat to North Yemen should become so immediate that the YARG and the SAG conclude that the stationing of Saudi troops in North Yemen is called for to provide an adequate defense, we would want to consult closely with SAG. In this connection any use of US-origin equipment would have to be within the meaning of the regional defense provisions of the military assistance agreement of 1951,⁷ which would not embrace action other than legitimate self-defense.

⁶ The communiqué issued on July 2 at the conclusion of the Arab League Council emergency session, which was attended by 15 moderate Arab League members, imposed a "freeze" on political, economic, and cultural exchange with South Yemen because of its "criminal action" in connection with al-Ghashmi's assassination. ("15 Arab States Plan To Impose Embargo On South Yemen," *The New York Times*, July 3, 1978, p. 3) Telegram 16308 from Cairo, July 3, reported on the meeting. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D7800274-0940)

⁷ Reference is to the U.S.-Saudi mutual defense assistance agreement of June 1951. Under the agreement, the United States agreed to provide military equipment and training for the Saudi armed forces. The pact also authorized the establishment of a permanent U.S. Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia.

(E) An immediate question is the need to demonstrate to North Yemen the commitment of the US and, more importantly, Saudi Arabia to its security. It is essential that we take immediate steps to invigorate our joint military assistance program with North Yemen in order to make a credible impact on the perceptions in both North and South Yemen of the YARG's ability to provide for legitimate defense. We want to consult closely with appropriate SAG officials about steps which should be taken to make program more effective. In addition, we are urgently examining the feasibility of accelerated delivery dates for previously approved equipment and the availability of U.S. training teams to accompany the equipment and assist in its integration into the Yemeni armed forces.

(F) We understand that the Yemeni armed forces are desperately short of men. The Yemeni Government is not able to compete with salaries available within Yemen or to migrant Yemeni workers in neighboring states and is thus not able to attract or retain the number and quality of personnel needed to develop a credible military force. Until budget support or military pay subsidy is available, it is questionable how effective any reorganization or re-equipping effort will be. Perhaps those states most directly concerned with the security of Yemen will consider ways to assist the Yemeni Government with this problem.

3. Ambassador West may wish to consider suggesting to Prince Sultan the creation of a working level coordinating group consisting of representatives of MODA and USMTM, as well as U.S. Defense Attache and Saudi Military Mission Chief in Sana. This group could address the acceleration of the reorganization of the Yemeni armed forces, immediate and long-term training requirements and the turn-over of U.S. equipment already delivered to Yemen. Based upon the difficulties we have experienced in moving forward with security assistance to North Yemen, State and Defense strongly favor creation of such a group as necessary to achieve an effective program.

4. If at some point the Saudis should raise with you possibility of using U.S.-origin equipment in legitimate self-defense, either in North Yemen or Saudi Arabia itself, you should remind SAG that U.S. law prohibits the participation of any USG personnel, military or civilian, including FMS contractor personnel in a combat support role. Ambassador should assure himself of U.S. contractor community understanding of this fact.

5. For Ransom: The above is provided to you on an FYI basis. While you should not share any details of Jidda's instructions with YARG, you should reassure them that we are actively engaged with the SAG on how best to assist them in their defensive needs.

6. FYI only: Under Secretary Newsom, who will be visiting Saudi Arabia July 17-19 will be interested in SAG views on South Arabia.

As our review in Washington of various options progresses we may have specific proposals for Newsom to present to the Saudis in the course of his visit. End FYI.

Vance

248. Message From the United States Military Mission in Saudi Arabia to the Department of Defense¹

Dhahran, July 12, 1978, 1120Z

69062. Specat Exclusive for LTG Graves from Von Harbod. Subject: North Yemen Military Assistance.

1. (S/NOFORN) Have been briefed by Ambassador West and Embassy staff regarding U.S. Mission increasing concern vis a vis situation in North and South Yemen. Ambassador and Chief USMTM met on this subject with MODA (Prince Sultan) on 10 July in accordance with instructions from State.² As a result of meeting, closer coordination between U.S. Country Team and Saudis on policy and planning can be expected. Additionally, believe both U.S. Mission and MODA have become convinced that U.S. must take stronger role to insure effectiveness of any actions decided between our governments.

2. (S/NOFORN) At the request of the Ambassador, MODA agreed to the creation of a working level, coordinating group consisting of representatives of the Saudi Ministry of Defense, USMTM, U.S. Embassy in Jeddah, U.S. Defense Attache in Yemen, and the Chief of the Saudi military mission in Yemen to begin meeting on 29 July in Riyadh. This group is to address the acceleration of the reorganization of the Yemen armed forces immediate and long term training requirements, the turn over of U.S. equipment already delivered to Yemen, and such other matters as are necessary to achieve an effective program. Prince Sultan agreed to the meeting of this group. However, he cautioned that he does not anticipate results unless the U.S. is fully willing to support the implementation of the recommendations. He would be against this committee if it is to be just a fact finding committee. He gave as an example F-5s for

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 92, Yemen: Arab Republic (YAR) (North): 4/77-7/78. Secret; NoFORN; Specat Exclusive.

² See Document 247.

Yemen. Quote: Is the U.S. willing to accelerate delivery, to train North Yemenis, and to raise the U.S. flag in Sana?

3. (S/NOFORN) In this regard, following thoughts are my personal view of directions you may wish to recommend to ISA policy makers:

A. U.S. presence in form of an ODC, or joint ODC with Saudis, in Sana is a must if any near term improvements in North Yemen military forces are desired. Saudis, at this point, are simply not capable of getting job done alone.

B. If USG/SAG decide to take effective joint action, emphasis should be on near term improvements. This will, in my opinion, require U.S. training team on the ground in North Yemen in the near future.

C. To this point, planning for introduction of F-5s into North Yemen Air Force has been of long term nature involving extensive English language and flying training in CONUS. This approach will not be effective if USG/SAG decide that near term, politically visible, actions are required. Suggest that joint USAF/RSAF team in country—perhaps coupled with contractor maintenance team—should be considered in event near term introduction of four RSAF F-5B's is desired. RSAF instructor pilots and maintenance personnel on such a joint team could mitigate language problem. Similar crash programs have been successfully completed by USAF in past (e.g., in Laos and Cambodia).

4. Best wishes. Eric

**249. Memorandum From the President's Deputy Assistant for
National Security Affairs (Aaron) to President Carter¹**

Washington, July 26, 1978

SUBJECT

Military Relationship with North Yemen

We have had a military assistance program with North Yemen for several years in which we provided equipment while the Saudis paid

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Yemen. Secret. Sent for action. Carter initialed the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum. Sick sent the memorandum to Aaron under a July 26 memorandum, recommending that Aaron sign it. Sick noted that Denend concurred with the recommendation.

for it and monitored the introduction into the North Yemeni Armed Forces. All parties agreed that this system has been cumbersome and unresponsive. (S)

A meeting is scheduled for Saturday, July 29, in Saudi Arabia for a formal review of the program.² At our request, State and Defense have prepared coordinated guidance for the U.S. participants which would accelerate the current program, demonstrate U.S. willingness to cooperate in giving North Yemen a more effective defense capability, and hopefully prod the Saudis into a more cooperative posture than in the past.³ (S)

Most of the guidance simply involves improved management of military sales which were approved some time ago. However, there is one new issue. Some time ago, we approved the transfer of four F-5B trainers to North Yemen from Saudi Arabia. The Yemenis have requested purchase of 12 additional F-5E aircraft to partially replace their present force of Soviet MIGs. The Saudis have been considering whether or not they would be willing to pay for these aircraft. We anticipate that the Saudis will agree on Saturday⁴ to buy the 12 F-5s, and we would like to be able to respond positively to their request. (S)

The proposed guidance reads: "If Saudi Arabia requests agreement to proceed with the sale of additional F-5s, you should respond that the Administration is prepared in principle to give favorable consideration to providing an appropriate number of aircraft. But as Saudis are aware, we cannot make a formal commitment until we have consulted with Congress. Under any circumstances . . . formal notification could not take place until the Congress returns in February 1979." (S)

² No record of the July 29 meeting has been found. However, Murray discussed the Yemen Arab Republic's military needs with Sultan in Taif on August 1. At the meeting, Murray also reported on his meeting with Salih the evening before. (Telegram 5695 from Jidda, August 3; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780318-0675)

³ In a July 19 memorandum, Brzezinski recommended that Vance and Brown prepare draft guidance in advance of the July 29 meeting in Riyadh. Brzezinski noted: "We should be prepared to make concrete proposals about how our existing program can be expedited, how training bottlenecks can be overcome, and what type of high impact accelerated deliveries we would be prepared to consider in cooperation with Saudi Arabia." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 92, Yemen: Arab Republic (YAR) (North): 4/77-7/78) Duncan provided the Department of Defense guidance in a July 22 memorandum to Brzezinski and Vance. (Ibid.) The Department of State response on July 25, which Wisner transmitted to Brzezinski, was in the form of a draft cable to Jidda, Sana, and Riyadh. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Yemen)

⁴ July 29.

RECOMMENDATION: That you approve the draft guidance accepting a commitment in principle to give favorable consideration to sale of additional F-5Es to North Yemen. State and Defense concur.⁵

⁵ Carter approved this recommendation and initialed in the right-hand margin next to it.

250. Briefing Memorandum From the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (Veliotes) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Newsom)¹

Washington, August 8, 1978

SUBJECT

US-Saudi Cooperation in North Yemen

Ambassador West, in his July 6² meeting with Prince Sultan and Prince Saud, completed the first round of a series of discussions at the political and military levels with the Saudis on how we might better work together to strengthen North Yemen's defense capability.³ We believe these discussions have been successful in establishing a general understanding which will permit the US to work with the Saudis in a manner reflecting the guidance of the recent PRC meeting.⁴

The Commander of our Training Mission in Saudi Arabia and the Saudi Director for Assistance and Cooperation, will be travelling to Sana in the next few days to brief the North Yemenis on what we plan to jointly do to move forward the military modernization program. While the scope of our proposed program, which essentially involves accelerated and more effective introduction of already approved and funded equipment, will fall short of meeting Yemeni expectations, it

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P780135-0498. Secret. Drafted by Twinam.

² Veliotes crossed out the word "July" and substituted the word "August."

³ West met with Sultan and Saud in Taif on August 6 and summarized the meeting in telegram 5784 from Jidda, August 7. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780322-1023)

⁴ Not further identified.

is consistent with what North Yemen's armed forces can realistically absorb in the coming months. Perhaps more to the point, we believe our proposed action, including US and Saudi air lift to accelerate delivery of artillery and anti-aircraft weapons, will demonstrate in a politically effective manner joint support for the North Yemeni government.

At present we are facing numerous technical problems characteristic of trying to implement a program such as this in a country like North Yemen in cooperation with a government like Saudi Arabia, but no basic policy problems are involved. Down the road we face the question of whether we will be able to accede to the general Saudi desire that we put up at least a token amount of the financing of our participation in training the YAR forces on specific items of equipment, as well as the issue of how to handle inevitable Yemeni requests for additional weapons and equipment. As we proceed the ambivalence in the Saudi attitude toward developing an effective North Yemen military will undoubtedly resurface and complicate our own efforts. For the moment, however, we are launched on asserting a limited but direct US role in North Yemen, related to introducing specific, Saudi-funded equipment in a way which can build the Saudi confidence in our desire to cooperate fully with them while demonstrating to North Yemen that our support is tangible.

251. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Sana, August 11, 1978, 1520Z

3926. Subj: Arms for Yemen.

Begin summary: YAR rejects impact package insisting US agree to much larger program of deliveries of its own to YAR. End summary.

1. On August 7 when I returned from Saudi Arabia, I realized task that remained was to sell in YAR program that had been hammered out over previous several weeks between Saudis and US. There were, however, no Saudis in town who could talk to President and, in view of Salih's insistence on much larger US role than program proposed,

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780329–0183. Secret; Niact Immediate. Also sent Niact Immediate to CHUSMTM Dhahran, USMTM Riyadh, and USCINCEUR Vaihingen.

I contacted Foreign Minister Asnaj to talk about foreign policy aspects of military proposals that would be brought by Kabbani-Cathey delegation on 10 August. Asnaj replied in personal letter that he could not meet with me. Anything having to do with military program would have to be handled "in headquarters by highest level of YAR Government." However, within hour of arrival of note, Ahmad Abdu Said showed up at my house for lunch to carry message to Asnaj. He said Asnaj would see President in evening.

2. I told Said that military delegation was carrying proposal which excellent first step. It would, by itself, increase key defense capabilities of Yemen in short time, begin a new Air Force program and provide political testimony of new US role in Yemen in highly conspicuous manner. I gave Said no details of the program.

3. I said that I hoped friends of the President would explain to him that an alliance between the United States and YAR or a defense commitment was not realistic and that while we willing to play a direct role in implementation, we saw coordination between us, the Yemenis, and the Saudis as key to success of this program. I said program was keyed to stages which would test absorptive capacity of YAR Army and as this proven I thought program could expand to include other types of equipment. I said in conclusion that I hoped that defense of Yemen would not be viewed by President entirely as military matter but as one which involved just as much or more diplomatic weapons. We did not want to escalate tensions in area with arms race.

4. Despite this preparation and highly upbeat presentation I gave Said, I was apprehensive at thought that a Saudi representative would not see Salih before military delegation presented the program. (Salih Hudayan, Saudi military attache in YAR and key figure for regime, was so ill that he was evacuated on flight which brought military delegation.) Fortunately, delegation brought in its tow Ali Musallim, highly persuasive and experienced secretary to Saudi's special committee which deals with Yemen under Sultan's chairmanship. Ali arranged for meeting with President for hour before military delegation appointment.

5. When delegation arrived for midafternoon Ramadan appointment, however, it found YAR President Ali Abdallah Salih fasting and sleepless. Musallim said later that President was strained not only by Ramadan but by pitched battle which renegade officer Moujahid al-Kuhali had provoked in north of Yemen on that day and day before. While casualties slight, issues in confrontation seemed large to Salih who is convinced Kuhali is working with former paratroop commander Abdallah Abdal Alim and PDRY to destabilize YAR.

6. USMTM Chief Cathey had prepared very clear and lengthy Arabic and English briefing book for Yemenis. General Kabbani was to be briefer but turned matter over to Cathey after very brief preamble.

7. Discussion got nowhere fast. Salih said much larger program was needed to face dangers from the South. He asked Cathey if he had authority to negotiate military assistance directly with YAR noting—and Kabbani agreed—that Saudis had acquiesced to such a relationship. Cathey explained that direct relationship was in implementation but that planning would continue in coordinated role between US, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. Salih bored in on what US would do. Pointing to briefing book he said “this is Saudi plan. It has already been agreed upon in past. I thought you had come to discuss new support and new weapons, to sign new agreements to face the new threat.” Salih said program as proposed would only invite Soviet reaction, chiefly by doubling or tripling of Soviet aid to South Yemen which he noted was already far greater than anyone’s aid to North Yemen. Salih hammered on point that program was financed by Saudi Arabia. American contribution was negligible.

8. After General Cathey had made several efforts to move to discussion of implementation of program, Salih clearly became impatient as he had earlier done with Murray and, to lesser extent, with myself. I pointed out that present military program involved more than 150 million dollars from US plus another 100 million dollars from French. In another portion of program there was 150 million dollars for military facilities like the airport in Sana. I noted that aircraft program which beginning would surely run over 100 million dollars. With upwards of half a billion dollars already in pipeline, US had concluded that need at moment was not more aid but to employ in best and most vigorous manner what is at hand. However, I noted program which we were presenting today fell in three parts. First was impact package which General Cathey had briefly discussed. Program also had mid-range and long-range segments which we wanted to discuss in detail with Yemenis.

9. General Kabbani chimed in with agreement but Salih clearly indicated he had no problems with Saudi aid but did not understand why United States had refused to help Yemen in this time of need. “The threat is not only to Yemen but to US as well,” said Salih. “What will be position of US if Soviet supported South attacks the YAR?” “Russians brought MiG–21’s and new tanks to our port but we refused to receive them. What is the American counteroffer to this?” I replied that if YAR looking for practical approach this program was good first step. I offered on behalf of USG to sit with Yemenis to formally analyze threat from South and determine what next steps should be. I told Salih USG was playing the more direct role which he had asked us to do. I assured him that we would deal with YARG directly. I said that if YARG sought alliances and pacts I did not see such in the future

but I pointed to President Carter's statement as clear and unequivocal message of support for Yemeni security.²

10. Discussion consumed much more time than record here indicates. Lengthy speeches by YAR President Salih and General Kabbani, plus attempts by General Cathey to explain program in detail, consumed much time and Salih after hour and fifteen minutes rather abruptly asked group to continue discussions with Chief of Staff. Salih left the meeting with Ali Musallim.

11. Attempts to continue briefing with Chief of Staff, Ali Shayba, however, didn't get much further. Shayba, for instance, asked repeatedly whether US aim was to get rid of Russia. If so, he added, we want a replacement. Is there a plan, Shayba asked. When talks had continued through better part of two hours and with fatigue clearly weighing on Yemeni and Saudi participants, I wound up meeting with two requests and one observation. First, I asked for clear YAR approval or disapproval of program which we would leave with them in draft and explain further in meetings of military committees that night at 10:00 p.m. I said we needed to know Yemeni view clearly in order to get on with implementation of this program. Second, I asked Yemeni friends to distinguish between political support and requests for equipment. I said we disagreed even with our closest friends on equipment issues but I wanted Yemenis to know that we were standing with them. Yemenis should accept that US is sincere in its offer of assistance and it is genuinely concerned about threat from the South.

12. Observation concerned the Soviets. Addressing Shayba, I noted that he knew them better than I from his many years of study in the Soviet Union. My observation was that whatever Soviets had done in Yemen in past, today their weapons were killing Yemeni officers in South and they were aligned with regime which, as he admitted, had killed two Arab Presidents in three days.³ If Soviets offered more equipment to YAR that would seem to be greater danger to Yemen. However, despite this Yemenis should understand "our aid is not tied to any condition. We do not ask you to throw out Soviets. That is up to you. We are prepared unconditionally to work with you to meet threat from the South." Shayba reiterated his desire for—it was increasingly obvious—massive US aid. I replied that worst thing that could

² Reference is to Carter's July 18 letter to Salih. In the letter, Carter congratulated Salih on his election as YAR President on July 17. Carter added: "On behalf of the government and people of the United States, I wish to express again my determination to support your efforts to protect and further Yemen's security and development." (Telegram 181143 to Sana, July 18; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780294-1172)

³ Reference is to the assassinations of al-Ghashmi and Salim Rubayi Ali.

happen would be for arms race to begin between North and South Yemen. YARG certainly did not want Soviet-US confrontation in the Yemens. What we proposed to do instead was try to relax tensions rather than raise it. Program was first and practical step in that direction.

13. Military meeting that evening—which I did not attend to avoid discussion of political rather than practical issues—was once again inconclusive. It lasted until midnight with Yemenis repeating in dozens of formulations that offer was not enough. Musallim had indicated beforehand that Yemenis would accept plan if they were given opportunity to forward their requests for other equipment to US and Saudi Arabia and Kabbani pushed this hard during evening meeting. Participants got impression that Yemenis would accept program although they did not like it. However, throughout evening Yemeni side continually pushed Americans to ask what we were going to do for Yemen separate from Saudis.

14. Final meeting took place today, Friday, at 3:00, in office of President. Ali Shayba, with Deputy Chief of Staff Baradi and Air Force Commander Daifallah present, scathingly rejected US program. It was of “no use.” There was “nothing new in it.” The anti-tank rockets were no substitute for tanks. Radar was hardly worthwhile if there were not planes to use against attacking foe. Machine guns and mortars were hardly worth mentioning for army which had fought as long and as hard as Yemeni one.

15. Kabbani interrupted Shayba repeatedly to argue with some heat that program should be given a chance. Shayba firmly said on several occasions that program was such that he did not care if it came by air or sea. What he wanted was to see what US was going to do. He presented list of equipment requests (see septel)⁴ which begins with five squadrons F-5's. List is comprehensive and includes rockets, tanks, and all other equipment which would give North Yemen a one to one equivalence with South Yemen.

16. As Kabbani argued with Shayba, replies of the Yemeni Chief of Staff became angrier. He clearly questioned good will of US in dealing with Yemen and intelligence in not understanding threat from South. At length I asked to speak and said I wanted to thank YARG officers for their time. I said they had given me answers to two questions I had asked the day before and finally I wanted them to know that I would take with me the list of equipment requests which they had

⁴ Telegram 3937 from Sana, August 12, forwarded the new Yemen Arab Republic military requests. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780331-0350)

prepared to allow my government to consider it. Americans then left after handshaking all around.

Comment: Yemenis were taken aback by departure and Shayba was clearly angry. Saudis stayed behind as well they should have since they were the real objects of Yemeni anger, I believe. Attacks on US are in fact attacks on them. With rejection of impact package if it wasn't tied to massive US aid to Yemen, I saw little to do in meeting. I was unwilling to let YAR impugn our motives and intelligence. My departure was polite. To offset any claim of US walk-out I have asked General Cathey and military colleagues to be available for dinner which Chief of Staff had previously set up for this evening. Message they will carry is that we want cooperate, want proceed, and believe best first step is to carry out proposed impact package. As I see issue at moment our aim should be in salvage program. Saudis may of course turn it around. They were convinced last night—as was I—that it was in bag. It wasn't.

Ransom

252. Memorandum From Samuel Hoskinson of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, August 16, 1978

SUBJECT

The Yemens

I have reviewed all of the information available in Washington pertaining to the situation in the Yemens and discussed the problem at great length with the key Saudi policymakers, involved United States Government officials in the field, and ranking UK intelligence and FCO officials. This memorandum presents my resulting assessment of the situation and thoughts on how we should proceed.

The Situation

There is little question that the Soviets, and especially the Cubans, played a direct and critical role in Abl al-Fattah Ismail's violent ouster of Salim al-Rubayyi Ali from the PDRY Presidency in late June.² While there is some dispute about what may have stimulated Ismail's move at this time, all our intelligence indicates (and virtually everyone in the field agrees) that the Soviets and Cubans decisively intervened to tip the balance of the fighting in favor of their longstanding ally, Ismail.

The Saudis believe that the Soviets encouraged Ismail to make his fateful move against Ali and inspired the assassination of North Yemen President Ghashmi³ because of the Saudi success in developing Ali into a moderate nationalist (albeit still Marxist) alternative to the Soviet-backed Ismail faction who would settle the longstanding north-south Yemen conflict and keep the Soviets at bay. The British, and some Americans, believe the Saudi approach had failed miserably some time ago as Ismail gradually gained ascendancy over Ali and other potential rivals and that Ismail's [Ali's] ouster from the Presidency in June was merely the final *coup de grace*. Thus the degree of Soviet inspiration behind the events of June remains somewhat obscure. All agree, however, that once the fighting started the Soviets and Cubans did throw their local military weight behind Ismail. The lesson has not, of course,

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Yemen. Secret. Sent for action. Inderfurth's and Bartholomew's initials are on the first page of the memorandum.

² See Document 244.

³ See Document 243.

been lost on the neighboring Arab states who are fearful that they could be next and are looking to us for help.

Soviet motivation is clear. At a minimum they want to establish and maintain a secure base of operations in South Yemen which can provide logistics support for their Indian Ocean fleet and give them a presence on the Red Sea and Arabian Peninsula. The Saudis believe—and I agree—that the Soviets also see South Yemen as a base for expanding their influence elsewhere in the Middle East. North Yemen is a logical next target for Soviet-Ismail adventurism and neighboring Oman is vulnerable as well. The threat is also aimed, however, at Saudi Arabia since the loss to the Soviet orbit of either or both of these traditionally Saudi-dominated areas would seriously undermine Saudi political dominance of the Gulf states as well. In the process there could even be a popular loss of confidence in the ability of the House of Saud to govern Saudi Arabia and increased divisiveness within the Saudi ruling circle.

Soviet success in pursuing these objectives will turn to a considerable extent on the fortunes of Abl al-Fattah Ismail in the months ahead. From all indications, Ismail is a true believer Marxist determined to revolutionize his own country and export the revolution abroad as well. He knows what he wants and will not be persuaded to settle for less.

Ismail, with Soviet and Cuban help, has only achieved the first step of seizing power in Aden and pacifying the population there. He still must consolidate his power throughout the country before he can get down to revolutionary business in earnest. Best Saudi and American estimates are that this will take some six to eight months. After that, most observers believe Ismail—backed by the Soviets and Cubans—will begin his onslaught on North Yemen and heat up the Dhofar rebellion again in Oman as well as introduce Communist “reforms” into South Yemen. In the meantime, Aden will continue to be a haven for international terrorists and other radicals.

Ismail's strength is his ruthlessness, almost messianic zeal and, most importantly, the backing of the Soviets and Cubans. On the other hand, he still faces some serious obstacles. We know there are still potential rivals within the regime and disputes within the hierarchy over who should be named to leadership positions. More importantly, a sizable part of the army may be disaffected or, at a minimum, not responsive to government direction. Traditional tribal and religious conflicts, some of which have been exacerbated, will also complicate Ismail's life. Finally, the desire for revenge by the extended families of those killed or purged by Ismail cannot be disregarded in a traditional society like this. Unfortunately, in the opinion of most close observers of this situation, the balance at this point would seem to be slightly in

favor of Ismail consolidating his power base throughout South Yemen in six to eight months.

The situation in North Yemen is mixed as well. North Yemen's new President Ali Abdallah Salih's greatest strength is his strong backing from the Saudis who were very instrumental in his rise to power. He is, however, an impetuous man of very limited experience and intellectual depth. The Saudis believe they can control Salih but as an ace in the hole they are frank to say they are maintaining their influence with key tribal leaders who can bring strong pressure on any regime in Sana. Salih apparently has little popular support, especially in the important southern province which differs ideologically and religiously from the tribal north. There is also a raft of various leftists, Ba'thists and South Yemen sympathizers who can stir up trouble in Sana. They are especially resentful of Salih's conservatism and close ties to the Saudis. Our embassy in Sana gives Salih about six months in office but there does not appear to be anyone much better in the wings.

The Saudis at all levels are extremely concerned about the situation in the Yemens. To a remarkable degree, the Saudis share our assessments. For them, of course, the problem is more immediate and they are consequently eager to develop a meaningful program to counter the threat from South Yemen. At the same time, they seem to fear the possible consequences of attempting to take on the Soviets alone. In short, the Saudis will act to protect their interests but to an extent they fear such actions will anger the Soviets, they want us as a full partner to shield them against repercussions.

The Saudis indicated to me that they want to develop a multidimensional program designed to put maximum pressure on Ismail while at the same time working to reduce the vulnerabilities of North Yemen and Oman. Parts of this program are still in the conceptual and formative stage but the major elements are clear. North Yemen's "defensive" military posture must be strengthened in partnership with the U.S. though not to the point where it could also be a threat to Saudi Arabia. Oman should be assisted militarily as well. Economic development assistance is another element, although it is not clear precisely what the Saudis have in mind.

[1 paragraph (11 lines) not declassified]

Options

Assuming that my assessment of the situation is reasonably accurate, the U.S. has an obvious strong interest in countering this most recent example of Soviet expansionism. *Unlike the Horn of Africa, the Yemen situation is one where we are well positioned to draw the line and even reverse an important Soviet gain.* Soviet/Cuban intervention in the internal affairs of South Yemen is clear-cut, the Ismail regime is already

isolated in the Arab world and vulnerable from within, the threatened neighboring states want our help and we have vital interests in the political stability of the Arabian Peninsula.

In this situation, there would appear to be three basic alternative courses of action we could take.

1. *Limited diplomatic/military aid reaction.* This is essentially the approach we are taking now. It involves a very limited military supply program for North Yemen in cooperation with the Saudis and what amounts to little more than diplomatic loss covering moves. No concerted effort is being made to put pressure on the Ismail regime, political or otherwise.

The major argument in favor of this approach is that it does not commit U.S. prestige, but is not totally unresponsive either. The argument against it is that this is tokenism at best and at worst a weak response that will only encourage Ismail to press on with his revolutionary program and the Soviets to engage in similar adventurism elsewhere.

2. *Maximum diplomatic/military aid/propaganda pressure on South Yemen.* Under this approach we would mount an international diplomatic and propaganda offensive to expose the Soviet hand in South Yemen and rally international opinion. We would work closely with the Saudis on both military aid to strengthen North Yemen's and Oman's defenses against conventional military attack and subversion and on various forms of economic and diplomatic pressure on South Yemen. The objective would be to isolate and put the Soviets and South Yemen on the defense and thereby, hopefully, neutralize them.

The major argument for this approach is that it would go beyond limited defensive reaction and pressure the Soviets and Ismail. The major argument against, is that we could well end up with the worst of both worlds by drawing international attention to the problem only to witness the Soviets continuing to back Ismail's effective efforts to undermine both North Yemen and Oman. In short, Ismail is unlikely to back off and the Soviets, rather than being defensive, could well choose to press on with enough success to leave the outcome in doubt or up the ante in military supply and other support to South Yemen beyond our political willingness to respond in kind.

3. *Counteroffensive.* This approach, in addition to the actions undertaken in option 2, would involve us in a covert action program [*less than 1 line not declassified*] to intensify Ismail's existing internal problems, make life more difficult for the Soviets and Cubans in South Yemen and if completely successful lead to Ismail's downfall.

The argument for this approach is that it offers the prospects of rolling back the Soviets from an area where they have intervened and

thereby regaining the international respect and influence we have lost as a result of the Soviet/Cuban thrust in Africa and the Middle East. It may be a long time before such an ideal opportunity like this arises again. On the other hand, there would be some inevitable Congressional concern about “destabilizing” a regime even as odious and illegitimate as Ismail’s.

Obviously each of these options needs to be systematically developed to understand more precisely what would be involved and the implications. The Yemen situation is serious enough to warrant such a study effort.

In the meantime, irrespective of what option we select, there is *an immediate need for much better intelligence coverage*. The Yemen’s until recently have been of secondary interest to the U.S. and our intelligence effort has been minimal. We now need to examine what needs to be done to bring it up to speed with our changing interests.

RECOMMENDATIONS⁴

1. That you commission the PRM at Tab A to study on a priority basis the three options.⁵

2. [3½ lines not declassified]

⁴ Inderfurth placed a bracket around both recommendations and drew an arrow from the bracket to the margin below and wrote: “ZB, I suggest you sign the memo at Tab B to Turner *now*. Before signing the proposed PRM, however, I suggest that Sam consult with Gary Sick and Bill Quandt. Rick.” Brzezinski responded: “OK—Sam is out until 28 August—show to Sick/Quandt now for views. Good memo.” According to an August 17 covering memorandum, attached to another copy of Hoskinson’s memorandum, Inderfurth sent the memorandum to Quandt and Sick on August 17. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Subject File, Middle East, Box 92, YAR: 8/78)

⁵ Neither Tab A nor Tab B is attached. An undated and unsigned draft PRM is in the Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 92, YAR: 8/78.

253. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, August 22, 1978, 1450Z

6140. Subj: Letter From King Khalid to President Carter.

1. Foreign Minister Prince Saud handed to Ambassador letter from King Khalid to President Carter on August 21. Following is Embassy translation.

2. Begin text: It gives me pleasure to send this letter to Your Excellency within the framework of continuous cooperation between our two friendly countries and of our common efforts aiming at supporting the forces of moderation in the area in their opposition to active Communist movements therein, a matter which receives considerable attention from our country in particular and from the free world in general.

3. There is no doubt that you, Mr President, fully realize the extent of Communist concentration in the south of the Arabian Peninsula as well as of what Russia, Cuba, and East Germany are doing in Aden where they obviously enjoy hegemony and influence. We feel certain also that you are fully aware of what those countries are actively doing, through the Aden regime, in pursuit of their objectives which go beyond the borders of Southern Yemen. These greedy objectives must be only too clear to Your Excellency as they use North Yemen as only a passage-way leading to their real target.

4. Mr President, you may agree with me that at a time when we are both striving jointly to limit, indeed to put an end to, the Communist presence in Aden, we must need pay attention to and be careful about not losing other strategic areas like North Yemen to the Communist expansion aims in the Arabian Peninsula. You may also share with me the feeling of concern towards the highly active Russian-Cuban role in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula which sees North Yemen as only a first step.

5. Proceeding from this background the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has done all in its power to attract North Yemen into the fold of the forces of moderation. We have done this so effectively that we can now say that the present regime in North Yemen is ready to dispense with the Russian arms which North Yemen used to import from Russia and consequently to do away with the services of the Russian experts as well as to put an end to the Russian presence in the country as

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Country File, Box 67, Saudi Arabia: 6-12/78. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

soon as North Yemen is provided with convincing alternatives by the moderate and friendly countries headed by the United States of America.

6. In welcoming such modest alternatives the Government of North Yemen will naturally look at the extent to which Russia is arming the regime in Aden from both the quantitative and qualitative aspects. North Yemen will quite naturally have to do this in view of the fact that Aden is the center which is exporting aggression and subversive principles into the rest of the Yemen. This consideration is pressing the Government of North Yemen into emphasizing their needs in arms, military equipment, and training to a degree which will ward off the expected danger, made so acute by the status of military preparedness of the potential enemy. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this context cannot by itself match the power of that adversary nor respond fully to the needs of North Yemen in this field.

7. The responsible officials in the Government of North Yemen feel increasingly the need to have military alternatives, adequate in quantity and quality, provided to them because of what they quite rightly anticipate the Soviet Union will do the moment North Yemen turns away and ceases to seek arms and military equipment from it. The responsible North Yemeni officials anticipate that the Soviet Union will immediately stop providing them with any spare parts or any supportive equipment compatible with the Russian arms and military hardware which the Soviet Union has been providing North Yemen. Such a development would inevitably render those arms and hardware items virtually non-existent. This is what precisely happened to Egypt and Somalia.

8. Thus we find that the need of the Government of North Yemen and its desire to acquire such quantities of American arms and equipment as would (a) be commensurate with its fear of Southern Yemen supported by international Communism, (b) compensate North Yemen for the arms and equipment it would otherwise have received from Russian sources, and (c) satisfy North Yemen's armed forces and their young Yemeni leaders. All these considerations have their military, security, political, and psychological considerations. This is especially so if we bear in mind that at a time when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is doing its utmost to convince North Yemen to replace its Russian arms and military equipment with American supplies, we find that the Soviet Union is offering North Yemen new military aid including aircraft, naval vessels and tanks in quantities which the Kingdom alone is incapable of matching.

9. The Government of North Yemen has submitted a list containing its urgent requests and requirements which we jointly might not be

able to respond to in the short term.² Therefore Your Excellency may find it agreeable that the United States of America would join the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in financing, on a 50–50 basis, what is possible to provide North Yemen with military equipment and training, within the framework of the U.S. foreign military assistance program. This would constitute Your Excellency's and your government's contribution towards driving away the danger threatening North Yemen and the region. It would come also as an element unifying our efforts toward stemming the Communist tide and protecting the common interests of the free world. I need not at this juncture underscore that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would be prepared to participate in doing anything that might be calculated to convince Congress and American public opinion (of the need for all this) in any way, similar to our participation in the F–15 case.

10. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that within this framework and at the present state it would suffice that we offer North Yemen the following:

(A) Twelve F–5E's with the arms, ammunition, and equipment necessary and pertaining thereto.

(B) Two transport aircraft (C–130's).

(C) Sixty-four tanks (M–50's).

(D) One hundred armored personnel carriers (M–113's).

(E) The necessary technical support and training personnel for these arms and types of equipment including an American military mission consisting of the necessary experts and advisers.

11. I would be very pleased to receive from Your Excellency a reply indicating that this suggestion of mine meets with your approval and emphasizing your desire to work towards its implementation for the realization of the common objectives which serve the interest of both our countries, the stability of the region, the upholding of the forces of moderation and the safeguarding of the interest of the free world.

12. Please accept, Your Excellency, my warmest greetings and sincerest wishes for your continued good health, well being and success.

/s/ Khalid Bin abd al-Aziz al Saud,

Taif, 17 Ramadan 1396 A. H., corresponding to August 21, 1978.
End text.

West

² See footnote 4, Document 251.

254. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic¹

Washington, August 31, 1978, 2349Z

222174. Military addressees handle as Specat Exclusive. Subject: YAR Prime Minister Visit to Washington.

1. Yemen Arab Republic Prime Minister Abd al-Ghani met with Acting Secretary Christopher August 29 for tour d'horizon with special reference to YAR view of developments in South Arabia and the evolving YAR–USG bilateral relationship. Also attending the meeting were Under Secretaries Newsom and Benson, NEA Deputy Assistant Secretary Crawford, DOD Deputy Assistant Secretary for ISA Murray, Ambassador-designate Lane and YAR Ambassador Mutawakel. In an earlier meeting, PM met with National Security Advisor Brzezinski.² Others in attendance were: NSC staffer Quandt, Crawford, Lane and Mutawakel. Under Secretary Newsom hosted luncheon for PM attended by Under Secretary Benson, Crawford, Murray, Lane and Mutawakel. The following is a distillation of the main points emphasized by Prime Minister during these meetings.

2. PM expressed his hope that bilateral YAR–USG relations could evolve into one of closest possible cooperation in wide variety of fields—military, economic/developmental, and educational/cultural.

3. PM described in some detail the “Russian conspiracy” on the east and west shores of the Red Sea. In the Yemens, this conspiracy culminated in the assassination of the YAR Prime Minister June 24 by South Yemen:³ this murder was followed immediately by the attack on the President of South Yemen, during which Russian pilots bombed Presidential Palace in Aden.⁴ These events were the most recent reminder of what will happen in the region unless counter-steps are taken by those who oppose Soviet efforts to dominate Arabian Peninsula. The Russians want foothold in the Peninsula, which they are

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780356–0934. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by A. Peter Burleigh (NEA/ARP) and Lane; cleared by Crawford, Benson, Quandt, Murray, and Thomas G. Martin (S/S–O); approved by Newsom. Sent for information Immediate to Jidda; sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Addis Ababa, Cairo, Kuwait, Mogadiscio, Muscat, Moscow, Tehran, the Department of Defense, USMTM Riyadh, CHUSMTM Dhahran, and USCINCEUR Vaihingen.

² According to an August 28 memorandum to Brzezinski from Quandt, Brzezinski was scheduled to meet with al-Ghani on August 29 at 2 p.m. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 92, YAR: 8/78)

³ See Document 243.

⁴ See Document 244. *The New York Times* reported that the planes were MiGs of the South Yemeni Air Force. (“3 Marxists Said to Share Power in Southern Yemen,” *The New York Times*, June 28, 1978, p. A7)

rapidly consolidating in South Yemen. In PM's view, South Yemen will move to expand once the pro-Soviet faction now in charge of the government thoroughly eliminates all rivals in the country. After that, North Yemen will be their target.

4. North Yemen enjoys good and growing relations with all its neighbors on the Peninsula, especially Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE and Kuwait. Relations with Saudi Arabia are especially close and the Saudis have been supportive to Yemen in a variety of ways, including both budget support and military cooperation. In this regard, Prince Sultan has played leading role. YAR wants USG to take more interest in the area, in helping to promote regional cooperation against the present danger of Russian-backed South Yemen. In addition, USG should establish more active, direct bilateral relations with YAR in several fields—including military. North Yemen wants to be able to defend itself against any possible adventurism from the South.

5. According to Abd al-Ghani, President Salih has confirmed his willingness to see bilateral USG–YAR cooperation develop in a gradual way. American arms are an essential element of that relationship. South Yemen is being developed into a garrison from which to launch attacks on other Peninsular states and the Russian presence there is a danger to the whole area as well as the free world.

6. YAR would also like to strengthen economic and developmental cooperation between our two countries. YAR Government appreciates the current level of assistance, but would like to see it increase, both in terms of private and public sector U.S. involvement in Yemen. YAR has liberal foreign investment laws and YAR hopes that U.S. firms will invest in oil and mineral industries. There is active consideration being given by YAR to joint ventures with U.S., both Yemeni private and public sector is ready to participate. Shell is currently exploring for oil both off and on-shore and YAR would like to see some American firms involved as well. Competition between such firms would benefit YAR.

7. As for cultural and educational cooperation, YAR would like to see it increased too. YAR is appreciative of current program but wants it expanded. YAR has taken step to freeze cultural cooperation with USSR this year; USSR offers 150 scholarships for higher study each year. YAR would like to see increased USG activity in this regard.

8. YAR is grateful and appreciative of the role of the USG, under President Carter, in its active participation in seeking Middle East peace. Yemen hopes that upcoming Camp David conference is success since stability of the area which will result from peace will result in greater stability for each country in the region. This is a goal shared by each Peninsular country except South Yemen.

9. Acting Secretary Christopher, thanking PM for this tour d'horizon, stated that he agreed with PM's assessment "in every respect."

He noted that Secretary Vance would very much have wanted to meet with PM, but that Secretary was on his first vacation since assuming office.

10. Christopher informed PM that USG hoped to increase its funding of participant exchange grants from 100 in this FY to 176 in next FY. He emphasized how important USG considers educational exchange, agreeing with the PM that advanced training for Yemenis is essential for the development of the country. Christopher noted that the PM is splendid example of graduate of American university who has served his nation. USG would like to be even more forthcoming in this regard and Acting Secretary asked PM to “let us know” if there is more USG should and can be doing.

11. Regarding military cooperation, Christopher assured PM that USG wants to move into new era with YAR. USG wants to assist in the construction of a sound defense system for the YAR. We understand urgency of YAR’s problem and in that respect are ready to airlift equipment to the YAR in an early and timely fashion, as we have informed President Salih.⁵ Christopher emphasized that this new relationship has to be a phased modernization program for the YAR military. It has to take place a step at a time and cannot happen overnight. USG is sure that Yemen shares our view that equipment must be effectively used.

12. Since our military relationship with YAR is essentially three-cornered (Saudi Arabia, YAR and USG), it will require patience and understanding on the parts of each government involved. Patience will bring progress. Underlying this step by step process is USG interest in looking at priority items needed by YAR to promote its self-defense.

13. On economic front, USG wants to be helpful as well. Yemen is one of few countries where we hope to increase aid next fiscal year. We want to be supportive of Yemen’s five-year plan goals. We think we should concentrate on agriculture and institution-building which will have greatest long-term effect on overall development of Yemen. As for the private sector, Yemen should make known what opportunities exist. USG would like to see greater U.S. private sector involvement in Yemen. At this point, PM specified that in both oil and minerals industries there may be such opportunities for the private sector. While Shell has not yet found oil, there have been encouraging reports. Yemen would like to see American oil firms involved. There may also be opportunities in copper and iron ore mining.

14. In this regard, PM noted once again how supportive Saudi Arabia has been with budgetary grants. In addition Saudi Arabia

⁵ See Document 251.

finances projects directly with bilateral investments as well as through multilateral institutions such as Arab funds and World Bank.

15. Secretary asked PM to describe some of the prospects and problems of the five-year plan. PM replied that results of first two years are encouraging although there are several bottlenecks in Yemen. In first two years, four billion dollars has been invested in infrastructure projects—mainly roads, agricultural projects, education and health. YARG would like now to move in promoting small scale industries in more effective manner. PM underscored YAR commitment to active private sector role. He noted that the major bottleneck is human resources, a lack of skilled and educated professional people. Thus the intense YAR interest in training large numbers of Yemeni youth. Over one million Yemenis now work in Saudi Arabia and while this does “wonders” for the Yemeni economy in terms of remittances (ninety-nine percent of Yemen’s foreign exchange earnings, he said), it also creates problems such as labor shortages and inflation (since local wage rates must keep up with those prevailing in Saudi Arabia). As a result, costs of projects have overrun tremendously. Imported inflation and twelve-fold increase in wages in three years have led to necessity to renegotiate most contracts.

16. Christopher thanked PM for his detailed and interesting summary of Yemen’s situation, noting that USG looked forward to increasingly close relations. In an atmosphere of mutual understanding and patience, “we’ll do our part,” Christopher stated.

17. During meeting with National Security Advisor, PM was told that U.S. attaches great importance to the YAR and is concerned with recent developments in that part of world. PM replied that YARG was thankful for President’s statement of support for the YAR’s efforts to develop its economy and defend its territory.⁶ He thought there was an all-out effort to disrupt stability in Southwestern Arabia.

18. Dr. Brzezinski asked PM about situation in South Yemen. PM replied that now that moderate President has been killed, the field there is open to the far leftists. He expected that by October of this year the three parties now in existence in PDRY would be merged into single Marxist party. PM noted that PDRY military forces are still divided internally but that within one year he would expect the Marxists to have consolidated their position. During June fighting, the South Yemeni militia, with support of Russians and Cubans already present in PDRY, had defeated the PDRY Army.⁷ Border between North and

⁶ See footnote 2, Document 251.

⁷ See footnote 2, Document 244.

South Yemen is now closed: there is no fighting along the border but the South has massed troops in some areas.

19. PM noted intense Saudi concern about developments in South Yemen and said Saudis and YAR are consulting closely and cooperating in order to defend themselves. Saudis, however, cannot provide all the military assistance YAR needs and this is why Yemen is looking toward the U.S. The Russians are helping the extremists in the South consolidate their position: meanwhile YAR is hoping to work with more moderate elements in South to lessen the danger of attack on YAR and to increase independence of South Yemenis. Most Arab countries have a “presence” in South Yemen but relations with them are now “frozen” following a decision of Arab League in early July.⁸ The one exception is Libya which has declared its strong support for PDRY. All other Arab states worry that South Yemen is becoming more Communist than Arab.

20. Brzezinski said that U.S. has had and will continue to have question of Aden under discussion with Russians. He asked if YAR had discussed problems with either Shah of Iran or President Sadat. PM indicated there had been some discussions but no joint policies have been worked out. Brzezinski recommended that both Yemenis and Saudis hold discussions with Iranians and Egyptians. He reiterated USG’s great interest in stability and peace in the Peninsula area, saying that the first response to any threat from South Yemenis should be an Arab response but that if there were a threat from a major power the USG would make its concern unmistakably known.

21. In closing the conversation, Brzezinski noted that U.S. is considering Saudi proposals regarding military assistance to YAR and hopes to be forthcoming. USG has deep interest in YAR security, he reiterated.

22. During luncheon, Newsom noted that USG is waiting for YAR President Salih to indicate whether our initial arms impact package would be acceptable to him. USG is ready to expedite delivery, by airlift, of that equipment, most of which is part of trilateral (Saudi, USG, YAR) agreements made over past three years. PM responded that, while he was not privy to detailed military thinking of President, he had impression that President Salih was waiting for USG response to his list of requests which he had submitted in reaction to what he considered inadequate USG initial offer.⁹ Salih is working under pressure which is both external (South Yemen) and internal (YAR military). He must assure that YAR has wherewithal to defend itself against possible aggression from South. He must also be able to con-

⁸ See footnote 6, Document 247.

⁹ See Document 251.

vince YAR military that they can definitely depend on U.S. sources of supply if they take steps which will result in cut-off of Soviet supplies and spare parts. In sum, PM thought that President Salih felt that USG offer did not take adequately into consideration the "new situation" which Yemen faces after events of June and that package offer was nothing really new. On the other hand, he had the impression that USG considered Salih's list excessive: that list contained what Yemeni military thought they needed to match ongoing buildup in South Yemen. He made further point that YAR military wants equipment to be in hand and would not be satisfied with political assurances and support which civilian officials valued more highly than military. Murray noted that it was not completely accurate to say that our package offer contained nothing new, there are new items included. Newsom, Benson and Crawford stated that in USG view this package offer was "first phase" and that discussion would be ongoing about further equipment deliveries. USG was ready to get moving with program if YAR was.

Vance

255. Telegram From the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State¹

Jidda, September 9, 1978, 1230Z

6452. Subject: South Arabia. Ref: State 224270.²

1. Summary: In an hour and a half meeting 5 September with King, Crown Prince, Second Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah, and Foreign Minister Saud, to deliver President's message, discussion of Soviet threat in Yemen overshadowed Camp David topic, indicating deep Saudi concern and high priority given to this issue. Crown Prince Fahd asked what USG would do in the event SAG had to intervene in dispute

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850070-2442. Secret; Immediate; Exdis Distribute as Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to the White House.

² In telegram 224270 to Jidda, September 4, the Department instructed West to deliver a message from Carter to Khalid. Carter's message focused on the upcoming Camp David Summit meetings and ongoing developments in Saudi Arabia and expressed Carter's desire to work with Khalid and Salih to assist the Yemen Arab Republic in developing a defensive posture. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840137-1821)

between YAR and PDRY fomented by latter with its Soviet and Cuban allies. End summary.

2. At meeting 5 September at King's residence at Taif to deliver President's message on Camp David (see septel).³ Reference in the message to King's letter to President re assistance to YAR⁴ soon became main subject of conversation, in fact consuming about two-thirds of the one and a half hour meeting.

3. I called attention to that part of the President's letter which referred to a forthcoming answer to the King's letter on YAR pointing out that this matter was receiving serious consideration in Washington. I noted that General Cathey, our USMTM Chief, had been back in consultation with DOD officials so they may have the benefit of his firsthand knowledge of negotiations and progress, or lack of progress, in furnishing additional assistance to YAR. I also told the group that I knew the President was giving this matter his personal attention on a priority basis despite the pressures of the Camp David summit, largely because of the importance assigned to it by SAG. I mentioned that in my reports emphasizing the importance that SAG assigned to the matter that I had quoted SAG officials, including Foreign Minister Saud and Defense Minister Sultan, as saying that the YAR situation had equal, if not greater, urgency than the Arab-Israeli controversy. Both the King and the Crown Prince nodded immediate agreement with this statement.

4. The King began by referring "to the circle of fire closing in on us" thanks to the schemes of the Communists. "It is amazing that they have accomplished so much in such a short time. What has happened in Ethiopia, Afghanistan and what is now happening in Iran, should have sounded a shrill alarm into the consciousness of our great American friends just as it has to us. The situation in Southern Arabia, if not remedied, would be disastrous to all, to you as well as us for we have a common interest in facing this common threat." He said that if the Shah were overthrown and a left wing radical group came to power in Iran, then Saudi Arabia would find itself completely surrounded and at the mercy of the Communist radical forces.

5. At this point Crown Prince Fahd asked if he might elaborate. He said the following:

A. The Soviets, Cubans, East Europeans are still very active in PDRY.

³ See footnote 2 above. In telegram 6446 from Jidda, September 9, the Embassy summarized West's discussions with Saudi officials regarding the portion of Carter's letter dealing with Camp David. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850070–2456)

⁴ See Document 253.

B. It is a question of time, indeed short time, before those Communist “helpers” will have the South Yemenis as well as their “volunteers” adequately armed, equipped and trained to launch serious military action.

C. This action could be either against YAR or directly against us at our common borders with PDRY.

D. We might be able to withstand a concerted onslaught against us, if only for a short time.

E. We promise you that we ourselves are not interested in starting any fight and we have no selfish territorial ambitions, but if PDRY and the Communists start their aggression, which we all know is aimed at this country and the source of oil, we will have to fight back.

F. “It is very, very important for us to know, directly and clearly,” said Crown Prince Fahd reverting to a measured tone, “what will you do in this case to save the situation? Will you rush to our rescue, as you have done towards certain friends or will you dally until dust settles on corpses and charred remains? In short, what will the attitude of the U.S. be if Saudi Arabia moves—as we shall—to counter this aggression in whatever form it comes?”

G. Crown Prince closed his remarks by saying: “We are being very frank and pointed because we wish you to be forewarned and not be surprised by events,” said Fahd, adding, “we are not being alarmists necessarily but we must bare our minds and our hearts to our genuine friends who, together with us, have a lot of vital interests at stake.”

6. I replied that this was the identical question the Crown Prince had posed to me on February 14 and that I had taken this question back to the President and had discussed it in a meeting with the President, Secretary Vance, and National Security Director Dr. Brzezinski.⁵

I reminded him that I had brought a reply from the President when I returned in April.⁶ While I could not recall the exact words of the letter, I recalled two impressions that I had: first that the President and his chief advisors were most sympathetic with the problem which the Crown Prince posed and that USG looked upon Saudi Arabia as a close friend and valuable ally; that I felt sure that the President and the administration would be most sympathetic to any request or need by SAG necessary or vital to her integrity or continued independence. Secondly, that the letter itself was, I felt, an extremely strong evidence of the depth and extent of the USG’s commitment to SAG; that under our system of government the President could not declare war or

⁵ See Document 170. No record of West’s meeting with Carter has been found.

⁶ A draft of the letter is attached to Document 170 but is not printed.

commit the forces of USG without prior approval of Congress in the absence of a mutual defense pact, which we did not have with Saudi Arabia. However, I felt that the commitment as set forth in the letter was as strong a commitment as the President and the administration could make without some formal action by the Congress. (FYI, letter from President to King is dated 14 April 1978)

7. The Crown Prince then said that it was desirable to familiarize the Congress to the extent of the threat presently posed by Russian activities in the area.

8. I replied that I agreed completely and had found that the Congress, once given the facts as they had in the F-15 sale, reacted in a favorable manner. I added that we had had a visit by two Congressmen to YAR in the last two weeks and they stated after the visit their great awareness of and concern for the threat posed in the Yemens to SAG and USG.⁷ I added that I hoped that we would have additional Congressmen to visit both Saudi Arabia and YAR in the coming months and I was sure that this could be arranged.

9. I also added that we were doing a continuous intelligence gathering and appraisal operation on YAR and had been sharing our findings on a continuing basis with SAG, including the Crown Prince.

10. The Crown Prince stated that many of the fears that he expressed in our February meeting as only possibilities were fast becoming realities and for that reason he had brought the subject up again.

11. I told him that I would report to my government the fact that the fears and concerns which gave rise to our February conversation were now upon us in the form of activities in YAR and I was sure the President's response would be framed with SAG's deep concerns thoroughly understood and appreciated.

12. I ended the meeting by saying as a personal observation I felt that the policy of the U.S. has always been and will continue to be to stand by our friends and allies in time of need, and we had today no truer friend and ally in the world than Saudi Arabia.

The King and the Crown Prince responded by saying, "al hamdu-lillah."

West

⁷ On August 21, Representatives Robert L.F. Sikes (D-Florida) and John James Flynt (D-Georgia) visited North Yemen and held meetings with YAR officials. In telegram 4151 from Sana, August 22, the Embassy described these meetings. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780343-0149)

256. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, September 19, 1978

SUBJECT

Military Assistance to Yemen

Our strategy for supporting the outcome of the Camp David Summit requires that we respond to King Khalid's letter of August 21 expressing deep concern about the security of North Yemen and proposing an expanded U.S. military sales program.²

He proposes:

- 12 F-5Es (you had previously approved these in principle as a follow-on item to the impact package)
- Two C-130 transport aircraft
- 100 M-113 armored personnel carriers
- 64 M-60 tanks
- Associated training and support by U.S. personnel

As indicated in Cy's memo³ these proposals are basically sound and Cy and Harold recommend approving them subject to some reservations on the armor mix and financing arrangements. King Khalid suggested that we fund this roughly \$300 million package on a 50-50 basis with Saudi Arabia, as opposed to the previous arrangement where we provided expertise, equipment and training and the Saudis paid. There is no realistic possibility we could share the financing of the package with the Saudis, but all agree that we should try to be as forthcoming as possible on other aspects of this proposal.

This conclusion has been given added urgency by Secretary Vance's departure this evening for the Middle East and talks with Saudi leaders.⁴ I agree with Cy that we should respond to the Saudis as follows (Defense concurs).

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 92, YAR: 9-12/78. Secret. Sent for action. Carter initialed the first page of the memorandum, indicating that he saw it.

² See Document 253. In telegram 4628 from Sana, September 19, the Embassy noted that al-Ghani had informed Ransom that Khalid had requested that the United States initiate the arms deliveries proposed in the impact package (see Document 257). (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780381-0681)

³ Reference is to Vance's September 19 memorandum to Carter, wherein Vance outlined the issues, background, financing, implications, and recommendations related to the Yemeni request. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840167-0926)

⁴ Vance traveled to Jordan September 20-21, Saudi Arabia September 21-24, and Syria September 24. For the memorandum of conversation of Vance's September 21 meeting with Fahd on the Arab-Israeli peace process, see *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. IX, Arab-Israeli Dispute, August 1978-December 1980, Document 65.

—Approval in principle to provide the equipment the King suggested

—Offer to discuss with the Saudis alternatives to the tanks and APCs (2–3 year lead time) in the form of V–150 armored cars with TOW, which could be delivered in the near future

—Agree to provide appropriate U.S. training in Yemen for American equipment

As for financing State proposes a commitment to seek up to \$50 million in FMS credits for Yemen over time.⁵ I concur with OMB that this proposal has not been adequately staffed. Yemen is one of the poorest nations in the world, and a loan on normal FMS terms would hardly be better than a demand that Yemen carry the costs themselves. If the Saudis guarantee the loans and agree to repay them, we are offering only a “gimmick” that will persuade no one that we are being responsive.

Moreover, if the credits are to come out of FY 79, we will either have to reprogram or ask for a supplemental. Neither is very attractive. On balance, we do not believe that even a partial response of this nature is likely to have much effect on the Saudis and it could unfortunately come to haunt us later. I believe we would be on firmer ground to stress our willingness to provide training assistance wherever possible but to be honest about our inability to provide grant financing.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve responding to King Khalid along the above lines.

_____ Approve⁶

_____ Approve but also offer \$50 million FMS

_____ As amended

⁵ Carter wrote “no” in the right-hand margin next to this sentence.

⁶ Carter checked this option, initialed, and added: “If Saudis are helpful on C David agreement. J.” A response to King Khalid along the recommended lines was sent in telegram Tosec 100034/239585 to Vance in Amman, September 20. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780384–0680) Vance discussed the situation in South Arabia with Sultan on September 22. He summarized his meeting in telegram Secto 10038 from Riyadh, September 22. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780387–1166)

257. Memorandum From the Deputy Secretary of Defense (Duncan) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski)¹

Washington, December 13, 1978

SUBJECT

Status of Program for the Yemen Arab Republic

The current program emphasis on Yemen is separated in two phases. Phase I provided for the expedited air delivery of army items previously purchased by Saudi Arabia for Yemen, i.e., 81 81mm mortars, 50 50 caliber M2 machine guns with mounts, 2025 Light Anti-Tank Weapons (LAW's), 3 fire direction sets and 36 Vulcan 20mm Air Defense guns. This equipment, with the exception of the Vulcans, is being airlifted in two aircraft to arrive in Yemen on December 14 and 15. The Vulcans are scheduled for January–February airlift delivery after joint US/SAG/YARG consideration of recommendations of a predeployment survey team which visited Yemen in November 1978. Phase II is the result of a request from King Khalid to President Carter in September 1978 to provide 100 Armored Personnel Carriers, 64 M60 Series Tanks, 12 F–5E aircraft and 2 C–130H aircraft.² The delivery schedules for Phase II are the matter of immediate concern.

It was agreed from the beginning that Congressional notification of the Phase II Package (required by Section 36(b), AECA)³ would not be initiated until Congress convenes in January. The following paragraphs indicate the initial equipment delivery times which were provided to the Saudis in September 1978, the schedule improvements we since have communicated (both by Secretary Brown to Prince Sultan during the October 27 White House meeting and simultaneously by me to Prince Naif during my visit to Saudi Arabia),⁴ and additional actions taken or issues raised since October 27. The delivery schedules

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 92, YAR: 9–12/78. Secret. Attached but not printed is a December 14 memorandum from Sick to Brzezinski, in which Sick recommended that Brzezinski read only the final two paragraphs of Duncan's memorandum. Sick added: "This subject will be reviewed in its entirety following West's talks with Sultan and in the course of the mini-SCC review of a package of items as mandated in the SCC last night." Brzezinski added the following comment: "GS, how can we expedite? ZB."

² See Documents 255 and 256.

³ Reference is to the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976 (P.L. 94–329; 90 Stat. 729), which Ford signed into law on July 1, 1976.

⁴ Regarding the October 27 meeting at the White House, see footnote 7, Document 176. For Duncan's report to Carter on his Middle East trip, see Document 10.

have not been provided to Yemen by the USG; we are not certain whether the Saudis have provided any schedules. All delivery dates should be calculated from April 1979, the time when we expect Congressional review to be completed and Letters of Offer to be signed.

M113A1 Armored Personnel Carriers

a. Initial Delivery Offer

The original delivery proposal was to provide 100 M113A1's starting 35 months after signature of the Letter of Offer.

b. Revised Delivery Offer

The revised proposal is to ship 6 to Yemen one month after Yemen signs the Letter of Offer, together with U.S. Army training personnel necessary to initiate training in the spring of 1979. Another 44 will be sent as soon as CADRE training is completed. The Saudis were requested to transfer the other 50 APC's from their own inventory. We will initiate an FMS case to replace the 50 APC's in the Saudi inventory.

c. Outstanding Issues

There is some question as to whether the Saudis currently are willing to provide the remaining 50 APCs, or some lesser number. Also, we since have defined a need for APC-type vehicles such as mortar carriers and light retrievers which should be included, with a corresponding reduction in the number of M113A1's needed. On December 10 we requested the U.S. Office of Military Cooperation in Sana to coordinate with their Saudi counterparts and ascertain that the Saudis will provide the full 50 vehicles, including all of the APC-type vehicles such as the mortar carriers.

M60 Tanks

a. Initial Delivery Offer

Deliver 64 tanks starting 18 months after LOA signature.

b. Revised Delivery Offer

Reduce delivery period of the first tanks to 12 months by shipping 6 tanks and personnel to initiate CADRE training early in 1980. This will allow training to be completed consistent with the delivery of the remaining 58 tanks.

c. Additional Actions Which Could be Taken

AMEMB Sana has suggested by message of December 11 that we contact the Saudis to ascertain their willingness to divert some tanks

which soon will be delivered to Saudi Arabia from the M60 production line.⁵ State is following up this suggestion with AMEMB Jidda.

F-5E Aircraft

a. Initial Delivery Offer

We have offered to deliver 12 F-5E's 26 months after LOA signature.

b. Revised Delivery Offer

The delivery period has been reduced slightly to 24 months.

c. Actions Which Could Be Taken

DOD currently is forwarding to State a letter which raises the possibility of diverting 4 F-5E's from April-July 1979 production now scheduled for Thailand, and an additional 4 F-5E's from October-September 1979 production now scheduled for Jordan. Another alternative is to approach Saudi Arabia or Iran, or both, to ascertain their willingness to provide some aircraft and support equipment as a third country transfer. It should be noted that if the diversion from production is approved, Saudi Arabia would have to provide spare parts and support equipment from its own inventory even if the USG provided the 8 aircraft. The Saudis have already undertaken to transfer 4 F-5B aircraft (2 seater) to Yemen for flight training, and we have approved the third-country transfer. However, no date has been set for transferring these aircraft to Yemen.

C-130 Aircraft

a. Initial Delivery Offer

We have offered to deliver 2 C-130 aircraft 12-14 months after LOA signature.

b. Revised Delivery Offer

We have advised the Saudis that the most immediate way to improve the air transport situation in Yemen is to provide the 2 C-130 aircraft from Saudi inventory, and to replace these aircraft from U.S. production.

c. Outstanding Issues

On November 13 we requested the country team to advise the Saudis that, if they were willing to execute a direct commercial contract

⁵ Reference is to telegram 6196 from Sana, December 11. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780538-0258)

with Lockheed and the contract was signed in December, the two replacement aircraft could be delivered in May and September 1979. We encouraged this commercial alternative. No Saudi response to this suggestion has been received.

State has sent instructions to Ambassador West to review the Phase II delivery schedules with Prince Sultan today and to report the results to Washington.⁶ As soon as word of Saudi agreement is received, State will instruct Ambassador Lane in Sana to notify President Salih of our delivery plans.

I recommend that we arrange for LTG Graves, the Director of the Defense Security Assistance Agency, to brief Senator Byrd on the current status of the Yemen program. The program has received much more momentum than Prince Sultan apparently indicated. Also, Senator Byrd may be interested to find out that part of the perceived delay is due to our agreement with Congressional leadership to avoid submission of controversial Section 36(b) notifications while the Congress is out of session.

CW Duncan Jr

⁶ The Department transmitted instructions to West in telegram 313548 to Jidda and Riyadh, December 13. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D780513–0275)

**258. Memorandum From the Deputy Secretary of Defense
(Duncan) to the President's Assistant for National Security
Affairs (Brzezinski)¹**

Washington, December 20, 1978

SUBJECT

Deliveries to Yemen (U)

(S) As requested, I have directed the Army to provide 64 M60A1 tanks to Yemen on the schedule set forth in my memorandum to you of December 15, 1978.² The delivery schedule for armored personnel carriers and C-130 aircraft also will be as indicated in that memorandum.

(S) We have reviewed the F-5 delivery schedule again, as requested at today's Mini-SCC meeting.³ I confirm that the only F-5 aircraft available from production in the right configuration are the aircraft now scheduled for Thailand and Jordan. Thailand has 4 F-5Es scheduled for delivery in April-July 1979. These are advance attrition replacements for the 18 F-5 aircraft Thailand already has. Jordan has F-5 deliveries beginning in August, 1979 and continuing, on present schedule, through January, 1981. These Jordan aircraft are part of a 30-aircraft purchase under the MAP Program, and will supplement the 42 F-5s already in the Jordanian Air Force.

(S) There are two options for expediting delivery of 8 F-5E aircraft to Yemen:

1. Divert to Yemen the 4 aircraft now scheduled for Thailand in April-July, 1979, and 4 aircraft now scheduled for Jordan in August-September, 1979. Pay back the Thailand and Jordan programs in 24 months.

2. Divert to Yemen the 4 Thailand and the 4 Jordanian aircraft, as in option 1. Pay back Thailand in October, 1979-January 1980. This

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Middle East, Box 92, YAR: 9-12/78. Secret. Copies were sent to Christopher and Benson.

² Presumably a reference to Document 257.

³ A mistaken reference to the Mini-SCC meeting held December 19. With regard to North Yemen, the Summary of Conclusions of this meeting states: "The program developed by Defense for speeding up deliveries to North Yemen was reviewed, including expedited delivery of 64 tanks. DoD agreed to look again at the diversion of F-5s from Thailand, with the objective of delaying Thai deliveries as little as possible." (Summary of Conclusions of Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting, December 19; Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Stoddard File, Box 122, Special Coordination Committee (SCC) Meetings: 11-12/78)

will delay deliveries to Thailand for only 6 rather than 24 months, but will require Jordan to wait 24 months for all 8 aircraft, rather than for only the 4 aircraft in option 1.

(U) Please let me know if you wish the DoD to act on either of these alternatives.⁴

CW Duncan Jr

⁴ In the lower margin an unknown hand wrote: "DA [David Aaron] approved #2, answer relayed by phone 12/20—WFAR."

259. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, February 13, 1979, 0641Z

963. Subj: (U) USG–YAR Relations.

1. (C-entire text).

2. Summary: The YARG wants a more direct relationship with the USG. The Yemenis are particularly interested in closer military cooperation, U.S. investment, and the participation of U.S. firms in exploration for minerals and oil in Yemen. They believe they are now on the front line of the struggle for control of the Arabian Peninsula and are entitled to be treated as full partners, not as dependents of Saudi Arabia. End summary.

3. In two recent conversations, YAR ForMin Asnaj and Special Presidential Rep Jughman have made strong pitch for closer direct USG–YARG relations. Asnaj said YARG appreciates trilateral arms program with Saudis but a more direct relationship is needed. Many Yemenis, including President Salih, believe the USG is behaving like a "puppet" of the Saudis in the YAR. He knows how possessive the Saudis feel about the YAR and is well aware of their conviction that "they know best." However, USG has its own interests in Yemen and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790068–0134. Confidential; Priority. Sent for information Priority to Jidda.

in the light of developments in Iran,² the USG should reassess its policy. The Yemen has become too important for the USG to allow its policy here to be dictated by Saudi Arabia.

4. Asnaj and Jughman proposed stronger bilateral relationships in three areas—military cooperation, U.S. investment, and petroleum and minerals exploration. Re military cooperation, Asnaj said it is obvious from SecDef Brown's remarks in Riyadh³ that Saudi Arabia itself needs a USG commitment to its defense in present circumstances—how then can YARG rely on a Saudi commitment for its protection? What YARG needs, he said, is a direct USG commitment that USG will support YAR if it is attacked. Ambassador referred to several statements made by President Carter in last six months, but Asnaj said more is needed. Jughman mentioned, as he has before, that the YARG needs a quick reaction force which is appropriately trained and armed to counter the kind of infiltration and subversion which the PDRY is sponsoring. He hoped the USG would work with the YAR in developing such a force.

5. Concerning investment, Jughman and Asnaj said YAR wants more U.S. investment in the YAR. In this connection, the Exim Bank has an important role to play; for example, in supporting the YAR's purchase of Boeing aircraft for Yemen Airways and the Fuller Company's bid to construct the 100 million dollar cement plant near Umrān.

6. On petroleum/minerals exploration, Jughman and Asnaj said that American companies should be encouraged to undertake major exploration efforts in the YAR. There are indications of presence of exploitable minerals, but no major exploration effort has been undertaken. As an example of the disappointments the YAR has suffered, Jughman recounted in detail the story of the last minute withdrawal of the Japanese firm Toyomenka and Santa Fe Drilling from an off-shore exploration project in 1975. Jughman mentioned that he had been told by Syrian FonMin Khaddam during his recent visit to Damascus that oil had been discovered in the PDRY. If this were true, he said, and no major minerals exploration efforts were being made in the YAR, the government would be asked why its friends (i.e., the U.S.) were not undertaking similar activities in the YAR.

7. Asnaj and Jughman said that they were working constantly with President Salih to convince him that continuation of the policy of cooperation with Saudi Arabia and the U.S. is in the best interest

² Reference is to the Iranian Revolution that ousted the pro-Western Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

³ Reference is to remarks made by Brown at the Saudi Military Officers Club on February 10. Brown reiterated the United States' commitment to Saudi Arabia's territorial integrity during his speech. (Telegram 1319 from Jidda, February 13; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790068-0385)

of the YAR. Because of their advocacy, Salih refers to Asnaj as “Mr. Saudi Arabia” and Jughman as “Mr. Camp David.” Salih was in agreement with this policy but was naturally disturbed by the Saudis’ direct relations with a whole gamut of Yemeni political figures, and he was also hearing rumors that the USG was grooming YAR Ambassador to the U.S. Yahya Maiwakel as his replacement. Asnaj urged USG to strengthen its direct bilateral relationship with the YAR to reassure Salih that the USG is interested in the Yemen for its own sake, not just as a buffer state next to Saudi Arabia. Asnaj concluded that an independent YAR is vital to the United States because if the two Yemens should unify under leftist-Marxist domination they could cause a great deal of trouble, both to us and to the Saudis.

8. Comment: The remarks reported above occurred in the same conversation in which these two men commented on Saudi–YAR relations (reported Sana 0937).⁴ The Asnaj/Jughman position is self-serving in the sense that they are both identified with the YARG’s present policy of close cooperation with Saudi Arabia and the USG; to the extent it succeeds, they will. At the same time, they are reflecting a strong body of opinion in the YAR that the Yemen is now on the front lines of the struggle to preserve the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula from Communist domination, and the USG, which has a vital interest in this struggle, needs to do more to support them. A “trilateral” relationship is not enough—they believe they need and deserve to be treated by the USG as an equal partner, not as a ward of Saudi Arabia.

Lane

⁴ In telegram 937 from Sana, February 12, the Embassy reported that during a February 7 conversation al-Asnaj expressed his frustration concerning Saudi–YAR relations and told Lane that he believed the Saudis did not trust the YAR Government and that Saudi Arabia was losing confidence in Salih. Lane claimed that al-Asnaj’s frustration was due in large part to the fact that he was the one responsible to Salih for Saudi–YAR relations. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790066–0630)

260. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 24, 1979, 11:40 a.m.–12:50 p.m.

SUBJECT

Yemen

PARTICIPANTS

State
David Newsom
William Crawford

Defense
Robert Murray

JCS
LTG William Y. Smith

DCI
Stansfield Turner
[2 names not declassified]

White House
David Aaron

NSC
Gary Sick
Robert Gates

The group reviewed the current situation in Yemen² and next steps in view of requests for assistance from North Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The following conclusions were reached:

1. [7½ lines not declassified]

2. In a conversation with David Newsom during the course of the meeting, the Vice President suggested that this might be a place to use some muscle. He wondered about the possibility of some fleet movements by US units and whether a strong riposte might not destabilize the regime in the PDRY. (TS)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 119, SCM 048, 02/24/78, Mini SCC, Yemen. Top Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter initialed the first page and wrote "OK." Brzezinski attached a handwritten note, February 25, to the Summary of Conclusions that reads: "Mr. President—For your approval. ZB." Aaron sent a copy of the Summary of Conclusions to Vance, Brown, Jones, and Turner under a February 26 memorandum, noting that Carter had approved it. (Ibid.)

² In a February 23 memorandum to Carter, Christopher described the events taking place in Yemen: "We have received reports from intelligence sources and from the North Yemen Government that regular army forces of South Yemen have launched a three-pronged attack along the border and in some places are 20 kilometers inside North Yemen territory. If these reports are true this could signify a significant escalation in South Yemen border harassment against the North. President Salih has sent an envoy to the Saudis seeking assistance in repelling the attack. While the North Yemen Government would appreciate our diplomatic support, it has not sought U.S. military involvement or public action since in their view this could stimulate even greater Soviet support for the South." (Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 39, State Department Evening Reports, 2/79)

3. It was agreed that the replacement of Seventh Fleet ships in the Arabian Sea by Sixth Fleet units via the Suez Canal would be expedited. We will contact the Saudis about possible port visits of these units as they enter the area. Secretary Vance would be consulted about any implications of such movements for the Camp David talks.³ (S)

4. *[7½ lines not declassified]*

5. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Murray will return to Saudi Arabia next week to continue the consultations on security issues which were begun during Harold Brown's trip to the area.⁴ This issue will serve as the basis for concrete discussions of next steps. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to review with the Saudis the results of the visit of PDRY Foreign Minister to Riyadh which is scheduled for this weekend and may provide some insights. (S)

6. The State Department will contact the British and French Embassies and request their views over the weekend, since they both have better access to PDRY than we do. (C)

7. DOD and JCS will examine the problems associated with support of the Saudi aircraft in Yemen, particularly what steps might be required to operate the F-5s out of Sanaa and what US contribution might be needed. (C)

8. Defense will also contact our military representatives in Yemen and Saudi Arabia about other types of defensive systems which might be required by North Yemen. The next SCC meeting will assess which other nations in the region might be able to assist. (C)

9. *[2 lines not declassified]*

³ Carter wrote "OK" next to this paragraph.

⁴ See Documents 185 and 186.

261. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, February 24, 1979, 1642Z

1194. Dept please pass to USMTM Dhahran SA and SecDef WashDC. Subj: (U) PDRY Aggression Against YAR. Ref: Sana 1177² (DTG 241015Z Feb 79) (Notal).

1. (C-entire text).

2. I met with YAR President Ali Abdallah Salih at 4:00 p.m., Feb. 24. I was accompanied by OMC Chief Colonel Broman and DATT LTC Ruszkiewicz. YAR Special Presidential Advisor Yahya Jughman acted as interpreter.

3. President Salih opened the meeting by stating that YAR was now victim of aggression from PDRY³ and he wanted to know what position of USG would be. In response to my questions, Salih said that PDRY forces were attacking all along the border with mortars, rockets, and aircraft and that they had occupied the village of Qatabah and the nearby heights. He said there were no Cubans or other "foreigners" in YAR territory but they were operating the sophisticated weapons being used against YAR territory. He indicated that YAR forces were holding their own but PDRY attacks were continuing.

4. Salih said that purpose of PDRY attack was to show Yemenis, both North and South, that Soviets would support their friends but that U.S. would not. PDRY, he said, was completely in the hands of the Soviets and attack was designed to test the will of the U.S. as well as determine YAR capabilities. President Carter had promised that U.S. would assist YAR if it was victim of aggression and he needed help immediately. What was USG response?

5. I asked what had been Saudi response to Junayd mission. Salih said that Saudis had replied that YARG should get in touch with U.S. Ambassador in Sana and they would do the same in Saudi Arabia. Saudis had said that "the Americans carry all the cards."

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790085-0955. Confidential; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Cairo, Jidda, USUN, Muscat, and USLO Riyadh.

² In telegram 1177 from Sana, February 24, the Embassy reported on Lane's meeting with YAR Deputy Foreign Minister al-Kibsi to discuss the latest developments in the PDRY attacks on the Yemen Arab Republic: "Kibsi said that in view of assurances given by Ambassador Twinam when he visited YAR shortly after Ghashmi assassination, YAR expected USG to help." Al-Kibsi recommended that the United States "should consult with Saudis on appropriate steps to take." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790085-0859) Twinam was in Sana July 27-28; see Document 246.

³ See footnote 2, Document 260.

6. Brushing aside question of Saudi assistance, Salih said that he wanted immediate military aid from the U.S. He mentioned specifically the deployment of three squadrons of fighter planes, helicopter gunships, SAMs and naval vessels. I said that FornMin Asnaj had expressed some reluctance about direct USG involvement at this time. Salih said in that case, U.S. planes could be operated by Pakistanis or others and he would need U.S. help in recruiting such personnel. Salih said that as he had mentioned before, the trilateral arms program was all very well, but he wanted a direct military supply relationship with the U.S. He needed an immediate answer from the U.S. so he would know where he stands. Would the U.S. help now, or when it was too late?

7. I replied that I would, of course, forward his request to my government immediately. At the same time, I wanted to give him my frank personal views. Even though I was without instructions, I felt sure my government would support the YAR in resisting this aggression. However, the immediate dispatch of American military units to the YAR would be a very serious step. As he had described the situation in the South, it seemed to me there was time to make political and diplomatic moves rather than sending in U.S. forces. Although I did not know exactly what steps my government would take, I was sure that USG would not be idle. Contrary to my expectations, President Salih seemed to accept this. In closing, he left the impression that the important thing was to expel the PDRY troops from YAR territory immediately; if this could be done by diplomatic or political action he was agreeable.

8. Comment:

A) Given the sense of crisis which had been transmitted to me earlier in the day by Jughman, Salih seemed strangely relaxed during this meeting. Salih seems to be primarily interested in U.S. military support for political reasons. The kinds of arms he asked for are not those that could be effectively used in the present border fighting, but would be extremely useful in demonstrating to both North and South Yemenis that he has the backing of the United States. After I remarked that it would be a very serious step for the United States to send its own military forces to Yemen at this point, he seemed to accept that this kind of direct military support was unlikely. However, he is definitely expecting an immediate answer on what action the USG will take to support him.

B) As we left the meeting, Jughman said YARG had decided not repeat not to raise question of PDRY aggression at the UN.

C) In view of the conflicting and spotty information on the state of fighting in the border region, and FornMin Asnaj's reservations we do not think the situation warrants sending U.S. forces to the YAR at this time. We will, however, be under great pressure to take this step

should the present PDRY attacks develop into a major assault designed to split North Yemen.

9. Recommendation: In order to reassure YARG that we will support them in repelling PDRY attacks, we recommend a) that the United States urge the Saudis to send a squadron of F-5's to Sana as the YARG requested (Sana 1165)⁴ and b) that the USG immediately call the attention of the Soviet Government to the PDRY aggression and urge them to use their influence to have the PDRY withdraw immediately from all YAR territory.

Lane

⁴ In telegram 1165 from Sana, February 23, the Embassy reported on Lane's meeting with al-Asnaj during which the Foreign Minister informed Lane that the Yemen Arab Republic had sent a delegation to Saudi Arabia on February 22 to brief Saudi officials on the fighting in North Yemen. The YAR delegation asked the Saudis to send a portion of their air force to Sana as a show of political support and provide defense if needed. Al-Asnaj also noted that if the Saudis proved unwilling to do so, the Yemen Arab Republic was poised to ask Egypt for this assistance, and the Foreign Minister asked that the United States support the Yemen Arab Republic's request to Saudi Arabia. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790084-0160)

262. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 26, 1979, 2:15–3:20 p.m.

SUBJECT

Yemen (U)

PARTICIPANTS*State*
David Newsom*
Harold Saunders
William R. Crawford*OSD*
Robert Murray*
Walter B. Slocombe
David Ransom*JCS*
LTG William Y. Smith*
LTC Kenneth McKim*DCI*
[3 names not declassified]*Justice*
John Harmon*
Ken Bass*OMB*
John White*
Ed Sanders
White House
David Aaron—Chair**NSC*
Gary Sick*

The group reviewed the situation on the Yemeni border and our discussions with the Saudis and the Yemenis to date. The following are the main points:

1. It appears that the PDRY forces have taken the airfield at Bayda on the YAR side of the border and that skirmishes are in progress in several other areas, including the peninsula near the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb. Our embassy in Sanaa suspects that regular PDRY forces are being used to take territory, which will then be turned over to YAR dissidents with the intention of establishing a rival regime in the YAR and bringing down the government of President Salih. (S)

2. The Saudis are backing away from providing their own F-5s for support of the YAR and are now asking that the United States provide forces. We are unable to provide F-5s or other military equipment which the YAR would then operate, and the Saudis probably realize this. (S)

3. A U.S. team headed by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Murray leaves this afternoon for consultations with the Saudis. The principal objective of this team will be to get a clear reading of Saudi

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 119, SCM 050, 02/26/79, Mini SCC, Yemen. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found.

military and political intentions. Is the latest change of signals due to the Saudis' talks with the PDRY Foreign Minister who has just completed a visit to Saudi Arabia?² Precisely what would be required to permit the Saudis to provide effective support to North Yemen? Would they require U.S. support? If so, we need to know explicitly what the nature and level of that support would be. The team should not let the Saudis divert the issue from a Yemeni and Arabian Peninsula problem to a U.S.-Soviet problem. The Saudis must be willing to accept a leading role in dealing with the issue. (S)

4. The State Department will prepare and coordinate instructions to Ambassador West incorporating these views. This cable will be available in Saudi Arabia by the time the team arrives. (C)

At 3:10, a restricted group (marked * above) remained to review the status of [1½ lines not declassified]. CIA reviewed various proposals which they will be prepared to submit formally to the SCC on Friday.³ No decisions were taken at this meeting. (S)

² See footnote 4, Document 261.

³ March 2. No SCC meeting was held that day, but see Document 187.

263. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, February 27, 1979, 2–3 p.m.

SUBJECT

Yemen (U)

PARTICIPANTS

State
David Newsom
Harold H. Saunders
William R. Crawford

CIA
Frank C. Carlucci
[name not declassified]

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Meeting: (2/27/79 SCC): 2/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. An attached February 28 covering memorandum from Brzezinski to Vance, Brown, Jones, and Turner noted that the President had approved the recommendations in the Summary of Conclusions.

Defense

Harold Brown
Charles W. Duncan
Walter Slocombe

JCS

Gen David C. Jones
LtGen William Y. Smith

White House

The Vice President
David Aaron—Chaired
Denis Clift

NSC

Gary Sick

1. All agreed that the US cannot respond positively to YAR and Saudi Arabian requests that we provide our own fighter aircraft for YAR operations nor can we provide [1 line not declassified]. However, it was agreed that we could take the following actions to support YAR defenses against the PDRY incursion:

—We will accelerate deliveries of previously ordered military equipment (anti-tank, anti-aircraft, ammunition, transport) by immediate airlift of this equipment.

—We will seek an assessment from our Defense Attache presently in the YAR of the military situation there and YAR requirements to contain the PDRY advances.

—Defense will examine the extent to which the type of military equipment required to support the YAR might be obtained from Egypt, Jordan, or other friendly countries.

—The US national vessels proceeding south through the Suez Canal will call at YAR ports should the Sana Government so request.

—In response to a recommendation by our Ambassador, we will offer the YAR aerial reconnaissance over the YAR in the area of alleged combat. The Chairman of the JCS made clear that there would be no risk in such reconnaissance.

2. On the diplomatic front, we will urge the Soviets to restrain the PDRY.² We will consult with the British and Oman for their assessment of developments in Yemen.

3. With Saudi Arabia, we will:

—Urge the Saudis to mobilize Arab opinion for the immediate secession of hostilities and withdrawal of PDRY forces from North Yemen.

² Carter, Vance, and Brzezinski met with Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin on February 27 following the SCC meeting. Noting that “we believe the Soviet Union has encouraged this altercation,” Carter informed Dobrynin that the United States hoped “the Soviet Union will use its influence to end the penetration of North Yemen’s borders.” See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 176. Vance also met separately with Dobrynin on February 27, and sent the same requests for Soviet intercession. The memorandum of conversation is in the National Archives, RG 59, Vance Files: Lot 84D241, Box 9, Nodis 1979, Memorandum of Conversation for Secretary Vance. Vance informed Ambassador Toon of his démarche in telegram 47704 to Moscow, February 28. See *Foreign Relations, 1977–1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 177.

—Describe the actions indicated above that we will take to help strengthen YAR defenses.

—Seek to clarify Saudi intentions and objectives with respect to the Yemens.

—Seek to determine what actions the Saudis intend to take to strengthen YAR defenses and what support they might need from the US to carry out those actions.

—Seek Saudi agreement that we should carry on further discussions with the Egyptians and Jordanians on whether they would be prepared to take direct action to support the YAR should the situation deteriorate further.

4. The group approved the attached statement concerning US policy and action in regard to the situation in the Yemens. State will release it if it is not used by the President in response to a question at his press conference.³

³ Attached but not printed is a February 27 draft statement entitled "Situation in Yemen." Yemen was not mentioned in the President's 4 p.m. press conference. Hodding Carter read the statement, which announced that the United States would accelerate delivery of arms to North Yemen, to reporters on February 28. See the Department of State *Bulletin*, April 1979, p. 41.

264. Memorandum Prepared by the National Security Council Staff¹

Washington, February 28, 1979

1. *Saudi Arabia Threatens to Intervene in Yemen*: Prince Saud described to Ambassador West yesterday the situation in Yemen as very serious. He said the attack on the YAR was premeditated, organized, well-equipped, and specifically measured to subvert the legal regime of the YAR and turn it into a battleground. Saud claimed that Cuban troops were involved, although not a great number, but extensive enough to be serious. He said that Saudi national² interests are threatened and if

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, President's Daily CIA Brief File, Box 17, 2/23/79–2/28/79. Secret. Carter wrote in the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum: "Zbig J." Mondale also initialed the memorandum.

² Carter underlined the words "Saudi national."

the situation continues to deteriorate within the next two weeks, then Saudi Arabia would intervene.³ Saud asked the U.S. to do what it could through the USSR to stop the conflict and if it was not contained, then the U.S. should do what it could to help the YAR directly. According to Saud, if that fails to stop the fighting, then the U.S. should supply Saudi Arabia with what it needs for its intervention. Saud said that if West could not get this message through to Washington adequately by cable, then he should go to Washington⁴ personally and present the message as one from King Khalid to the President. Ambassador West does not know whether Saud is trying to test our commitment made by Secretary Brown during his recent visit.⁵ In any case, they appear to take the threat seriously and reportedly have placed their forces on full alert. West suggests that State consider allocating appropriate U.S. reconnaissance assets to gauge the military situation in the border area. He also suggests that we consult our F-5 production schedules to see how we can best replenish Saudi stocks if they transfer their F-5s to YAR and we should examine the legalities involved in permitting U.S. contractors maintenance in Sana for Saudi or Yemeni F-5s flying combat missions. It appears to West that immediate relief can only come through diplomatic efforts as conventional armaments would be even less effective against a war of infiltration and subversion.⁶ (Riyadh 333 NODIS,⁷ PSN 24834, 24809, and 24813⁸) (S)

2. *Vance Makes Demarche to Dobrynin on Yemen Situation:* In a meeting yesterday with Ambassador Dobrynin, Vance said that we are concerned about the recent incursion by PDRY forces into the YAR and are disturbed by the recent escalation of the conflict which has caused a significant increase in tensions. Vance noted that we have urged restraint on the YAR leaders and hope the Soviets will urge restraint on the PDRY leaders. Vance added that we also believe it is in the interest of the U.S. and Soviet Union to work together to prevent the conflict from developing further. Ambassador Toon was informed that he not need make a specific demarche in Moscow on this matter, however, if an opportunity arises, State has no objection to his repeating

³ Carter underlined the phrase "then Saudi Arabia would intervene."

⁴ Carter underlined the phrase "he should go to Washington."

⁵ See Documents 185 and 186.

⁶ Carter wrote "Vance consult w/Congress" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph. In a February 28 memorandum to Vance, Brzezinski communicated the President's request. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P850129–1056)

⁷ Telegram 333 from Riyadh, February 28, is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840125–1256.

⁸ None found.

these points with appropriate Soviet officials. (State 47704 NODIS, PSN 24666)⁹ (S)

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

⁹ Carter wrote "I did the same" in the left-hand margin next to this paragraph. See footnote 2, Document 263. PSN 24666 was not found.

265. Telegram From the United States Liaison Office in Riyadh to the Department of State and the Department of Defense¹

Riyadh, March 1, 1979, 1202Z

340. Subject: (S) Saudi Plans re PDRY Attack Against YAR.

1. (S) Entire text.

2. Summary. Foreign Minister Saud informed us today that Saudi Arabia was making firm plans to attack PDRY in the event that (1) diplomatic efforts failed to persuade PDRY to withdraw; or (2) efforts by YAR (with such assistance as SAG and USG may provide) were not successful in causing withdrawal. From comments, attack would be armed incursion for limited objective of forcing withdrawal of PDRY forces from YAR. Saudi forces would withdraw immediately thereafter. Specific requests were made of the degree of support which USG would provide in the event of such action. Likewise, specific questions were asked about utilization of USG personnel in planning and advising YAR and SAG forces. End summary.

3. Foreign Minister Saud in a meeting this morning informed us of official request that the Saudi Arabian Government had made a firm decision to institute a military operation against PDRY in the event that present diplomatic efforts to persuade PDRY forces to withdraw from North Yemen were unsuccessful or if YAR forces continued to be unable to cope with the PDRY invasion. Saud said in answer to a question that he was telling us of the SAG decision not repeat not seeking our advice. Saud said that on 27 Feb he personally informed PDRY Foreign Minister Muhummad Salih Muti' that Saudi Arabia would attack PDRY if they did not withdraw their forces from YAR.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790093-0461. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Sana, and Jidda.

4. He then posed direct questions about the extent of support and aid which USG could provide in the event Saudi Arabia launched its attack. He asked specifically as to what legal constraints, if any, would apply to U.S. civilian personnel providing logistical support for the operation: what advice and assistance would be provided by U.S. military personnel in the operation.

5. Saud stated that he needed answers as quickly as possible; that the planning for the operation had already begun; that he would like to have USG military personnel, including General Cathey, USMTM Chief, consult with SAG military leaders in the planning process. DASD Murray replied that U.S. military personnel could not repeat not give advice or assistance in the planning of a combat operation without specific permission from USG. Ambassador said we would only listen to Saudi explanations. Saud asked that we request such permission forthwith; he also asked that we seek permission for USG military personnel to confer with YAR and SAG military personnel and provide advice on combat operations now going on between YAR and PDRY forces.

6. Saud opened the morning meeting with a statement that the President of PDRY was enroute to Moscow and we would therefore soon see what the master wanted its servant to do. He later added that even the conclusion of a mutual security pact between PDRY and Russia would not change Saudi Arabia's plans as, "we are not afraid of the Russians." (The latter was, however, said with a slight smile.)

7. Saud next stated that he was sending a letter to President Salih requesting a representative of the SAG military forces be allowed to make an onsite inspection and evaluation of the military situation in North Yemen. In our meeting with Saud the previous evening (being reported by septel),² we had pointed out that our military personnel in Sana had not been permitted to make on site inspection of the military operations. We subsequently learned that SAG forces likewise had been refused permission to visit battle areas. Saud agreed that SAG's representative (Col. Showayel, Saudi Mil Rep Sana) could be accompanied by OMC Chief, Col Broman, who was present at the meeting. The plan is for the two to leave this afternoon (1 March) and to report back to their governments.

8. Saud then made his announcement of Saudi intentions and his specific request for U.S. decisions as above set forth. He stated that he realized the decisions may take some time but he said the urgency of the situation required action at the earliest possible time.

9. Murray said we would pass on Saudi requests to USG.

Gerlach

² See footnote 3, Document 266.

266. Telegram From the United States Liaison Office in Riyadh to the Department of State¹

Riyadh, March 1, 1979, 1347Z

343. Embassy Jidda sends. Military addrees handle as Specat Exclusive. Subject: Saud Calls for Direct Commitment of US Support in Potential Conflict With PDRY (S). (Ref: A) Riyadh 0340,² B) Riyadh 0341.³

1. Secret-entire text.

2. Summary. Following is MemCon of 1 March meeting in which Prince Saud reiterates Saudi commitment to use its own forces if necessary against PDRY, defines military aims and justifications, and seeks US commitment to supply arms and help in planning. End summary.

3. Ambassador West, DAS/ISA Murray met with Prince Saud and Foreign Minister Prince Saud and Intelligence Director Prince Turki bin Faysal morning of March 1 at MODA headquarters to continue their discussions on the Yemen situation. Ambassador and Mr. Murray were accompanied by USMTM/Chief MGen Cathey, RADM Lyons of JCS-J-5, Embassy officer Cave, DATT Col Hunt, David Ransom, and LTC George W. Plummer, both of ISA (NESA) and other Embassy and USMTM officers. A large number of Saudi military officers were also present, including Chief of Staff Gen Humayd, LTG Kabbani of MODA's Foreign Assistance and Cooperation Office; LTG Muhammad al-Shayah, LTG Asad Zuhayr; LTC Fahd Abdallah and several others.

4. Prince Saud began the meeting by stating that PDRY leader Abd al-Fattah Isma'il is expected to arrive in Moscow tonight 29 February. The Ambassador asked for the Fon Min's analysis. FonMin responded simply: "He's going to report to his masters." Then said that if Soviets want to contain conflict they will ask him to withdraw his forces. Ambassador suggested that this is perhaps the reason we have not yet

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemens: Border War: 2/79-3/4/79. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to the Department of Defense, Jidda, Sana, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room.

² See Document 265.

³ In telegram 341 from Riyadh, March 1, the Liaison Office reported a February 28 late night meeting among Saud, Turki, West, and Murray. Saud "wanted blanket assurances that USG would provide whatever logistics and arms supply support was necessary, getting waiver of all restrictions on President by Congress because of urgency of situation. We said USG understood urgency of situation and was prepared to provide appropriate support." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790093-0835)

heard any response to our demarche to Soviet Union on situation in Yemen.⁴

5. Prince Saud continued by noting that letter is being sent to YAR President Ali Abdallah Salih to ask for permission for Saudis and US reps to visit battle fronts in Yemen. Purpose for this visit is to collect all of the information available on forces and equipment available and report back. Report should indicate the shortcomings and gaps in the Yemeni inventory which Saudi Arabia and the US may supply.

6. Mr. Murray responded that the Sana OMC/Chief, Col Ralph Broman, will accompany the fact-finding team. The Ambassador asked for the timing of the proposed mission. Prince Saud said it would leave today. The Saudi MTM Chief Col Seuwayil will carry the letter to Salih and will head the Saudi team.

7. Prince Saud continued by saying that the previous evening's meeting⁵ had indicated intent on the part of the United States to do everything it can to supplement Saudi efforts to contain situation, meet any eventuality in South Yemen threat and, if worse comes to worst, to provide Saudi Arabia with whatever is needed—to supply what support is needed, prevent reverses and help Saudi Arabia achieve its military objectives.

8. Mr. Murray responded that was not fully accurate; important qualifications should be noted. The first is that we cannot go beyond the law. We must look at the circumstances. The second is that it depends on the military requirements. We have to know what you have in mind. We have received a list of your requirements, and we have basically supportive attitude but it is not clear how all these requirements fit into circumstances. However, we are willing to continue the discussions, and it is probable that MGen Cathey is the one best suited to continue the dialogue in the first instance.

9. Somewhat tersely, Prince Saud declared that Saudi Arabia does not wish to be caught in vicious circles. "We will cut up our vicious circles and help you. We will take your people into our confidence. Our intention is to see the situation through; to use our military forces to involve ourselves in the fighting with South Yemen if the fighting continues in North Yemen. We have not yet given you the details, as you have not said that you are committed. You have made only qualified commitment." Speaking in rapid but deliberate tones, Prince Saud emphasized that Saudi Arabia is making a direct request to be told quickly if the US will support Saudi Arabia within the scope of US law. Situation moving quickly. In the meantime, Saudi officers will

⁴ See footnote 2, Document 263.

⁵ See footnote 3 above.

present US officers with operational plans. These will be discussed with MGen Cathey and any others you may choose. This group will examine what the possible operational measures will be.

10. Mr. Murray asked for clarification. As this appeared to be a formal request, he wished to raise several questions. Are you asking for a commitment to support Saudi Arabia in actual operations? Are these operations hypothetical? Prince Saud responded no, adding that we do not deal in hypothetical situations. Mr. Murray stated that it was his understanding that the Saudis were approaching the Yemen situation in three ways. First, they are undertaking efforts to work out a diplomatic solution. Second, if this fails, then they hope that the South Yemenis will be expelled through [by] the Yemen Arab Republic. Third, if this fails as well then Saudi forces will be used to solve the problem. As the first two options have not yet been exhausted, is not the third option hypothetical?

11. Prince Saud said this was the right order but we must prepare at same time for all eventualities. Thus, preparation for the third option is not hypothetical. It is a reasonable concern which must be met.

12. Mr. Murray asked for further clarification. He asked whether the preparations in the last instance are preparations for movement by Saudi forces, not into North Yemen, but into South Yemen? Prince Saud replied affirmatively. He said that the US knows the capability of the SAG forces. We will inform you of the current disposition of the Saudi forces at the forthcoming combat as we perceive it. We expect you to contribute your thoughts. Participation by the US is not joining in the planning phase only but joining in the implementation phase too.

13. Mr. Murray considered the FonMin's points briefly. Then he responded that while MGen Cathey can serve as a channel of communication to the USG, passing on information received, he cannot give formal advice on behalf of the US Government or advise privately on Saudi plans.

14. Ambassador West said he wanted to anticipate some of the many questions that will be asked in Washington about Saudi decision. For instance, someone who defends his territory is always in a stronger position vis a vis law and public opinion than someone who attacks the territory of another. Saud replied that PDRY had not violated Saudi borders but had done so in YAR. He asked rhetorically if USG would support SAG if it fought inside Yemen and said that choice of attack across Saudi-PDRY border is military decision, an easier way to respond to aggression. He noted in passing that border with PDRY was not internationally recognized—a benefit of being ruled by the British, according to Prince Turki.

15. Ambassador West asked if Saudi attack successful in forcing PDRY withdrawal, would SAG withdraw? Prince Saud answered in

the affirmative at once, adding that SAG did not intend to occupy territory or force a change of government in Aden.

16. Admiral Lyons noted that Saudi decision would broaden the conflict. Prince Saud nodded. Ambassador West pressed to know if Saudis had definitely made decision. Yes, said Prince Saud. He added that Saudis were picking up signs of greatly increased Soviet naval activity in the Bab al-Mandab Straits. Mr. Murray asked if, in Saudi view, Cubans will become involved. Prince Saud said equipment placed in PDRY would allow 13,000 troops to be introduced. What are the military consequences of this, asked Murray. That is enough to face Saudi forces, said Prince Saud plainly. How do you deal with that contingency, asked Murray. That's your problem said Saud. In absence of Cubans, Murray asked, what is your estimate of forcing PDRY withdrawal from YAR? We think we can succeed, said Saud. Would YAR be helpful, asked Murray. Yes, said Saud.

17. Prince Saud then suggested an afternoon 1 March meeting with General Cathey to go over Saudi contingency plans.⁶ He asked for Cathey to contribute his thoughts as well as listen. Murray said Cathey could not do this; that would require special USG approval.

18. Murray then read over his notes of commitment which Prince Saud was seeking (see para 7 above). Prince Saud claimed he had not asked us to "prevent reverses" but to help attain military objective (#)⁷ SAG. Prince Saud added he was not defeatist in his thinking. He said issue was basically a military one: "We want you to provide whatever our requirements are to keep military operations going." "US forces?" asked Murray. "I'm not counting on US military personnel since USG won't even help with planning," replied Saud.

19. Prince Turki then asked if US team to Sana could give YAR and Saudis its views. Murray said team could describe situation and suggest some steps that were needed but could not give tactical advice. Prince Turki concluded by asking—Prince Saud joined him—if Murray and the Ambassador would ask permission for US advisory team which could go beyond observations and advise YARG on tactical formations. Prince Saud also wanted permission for MGen Cathey to advise of Saudi plans.

Gerlach

⁶ See Document 265.

⁷ As on the original, presumably indicating an omission.

267. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

RP M 79-10111

Washington, March 1, 1979

SUBJECT

South Yemeni Intentions Toward North Yemen

Our information on the current military situation between the two Yemens [*less than 1 line not declassified*], and the immediate plans of Aden remain unclear. We believe, however, that South Yemen is committed to the overthrow of the government in Sana and to the eventual union of the two Yemens under a Marxist government. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

This is not a new South Yemeni objective, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] it was reaffirmed and given top priority at a closed session of Aden's ruling party last October. A special committee, including the country's leader, Abd al-Fattah Ismail, was set up to plan and direct the subversive effort. A new Aden-backed organization—the National Democratic Front—was formed to spearhead the overthrow of North Yemen. The NDF, which allegedly is doing most of the current fighting, is composed largely of North Yemeni dissidents, including some prominent military defectors.² [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

South Yemen's decision to *increase* pressure probably resulted from the perception that North Yemen, under the spiritless leadership of President Salih, needed only a shove to bring it down. [*less than 1 line not declassified*], South Yemeni Prime Minister Hasani told a visiting Palestinian delegation late last year that Sana was near collapse and Aden had to move quickly, before a stronger leader emerged in Sana. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

[*less than 1 line not declassified*] the fighting which began last week and is apparently going on entirely within North Yemen, was triggered by a signal from Aden that the time was ripe for bringing down the Salih regime. There are several plausible alternative explanations for the fighting: it may have evolved from a series of border raids engaged in by both sides which got out of hand; or South Yemen may intend

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Support Services (DI), Job 82T00150R, Production Case Files (1979-1981), Box 6, Folder 90, South Yemeni Intentions Toward North Yemen. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]. According to an attached March 1 memorandum from the Acting Chief of the Middle East Division to Carlucci, the Office of Regional and Political Analysis drafted the memorandum.

² The National Democratic Front (NDF) was founded in Sana in February 1976 as an overarching governmental opposition group.

to punish North Yemen for sponsoring paramilitary activities, hoping to discourage such action in the future. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Whatever the origin of the conflict, if Aden smells blood and perceives the military action to be seriously undermining President Salih's position—with bearable political and military costs to South Yemen—we would expect the Aden Government to maintain the pressure. South Yemen could help the exiles establish a government of national liberation in the southern part of North Yemen. The inhabitants of this area are, like the South Yemenis, largely of the Sunni Muslim sect. The residents of the northern part of North Yemen, on the other hand, are primarily Shias. Such a development would almost certainly further erode Salih's already uncertain position. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Pressure from the Soviet Union, other Arab states through the Arab League, a decisive Saudi move to support North Yemen, or a visible show of support for the regime in Sana by the US might induce South Yemen to back off for the moment. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Aden's long-term goal of exporting its Marxist system to North Yemen will remain, however, ensuring continued instability in the area. If the current military campaign does not result in a change of government in Sana that is favorable to South Yemen, that country can be expected to seek other opportunities to subvert the North Yemeni Government. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

The Soviet Angle

[less than 1 line not declassified] active Soviet encouragement of current South Yemeni-backed operations against North Yemen, *[less than 1 line not declassified]* the USSR may be less opposed to PDRY adventurism than in the past. In the fall of 1978, a number of reports indicated that the Soviets were reluctant to support South Yemeni activities because they were concerned that these might provoke foreign intervention which in turn might lead to a war of attrition that they would have to support. In addition, they reportedly felt that this policy was injurious to Soviet interests because it had provoked tensions with North Yemen and Saudi Arabia and was giving imperialist forces opportunities to exploit. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

By the end of 1978, reporting to this effect had ceased, *[less than 1 line not declassified]* the Soviets were aware of and prepared to support South Yemeni actions with respect to North Yemen as long as no direct invasion by South Yemeni armed forces occurred. No reasons for this apparent shift in position have been cited. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

The Cuban Perspective

[less than 1 line not declassified] North Yemeni claims that Cuban military personnel are involved in the current fighting against North Yemen, we would not be surprised if Cuban advisers were assisting South Yemeni-supported forces behind the lines in South Yemen. In November the Cubans reportedly agreed to arm North Yemeni dissidents based in South Yemen. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

It is highly unlikely, however, that Havana would risk sending Cuban units or combat support personnel into North Yemen. In Angola and Ethiopia where Cuba intervened militarily on a large scale, Havana could argue that it was performing a defensive role in assisting local forces repel foreign aggression. No such claim could be made in the case of a Cuban incursion into North Yemen and the Cubans realize that such a blatantly offensive move would tarnish their image in the Third World and jeopardize their chances for hosting a successful nonaligned summit in Havana in September. Moreover, Havana would probably reason that direct Cuban involvement would provoke US and other Western countries into increasing military assistance to the North Yemenis. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

268. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 1, 1979, 4–5:40 p.m.

SUBJECT

The Yemen Conflict

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newson

Lucy Benson

Amb. William Crawford

James Michel

Defense

Walter Slocombe

Col. T.O. Williams

Energy

Bruce Clarke

Denny Ellerman

JCS

General William Smith

Lt Col Kenneth McKim

DCI

Dr. Robert Bowie

NSC

Gary Sick

Robert Kimmitt

White House

David Aaron—Chair

It was agreed to recommend to the President the following steps:

1. We should agree to the Saudi request for assistance in planning appropriate military operations to help defend North Yemen against the attack by South Yemen. The Chief of our MAAG, General Cathey, would be authorized to begin consultations with a view towards providing this assistance. The Defense Department will make the necessary arrangements to insure that such activity will be fully consistent with the law regarding military assistance.

2. General Cathey will be instructed that the United States does not contemplate being involved in any combat operations or activities. We would be prepared to provide necessary support of a non-combat nature for Saudi operations for the defense of North Yemen. To this

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 94, Yemens: Meeting: (3/1/79 Mini-SCC): 3/79. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote "OK J" in the right-hand margin next to the list of participants. Aaron sent the Summary of Conclusions to Vance, Brown, Jones, and Turner under cover of a March 2 memorandum, in which he informed them that Carter had approved the recommendations from the meeting and noted that implementation of Carter's "decisions should commence immediately."

end, we would be prepared, if necessary, to make the required notifications to Congress under the War Powers Act.²

3. The United States should be prepared to sell replacement equipment to Saudi Arabia for losses which might be incurred in the defense of North Yemen.

4. The Saudi and Yemen Governments should be advised that any U.S. assistance will be in response to a YAR request for Saudi and U.S. support in the context of collective self-defense. We will urge them to take appropriate steps to notify the UN Security Council of these actions.

5. To prepare for implementation of these steps the State Department will prepare appropriate guidance for the Embassies in Riyadh and Sanaa, and Defense Department to General Cathey. State will also prepare talking points to be used in consultations with the Congress.

6. State and Defense will prepare a program to accelerate delivery of items already programmed for North Yemen beyond the few items which we have already authorized to be airlifted. Defense will also develop options for the supply of additional items to North Yemen from inventories of Egypt and Jordan. In the latter connection, State will clarify Jordanian intentions to provide some U.S. anti-aircraft weapons to Sanaa.

² See footnote 10, Document 188. Carter made checkmarks in the margin next to this and the next four recommendations.

269. Message From the United States Military Training Mission in Dhahran to the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Dhahran, March 2, 1979, 1505Z

32597. From DASD (ISA) Murray. Subj: Joint Planning With Saudi Arabia.

Summary: Saudi move to force PDRY withdrawal from Yemen, by force if necessary, presents USG with difficult but important decisions on US security role in Middle East and support of YAR and Saudis. Developments in Yemen come at time of strain in our relations with Saudis. They are hopeful but skeptical of our willingness to follow up Brown visit² with actions in military supply and security field but acutely aware of our demands on them for cooperation on peace process, oil, other issues. Incursions of last two weeks in YAR present Saudis with threat to their vital interests. I basically agree with their analysis of threat and think we must take seriously their decision to intervene by attack on PDRY. They have explained their strategy to us in detail except for military plans, which can be generally deduced, however. They are pressing us for commitment. We must decide whether and how to encourage or discourage them from military action in PDRY and tailor our support to that decision. There are alternatives to their military scenario. I feel we should seek to avert Saudi attack on PDRY in favor of intervention, if necessary, only within YAR and separate efforts in fields of diplomacy, economics, political action. Money to support this strategy and make it successful—and above all to make sure Saudis are not dealt humiliating defeat—I see us required to provide additional assurances, specific equipment and other forms of help, which are outlined below. As Ambassador West departed Riyadh before this cable was drafted, his comments are needed. End summary.

1. You have the reports of our conversations with Saud and Turki on Wednesday and Thursday.³ Unlike February 18 meeting,⁴ this time talk was entirely of actual contingency developing in Yemen, including Saudi Government's commitment in principle to military action against

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemens: Border War: 2/79–3/4/79. Secret; Immediate; Exdis; Specat Exclusive. Sent for information Immediate to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

² See Documents 185 and 186.

³ See Documents 265 and 266.

⁴ Telegram 259 from Riyadh, February 18, described a meeting between Brown and Sultan, during which the two officials discussed the U.S.-Saudi-YAR tripartite military relationship. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790095–1049)

PDRY and request by SAG for US military support. Saudi request raises two serious policy issues for US: whether to encourage or discourage Saudi military action against PDRY, and the extent of US military support for SAG.

2. Mood in the country, as far as one can judge from our limited exposure, is one of business as usual, with no apparent expectation of imminent hostilities, despite recall of all military personnel to units and placing of armed forces on alert. Mood among the leadership, however, is more serious. Army and Air Force leadership, according to General Cathey, is more active than he has ever seen it, burning the midnight and weekend oil. Prince Saud was particularly nervous and drew, at least for our benefit, the most stark conclusions from current events. He was clearly trying to convince us that a crisis was at hand requiring dramatic increases in U.S. support for Saudi Arabia. Crisis comes at a time of unusual strain in U.S.-Saudi relations. Too many critical issues—oil, the dollar, peace negotiations, security—are being argued simultaneously, and in an atmosphere of uncertainty arising from Iran, the more aggressive Soviet policy demonstrated in PDRY, Ethiopia and Angola, and continuing Saudi doubts about American willingness to act. The relationship is made more sensitive by the mutual recognition of unalterable interdependence.

3. Nevertheless, there is a sense of hope and anticipation of U.S. security assistance arising from the Brown Mission. Secretary Brown brought the President's decision that the United States would play a more active role in assuring the security of the Middle East, and particularly Saudi Arabia, and this was received at the time in euphoric terms. The euphoria was not noticeable in our talks this time. The military are disappointed that there is not a firm American commitment to further arms supply, and Saud is suspicious about the U.S. security commitment and the American-Israeli connection. Nevertheless, there is an eagerness to believe that the President's decision reflected a real "sea change" in American policy and that practical measures would follow. Saud's request is meant to plumb the depth of the policy change.

4. Yemen is a test case. The remoteness of Yemen, its backward economy, tribal society, weak government and uncertain politics are all reasons to mount important policy initiatives elsewhere. Nevertheless, Yemen is contested ground. The contest has taken a particularly sharp form in the last few years as Saudi leadership, now less defensive, has tried to use its new wealth and ambition to oust the Soviets from both Sana and Aden and give local governments an Islamic and Western oriented character. The Soviets, smarting from other reverses in the Middle East, have mounted massive programs of arms deliveries and political support for radical groups. The leadership in both the PDRY and Saudi Arabia is insecure. Both governments see the struggle for

Yemen as a life and death matter for themselves. The Saudis, who have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in their effort in Yemen, now fear incursions of the YAR from the South, backed by an expansionist Soviet Union, sufficient to topple the Salih regime and perhaps shift the balance in the Yemens against Saudi Arabia and the West. Yemen thus becomes a test case of U.S. security policy in the Middle East even though we might prefer other locations and circumstances.

5. The threat from Aden is real. While allowing for Saudi astigmatism in the matter of radical states, it is hard to fault their analysis of threat from PDRY. The Ismail government is openly devoted to overthrow of governments throughout Peninsula. It proclaims itself part of world revolutionary movement. It is Communist in most doctrinaire sense, repressive in Stalinist manner, supportive of terrorist groups and liberation fronts for Oman and the Gulf states as well as Yemen. Whatever checks were placed on these extremist tendencies by local nationalism and self-interest seem to have been removed by the Soviet and Cuban supported coup against President Salih Rubaayya Ali last June.⁵ Although we here have only fragmentary information, much of which is conflicting, fighting by PDRY forces in YAR has now continued for almost three weeks with no sign of let-up on PDRY side. Tanks, artillery, and possibly some air strikes have been employed. Four lodgements within YAR across wide front from sea coast plain through mountains to eastern desert region, suggest something in excess of usual border fighting. It is also way out of proportion to any YAR-sponsored activity by South Yemen exiles in PDRY. Saudis believe PDRY aim is to topple regime in Sana for one of their own choosing, with aim of unification of North and South: at minimum, Saudis believe PDRY will attempt to establish a rival regime in southern YAR to bring down Salih in slightly longer term. We will get more specific information about situation on ground when qualified observers report but at this point it looks like conflict has been militarized and escalated, and stage has been set for set-piece battle to change political complexion of South Arabia.

6. Saudi Arabia has a carefully conceived plan for dealing with the current crisis. The Saudi plan falls into three stages: to mount a considerable diplomatic effort to force withdrawal; to strengthen the YAR to meet the threat itself; and third, to be put into effect if the first and second stages fail, an attack by Saudi forces against PDRY itself.

A. Saudis have energetically pursued, with considerable success, the convening of the Arab League, a consensus of Arab opinion (including Iraq and Syria) against the PDRY, and the likely tightening of the

⁵ See Document 244.

screws on PDRY through economic sanctions as well as procedures for cease fire, withdrawal, and observers along the border. The Saudi ability to press a diplomatic solution rests, in their eyes, on developing a position of strength from which they can carry out the third phase if necessary.

B. Phase two actions are numerous and varied. Direct financial aid is being given YAR military and key officers. Provision of new equipment, both from Saudi arsenals as well as from US and other sources, is equally important. The Saudis see the greatest need as aircraft, air defense equipment, antitank weapons, and artillery. The Saudis have stated that they are prepared to find third-country nationals if necessary to man specific equipment if the US is prepared to supply the equipment.

C. Personnel is a key problem in the YAR Army not only from the point of view of skill and training deficiencies but also from the more elementary point of view of numbers. The YAR Army has suffered numerous defections in the wake of assassinations of two heads of state in less than 18 months, and its ranks have been leached even more insidiously by the simple lure of better paying jobs in the civilian economy in Yemen and in Saudi Arabia. Embassy Sana has had frequent reports that the number of effectives serving in the YAR armed forces is certainly under 15,000 and may be under 10,000 men. To overcome this need, the Saudis have turned to their erstwhile friends, the tribes of North Yemen, whose ability to raise large groups of well armed and formidable warriors is considerable. Tribal efforts, however, are notoriously mercenary and short-lived, and they cannot use heavy weapons, but they appear to be making an impressive contribution at the present moment to the efforts of retaking Harib, Sayda, and Qataba.

D. Phase three in the Saudi view, as far as we are able to discern, is a carefully designed and limited military operation to attack PDRY forces from three sides. Based on circumstantial evidence and local speculation, the following appears to be Saudi strategic thinking. The first element in the attack is the YAR effort along its southern border, with the aim of tying up as many forces as possible in the mountainous terrain. The Saudis probably anticipate an "Omani front" both to seize some territory in eastern PDRY and tie up PDRY forces there. The SAG military stated possible use of PDRY dissidents for this purpose. This leaves the Saudis to attack from Sharura toward Zamakh, Al-Abr, and Minwakh, plus a drive down into the mouth of the Hadramaout Valley to a town called Hanayn. This is a thrust of between 50 to 100 miles from the large forward operating base of the Saudis at Sharura. It is within the range of Saudi aircraft. Saudis already have about a 5,000 man force (mostly motorized infantry) at Sharura and are making arrangements to more than double this number soon.

E. The Saudi scheme of operations is, according to Saud, not intended to result in long-term occupation or dismemberment of South Yemen, nor is it intended—to judge by Saudi statements—to topple Aden by direct assault. It is intended, however, to create a situation in which the PDRY Army and political leadership might decide to overturn Abdul Fattah Ismail in the aftermath of PDRY defeat and withdrawal from Yemen.

7. The Saudi request for US support and endorsement should be carefully considered. The decisions we take on the Saud request may have far-reaching consequences. On the face of it, Saudi Arabia is asking for a major commitment from us—a commitment to back up Saudi military action and, if necessary, to intervene to rescue them from Soviet/Cuban military reaction. Nevertheless, notwithstanding Saud's statement to me that Saudi Arabia had "decided" to intervene militarily, we see little enthusiasm here for military action, and the prospects that Saudi Arabia will implement its decision are not high. The risks are real, however, that events could propel Saudi Arabia in the direction of intervention, and we should respond to the Saudi request for American support with this possibility in mind. Accordingly, we should examine closely the two crucial policy issues Saud has placed before us: (1) should we encourage or discourage Saudi military action against PDRY; and (2) what should be the extent of US military support in these circumstances.

A. A successful Saudi military action in South Yemen would be a defeat for the PDRY, a setback of some proportions for the USSR, and a significant gain in credibility for the United States (and Saudi Arabia). It would offset, and perhaps overcome, impressions current in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world that the friendship and support of the United States is of little practical value, and that the United States will not act in the face of Soviet-supported aggression. It would give practical sustenance to the President's new security policy enunciated by Secretary Brown earlier this month. It would deal a rebuff to Arab radicalism and sound a cautionary note for other Arab radicals. It would obligate Saudi Arabia to the United States in a new way.

B. Encouraging Saudi military action in PDRY has real dangers however. The Saudi military effort will almost surely fail, either because of Saudi incompetence or because of Soviet-Cuban intervention. It is uncertain, even improbable, that the Saudi attack could achieve its aim of forcing a rapid PDRY withdrawal from YAR; it is unlikely that the Saudi military action could be completed successfully before a Soviet-Cuban counteroffensive had occurred; and it is certain that the Saudi forces could not withstand a Soviet-backed attack by proxy forces. A Saudi defeat, as Saud said to me, is "politically intolerable" and could lead to the eclipse of the Saudi royal family's leadership, and a political

unravelling in the Peninsula. Saudi Arabia will look to us to bail them out. But the United States will be unable to muster the necessary domestic-political endorsement for US military support for a Saudi invasion of an independent state. The United States will thus be found wanting when the chips are down. These real risks appear to weigh more heavily than the fond hopes.

C. Full US support requirements implied by the Saud request are enormous. If we encourage Saudi military action, we should also be prepared to (1) meet urgent equipment requirements of Saudi Arabia and YAR, for both political and military reasons, at expense of our own stocks; (2) resupply combat-attributed expendables and major end items; (3) give the necessary planning and tactical advice and intelligence support to enhance operations; (4) politically, work to achieve domestic political support and, diplomatically, take a very hard line with the Soviet Union; and (5) prepare for a US military presence in Saudi Arabia and a last-resort commitment to protect the Kingdom.

D. There is also a lesser level of support possible. We could (1) make general commitment to supply necessary equipment to both Saudi Arabia and YAR and be generous in our interpretation of "necessary"; (2) expedite the deliveries of F-5's and supply Redeyes under suitable control arrangements for the YAR; (3) provide training teams and tactical advice to the YAR in order to raise the proficiency of YAR forces quickly; and (4) create a logistics support arrangement, involving US military personnel in country. We could also develop an action program, in cooperation with Saudi Arabia, for involving third-country military personnel in support of the YAR (Jordan and Egypt for example). So far as we know, however, Saudi Arabia has not been active as of yet in this. Although telling us they agree in principle to third-country participation, they have left it up to the YAR to arrange and haven't offered to pay for any costs.

8. There are alternatives. Discussion above has focused on options as conceived by the Saudis; we should think in terms of alternatives to the risky and difficult attack by Saudi forces on PDRY. First alternative is use of Saudi forces within YAR, and second alternative is diplomatic effort which extends far beyond one-month period which Saudis have so far mentioned informally as limit of their patience.

A. Military commitment within YAR involves air strikes by Saudi aircraft on PDRY enclaves in Harib, Sayda, Qataba, and Waza'iyah areas and/or commitment of some Saudi Army units—artillery, anti-tank, air defense, local security, and helicopters—in YAR, either in central locations in Sana (to free YAR units for movement away from capital) or on major avenues of approach.

B. This alternative has several unattractive features to Saudis, including not only problems they mentioned, i.e., danger of accidental

attacks on local tribes by Saudi aircraft and inadvertent destruction of villages by Saudi fire but probably also problem which Saudis did not mention, [2 lines not declassified]. Other difficulties with commitment within YAR is that it is not likely to be decisive or quick as strike directly at PDRY might be, and it means that fighting will take place on soil of victim rather than aggressor. It could be wasteful and protracted conflict, subject to the divisions and personalism of Yemeni politics.

C. On other hand, commitment within YAR ranges Saudis alongside YAR in clearly defensive role which would make diplomatic case more palatable. It would tend to contain conflict in Yemen rather than widening it. It would be easier to draw in other forces in pan-Arab peacekeeping or expeditionary force and it would sustain morale of YAR Government and fighting capability of YAR forces. Last and not least, it would be far easier for USG to mount resupply effort for Saudis and Yemenis and convince domestic and international opinion of correctness of our role.

D. Diplomatic effort should not only be much longer than Saudis now anticipate but also should be much more far ranging effort than attempt to get paper decision in Arab League. Saudis have sophisticated view of economic and commercial pressures which can be brought to bear on PDRY. Remittances, shipments of Arab oil to Aden refinery, payments of Arab aid are most important props of marginal PDRY economy and more important than Communist aid. Cut-offs would not necessarily be decisive but would create unrest in population and some potential for division in leadership over foreign adventure which sacrifices national welfare for international revolution. Political isolation of PDRY—especially if Syria and Iraq can be brought along—would strike at Arab credentials of Aden regime. Condemnation in Arab League is of passing importance by comparison, as is UN call for withdrawal, but these could be added to efforts to rally international opinion against “renegade” regime in Aden.

9. Based on foregoing, I recommend the following: respond to Saudi request for US security commitment by telling SAG that (1) the United States is prepared to state, in a public forum, our commitment to go to the aid of Saudi Arabia, in accordance with our constitutional processes, if Saudi Arabia is subject to unprovoked aggression; (2) we strongly discourage an attack directly across Saudi borders on PDRY but will support efforts, if necessary to use Saudi forces within YAR to force PDRY withdrawal, and will do what we can in this regard to supply attrited expendables and essential major end items; (3) subject to Saudi undertaking not to attack PDRY directly, we will provide needed military equipment items, including air munitions, on expedited basis to ensure SAG can negotiate from a position of strength; and (4) we are prepared to work jointly with SAG to examine YAR

military needs and to further accelerate deliveries of tanks and APC's now on order.

10. In addition, I also recommend the following: A. Diplomatic. An active diplomatic effort in support of Arab League attempts to arrange a cease fire and withdrawal of PDRY forces. We could press Soviets urge these actions on Ismail in Moscow. We might make available to YAR, for public release, aerial photographic evidence, if any, of PDRY incursions. Privately and publicly we should discourage Saudis from phase three intervention in PDRY.

B. Joint planning. Continue discussions now underway with regard to planning for the defense of Saudi Arabia. This would include examination of threats, contingencies, responses, and requirements. Do not agree now to joint planning for offensive operations against PDRY.

C. Intelligence sharing. We should arrange to share intelligence of a regional and tactical nature. We might do this through the planning team.

D. Tactical advice to YAR. Provide small number of area-knowledgeable people to form joint team with Saudis in giving tactical military advice to YAR military, and in developing ways to improve military capabilities of YAR.

E. Increase US naval presence in the Indian Ocean modestly, as a readily available but over-the-horizon military force, not intrusive on local political sensibilities but periodically visible through port calls. Consider the development of co-located operating bases and periodic deployments of USAF aircraft.

F. Agree to expedite delivery of Saudi F-15's to first quarter of 1981, as requested. Agree to recommend to Congress this year items of high value to Saudi Arabia, especially F-5 munitions. Offer to update 1974 survey of Saudi military forces to assist in long-range planning requirements.

G. Expedite the delivery of 12 F-5 aircraft to YAR, with deliveries by 1 April, if by that time, Saudi Arabia provides from its own resources, or acquires from third countries, necessary pilots and support personnel and equipment. This should have a useful bolstering effect on Salih.

H. Agree to the deployment of Saudi-manned Redeyes to YAR, as alternative to giving Redeyes to Yemen itself. Expedite the repair and delivery of Redeyes now in pipeline for Saudi Arabia. Agree to provide additional 318 Redeyes requested of Secretary Brown.

I. Expedite delivery to YAR of 64 M60 tanks and 50 M113 APC's for delivery by May. Agree to provide TOW missiles on expedited basis if Saudi Arabia will agree to their purchase.

J. Undertake with Saudis to develop additional assistance program for YAR through joint military survey of YAR requirements. Tailor

suggested equipment to achieve modest but real improvement in overcoming YAR deficiencies. Concentrate on training teams and nonso-phisticated equipment.

270. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, March 3, 1979

1. *Yemen*—Scattered reports indicate that fighting between North and South Yemen continues, although a ceasefire was announced to take effect early today.²

We have stressed our willingness to be as supportive as US law permits in non-combat support of any Saudi defensive role in North Yemen. We have accelerated by airlift the delivery of military equipment we previously agreed to provide the YAR, and also agreed to new requests for some TOW missiles and grenade launchers. North Yemen accepted our offer of increased aerial reconnaissance but declined a US naval visit to the port of Hodeida. Meanwhile the Arab League Foreign Ministers agreed to meet in Kuwait tomorrow to discuss the Yemen situation.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 39, State Department Evening Reports, 3/79. Secret. In the upper right-hand corner of the first page of the memorandum, Carter wrote: "Cy J."

² On March 2, North and South Yemen agreed to a cease-fire brokered by Syria and Iraq and to consider a mutual withdrawal of forces, which would be proposed at an upcoming Arab League Foreign Ministers meeting (see footnote 6, Document 274). (Marvine Howe, "Yemen and Southern Yemen Agree to a Cease-Fire," *The New York Times*, March 3, 1979, p. 3)

271. Summary of Conclusions of a Special National Security Council Meeting¹

Washington, March 5, 1979, 2–3 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

President Jimmy Carter
Department of State
 Secretary Cyrus Vance
 David Newsom, Under Secretary of
 State for Political Affairs
 William R. Crawford, Deputy Asst.
 Sec., Bureau of Near Eastern &
 South Asian Affairs
 William Bowdler, Director, Bureau of
 Intelligence & Research
Department of Defense
 Secretary Harold Brown
 Charles W. Duncan, Deputy Secretary
 Robert Murray, Deputy Asst. Sec. for
 ISA
 JCS
 Gen David C. Jones, Chairman
 LtGen William Y. Smith, Asst. to the
 Chairman
 Adm James Lyons, Office of Plans
 and Policy

Vice President Walter Mondale
 Denis Clift, Assistant to the Vice Pres.
 for National Security Affairs
DCI
 Stansfield Turner, Director Central
 Intelligence
 Frank Carlucci, Deputy Director
 Central Intelligence
White House
 Zbigniew Brzezinski
 David Aaron
 Hamilton Jordan
 Jody Powell
 NSC
 Gary Sick

SUBJECT

Yemen (U)

The President indicated that we should do what we can to assist in defense of the YAR, short of direct U.S. military involvement in the Yemens. Our efforts should be directed primarily [1 line not declassified] in defense of the YAR. The following specific steps were agreed: (S)

1. We will reconfirm our assurance previously given the Saudis that we would help defend them in the event of an attack on Saudi territory. That commitment will not be extended to the defense of the YAR. The U.S. will be prepared to assist in the planning of whatever

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 94, Yemens: Meeting: (3/5/79 NSC): 3/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are *ibid*. An unknown hand crossed out "Coordination Committee" in the heading of the document and wrote "NSC" above it. Carter approved the Summary of Conclusions, writing "OK C" in the right-hand corner of the first page. Aaron sent the Summary of Conclusions to Vance, Brown, and Turner under a March 5 covering memorandum.

steps or actions are necessary in the defense of the YAR including the provision of related support. (S)

2. The U.S. will encourage Saudi Arabia [*3 lines not declassified*]. We will indicate our willingness to assist [*less than 1 line not declassified*] including U.S. logistic support. (S)

3. The Secretary of State will consult with [*less than 1 line not declassified*] concerning what assistance they may be willing to provide. (S)

4. The U.S.U.N. Mission will assess the most effective means of raising this issue in the UN, bringing in the support of other nations as possible. The YAR should be encouraged to take the lead, with Saudi backing. (S)

5. The Secretary of State will deliver a strong message to the Soviets, protesting their involvement in the PDRY attack and indicating our firm backing of the integrity of regional borders, our commitment to protect the integrity of Saudi Arabia, and the serious effect this action can have on our relations with the USSR. (S)

6. The U.S. is prepared to transfer 12 F-5 aircraft to Saudi Arabia [*1 line not declassified*]. Alternatively, the [*2 lines not declassified*]. The U.S. would be prepared to provide maintenance and support. (S)

7. The U.S. will be prepared to provide replacement of equipment lost [*less than 1 line not declassified*] on the same basis as the assurance previously given to Saudi Arabia. (S)

8. The U.S. will offer to provide immediate deployment of a squadron of USAF F-15s and AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia for defense of Saudi Arabian airspace. (S)

9. A U.S. carrier from the Pacific will be ordered to proceed to the area. (S)

10. SR-71 reconnaissance of the area will be examined, possibly operating from bases in the region, such as Egypt.

11. The DCI will undertake an assessment of the stability of the Salih Government in the YAR and the prospects for the emergence of alternative leadership friendly to the Saudis and ourselves. (S)

12. We will maintain the lowest possible public posture on our own activities for now, with no announcement of movements of units. We should take all necessary steps to make public the Soviet role, their advance knowledge of the attack and the involvement of the Cubans and Ethiopians. (S)

272. Paper Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

Washington, undated

*Proposed Covert Action Program in the Arabian Peninsula**INITIATIVE*

This proposal derives from a consideration of the deteriorating situation in the Arabian Peninsula by the Special Coordination Committee (SCC) on 5 March 1979.²

SYNOPSIS

This proposal provides options for assisting the Governments of Saudi Arabia, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and Oman in countering the threat posed by the aggressive policies of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). A long term subversive program by PDRY against the YAR has recently escalated into relatively large scale military incursions. PDRY is receiving substantial assistance from the Soviet Union, Cuba and East Germany. Failure of the United States to act could indicate to the Saudis and other area countries that the U.S. Government was not concerned with their security and could also lead to the destabilization of YAR. The options involved include:

- (1) Defensive training for YAR and Omani military personnel
- (2) Support for the YAR through consultants and advisors
- (3) Propaganda Broadcasts [*less than 1 line not declassified*] into PDRY
- (4) Agent of influence operations against PDRY

POLICY

It is United States policy to maintain friendly relations with Saudi Arabia, Oman and the Yemen Arab Republic, and to respond positively to requests from friendly countries, where appropriate, for assistance to counter Communist-sponsored insurgencies and subversion.

PROBLEM

PDRY has been sponsoring continuing insurgency in the border area between PDRY and the YAR, and to a lesser extent along the border between PDRY and Oman. There is historical tribal irredentism in these areas, which PDRY is exploiting. In late February the insur-

¹ Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Congressional Affairs, Job 81M01032R, Subject Committee Files (1943-1980), Box 9, Folder 24, Covert Action Pres Find Saudi Arabia. Secret; Sensitive. The paper was considered at the March 6 SCC meeting. See Document 187.

² See Document 271.

gency escalated in YAR. Three towns have been occupied, and the PDRY-backed forces appear to be moving on major population centers. It is believed that they intend to cut off the southern portion of North Yemen from the YAR proper.

PDRY is receiving political, economic and military support from the Soviets, Cuba and East Germany. The Government of Saudi Arabia believes that PDRY is acting as a surrogate for the Soviet Union and poses a serious threat to the stability of the moderate regimes in the Arab Peninsula. The Saudis have indicated that they will support [*less than 1 line not declassified*] efforts of the United States to increase the ability of YAR and Oman to resist PDRY aggression. Conversely, failure of the United States to [*less than 1 line not declassified*] at this time could convince the Saudis that the United States is not interested in their security and lead to a worsening of the United States position in the Arab Peninsula.

The Saudis have indicated that if PDRY-backed forces do not withdraw, they may open hostilities against PDRY. However, their military capabilities to deal with this crisis are limited. The Arab League is meeting in Kuwait to attempt to resolve the problem, but it is anticipated that their efforts will prove unsuccessful. Therefore, without U.S. intervention, the PDRY-sponsored insurgency will probably succeed, and PDRY may be encouraged to expand its aggression.

At the same time, PDRY itself is not without vulnerabilities, including: apparent tribal dissidence; opposition to the Marxist regime's anti-Islamic policies; separatist tendencies in the Hadhramaut area; and resentment against the rule of the North Yemeni President, Ismail, by his South Yemeni subjects. Programs exploiting these vulnerabilities could substantially diminish, in time, PDRY's ability to operate against its neighbors.

ACTION OPTIONS

1. *Overt Options:* Through diplomatic channels, the United States can protest to the Soviets and their surrogates regarding PDRY's activities and can mobilize other friendly governments to concern themselves with the deteriorating situation in the Peninsula. A U.S. military option is also available as a last resort.

2. *Covert Action Options:* CIA proposes the following options, which would serve both to improve area governments' capabilities to resist PDRY aggression and to reassure them of U.S. interest in their security. [*1½ lines not declassified*]

a. *Defensive Training for YAR and Omani Military Personnel.* We would propose training, [*less than 1 line not declassified*] select YAR and Omani units to cope with subversion and destabilization operations run into the YAR and Oman from the People's Democratic Republic

of Yemen. Because of the current escalation in the YAR, the initial focus of the program would be in that country. Training would include, inter alia, instruction to government administrators on communist tactics; training of militia leaders in weapons handling and small scale military tactics; and assistance in the development of counterpropaganda operations against PDRY. (Note: This option may have little impact if military activity permanently escalated to the level of conventional warfare, involving tanks, artillery and tactical air support.)

b. [10 lines not declassified]

c. Propaganda Broadcasts [less than 1 line not declassified] into PDRY. Establishment of a transmitter [less than 1 line not declassified] for propaganda broadcasting into PDRY is a definite possibility. [7½ lines not declassified] A survey would have to be conducted to determine technical requirements. We assume that [less than 1 line not declassified] approach would be required to reach a wide PDRY audience. We doubt that [less than 1 line not declassified] currently has the necessary facilities.

The aim of our radio propaganda would be to denigrate the regime of PDRY President Ismail, condemn its anti-Islamic policies, and exploit tribal dissidence, separatism and regional frictions within PDRY.

d. Agent of Influence Operations Against PDRY. We propose recruitment and manipulation of dissident PDRY regional, tribal and political leaders to foment unrest within PDRY. [2½ lines not declassified] This activity would require good intelligence on PDRY, which in turn would necessitate undertaking new collection operations.

RISKS

[less than 1 line not declassified] agent of influence activities are low profile and involve little risk. The defensive training and radio options, on the other hand, would be readily detected by our adversaries and, while U.S. involvement would be deniable, they would constitute a clear signal that the U.S. Government was involved. If they are successful, particularly the defensive training option, they could lead to an escalation by the other side. On the other hand, if they did not produce results, they could prove disappointing to our allies. This could lead to demands for intensification of our involvement, for example, for mounting cross-border paramilitary operations into PDRY as opposed to merely defensive training activities.

As indicated above, the risk of not carrying out some or all of these options is that the Saudis, YAR and Oman may come to believe that the U.S. Government is not interested in their security.

ALTERNATIVES TO U.S. ACTION

[1 paragraph (6½ lines) not declassified]

COSTS

[table not declassified]

The sums involved almost certainly will require [less than 1 line not declassified].

COORDINATION AND REPORTING

This paper has not been coordinated outside CIA and, because of time constraints, has received only limited coordination within the Agency. CIA believes that this proposal, if implemented, requires a Presidential finding and Congressional reporting under the provisions of Section 662 of the Foreign Assistance Act.³

SCC DECISIONS

There has been no prior SCC decision on this subject.

³ Section 662 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974 that required a Presidential Finding that special activities of the Central Intelligence Agency in foreign countries were important to the national security of the United States. This was repealed in 1991.

273. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union and the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, March 6, 1979, 0136Z

54819. White House—pass Dr. Brzezinski on aircraft. Subject: Secretary's Meeting With Dobrynin. Ref: Moscow 5258.²

1. Secretary Vance met with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin March 5. Dobrynin requested meeting to provide Soviet response to our demarche on Yemen situation February 27.³ The Ambassador's instructions were to express satisfaction that Soviet urgings of restraint had resulted in a ceasefire; he was also to raise the question of U.S. arms shipments to the YAR. The Secretary told him the ceasefire had not held, and that the fighting had expanded, pointing out that Soviet logistical support and shipments of military equipment, including artillery and anti-tank rockets, had contributed to the present situation.

2. The Secretary impressed on Dobrynin the urgency of getting the PDRY forces back across the border from their deep penetration into the YAR and the importance of restoring the ceasefire. He indicated that we had obligations to Saudi Arabia and we would honor those obligations. The Soviet Union should understand that its actions in Yemen bear on our vital interests in the region. Dobrynin said there was no threat to Saudi Arabia, but Secretary indicated that the Saudis were nevertheless worried. Dobrynin promised to report our views.

3. For Jidda: Ambassador may use summary of Vance-Dobrynin conversation in briefing Saudis on our continuing efforts to persuade Soviets to play a constructive role in the resolution of this conflict. After briefing Saud on the Secretary's demarche to Dobrynin, you should point out the anomaly of US support for Saudi Arabia vis-a-

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemens: Border War: 3/5-12/79. Secret; Niact Immediate; Nodis. Sent for information Immediate to Sana, Paris, London, and the White House. Printed from a copy that was received in the White House Situation Room. Drafted by Bodine and Sherrod McCall (EUR/SOV); cleared by Robert L. Barry (EUR), Marshall Shulman (S/MS), Crawford, and Wisner; approved by Newsom. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840140-2571) Brzezinski traveled to Egypt with Carter to meet with Sadat March 7-10. Also printed in *Foreign Relations, 1977-1980*, vol. VI, Soviet Union, Document 179.

² In telegram 5258 from Moscow, March 2, the Embassy described Toon's meeting with Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Korniyenko regarding the Yemen situation, during which Toon reiterated the U.S. desire for the Soviet Union to urge restraint on the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, P840176-1010)

³ See footnote 2, Document 263.

vis PDRY and the press play on his interview with Hawadis.⁴ At this particular time, with the Yemen conflict raging, such statements might be interpreted as Saudi encouragement in Moscow.

4. For Moscow: Above points provided as background. You may draw on them if the occasion should arise but you need not approach Soviets on this specifically.

5. Addressees will be provided septel factual up-date of Soviet assistance to PDRY, with emphasis on post-June '78 coup arms deliveries and review of current political and military situation in YAR.⁵

Vance

⁴ Reference is to Saud's interview printed in the March 3 issue of *Al Hawadess*, a weekly Lebanese magazine. Saud asserted: "We would like to emphasize that the absence of diplomatic ties between us does not mean we do not recognize the Soviet Union or the importance of the role played by Soviet international policy. We have in the past expressed gratitude toward the positive stands taken by the Soviet Union regarding Arab questions. ("Saudi Hints at Efforts for Better Soviet Ties But Not Formal Links," *The New York Times*, March 5, 1979, p. A6)

⁵ Not found.

274. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, March 6, 1979

Yemen. We have little news on the fighting. The Arab League-mandated ceasefire² which officially went into effect this morning appears to have some impact: the level of combat seems to be reduced. The ceasefire calls for (1) an immediate end to fighting; (2) pullback of forces to internationally recognized borders within ten days, i.e., by

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 39, State Department Evening Reports, 3/79. Secret. Carter wrote "Cy J" in the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum.

² The Arab League Foreign Ministers met in Kuwait March 5–6 to discuss the Yemen situation. The Arab League plan "called for a truce and a committee of Arab foreign ministers to follow it up. It also called for mutual withdrawals within a week, stationing of military observers along the border and opening of talks for unification of Yemen and Southern Yemen." (Marvine Howe, "Arab League Agrees on Plan," *The New York Times*, March 6, 1979, p. A8)

March 16; (3) appointment of military and political committees to oversee the ceasefire and withdrawal (composed of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Kuwait, the PLO and the Arab League Secretary General); (4) cessation of propaganda attacks; (5) eventual re-establishment of commercial and diplomatic ties; (6) direct dialogue between North and South Yemen at the presidential level, with Kuwait offering to host such a meeting. The Syrians and Iraqis jointly took the lead in bringing about Arab League action.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

275. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 7, 1979, 3–4:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Yemen

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for the Middle East
Lucy Benson, Under Secretary for Security Assistance
Ambassador William Crawford

OSD

David McGiffert, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs
David Ransom, Deputy Director, NEASA Region
Eric Von Marbod, Deputy Director, Defense Security Assistance Agency

JCS

Lt. General William Y. Smith, Assistant to the Chairman
Colonel Kenneth McKim

DCI

Dr. Robert Bowie, NIO
Raymond Andrews, NIO

White House

David Aaron (Chairman)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 94, Yemens: Meetings: (3/7/79 Mini-SCC): 3/79. Confidential. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found.

NSC

Gary Sick

Leslie G. Denend

A mini-SCC meeting was called to follow-up on decisions taken at the NSC meeting March 5.² The following issues were reviewed: (C)

1. Under Secretary Newsom will brief the Congress this afternoon and tomorrow to convey the following points: (C)

—Status of deliveries to the YAR and Saudi Arabia including anticipated additional sales, and our intent to waive the required formal 30-day notification period for three sales to the YAR which have just completed the informal notification period. (C)

—That if Saudi aircraft enter combat in support of the YAR, it may be necessary for the United States to replenish Saudi air munitions. (C)

—That U.S. forces will not be directly involved in activities in the YAR but that training connected with arms sales will go forward as planned. (C)

—If questioned on the War Powers Resolution, Newsom will respond that U.S. forces will not be involved in the YAR. He will indicate that we are very aware of the resolution and will consult if and when required. (C)

2. The Saudis have declined our offer to send F-15s to Saudi Arabia but have requested the urgent deployment of AWACS. Two AWACS aircraft currently in Okinawa will move to Saudi Arabia during the next 24 hours. (C)

3. Rather than provide U.S.-origin long-range artillery to the YAR, the U.S. will encourage Yemen to use artillery already in their inventory, seeking ammunition and support from Egypt if necessary. (C)

4. To answer the question posed by Princes Fahd and Saud on the legal implications for the United States Government if Saudi Arabia were to go to the aid of the YAR under their defense pact, State and Defense will review the U.S. statute. (C)

5. Should U.S. participation in the Saudi planning effort to assist the YAR become significant, it may be necessary to augment the number of people presently available to General Cathey. (C)

² See Document 271.

276. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)¹

Washington, March 8, 1979

SUBJECT

Yemen: Your Meeting with the Vice President

Since the completion of the Arab League Foreign Ministers meeting in Kuwait on Tuesday,² the fighting seems to have subsided somewhat. There are reports that the YAR defense has stiffened, but that may only reflect a lower level of activity by the PDRY. Nevertheless, there were reports of PDRY air attacks on YAR positions yesterday, suggesting that an effective YAR counterattack may have begun to materialize. (S)

On the political front, an Arab League committee (Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, UAR, Algeria, PLO) is due to visit the YAR in the next two days as part of the cease fire supervisory effort. The Kuwait communique also called for a meeting "at the summit level" between YAR and PDRY. The YAR leadership says it will meet only after PDRY troops are withdrawn; PDRY wants to meet before. The withdrawal was to take place in no less than 10 days, i.e. by March 16. There is a lot of diplomatic activity on that front, and an early YAR-PDRY summit is not likely. (S)

There have been isolated cases of tribal revolt in the North. A small band attacked a guard post near the Sanaa airport but was driven off without casualties. Other limited tribal clashes have occurred north of Sanaa but have reportedly been contained. The Salih government has been badly undermined, and there is talk of succession, including a possible seven-man ruling council composed of tribal leaders and political figures, with Salih remaining at least titular President. The Saudis are probably actively involved in the power-brokering, but we will hear of it only after the fact if past experience is any guide. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemens: Border War: 3/5-12/79. Secret. A stamped notation on the first page reads: "DA has seen."

² See footnote 2, Document 274.

277. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 14, 1979, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

Iran and Yemen

PARTICIPANTS

The Vice President

State

Mr. David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

Mr. William Crawford, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

Mr. James Michel, Legal Advisor

OSD

Admiral Daniel J. Murphy, Deputy Under Secretary for Policy

Mr. David Ransom, Deputy Director, Near Eastern, African and South Asian Affairs

Cmdr James Kelly, Iran Desk Officer

JCS

Admiral James A. Lyons, Assistant Deputy Director for Politico Military Affairs

Lt. Colonel Kenneth McKim, Staff Officer

CIA

Mr. Frank Carlucci, Deputy Director

Mr. Bob Ames, NIO Near East and South Asia

White House

Mr. David Aaron, Chairman

Mr. John Matheny, Vice President's Staff

NSC

Captain Gary Sick

Lt. Colonel Leslie G. Denend

[Omitted here is material related to Iran.]

4. Ambassador West and General Cathey will be asked to assess Saudi intentions toward the Yemen situation in light of recent indications that their policy might be changing. (S)

5. The SR-71 flight scheduled for Thursday, March 15 will go as planned. After the intelligence is developed, specific authorization will be sought before delivering the material to Saudi Arabia or the YAR.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Global Issues, Oplinger/Bloomfield Subject File, Chron: 3/9–14/79. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Sent by Aaron to Vance, Brown, and Turner under a March 14 covering memorandum.

After the flight, the U.S. will also begin an exchange of order of battle intelligence with the YAR if they are interested. (S)

6. The U.S. will seek to make the case with the YAR that the continued presence of Soviet advisors in North Yemen is no longer in their interest. (S)

7. All agreed that U.S. participation in support for North Yemen has moved into a period of consolidation. After having moved quickly to accelerate the delivery of equipment in response to urgent Saudi and Yemeni requests, U.S. efforts should now concentrate on support for acceptable diplomatic initiatives to resolve the conflict and effect a withdrawal and on our continuing to follow through on equipment deliveries at a measured pace. (S)

278. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic¹

Washington, March 17, 1979, 0234Z

65767. Subject: Soviet Role in YAR.

(S) entire text.

1. As you are aware, prior to outbreak of recent hostilities it had been U.S. policy not to urge YAR to get rid of Soviet military advisors. Thinking behind this policy was that lingering but declining Soviet presence in YAR might be a force for restraint on Soviet part in South Arabia and concern that a premature YAR effort to dislodge Soviets could precipitate a Soviet response threatening YAR stability.

2. Evidence since February 23 makes it clear that Soviets have not been a force for restraint. We understand that YAR has entertained idea of asking Soviet military advisors out but to our best information has taken no action in this regard. In terms of YAR Government's attitude towards Soviets, time may be right to encourage YAR intentions in this regard.

3. Congress has pressed us on the anomaly of lingering Soviet advisory presence while we are supplying equipment and training. Our accelerated delivery of equipment and training seems to meet

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790122-0688. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Twinam; cleared by Crawford, Sick, Murray, Hurlings (S/S-O); approved by Newsom. Sent for information Immediate to Jidda, USLO Riyadh, and Moscow.

conditions YARG had previously stressed for termination of Soviet role. In addition, as practical matter, we wonder whether continued presence of Soviets, including possible Soviet offers of additional equipment, could not interfere with our own efforts to supply and train YAR armed forces.

4. Before taking any action along these lines however we would appreciate your assessment on two points. (1) Given YAR sensitivities about “super power” competition in region, would it be preferable for probe to come from Saudis rather than from U.S.? (2) Given the apparently delicate state of political stability in YAR and the ties which some YAR military leaders have to the Soviet relationship, would we or Saudis by suggesting to YAR that the time has come to move against the Soviet presence run the risk of precipitating a military coup attempt by pro-Soviet officers? In this connection, it would be helpful to have update of your assessment of attitudes in Yemeni military and political groups about Soviets at this stage.²

Vance

² See Document 279.

279. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, March 19, 1979, 1227Z

1862. Subj: (S) Soviet Role in YAR. Ref: State 065767.²

1. (S-entire text).

2. Summary: A direct request to the YARG for immediate expulsion of all Soviet military advisors at this time would be unwise. YARG officials have said they would like to see the Soviet military advisors leave but, given the present internal and international circumstances, we believe this will have to be done quietly and gradually. A phased

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790154–0571. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Jidda, USLO Riyadh, and Moscow.

² See Document 278.

withdrawal of Soviet military advisors, as described below, is less likely to become a controversial political issue and therefore more likely to be acceptable to the YARG. End summary.

3. Despite the pounding that the YAR Army took from Soviet weapons in the hands of the PDRY during the past three weeks, the YAR attitude towards the Soviets remains ambivalent. On the one hand, President Salih, the YARG and many Yemenis believe that the Soviets supported the PDRY attack, if they did not actually instigate it, and the YAR Army now knows for a certainty that the Soviets gave more and better weapons and training to the PDRY than to the YAR. We have also heard that, although the Soviet military advisors continued to report for work during the fighting, they did very little to help the YAR Army or the Air Force, remarking instead that if the YAR had accepted the Soviet offers of new equipment, rather than waiting for U.S. aid, they would have been better able to defend themselves. On the other hand, we have heard remarkably little public criticism of Soviet behavior. YARG leaders have repeatedly claimed that Cubans and even Ethiopians were fighting with PDRY forces inside the YAR, but they have not specifically mentioned the Soviets in public. Many Yemeni politicians are of two minds about the Soviets; in strictly Yemeni terms, they would like to see them go as soon as they are sure the USG will take their place as arms suppliers and advisors; in pan-Arab terms, however, the political figures are reluctant at this time to cut all ties with a country that has strongly supported the Arab position vis-a-vis Israel.

4. Internally, President Salih's position is even weaker than before and all of his rivals are jockeying for position and for both internal and external support. A decision to expel the Soviets would be politically dangerous. In present circumstances, we doubt whether President Salih has the power or the courage to take such action.

5. We estimate there are currently about 120–150 Soviet military advisors in the YAR—about 30 with the Air Force, 12 with the Navy, 6 at the military academy and most of the remainder with the armored units and artillery. Soviet advisors to the air defense units were withdrawn by the YAR prior to the recent fighting, on the grounds that they had already provided all the training the YAR Army needed on the equipment it was using, and for some time prior to the fighting, Soviet advisors needed prior approval from military HQs before visiting a military unit. At the same time, the initial exposure of the Yemeni military to our MTTs, which began early this year, has had a positive effect. We have received numerous compliments on the friendliness and professionalism of U.S. Army trainers as compared with Soviet advisors. As our training programs expands, the Yemeni armed forces will have a growing respect for the competence of our soldiers and our military system.

6. If the Soviets perceived that we were determined to force the government of President Salih to expel all their military advisors immediately, they might well try to instigate a coup, since we do not think they will give up their position here without a fight. The most likely group to spearhead such a coup is the Air Force, commanded by Major Dayfallah, who is Soviet trained and has frequently been accused of being pro-Soviet. Chief of Staff Ali Shayba is also very close to the Soviets. Some internal elements of the pro-PDRY Democratic National Front might join this attempt, but it would need more widespread support in the Army to succeed. Whether or not this support would be forthcoming would depend on other elements in the YAR political equation, such as the Nationalists and the Baathis, as well as the tribes. If such an attempt were successful, we believe the result would be a coalition government that would include pro-Soviet elements but not be dominated by them. The attitude of such a coalition government might be more favorable to the continued presence of Soviet military advisors than that of the present government.

7. Despite the publicity given to our arms supply effort to the YAR, the fact of the matter is that the only useful arms we sent while the fighting was going on was 7,000 LAW anti-tank missiles. As of March 16, we have delivered 12 105 howitzers, 12 TOWs and a number of grenade launchers, with associated MTTs, but the planes, tanks and long-range artillery pieces the YAR particularly wants and needs have not yet arrived. Until we, the Saudis and/or the Jordanians actually begin delivering these weapons, and training the Yemenis how to use them, the YAR will be extremely reluctant, for both military and political reasons, to give up the weapons they have and the Soviet advisors who keep them running.

8. We believe the best way to proceed on this problem is on a step-by-step basis. We understand that the YAR is planning to move the remaining MiG-17s and the Soviet advisors associated with them to Hodeida, once they have a firm ETA for the F-5s in Sana. As the F-5s become operational, the YAR can be expected to rely more and more on them as its principal air weapon. In the meantime, the MiGs will probably join the "static display" of deadlined Soviet aircraft in Hodeida, particularly if the Soviets continue to refuse to supply spare parts. As the aircraft break down, the need for Soviet advisors will disappear and they can quietly be sent home. The same system could be followed with the tanks: once the M-60s have begun to arrive and YAR troops trained in their use, the older Soviet tanks and their Soviet advisors could be moved to a remote location and then retired from service. This might take longer than in the case of the airplanes because the YAR military is supplied at the moment entirely with Soviet tanks, but it would remove the Soviet advisors from the scene and prevent

them from interfering with our efforts to supply and train the YAR armed forces. A suggestion along these lines to the Yemenis could come more appropriately from the Saudis or the Jordanians than from us, as was the case with the F-5s. This keeps the matter in the Arab context and makes it easier for other Arab states to accept.

Lane

280. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, March 29, 1979, 10:38 a.m.–12:05 p.m.

SUBJECT

Current Issues—Yemen and Iran

PARTICIPANTS

State

David Newsom, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

Ms. Lucy Benson, Under Secretary for Security Assistance, Science and Technology

Ambassador William Crawford, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs

OSD

Robert Murray, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Near Eastern, African and South Asian Affairs

David Ransom, Deputy Director, Near Eastern and South Asia Affairs

JCS

Lt. General William Y. Smith, Assistant to the Chairman

Admiral James A. Lyons, Assistant Deputy Director, Politico-Military Affairs

CIA

Dr. Robert Bowie, Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

John Helgerson, Assistant NIO, Near East and South Asia

White House

David Aaron (Chairman)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Yemen. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room.

NSC
Gary Sick
Thomas Thornton
Leslie G. Denend

The Mini-SCC met to update and review outstanding issues.

Yemen

1. During ASD McGiffert's attendance at the U.S.-Jordan Military Commission meeting on April 7 and 8, he will raise the issue of closer U.S.-Jordanian cooperation in Yemeni training. He will urge the Jordanians to provide training personnel to assist Yemen with the absorption of newly provided equipment. (S)

2. State and DOD will continue to press Saudi Arabia and Yemen for early completion of the training of Yemeni F-5 pilots. (S)

3. DOD will circulate draft guidance for General Lawrence to visit the YAR for a first-hand evaluation of the situation and to assess the absorption of new equipment.² (S)

4. JCS will work promptly to secure release of SR-71 photos to Saudi Arabia at Saudi request. No additional flights will be undertaken unless the Saudis make a further request. (S)

5. DOD will dispatch a five-man survey team to evaluate the Sana airfield and develop options. The team will attempt to define the minimum construction necessary to support the F-5s and other systems stationed there, using regional assets as much as possible. (S)

6. The Embassy will approach the Saudis on the redeployment of the two AWACS aircraft back to the U.S., tentatively planned for April 8. If the Saudis request a brief extension, we should accommodate them. (S)

7. DOD will circulate draft guidance for the routine deployment of the *Ranger* to the Indian Ocean, replacing the *Constellation* approximately April 14. No replacement is presently planned after a deployment of about one month. (S)

8. In order to meet P-3 surveillance requirements, State/DOD should approach Saudi Arabia first on the use of commercial facilities for approximately one flight per week for a month. Oman will also be approached for the use of commercial facilities on the same terms. (S)

[Omitted here is material related to Iran.]

² See Document 284.

281. Memorandum From Secretary of State Vance to President Carter¹

Washington, April 3, 1979

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

5. *Yemen*: The Kuwaiti sponsored Summit between the two Yemeni Presidents concluded with a declaration outlining steps toward unification of the two states.² The declaration allows enough room for interpretation so that either party may effectively block final implementation without violating the letter of the agreement.

While the principle of unification receives lip service in both the North and the South, various efforts to achieve this goal have floundered in past years. It is too early to say whether the Kuwaiti initiative will meet with any more success, but given the poor record of Yemeni and other Arab unification attempts, the prognosis is not favorable.

The declaration includes a fair amount of PDRY bombast—including a phrase on the need to “consolidate the just Pan-Arab struggle against the common enemy represented in the imperialist-Zionist-US alliance and treason.” We have received apologies from members of the North Yemen Government explaining the phrase reflected the Baghdad Conference³ and the skillful maneuvering of the South Yemeni President. The YAR has offered to issue a statement on the value North Yemen places on its relations with the US. We have instructed our Ambassador to make clear to the North Yemen Government that the declaration’s reference to the US undermines our ability to assist the Government of North Yemen and that the proposed statement would be a helpful antidote.

¹ Source: Carter Library, Plains File, Subject File, Box 39, State Department Evening Reports, 4/79. Secret. In the upper right-hand corner of the memorandum, Carter wrote: “Cy J.”

² The Arab League-sponsored summit took place in Kuwait March 28–30. Salih and Ismail signed a unity declaration on March 30. In telegram 2180 from Sana, April 1, the Embassy provided an overview of the meeting and commentary on the declaration. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790150–0912)

³ See footnote 4, Document 191.

282. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, April 30, 1979, 1142Z

2969. Subj: (U) Soviet-YAR Relations. Ref: Sana 2800.²

1. (C-entire text).

2. In a wide-ranging conversation with Presidential Advisor Abdullah Asnaj on April 29th, Asnaj said he wished to elaborate on President Salih's remarks to the Ambassador on April 22 on Soviet-YAR relations. He said the President had intended to convey to the USG that Yemen's relations with the Soviet Union go back many years to a period prior to his entry into government. This relationship had been very close in times past and he was not in a position to make a precipitate decision to terminate that relationship. On the other hand, it was the President's feeling that actions had to be taken gradually in the not too distant future to reduce Soviet presence and to diminish the relations between the two countries. Asnaj said the President had in mind to ultimately terminate all Soviet advisors and break diplomatic relations. Asnaj reiterated in strongest terms that the President wanted the U.S. to know that he was sincere in desiring a reduction of Soviet presence in the YAR and that in saying this he was not trying to play the U.S. against the Soviet Union.

3. Asnaj said that he had discussed the Soviet presence in Yemen with the Saudis on numerous occasions. He recalled a conversation last summer during the time when Saudi Arabia was discussing with U.S. and the YAR a new trilateral military relationship, saying that he had told Prince Sultan that the Saudis should prepare a timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet advisors in Yemen. He pointed out that President Salih was new in office and would be amenable to such a suggestion and that once committed he would follow through. Asnaj urged Sultan to tie the phasedown of Soviet advisors to the commitments and deliveries of military equipment under the new tripartite assistance program. Asnaj criticized Sultan as having not taken his advice and as a consequence having never given President Salih a good plan for the elimination of Soviet influence in the YAR.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790197–0376. Confidential. Sent for information to Jidda, USLO Riyadh, Cairo, and Moscow.

² In telegram 2800 from Sana, April 23, the Embassy reported on an April 22 meeting between Lane and Salih in which the latter "agreed to visit by MG Lawrence, stressed the importance of closer US-YAR relations, suggested the formation of a high level tripartite committee (Saudi/US/Yemeni) to coordinate programs and activities of mutual interest, and discussed unity with PDRY, current internal developments and Yemeni/Soviet relations." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790185–1072)

4. Asnaj said that, to his knowledge, no Soviet advisors had been withdrawn from the YAR, but there were specific plans afoot to return some of them to Soviet Union. He would not elaborate further but pointed out that a number of Soviet advisors were no longer working in their jobs with the military and that these were the obvious people to return.

5. Comment: This is not the first time Asnaj has discussed actions to reduce Soviet influence in the YAR. Even though we have heard such talk on previous occasions, the President has taken only a few limited actions against the Soviets, including removal of Soviet advisors from radar sites and the transfer of the MiG's and related Soviet personnel from Sana to Hodeidah. The latter action was taken under intense pressure by the Saudis which took the form of a refusal to transfer the F-5's until all Soviet advisors and equipment were removed from the airport. We believe Asnaj is much more committed to the views he ascribed to the President than perhaps the President himself.

Gnehm

283. Memorandum From Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)¹

Washington, May 2, 1979

SUBJECT

The Yemen Border War—A Revisionist Perspective

The Intelligence Community is significantly revising its views of what actually happened in the Yemen border war as they go back and fill in some of the gaps in the information available at the time. Some of the conclusions of the analysts closest to the issue are as follows:

—There was no unusual Soviet resupply. The flights which were reported were part of a routine pattern.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemens: Border War: 3/13/79–5/79. Secret; Sensitive. Outside the System. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates that Brzezinski saw it.

—The fighting was far less intense than we had been led to believe. There are virtually no signs of destruction in Qa'tabah, for example, where we had been told there was total devastation.

—The force levels on either side amounted to about 3,000 men, with the YAR enjoying a possibly slight numerical advantage.

—The incident may have started as a result of cross-border raids from the YAR, prompting a PDRY response.

—Only three of the 11 PDRY battalions were engaged, whereas a major effort would probably have called for commitment of 6 battalions or more.

—There is no evidence of Ethiopians involved in the fighting.

—A group of Cuban forces did arrive in Aden on the same day that the first U.S. airlift flight arrived in Sanaa. There is no evidence of any foreign personnel crossing the border.

—There were significant defections from the YAR military to the south. The YAR Government may not have known what was really going on.

—The so-called National Democratic Force [*Front*] was a rag-tag collection of about 1,000 political and military defectors from the YAR which was never under the direct control of the PDRY and was relatively ineffective in the fighting. (S)

There is no consensus about the motives and objectives of the PDRY. They clearly wanted to see the YAR regime fall and be replaced with a leadership more sympathetic to them. They may have expected a military coup in Sanaa as they won their first battles. It is not clear that they ever intended to take the Sanaa-Taiz road, although their appetites may have grown when they experienced such great success in their initial strikes. They faced a key decision point after the fall of Qa'tabah and before beginning what could have been a more costly drive up into the foothills. As it happened, the tribal forces of the north began to arrive and the political process by the Arab League began to move into full gear at that point, which may have led to the PDRY decision to leave well enough alone. (S)

The political process on both sides of the border remains murky, but analysts have offered the following observations:

—The PDRY evidently felt that the USSR did not provide as much backing as the PDRY wanted or expected.

—The Soviets may have felt some constraint due to their larger interests in the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. In that regard, Saud's overture to the Soviets in the midst of the battle may have been calculated.

—The Iraqis and Syrians were decisively important in getting the PDRY to stop fighting. Until Iraq and Syria weighed in, Arab League

efforts were largely futile. The PDRY found itself unexpectedly friendless.

—The Iraqi intervention was a major investment in developing a new relationship with the Saudis, and it served them in good stead later at the Baghdad meeting.

—The major leverage available to the Saudis was the “American card,” which they played effectively. (S)

All of this being said, the central elements of the problem remain about as we saw them at the time:

—There was a concerted effort by the PDRY to destabilize the Salih regime in the YAR by means of a military attack across the border.

—The attack was conducted with Soviet materiel and at least Soviet acquiescence.

—There was a serious threat of intervention by Cuban forces.

—The YAR military was largely ineffective and threatened to collapse at least locally.

—The Saudis regarded the crisis as a major threat to their security and viewed our participation as a fundamental test of our political relationship. (S)

Thus far, the revision of the record has been confined to analysts at the working level. There are no present plans to publish a formal review. (S)

284. Summary of Conclusions of a Mini-Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, May 17, 1979, 3:30–5 p.m.

SUBJECT

Security Issues in the Arabian Peninsula

PARTICIPANTS

State:

Under Secretary Lucy Benson, Security Assistance, Science and Technology
Harold Saunders, Asst. Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian
Affairs

William Crawford, Deputy Asst. Sec., Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian
Affairs

George Lane, U.S. Ambassador to Yemen

Daniel O'Donohue, Deputy Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs

DOD:

Robert Murray, Deputy Asst. Sec., Near Eastern African, and South Asian
Affairs

Gen Richard Lawrence, Commander, U.S. European Command Operations
Planning Element, Saudi Arabia

Henry Gaffney, Director for Near East and South Asia

David Ransom, Deputy Director for Near East and South Asia

LtCol William Boice, Aide to General Lawrence

ACDA:

Henry Blechman, Asst. Director, Weapons Evaluation and Control Bureau

Alan Platt, Arms Transfer and Economics Division

JCS:

LtGen William Smith

Rear Admiral James A. Lyons, Jr., Asst. Director for Politico-Military Affairs

DCI:

Robert Bowie, Director, National Foreign Assessment Center

[*name not declassified*], Asst. NIO for Near East and South Asia

OMB:

Randy Jayne, Assoc. Dir., Nat'l Security & International Affairs

White House:

David Aaron

NSC:

Gary Sick

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 120, SCC 068, 05/17/79, Mini SCC, Arabian Peninsula Security Issues. Secret. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found.

The Mini-SCC met to hear Major General Richard Lawrence's report on the findings of his team in Saudi Arabia and North Yemen. He outlined for the group the major deficiencies in organization, management and staff in both the Saudi and the Yemeni armed forces. He proposed a number of changes in present command structure and the assistance and advisory role of the United States to improve the military capabilities of both countries. (S)

The group agreed that an interagency study was required of the triangular U.S.-Saudi-Yemeni relationship, to be folded into the ongoing review of security issues in the Arabian Peninsula. The study should address the question of how much we wish to emphasize the U.S. role as opposed to the present situation of a U.S. role which is essentially derivative from Saudi policy. If a greater U.S. role is required or desirable, how should U.S. participation be strengthened? How can we profit from the availability of Jordanian military training and assistance? What would be the political implications of an increased U.S. role? Does the U.S. military role need to be balanced by a greater effort in the economic and political sphere? (S)

Based on the findings of this broad review of U.S. objectives and policy, the specific recommendations for command restructuring in the field will be examined. (S)

285. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, August 14, 1979, 0108Z

211437. For the Ambassador. Subject: Situation in the Yemens. Ref: (A) State 208981;² (B) Sana 5675;³ (C) Jidda 5880.⁴

1. In your meeting with Prince Sultan August 14 you should convey increasing US concern about the situation in the Yemens.

2. You should make the following points:

—We are concerned about the current political drift in North Yemen, specifically the apparent weakness of the Salih government, and its implications for YAR–PDRY relations. We believe Salih intends to spin out the Yemen unity negotiations but that he needs to feel he has solid ground from which to resist PDRY pressures.

—We would appreciate learning how SAG intends to proceed in the current situation.

—Recent events in the PDRY add to our concern for the North. It appears fairly clear to us that a major power struggle is underway within the PDRY leadership. In these circumstances there could be increased PDRY pressure on Salih to make significant gestures toward unity. Alternatively, factions in the South could precipitate hostilities against the North in order to divert attention from or influence, power struggle in PDRY.

—In this connection we were struck by the bellicose language in the statement following the August 11 extraordinary session of the

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790368–0521. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Countryman; cleared by Robert S. Steven (S/S–O) and Wheelock (NSC); approved by Constable. Sent for information to Sana.

² In telegram 208981 to Jidda, August 11, the Department noted the Saudi request to control the distribution of spare parts and ammunition for F–5s to the Yemen Arab Republic “but Saudi request to ‘establish the principle of control’ poses a variety of problems for the US.” The Department concluded, “At this point we have no alternative but to let the first shipment of F–5 munitions be delivered.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790364–0018)

³ In telegram 5675 from Sana, August 12, the Embassy reported on the ongoing unity talks between the Yemen Arab Republic and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen. Although the YAR and PDRY leaders had exchanged various messages, leading to a series of rumors of a forthcoming unity announcement, the Embassy reported that Salih “still intends to proceed toward unity very cautiously.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790365–0938)

⁴ In telegram 5880 from Jidda, August 12, the Embassy described a meeting between West and Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister Abd al-Rahman Mansuri that took place on August 11. West informed Mansuri of the Department of State’s response regarding Saudi control of ammunition and parts to the Yemen Arab Republic. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790366–0014)

PDRY's Supreme Peoples Council, which calls for "expanding the progressive revolutionary and nationalist forces and resisting the ferocious and imperialist reactionary onslaughts".

—In these circumstances we believe it is in the interest of both the U.S. and Saudi Arabia to provide the North Yemen Government with clear and unambiguous support. To do otherwise could encourage political uncertainty in the North and provide increased opportunities to the South.

—Over the next few weeks we wish to keep in close touch with the SAG on events in the Yemens with a view to exploring how each of us might best work to foster stability of YAR in order to discourage PDRY from exploiting situation.

3. If you have already cleared the way with Mansouri (para 8 ref C) you should in addition raise points in ref A re F-5 munitions with Sultan making clear that the other points you have made are in a broader context of concern about the Yemen situation.

4. Would appreciate your providing brief initial telegraphic report of Sultan's reaction via Flash precedence August 14.⁵

Vance

⁵ In telegram 5936 from Jidda, August 14, the Embassy detailed West's conversation with Sultan regarding Yemen. West noted that "Sultan seemed genuinely concerned with situation in PDRY, a concern emphasized by his request for photographic surveillance and other intelligence on the situation there. His attitude towards YAR, however, was almost blase in contrast." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790369-0513)

286. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State and the Department of Defense¹

Sana, September 4, 1979, 1026Z

6180. Subj: President Salih on U.S.-Saudi Military Assistance Program and Purchase of Soviet Arms. Ref: State 226410² (Notal).

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: Ambassador and DCM met with YAR President Ali Abdullah Salih on September 2. President said he was very pleased with U.S. military assistance efforts but called again for more direct U.S.-YAR bilateral relations in military field. He denied reports that YAR had concluded new arms deal with Soviet Union. He discussed parade being planned for September 26 National Day, saying he intended displaying all new U.S. military equipment, and extended official invitation for Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense to visit YAR on this occasion (reported septel).³ End summary.

3. Ambassador and DCM met with President Salih at YAR military headquarters in Sana on September 2. Ambassador delivered his personal greetings and condolences on the death of President's brother. Ambassador then said he would like to review the progress of U.S. military program in YAR since he had last discussed this subject with the President two months ago.⁴ Ambassador mentioned various MTTs which had been or are now in country and referred specifically to recent delivery by ship of arms, ammunition and spare parts. President interrupted to say he was very pleased with U.S. efforts. He praised work of U.S. officers and training teams and said U.S. military assist-

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790403-0569. Secret; Immediate. Sent for information Priority to Jidda, USLO Riyadh, USCINCEUR Vaihingen, and Moscow.

² In telegram 226410 to Sana, August 28, the Department agreed that the delivery of the remaining F-5s to the Yemen Arab Republic by National Day, September 26, would "be helpful in reassuring President Salih of dependability of U.S. military assistance effort. However, before approaching the Saudis on this matter it would be helpful to know if they share our assessment of YAR preparedness to receive and maintain larger number of F-5's at this time." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790393-1073)

³ In telegram 6179 from Sana, September 4, the Embassy reported that during the September 2 meeting Salih had issued an official invitation to Brown or Duncan to attend the YAR National Day celebrations on September 26. Lane commented that he believed it would be "highly desirable" for Duncan to attend, as it "would give new impetus to our military assistance effort and would be symbol of direct U.S./Yemen cooperation in the military field which is so important both to President Salih and to Yemen military establishment." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790403-0515)

⁴ Not further identified.

ance program was proceeding well. However, the “other partner”⁵ was not always cooperative. He therefore wanted closer, more direct, relationship with USG.

4. Ambassador agreed that direct, bilateral relations were important and said they were being constantly strengthened. Not only did we have close bilateral relations in the economic field, as witnessed by our growing aid program, but our direct military relations were also much closer than they were only six months ago. A trilateral arms program was by its very nature difficult to administer but since the Saudis were paying for the arms, they were naturally interested in how the program was carried out. Salih acknowledged legitimacy of Saudi interest but said that they should not interfere in the implementation of the program; for example, once arms, ammunition and spare parts destined for YAR had been paid for, they should be delivered directly to YAR, not via Saudi Arabia.

5. President Salih then brought up the subject of story of YAR arms purchases from USSR. He referred to Ambassador’s meeting with Presidential Advisor Abdullah Asnaj⁶ and asked where Ambassador had heard report of new arms purchase from Soviet Union. Ambassador replied that rumors were widespread in Sana. Ambassador noted that President had earlier urged us to ask him or his personal advisors for clarification of any such rumors we heard and we had therefore come to him. President said he had not signed any new agreement with Soviets. As U.S. was aware, YAR had recently purchased Polish tanks but no other equipment from Soviet bloc. (He proudly noted twice that these tanks were paid for in cash from the central bank.) Ambassador specifically asked if President meant there were no MiG 21s coming to Yemen. President said that was right. There had not yet been any military purchases from Soviet Union and there would be none if the U.S. military equipment, specifically the F-5s, reached Sana as soon as possible. (Clearly before September 26 National Day). He had to have fighters; what did USG expect him to do if they could not get the F-5s he had been promised? Ambassador said there had not been room to park all F-5s under cover at Sana airport. President scoffed at this, saying, quote you bring the planes and I’ll find a place to put them end quote.

6. President Salih said (and repeated several times during the 45 minute conversation) that there were those who were trying to destroy U.S.-YAR relations by spreading false rumors and said that both he

⁵ Saudi Arabia.

⁶ Reference is to a meeting between Lane and al-Asnaj on August 27, reported in telegram 5965 from Sana, August 27. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790391-0539)

and U.S. must work together to see that these people did not succeed. He specifically mentioned the Soviet Military Attache as one source. Re travels of YAR military officers, he confirmed that both Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Col. Ali Mansour and Lt. Col. Abdallah al Hazwarah had been in Europe but said that one was on vacation and the other had signed a DM 5 million contract for military equipment with the FRG. Salih also mentioned Hussein ad Defa'i, former YAR Ambassador to the USSR, who he said had visited the U.S. after a trip to London. The fact that these officials were traveling did not mean that a new deal with the Soviets had been signed. Ambassador said that it was precisely to find out the truth about these rumors that he and DCM had called on the President.

7. President Salih then turned to preparations for September 26 National Day parade. He said he wanted fullest possible display of U.S. military equipment, including all repeat all F-5s, the C-130s, and as many tanks and other equipment as possible. This would underscore conversion of Yemeni military to U.S. equipment. Salih said he would like to extend an official and personal invitation to U.S. Secretary of Defense or Deputy SecDef to attend September 26 celebrations. He asked Ambassador to convey this invitation immediately, saying the presence of such a USG official would be important evidence of new and close US-YAR relations (see reftel).

8. Ambassador's comments: Regardless of who may have visited Moscow during past month, it appears that President Salih has not yet committed himself to accept new, more sophisticated arms from the Soviet Union. On the other hand, he does not repeat not appear to have entirely dismissed the possibility. He is clearly frustrated by the non-arrival of the F-5s and the fact that he must rely on Saudi Arabia for spare parts and ammunition. He refuses to listen to the explanations, (that I tried again to make) that Sana airport has not, until very recently, been ready to receive all the F-5s, and is still not fully equipped to service and support them.

9. DCM and I had the impression that President Salih has decided to make the September 26 National Day parade the test of Saudi, and to a lesser extent American, good faith. He wants to put on display all the F-5s, the two C-130s, and as much of the other U.S. equipment as possible. If for any reason the aircraft are not available, he could use their absence as the excuse, or justification, for a new Soviet arms deal.

Lane

287. Telegram From Secretary of State Vance to the Department of State and the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic¹

New York, October 5, 1979, 0322Z

Secto 9012. Subject: Meeting Between Assistant Secretary Saunders and YAR Deputy Foreign Minister al-Kibsi.

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: Saunders met with al-Kibsi at the UNGA on October 4. Both noted the importance of bilateral ties. Al-Kibsi explained that several groups were competing for influence in Sana and this affected President Salih's decision-making process. Al-Kibsi stressed that Saudi Arabia should be patient in its relations with the YAR and not press the border dispute. He felt that senior officials in YAR did not want to see the unity talks with PDRY succeed and explained the state of play in the talks. End summary.

3. There was an initial exchange of pleasantries. Al-Kibsi volunteered that because of his Western education, he was viewed in Sana as pro-US and pro-Saudi. He intended to be quite frank in this discussion.

4. US-YAR bilateral relations

Saunders said that the US sees the security of North Yemen as important, not only in its own right, but because of its impact on larger regional events. The US cannot afford to see nations fall due to external threats. The US is pleased by its growing relations with the YAR and hopes that future ties will also be fruitful.

Al-Kibsi commented that President Salih appreciated US efforts to respond to Yemen's needs during the spring fighting with PDRY. Salih understood that President Carter had made a major effort in waiving the 30 day congressional notification requirement and rapidly sending military assistance. Al-Kibsi hoped that former Foreign Minister Asnag had succeeded in alleviating any US concern over the language in the YAR/PDRY Kuwait communique that had been critical of the US.²

5. YAR domestic situation

Al-Kibsi stated that the YAR's primary objective is economic development and in order to make progress Yemen needs stability. Many groups in Yemen—Baathists, Army officers, tribal sheiks, Nasserites—were competing for influence with President Salih. As a result of Iraqi intervention in ending the fighting with the South, there has been an

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790456-0495. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Priority to Jidda. Vance was in New York attending the UN General Assembly.

² See Document 281.

increase in Baathist influence. President Salih tries to satisfy all of the competing groups and therefore it is often not clear in which direction the YAR is heading.

6. YAR–Saudi relations

Al-Kibsi stressed that Saudi Arabia must be patient in its relations with Yemen. He had said this to Prince Sultan and asked that the US also make this point to the Saudis. The Saudis should concentrate on the major issues and ignore minor irritants. The major issues are domestic stability in the YAR and the future of YAR–PDRY relations. The Saudis should not press their border dispute with the YAR, since no YAR leader could agree to a solution without being accused of having sold out to the Saudis.

7. YAR–PDRY relations

In response to a query from Saunders, al-Kibsi said that no one in Sana, including President Salih, wanted the unity talks to succeed. However, the constant public references to unity could make it difficult to draw back from unity. Al-Kibsi explained that eight joint committees had been formed to consider various aspects of unification. Most of these committees had begun their work by reviewing the agreements reached in 1973 during a previous period of unity talks. Most committees had made some progress although they had not reached complete agreement. However, in the political joint committee, the PDRY had refused to begin with a review of the 1973 agreement. Aden claimed that because the political agreement had been endorsed in 1973 by both the PDRY and YAR Presidents, it could not be changed. The YAR delegation objected to 15 of the 18 articles in the 1973 document, including that describing the Soviet Union as the “only friend” of Yemen. Therefore there was a deadlock in the political committee.

In view of this impasse, the next steps would be crucial. Al-Kibsi noted that PDRY Prime Minister Ali Nasser Mohammad was currently in Sana. This visit was unexpected and had caused the YAR Prime Minister to cancel a long-planned visit to the UK. Sana did not know the purpose of Soviet Premier Kosygin’s recent visit to Aden. If the PDRY insists on rapid progress towards unity, there is a danger that border fighting could break out once again.

Vance

288. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic¹

Washington, October 18, 1979, 2126Z

272903. Subject: Secretary Vance's Conversation With YAR Foreign Minister Makki.

1. Secret-entire text.

2. Summary: Makki expressed gratitude for U.S. assistance and noted his government's desire to improve and diversify bilateral relations with the U.S. He saw solution of the Palestinian problem as key to peace and stability in the entire region and urged direct U.S. negotiations with the PLO. He discussed in some detail the current status of Yemen reunification talks. The Secretary expressed U.S. desire to broaden and make more fruitful our bilateral relations. He and Assistant Secretary Saunders explained how our current peace efforts are not incompatible with ultimate Arab objectives. End summary.

3. The Secretary had a useful 45-minute conversation with YAR Foreign Minister Makki October 12.² Under Secretary Newsom, Assistant Secretary Saunders, ARP Country Director Countryman, and YAR Ambassador Mutawakel also attended.

4. After exchange of pleasantries, Makki began by expressing his government's gratitude for U.S. assistance and conveyed his government's desire to improve relations and to diversify cooperation in the economic and military spheres. The Secretary responded that the U.S. was pleased to have been able to help the YAR and that we wished to have deeper, more fruitful relations. He asked that Makki convey to President Salih our desire to strengthen relations across the board. Makki then noted the value of trilateral cooperation, but reaffirmed the need for intensified bilateral contacts between the U.S. and the YAR in the context of regional cooperation.

5. Makki described the solution of the Palestinian problem as the heart, not only of the search for a Middle East peace, but integral also to peace and stability throughout the region. He voiced appreciation of U.S. peace efforts, but hoped that we would change our policy toward the PLO. Such a change would facilitate area states' cooperation with the U.S. Solution of Palestinian problem would also assist North

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790478-0512. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Countryman; cleared by Saunders, Newsom, W. Scott Butcher (S/S-O), and Raymond Seitz (S/S); approved by John M. Evans (S). Sent for information to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jidda, Kuwait, Manama, and Muscat.

² No other record of this meeting was found.

Yemen with its problems with the South. He also expressed concern about South Yemen and Ethiopia in the regional security context.

6. The Secretary replied that we would be happy to explore ways of making more fruitful our bilateral relations with the YAR. On the Palestinian issue, he declared that there was no essential difference between the U.S. and Arab commitment to resolve the Palestinian issue in all its aspects. We did have a different view of how best to move toward a comprehensive peace. We believe the problem is so complex and deep-seated that it cannot be solved in one fell swoop overnight. We have a particular problem with the PLO in that our 1975 agreement with the Government of Israel states that we will not negotiate with the PLO until it recognizes the right of Israel to exist and accepts UN Resolution 242 as a basis of negotiations.³ We do not take lightly our obligation to stand by a commitment. The Secretary then reviewed the various attempts to solve the problem of dealing with the PLO. In 1977 we came close to a solution, but the PLO Executive Council turned it down.

7. Saunders then noted we were engaged in a first step negotiation involving an attempt to achieve an Israeli withdrawal from and autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. We are thus engaged in a transient short-term operation, whereas the Arabs continue to look toward a final solution. He emphasized, however, that our respective goals are not inconsistent. Newsom noted that we now also have a clear idea from discussions with our Arab friends of what they think must come out of our efforts in order for them to cooperate. We hope that when there is further progress toward Middle East peace that it will be viewed favorably by our Arab friends.

8. The Secretary noted we follow with attention and concern problems of regional security, particularly events in South Yemen and Ethiopia. One way we can be helpful is to provide aid as we did in the case of attack on North Yemen by South Yemen. We are also aware of broader strategic questions and we wish to continue consultations with our regional friends to adopt constructive methods to preserve stability and avoid turmoil.

9. In response to Newsom's question about the intentions of South Yemen, Makki said North Yemen was seeking to solve its problems with the South via reunification rather than war. The North is seeking

³ Reference is to the memorandum of agreement between the United States and Israel that was initiated at the time of the signing of the second Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement on September 1, 1975. See *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, vol. XXVI, Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1974–1976, Document 227.

to establish a unified state based upon Islamic and democratic principles and believes it has had some recent success in getting the South to accept its point of view. There has been some progress in economic cooperation, i.e., integrating five-year plans and agreement to avoid industrial duplication. Foreign policy remains a major point of difference with the North insisting that the South bring itself closer to the Arab and away from the socialist nations. There is also hope that a reunified and peaceful Yemen will help attract Arab capital for development, but to this end the South must evidence some flexibility regarding the formation of mixed companies, the role of private investment, and the status of former Southern merchants who have fled to the North.

10. At the same time, North Yemen is not confident about the sincerity of the South in the unity negotiations. Socialism in the South has become stricter and the North is investigating reports about the South's links to the Warsaw Pact. In short, the unity negotiations could be a Southern trick. On the other hand, the North sees utility in continuing the negotiations as a way of strengthening the hand of those in the South who want an Islamic/Arabic basis for their society and who wish to move away from the socialist camp.

11. In a follow-up talk with Saunders, Makki raised three issues:

- Increased military and economic aid;
- The Omani Straits of Hormuz security initiative and
- Southern Lebanon.

12. U.S. military and economic assistance. Makki made a strong pitch for increased U.S. bilateral military and economic assistance. He noted that certain countries in the region had benefitted from increased levels of U.S. aid, whereas our aid to Yemen had remained constant. He hoped that we might fund directly YAR 5-year plan projects, and help the YAR with credit facilities. He asked specifically that we assist Sana University to establish new faculties and become a kind of regional educational showplace. Saunders replied that we wished to be helpful in both the military and economic areas and that we would be looking into ways to get the most out of our funding. We should not forget the participation of some of the YAR's wealthier neighbors, the use of Peace Corps volunteers, or putting together multilateral financial arrangements.

13. Saunders described the Omani security proposal for the Straits of Hormuz as a purely Omani initiative. While we felt it represented a responsible attempt to deal with a problem, and while we had no objection to it in substance, we wanted to make very clear that we had not instigated it.

14. Southern Lebanon. Saunders briefly reviewed events following the adoption of UN Resolution 425⁴ and described the various steps which the U.S. envisioned as leading toward the re-establishment of peace and tranquility in Southern Lebanon. The elements of our approach would include helping to increase the Lebanese forces in the South, seeking to expand the ceasefire, obtaining mutual assurances from the parties that they would not attack each other, and that they would report infractions of the ceasefire to the UN. He also noted the need to get people back into their homes in Tyre and described possible initiatives to get the Syrians to secure National Movement cooperation and turn over Syrian occupied areas to the Lebanese.

Vance

⁴ United Nations Security Council Resolution 425, adopted on March 19, 1978, after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, called for respect for the territorial integrity of Lebanon, for Israel to cease military activity against Lebanon, and for the formation of a United Nations interim force for Southern Lebanon to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli forces. (Department of State *Bulletin*, May 1978, p. 51)

289. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic and the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, October 27, 1979, 2132Z

281817. Subject: YAR Arms Agreement. Ref: (A) State 278082,² (B) Jidda 7478,³ (C) Sana 7427;⁴ (D) Jidda 7476.⁵

1. Secret-entire text.

2. We are concerned by increasing evidence that President Salih despite his denials has agreed or is on verge of agreeing to accept a Soviet offer of a major new arms supply agreement.

3. The impact of a Soviet arms agreement and the US reaction to it would depend on its size and scale. Several reports have mentioned Yemeni acquisition of two squadrons of MiG-21 aircraft, one squadron of Sukhoy aircraft and an undetermined number of T-62 tanks. We need more definite information on the scope of the agreement being considered by the YAR.

4. We understand Saudi concerns as well but hope SAG will not overreact. We urge SAG weigh all factors. Stability in the YAR is one important factor. It is important that US and Saudi Arabia coordinate their activities in Yemen and avoid precipitous actions.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790492-0974. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Michael R. Arietti (NEA/ARP) and Countryman; cleared by O'Donohue, Brzezinski, Murray, Arthur M. Giese (T), Jeffrey J. Buczacki (S/S-O), Roscoe S. Suddarth (P), and William T. Shinn (EUR/SOV); approved by Vance. Sent for information to Moscow.

² In telegram 278082 to Sana, October 25, the Department instructed Lane to refrain from expressing U.S. concern to Salih regarding the "adverse effects of a new YAR-Soviet arms package" until the Department had a chance to review with Murray the results of his trip. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790489-0633)

³ In telegram 7478 from Jidda, October 25, the Embassy transmitted Murray's comments on the Yemen situation. With regard to Salih, Murray noted: "But his relations with both Soviets and Saudis, and therefore inevitably with us, are changing." He continued: "In sum, Ali Abdullah is now moving on another policy tack, one encouraged by the left and by those who suffer poorly the indignities of excessive (from the Yemeni viewpoint) Saudi influence on Yemen's internal politics. If he continues on the present tack, we will soon not be able to work with him." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790514-0242)

⁴ In telegram 7427 from Sana, October 24, the Embassy reported on Murray's October 21 call on Salih. (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, YAR: 7-12/79)

⁵ In telegram 7476 from Jidda, October 25, the Embassy reported on Murray's October 25 conversation with Sultan, in which Sultan expressed his anger over the possibility of a new YAR-Soviet arms deal. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790489-0446)

5. For Sana: At earliest possible opportunity, Ambassador should make following points to President Salih and other appropriate YAR officials:

—The US has undertaken a major effort to assist Yemen in strengthening its defense capability forces against the Soviet-supported threat from South Yemen.

—The United States is deeply concerned by persistent reports that the YAR intends to go ahead with the purchase of significant amounts of additional equipment from the Soviet Union. These reports indicate that the YAR will buy MiG–21s and T–62 tanks, equipment similar to that we have already provided. In the spirit of the relationship we have been trying to build with YAR we believe USG should be told frankly what YAR intentions are in this respect.

—When the US agreed to our ongoing military assistance effort, we made clear that our aid to the YAR was not dependent on the complete elimination of Soviet military assistance efforts. We recognize that for many years the YAR military was equipped primarily with Soviet equipment and that Soviet advisors provided training. At the same time we have been concerned because as Salih must be aware the Soviets have used military aid as the prime means of extending their influence in the third world.

—We would therefore have difficulty understanding if the YAR agreed to a major new military assistance program with the Soviet Union particularly after that country provided the means for PDRY to attack the YAR.

—Moreover, implicit in the US agreement to undertake a military assistance program was the understanding that the YAR would be making a major effort to absorb US equipment and would commit manpower and resources to the necessary training. We would view YAR acquisition of new Soviet equipment duplicative of what we have provided as a failure to maintain its part of the bargain.

6. For Jidda: As a follow-up to DASD Murray's discussion, you should make the following points to Prince Sultan:

—The US shares Saudi concerns over reports that President Salih may go ahead with a major new arms purchase from the Soviet Union.

—At the same time, we do not think that Salih's action reflects an ideological shift towards the Soviet Union.

—We are making clear to Salih that such an agreement would raise serious difficulties for the US. We oppose an increase in Soviet influence in Sana and are concerned that an agreement may mean an influx of additional Soviet advisors into the YAR.

—On the basis of Murray's conversations with SAG officials we have carefully reviewed what course of action we in consultation with

the Saudis might wish to take. We are making a strong presentation of our views to the YAR. (Embassy should convey to the SAG points we are making to YAR, noting we will particularly stress point 5).

—While we think it important that the US and Saudi Arabia should discourage Salih from going ahead on this agreement, our actions should seek to avoid further instability in the YAR that would provide even greater opportunities for anti-US and anti-Saudi elements to come to power. With this in mind it is important at this point that the US and Saudi Arabia continue to make our ongoing military assistance efforts in Yemen effective.

—We wish to remain in close touch with Saudi Arabia as the situation develops.

Vance

**290. Message From the United States Commander in Chief
European Command to AIG¹**

Vaihingen, October 30, 1979, 1655Z

20475. Subj: USEUCOM Intelligence Summary Cable (EISC) 174–79. (U).

The 30 October EISC contains three items.

1. South Yemen/USSR: Treaty of friendship. (S/Noform)
2. Other significant developments. (S/Noform/No Contract)
3. Indications and warning status: No change. (U)

1. (S/Noform—all paras) South Yemen/USSR: On 25 October, after 2 days of official talks, Soviet Party Chief Brezhnev and South Yemeni Presidium Chairman Ismail, signed a 20-year treaty of friendship. Among other things, the accord calls for continued mutual cooperation in the military field. This development underscores Aden's increasing reliance on Moscow for economic, diplomatic, and military support. South Yemen is the only Arab state, other than Iraq, to have such a treaty in force.

The Soviets have been heavily involved in supporting successive South Yemeni regimes since 1969, and have long sought a treaty to formalize that relationship. It is not clear why the Yemenis have waited until now to sign a treaty, but several factors probably contributed to that decision: the treaty was probably accompanied by promises of increased Soviet economic or military assistance or both. Additional Soviet support was needed to shore-up the domestically threatened Ismail government; and Aden is probably seeking stronger Soviet assurances of support in the face of an increasing U.S. commitment to North Yemen and Oman.

Apparently responding to South Yemen's concerns about U.S. intervention in the region, the Soviets have, since spring, made a number of public displays of support, including the port call of the carrier Minsk in June, and the visit of Premier Kosygin in September; they have also provided new weapon systems, including Hind helicopters, SU-20 Fitter aircraft, OSA-II guided missile patrol boats, a fleet mine-sweeper, BMP and BTR-60 APCs, ZSU 23-4 air defense artillery, and T-62 tanks.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, Yemen: Democratic Republic (South): 2/77–9/80. Secret; Noform; Nocontract. Sent for information to CINCUSNAVEUR London, Sixth Fleet, MIDEASTFOR, USDAO Prague, USDAO Budapest, USDAO Belgrade, USDAO Hague, and USDAO Copenhagen.

As a result of the treaty, we believe it possible that the Soviets could increase their presence in South Yemen, but we disagree with recent press reports that there are already 9,000 Cuban and Soviets in-country; with an increase to 15,000 expected before years end. [5½ lines not declassified]

In the region, South Yemen, probably encouraged by the Soviets, has been undertaking moderate attempts to improve relations with neighboring Arab states. The treaty of friendship probably came as a surprise to these countries, and will probably spoil the normalization effort, and contribute to continued suspicions of South Yemen's Marxist regime. ([1 line not declassified] J2)

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

291. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, November 14, 1979, 1500Z

7858. Subj: U.S. Saudi Military Assistance Program in YAR—Meeting With President Salih on November 14. Ref: State 281817.²

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: During meeting with Ambassador and DCM on November 14, YAR President Salih defended his recent acquisition of new Soviet equipment by saying that he had been forced to take this action because of failure of U.S. and particularly Saudi Arabia to provide sufficient arms and to give total support for arms they had delivered. He insisted that presence of new Soviet arms would not lead to increased Soviet influence and that no repeat no more Soviet military advisors would be coming to the YAR. Salih reiterated his commitment to the U.S./Saudi program and his interest in strong U.S.–YAR bilateral relations. End summary.

3. Accompanied by DCM Gnehm, I had one and half hour meeting with President Salih morning of November 14. After initial exchange of courtesies, I told President that I would like to review U.S.–YAR bilateral relations in military assistance field. I briefly mentioned our

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790533–0044. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Jidda and USLO Riyadh; sent for information Priority to Moscow.

² See Document 289.

initial agreement to provide Phase II arms, the expedited deliveries in March of this year as a result of YAR–PDRY border war, and arrival of all F–5s in time for National Day. I said that DASD Murray’s visit³ was in context of these efforts to develop our bilateral cooperation in military field and to see what more could be done.

4. I said that in light of these efforts to assist the YAR in strengthening its defensive forces against the Soviet supported threat from the PDRY, the United States was deeply concerned by persistent reports that YAR was acquiring significant amounts of new Soviet equipment. USG had made clear that our aid to YAR was not dependent on complete elimination of Soviet military assistance efforts; we intended to complete our present military assistance program in the YAR. Nevertheless, USG was seriously concerned about these reports for three reasons:

A. Additional new Soviet arms would mean an extension of Soviet influence in the YAR which was not in the interest of the YAR’s independence and stability;

B. YAR acquisition of such arms would make it harder to get public support in the U.S. for the U.S. program;

C. Acquisition of Soviet arms similar to those being supplied by the U.S. would inevitably affect the ability of the YAR to absorb the U.S. supplied equipment. I then asked the President for an explanation of the YAR’s current policy.

5. Salih replied by first thanking the USG in general and President Carter specifically for the efforts made to assist the YAR in facing the threat from the PDRY. He insisted that he turned to Soviet bloc for additional weapons because although the American weapons were good, they were inadequate to meet Yemen’s defensive needs. Given the military strength of the South, he needed several hundred tanks in addition to the 64 M–60s to protect the Bab al Mandab, Quatabah and Al-Bayda areas. During the Asnaj visit he had asked for a direct military relationship with the U.S.; this request had been ignored.⁴ Since the Saudis were paying for all the U.S. weapons, he had asked them for more; they had refused. Furthermore, after the Kuwaiti communique of March 30,⁵ the Saudis had deliberately slowed down the Phase II arms program that had been already agreed upon. Salih said he was convinced that the shortages of ammunition and spare parts

³ See footnotes 2–5, Document 289.

⁴ Al-Asnaj visited Washington in June, meeting with Vance on June 11 to request a more direct military relationship with the United States. (Jim Hoagland, “N. Yemen Appeals for Military Advisers From U.S.,” *The Washington Post*, June 13, 1979, p. A25)

⁵ See Document 281.

and the slow progress being made in development of repair and maintenance facilities for the F-5s in Sana were part of a deliberate Saudi policy following the Kuwaiti declaration, to keep the YAR totally dependent on Saudi Arabia.

6. I replied that the problems were practical and described several of the deficiencies on the Yemeni side; ammunition had been damaged by mishandling, spare parts were not properly stored and accounted for, etc. Salih acknowledged some of these failures but insisted that the basic problem was Saudi unwillingness to wholeheartedly support the program. Under these circumstances, he said, he had no choice, given his responsibility for the defense of his country, but to buy additional Soviet arms. He said (as he had to DASD Murray) that all newly arrived Soviet bloc tanks had been sent to southern border, as defense against PDRY.

7. Salih insisted that he had signed no new "agreement" with the Soviet Union but had purchased arms and ammunition for cash. He said that his intention was to replace obsolete equipment of Soviet origin now in the YAR inventory—MiG-21s for MiG-17s and T-55s for T-54s and 34s. He implied this would be done on a one for one basis. When I asked how many MiGs were coming, he dodged the question by saying he was sure that American intelligence had complete information on this subject.

8. In response to my questions, he said he was well aware that Soviets would give PDRY 40 tanks for every ten they gave YAR. As for Soviet support in case of war with the PDRY, he was not counting on it. His army was familiar with Soviet tanks and would not need training or maintenance support. As for aircraft, his people were now transitioning to MiG-21s. He had also purchased ten years worth of spare parts (sic) so he would not be dependent on the Soviets in case of emergency.

9. Regarding Soviet technicians, Salih insisted that no more would be coming as a result of his recent arms purchases; he said we could take this as an official statement from the head of state. In response to my question, he said that there were no "less than 20 Soviet advisors" working with the YAR military. When we questioned this figure, he repeated it and said again that this number would not increase. (He did admit later in the conversation that two or three additional experts might come to help assemble the MiGs but insisted they would be leaving as soon as this job was done.) We could reassure the USG, Salih said, that YAR had no intentions of increasing Soviet presence.

10. Salih also insisted that he remained committed to the successful implementation of U.S. program and would do whatever was required to make it a success. We pointed out that sending Yemeni pilots and technicians to Soviet Union for transition training on MiG-21s would

inevitably draw off manpower that could have been devoted to the F-5 program. Salih brushed this aside and said he had repeatedly asked USG to provide additional training in Yemen for Yemenis on F-5s but nothing had been done. As soon as training program could be set up, he would supply the students.

11. I said that despite President's assurances, YAR had a limited pool of educated military. It was hard for USG to understand why YAR had turned to Soviets for more aircraft after efforts we had made, and hard to believe that U.S./Saudi military assistance program would not suffer as result of arrival of new Soviet arms. Salih repeated that acquisition of new Soviet equipment would not repeat not slow down implementation of U.S.-Saudi program and offered to send a special delegation to the United States to explain why he had purchased arms from the Soviets. I said I would consult with my government to see if they thought such a mission would be useful.

12. In response to my question about the recent PDRY-Soviet treaty, Salih said that YAR was convinced that there were some secret clauses that were aimed at his country. They were now trying to find out what these articles contained. Salih said "we are against the Communists." He said he was well aware that the Soviets would back the PDRY in any dispute with the YAR. It was for this reason that he had insisted that the Soviets supply him with ten years supply of spare parts for the new arms he was buying from them and that he was not accepting any additional Soviet technicians. Salih said that YAR had had relations with USSR for 50 years and had not gone Communist. He was well aware of Communist danger. We reminded him times had changed and threat of Soviet influence under present circumstances was much more dangerous than in the past. Salih said he was well aware of this and that we could assure USG that he was taking every precaution to prevent it. If U.S. would guarantee YAR's security, he would not need Soviet weapons. If USG would provide him with all the military assistance he needed, he would kick out the Soviets completely, with all of their military equipment. However, USG had not done so; therefore, he had had to turn to Soviet Union for more arms.

13. In response to my question about Saudi-YAR relations, Salih said they were good. He said that Prince Turki had arrived that morning (November 14) to discuss YAR's recent acquisition of new Soviet arms. Salih said that he intended to tell Turki that it was the Saudis' fault; if Saudis had not deliberately slowed down ammunition and spare parts deliveries after March 30 Kuwaiti communique, if they had not insisted on retaining control of F-5 maintenance in Saudi Arabia, and if they had not refused to supply additional arms to YAR, Salih would not have felt compelled to buy additional arms from the Soviet Union.

14. Comment:

A. Salih was in a good mood. After initial exchange of courtesies, he listened to my opening presentation quietly and calmly. He displayed some nervousness at the beginning of the meeting but his explanation of what he had done and why became more forceful and confident as he went along. His general position was that the Saudis were to blame for his decision to buy Soviet arms because they had not been sufficiently understanding and responsive to his needs.

B. Despite my efforts on several occasions to make clear to him that his decision to acquire MiG-21s could cause a real problem in our future bilateral relations, I am not sure that he really believes it. I suspect that his offer to send high level delegation to the United States to explain what the YAR had done and why was a spur-of-the-moment idea. Although I doubt whether this delegation will have any additional information to provide, it might be useful to accept Salih's offer to send them as a way of indicating our concern over his recent actions.

C. Further comments follow septel.⁶

Lane

⁶ In telegram 7857 From Sana, November 14, the Embassy highlighted Saudi-YAR tensions due to the new arms deliveries from the Soviet Union to the Yemen Arab Republic. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D790524-0676)

292. Memorandum Prepared in the Central Intelligence Agency¹

PA M 80–10019

Washington, January 11, 1980

NORTH YEMEN: MOVE TO THE LEFT (S)

North Yemeni President Salih, in his continuing efforts to maintain his hold on power, has moved his regime substantially to the left. Convinced that Saudi Arabian plotting with North Yemeni tribesmen is the most immediate threat to his position, Salih has attempted to draw closer to Marxist South Yemen. He has also concluded a major arms agreement with the USSR, and the US defense attache reports that MIG–21s, T–55 tanks, and artillery pieces have arrived in North Yemen since November. Salih still claims to fear a threat from South Yemen, but his maneuvering has severely restricted his options. He may be coming close to a point of no return in his relations with South Yemen, the USSR, and Saudi Arabia. The Aden-backed opposition National Democratic Front, meanwhile, is strengthening its position in all parts of the country. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Since taking power in July 1978, following the assassination of his predecessor, Salih has had to contend with continued meddling by Saudi Arabia and South Yemen. When the South Yemenis seemed more threatening during a brief border war last February, Salih turned to Riyadh and obtained strong Saudi political support as well as financing for US weapons. Now that he believes Saudi plotting is a more immediate danger, he is seeking a rapprochement with Aden. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

When the fighting between the two Yemens ended last year—and with it the heightened threat of a Marxist takeover in Sana—Saudi policy quickly reverted to its traditional ambivalence: The Saudis

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 94, Yemens: Meeting: (1/15/80): 1/80. Secret; *[handling restriction not declassified]*. Prepared in the Near East South Asia Division, Office of Political Analysis, National Foreign Assessment Center, and coordinated with the National Intelligence Officer for Near East South Asia, the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Directorate of Operations. Brzezinski wrote at the top of the page: “DA, we need a mini-SCC on this today—and add it to the SCC agenda on Mon. ZB (1/12/80).” A mini-SCC meeting was not held on January 12. In advance of the January 14 SCC meeting, Hunter and Sick sent Brzezinski and Aaron supplemental materials, including a copy of this memorandum and a paper summarizing key policy options, under a January 13 memorandum in which they noted: “The *ad hoc* meeting on Saturday afternoon [January 12] reviewed our objectives and options in Yemen in preparation for the SCC meeting on Monday at 10:00 a.m.” (Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 41, [Trips]—Paris: [1/80]) No record of the *ad hoc* January 12 meeting was found. For the January 14 SCC meeting, see Document 40.

wanted a regime in the North that was strong enough to fend off the South, but that posed no threat to Riyadh and was subject to its influence. Traditional fears that the leadership in Sana might make a deal with South Yemen also reappeared. To help preserve their leverage, the Saudis exploited their ability to control the flow of US arms, ammunition, and spare parts they bought for North Yemen. They also continued their subventions to pro-Saudi tribes in North Yemen as a means to limit the power of the central government. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Soviet Arms Deal

Salih soon became convinced that he could not rely on the Saudis to supply arms. This, coupled with his frustrations over Saudi meddling with the tribes, severely strained Saudi-North Yemeni relations and contributed to Salih's decision last summer to accept new Soviet arms as a way to reduce Saudi leverage. The Soviets, who had been the major arms supplier to North Yemen prior to 1978, had persistently offered to resume large-scale arms deliveries. MIG-21s began arriving in November. *[4 lines not declassified]* The US Embassy in Sana has already received reports of more Soviet military advisers in North Yemen; last fall there were approximately 120 such advisers. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

The Soviets recently have adopted a much higher profile in North Yemen. Besides the new arms and additional advisers, two official delegations and several cultural groups have recently toured the country. In addition, substantial numbers of Yemeni military personnel have been sent to the USSR in the last three months for training. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

Other Signs of Shift

The arms deal with the Soviets is the most visible sign of Salih's move to the left, but there are others.

—Pro-Saudi officials have been replaced with men of more leftist leanings. These include the current Foreign Minister and Ministers of Information and Development. Most important, on 3 January, Salih sacked his pro-Saudi Director of National Security² —a strong opponent of closer relations with the USSR and South Yemen—and three of the Director's top aides. *[classification and handling restriction not declassified]*

—Since talks in Sana in early October between Salih and the South Yemeni Prime Minister,³ the number of delegations traveling between

² Mohammed Khamis.

³ See Document 287.

the North Yemeni capital and Aden has increased sharply. [*3½ lines not declassified*] [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

—Salih has recently had a number of significant contacts with members of the opposition National Democratic Front. [*7½ lines not declassified*] [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

—In recent weeks Sana has taken a more left-leaning foreign policy stance. It has not, for example, publicly condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It has also taken a more militant position on the Palestinian question and against the peace process. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

South Yemen: Tactics

South Yemen has used Salih's mistrust of the Saudis to limit the North Yemeni President's ability to maneuver. President Ismail has urged Salih to dismiss his pro-Saudi advisers for disloyalty. Ismail reportedly has also demanded that the Front be brought into North Yemen's governmental and military structures as a precondition for unity. At the same time, Ismail has appealed to Salih's vanity by promising that once this condition is met, Salih will become the first president of a unified Yemen. Salih may well be intrigued by the offer. According to one report, he has instructed his officials to conclude a unity agreement with the South Yemeni team now in Sana for negotiations on a joint constitution. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Salih probably has overestimated his ability to control the unification process. The National Democratic Front, for example, reportedly continues to infiltrate both men and arms into North Yemen. Whereas the group was formerly restricted to regions bordering South Yemen, it now has extended its organization and influence into the northern tribal areas. It has avoided a direct confrontation with North Yemen's army and seems to have adopted a carrot-and-stick approach toward the government. It reportedly has cooperated with the government's attempts to reduce Saudi influence in the northern border region. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

The Front's appeal has grown partly because of its diverse makeup. There are nationalist as well as Communist elements within the group, and several of its leaders were associates of a popular North Yemeni President assassinated in 1977. Although the Front now is the willing tool of South Yemen, whether it would remain so once in power is not clear. In any event, it has become a serious contender for power in North Yemen. [*classification and handling restriction not declassified*]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia confronts an unpalatable dilemma in its present relations with North Yemen. The Saudis have probably concluded that

their ability to deal with Salih is minimal. A move to replace him, however, could easily result in expanded South Yemeni influence or even a takeover. [5 lines not declassified] [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

Salih, not wanting to lose the Saudi card completely, has indicated [less than 1 line not declassified] his acceptance of Riyadh's proposal, and a North Yemeni delegation that is to meet with Saudi leaders in Riyadh on 12 January will probably relay this message. Salih probably views his acceptance as one more way to maneuver between the conflicting pressures, and the Saudis may see it as a temporary solution. In the meantime, however, the mutual trust necessary for a workable alliance between Sana and Riyadh has largely evaporated, with a concomitant rise in the influence in Sana of South Yemen and the USSR. [classification and handling restriction not declassified]

293. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic and the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, January 16, 1980, 0146Z

12142. Subject: Newsom/al-Ayni Meeting. Ref: Riyadh 96.²

1. Secret-entire text.

2. Summary: During January 14 meeting with Under Secretary Newsom, Ambassador al-Ayni conveyed President Salih's desire for continued cooperation with the U.S. He downplayed the significance of the purchase of Soviet arms, and underlined the need for a strong government in Sana. Ambassador Mutawakel stated the dismissal of the head of national security³ did not signal a turn to the left and

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800026-0942. Secret; Immediate. Drafted by Michael R. Arietti (NEA/ARP); cleared by Twinam; approved in P.

² In telegram 96 from Riyadh, January 12, the Liaison Office informed the Department that Gerlach had conveyed U.S. concerns over trends and events in the Yemen Arab Republic to Saud. Gerlach stressed the U.S. view that "SAG and the USG should emphasize in our conversations with YARG the importance of preserving the independence of North Yemen." While Saud indicated that the Saudi Government agreed with the U.S. position on Yemen, the government "questions the sincerity of South Yemen especially in light of the USSR-PDRY treaty." The Prince noted that the Saudis were fearful "that we might see the events of Afghanistan repeated here on the Peninsula." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800021-0158)

³ Document 292 and footnote 2 thereto.

that there was no sign of rapid movement towards unity with PDRY. End summary.

3. YAR UN Perm Rep Muhsin al-Ayni, accompanied by Ambassador Mutawakel, called on Under Secretary Newsom on January 14, 1980. Deputy Assistant Secretary Twinam, and NEA/ARP Officer Michael Arietti also attended.

4. After initial plesantries al-Ayni explained that, after an absence of five years, he had recently returned to Sana prior to taking up his UN post. al-Ayni wished to deliver an oral message from President Salih—if the US felt Yemen deserves help and was seriously interested in providing this, Salih was prepared to go ahead with cooperation with the U.S.

5. Under Secretary Newsom stated that we regard relations with Yemen as very important. We had made a special effort, in cooperation with Saudi Arabia, to provide Yemen military equipment and almost all of the equipment had now been delivered. Training and maintenance were very important. We, the Saudis, and other countries had provided training personnel. The US also has an ongoing economic assistance program. In view of our efforts the US was very disappointed in the YAR's recent purchase of arms from the Soviet Union. We also had the impression that recent personnel changes in Sana suggest a change in the YAR's attitude towards the NDF and towards union with PDRY. The US would be very concerned if union took place on terms dictated by PDRY or the NDF. Al-Ayni's visit was timely in that we could reiterate our interest in the continuing independence of North Yemen. The US invited specific YAR suggestions on what we could do to strengthen our relationship.

6. Ambassador al-Ayni responded that the US should not make too much of the recent acquisition of Soviet arms. In view of the disarray in the Yemeni military these arms would not pose a threat to any quarter. The US should provide us training to Yemeni officers and additional economic assistance. Speaking personally al-Ayni commented that the YAR is now at the 11th hour. This is a result of the failure of past efforts to strengthen the YAR. President Salih is a sincere individual, but he is being pulled in many directions. A key factor is Saudi Arabia's attitude. The Saudis need to understand that it is important that there be a strong government in Sana. Unfortunately they have not recognized this in the past and the US should try to convince the Saudis that this is in their interest.

7. Regarding President Salih's relations with the NDF and PDRY, Ambassador al-Ayni commented that everyone in Yemen welcomed the recent dismissal of the head of national security since that organization had treated people badly. He was unaware of any particular significance to the timing of the dismissal. Ambassador Mutawakel interjected

that the replacement of Khamis did not signal a turn to the left since his replacement was neither pro-Aden nor pro-Soviet. However, he speculated that the replacement would please the NDF. President Salih had been in touch with elements of the NDF who are the main forces in some areas of the country. Speaking personally, Mutawakel did not believe these contacts would work out. He was not aware of any new steps towards unity and did not think there would be movement in the short term. Al-Ayni stated the NDF is a committed Marxist group and that President Ismail is firmly in control in Aden and growing stronger.

8. Newsom said we recognize that the YAR's relations with Saudi Arabia are complex, but it would be tragic if that relationship were seriously disrupted. The US wished to work with Saudi Arabia in Yemen, but this did not mean we could not have a direct relationship with Sana. The US would be very interested in the results of the meeting between Prime Minister al-Ghani and Saudi officials. We hoped that it would smooth out current difficulties.

9. Comment: Salih's message was delivered orally and was simply a reiteration of his willingness to cooperate with the U.S. Neither al-Ayni nor Mutawakel appeared prepared to suggest detailed steps the US might take to strengthen ties with the YAR. Al-Ayni appeared to be speaking personally when he urged we stress to the Saudis that it is in their interest that the YAR have a strong government. End comment.⁴

10. For Ambassador West: In following up on our commitment to consult with the Saudis on the results of the al-Ayni and al-Ghani meetings, you should draw on the above, without mentioning al-Ayni's personal comments in para. 6.

Vance

⁴ In a January 16 memorandum to Vance, Brzezinski noted that Carter had read a report of Newsom's meeting with al-Ayni, adding that the President noted that "we should follow up on this." (Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Brzezinski Office File, Country Chron File, Box 56, Yemen)

294. Summary of Conclusions of a Special Coordination Committee Meeting¹

Washington, January 17, 1980, 9–10:45 a.m.

SUBJECT

SCC Meeting on Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf

PARTICIPANTS

<i>State</i>	<i>OMB</i>
Secretary Cyrus Vance	Deputy Director John White
Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher	<i>White House</i>
<i>Defense</i>	Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Secretary Harold Brown	Hamilton Jordan
Ambassador Robert Komer	Jody Powell
<i>JCS</i>	Hedley Donovan
Chairman General David Jones	David Aaron
Lt. General John Pustay	<i>NSC</i>
<i>CIA</i>	Colonel William E. Odom
Deputy Director Frank Carlucci	Captain Gary Sick
Robert Ames	Thomas Thornton
[name not declassified]	Fritz Ermarth

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

Yemen

Dr. Brzezinski reported that [*less than 1 line not declassified*] now may be the time for a fundamental political change in South Yemen. [*3½ lines not declassified*] Dr. Brzezinski then emphasized that this would require a major political decision with very large political risks.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 107, SCC 254, 1/17/80, Southwest Asia, Persian Gulf & Yemen. Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the White House Situation Room. The minutes are not attached and were not found. Carter wrote at the top of the first page: "Zbig—These are very serious matters. The discussions are necessary but any proposal for contentious action must be submitted to me first J." Odom sent Brzezinski the Summary of Conclusions under a January 18 memorandum. A handwritten notation indicates it was sent to Carter at Camp David on January 18. At the January 14 SCC meeting (see Document 40), Brzezinski expressed his belief that the United States should "consider a joint action to bring about a fundamental political change in South Yemen." A working group chaired by the NSC was then directed to "prepare a paper on the Yemen problem." (Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Historical Materials, Geographic File, Box 15, Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf- [1/80]) The NSC-chaired working group submitted its policy options to Aaron and Brzezinski on January 16. This paper is in the Carter Library, Brzezinski Donated Material, Subject File, Box 37, [Serial] XX—Sensitive: [1/80–3/80]. For another extract of this Summary of Conclusions, see Document 42.

Secretary Vance characterized this proposal as an "action of the greatest moment." He argued that we must know much more about the "strength and cast of characters" in both YAR and PDRY, and particularly in the National Democratic Front. He proposed that [name not declassified] go to the region and report back with an analysis based on the best and fullest information available. Dr. Brzezinski suggested that such a trip might include [less than 1 line not declassified] and that its task should be (a) to assess the resources available, (b) to determine what it would take to alter the situation in Yemen.

When Secretary Brown mentioned that it might be an appropriate contingency response for a Soviet move into Iran, Dr. Brzezinski countered that there is also a danger that such an action might galvanize Islamic countries against the United States, a danger which must be taken into account before making a decision. Dr. Brzezinski agreed with Secretary Vance's emphasis on the gravity of the decision and added that it is an extremely difficult one for a democratic government to take. Saudi Arabia is so vital to our interest, however, that we may be forced into it.

Further discussion about what we know of the National Democratic Front, Salih and other political forces, led [name not declassified] to underscore a problem if he is to undertake a fact-finding mission. [1½ lines not declassified] Yet it would be useless to sit down with [less than 1 line not declassified] and ask them for options without making any U.S. commitments. We have done this so frequently in the past that [less than 1 line not declassified] now demand that we put our chips on the table. They do not want to be asked to pose options. They will insist that the United States tell them the options. Dr. Brzezinski observed that if [less than 1 line not declassified] needed a "Presidential finding," that could probably be secured.

In response to Secretary Vance's further question about what we actually know, [1½ lines not declassified] that if [name not declassified] talks to them he will be asked for (a) some covert actions such as an opening of the National Front Office outside of North Yemen, (b) military aid [less than 1 line not declassified] (c) possible security guarantees for North Yemen.

Dr. Brzezinski asked that David Aaron, Robert Komer, and Hal Saunders develop the terms of reference for [name not declassified] trip and report them to the SCC for review.

The discussion turned to timing. Dr. Brzezinski repeated the dangers of a fiasco like the Suez in 1956 but pointed out again the enormous stake for the U.S. in the region. If the situation in North Yemen deteriorates rapidly now, the [name not declassified] mission and plan could not be executed rapidly enough to save the day. [name not declassified] argued that for the short-term danger, [less than 1 line not declassified].

Secretary Vance mentioned that [*less than 1 line not declassified*] in the near future. Others thought that [*less than 1 line not declassified*] at once to avoid delay. He should engage in a general discussion [*less than 1 line not declassified*] about contingencies but make no commitments.

Agreed actions:

—[*1½ lines not declassified*]

—[*less than 1 line not declassified*]

—The David Aaron group will work out the terms of reference for [*less than 1 line not declassified*] trip.

[Omitted here is material unrelated to Yemen.]

295. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, January 23, 1980, 1220Z

567. London for Under Secretary Newsom. Subject: Meeting With President Salih. Ref: State 012142.²

1. (S-entire text)

2. Summary: Ambassador and DCM met with YAR President Salih for one hour on January 22. Salih, who was in a testy mood, blamed U.S. for any problems in bilateral relations. He had no specific suggestions to make about ways to improve relations and seemed basically uninterested in the subject. He again defended his acquisition of Soviet arms and expressed confidence that he and YAR could dominate Communists and PDRY in any union between the two countries. He criticized U.S. press campaign against him and YAR and said nothing but platitudes on subject of YAR-Saudi relations. Salih gave impression of a man who has made his plans, and, that they did not include closer relations with U.S. Following this meeting, President reportedly had lunch at local hotel with visiting NDF leaders. End summary.

3. In response to my request, President Salih received me for about an hour on the morning of January 22, (on 25 minutes advance notice).

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800039–0862. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Priority to Amman, Jidda, London, Muscat, and USLO Riyadh.

² See Document 293.

DCM Gnehm accompanied me and YAR Chief of Protocol was also present.

4. I opened meeting by telling Salih I welcomed this opportunity to review with him status of our bilateral relations. Referring to January 14 Newsom/al-Ayni meeting,³ I said that USG considered these relations very important. I then reviewed efforts we had made to assist YAR during past year, particularly in military field, mentioning specifically arms deliveries in March, F-5 program (in which Salih's brother is one of the top pilots), and our continuing efforts to provide spare parts and ammunition for U.S. origin arms as witnessed by ship deliveries last month and further deliveries, including tank ammunition, scheduled for March. At same time, I said, USG was concerned about certain recent developments. As Salih knew, we were concerned about recent Soviet arms deal because it meant more Soviet technicians in the country and more Yemeni trainees going to the Soviet Union. I mentioned Senator Percy's letter to Salih,⁴ to which we have not received a reply, and said that this was an example of honest concern by a distinguished and influential American who was a friend of Yemen. Salih acknowledged that Senator Percy was a friend of YAR and said that a reply to his letter was on the way. I then asked Salih for his views on YAR-US relations and ways in which they could be improved.

5. YAR-USG relations. Salih replied that as far as he was concerned relations with USG were excellent; all the problems seemed to be from U.S. side. He and his government had done their best to develop and sustain these relations. If there were any shortfalls or weaknesses it was because of American hesitations and doubts. Throughout discussion he repeatedly returned to theme that USG support for him and his government had not been wholehearted, particularly since the Kuwait unity declaration of March 30, 1979.⁵ He also referred repeatedly to unfavorable articles about Yemen and him personally that have appeared in the American press, beginning with the stories of over a year ago predicting that he would not last six months, and continuing up to the January 17, 1980, article in the *Washington Star* (see Sana 523).⁶ Despite these attacks (which he obviously believes, despite our

³ See Document 293.

⁴ Not found.

⁵ See Document 281.

⁶ In telegram 523 from Sana, January 22, the Embassy referenced a recent *Washington Star* article entitled "North Yemen Reported Easing Ties to Soviets," noting: "In our view, this article is a disaster for U.S.-YAR and U.S.-Saudi relations and may have totally negated any possible positive results of Riyadh talks." Lane concluded: "In short, this article has seriously damaged chances that we and/or Saudis can repair relations with Salih and convince him to reduce his dependence on Soviets." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800037-1057)

denials, were inspired by the USG), the YAR has not responded with a similar campaign against the U.S. He also reiterated his familiar theme that YAR wants a direct bilateral relationship with the U.S. He referred in this regard to his letter to President Carter, which was hand carried to the U.S. last spring by Abdullah Asnaj.⁷ He mentioned pointedly that he had sent this letter prior to making the Soviet arms deal. He noted that when he acquired Soviet arms they did not arrive via the PDRY. When I pressed for his suggestions on what we could do to strengthen our bilateral relations, he referred in vague terms to need for U.S. military personnel to train Yemenis on M-60 tanks, now that Jordanians are leaving. He had no other suggestions.

6. Soviet influence. Salih repeated several times during the conversation his earlier arguments that acquisition of Soviet arms did not mean that Soviets controlled YAR foreign policy. He said that arms were simply hardware and that it was Yemenis who were operating them, that it was Soviet not American arms which had been used in fighting against PDRY. He had used them once to kill the Communists in the South and would not hesitate to do it again. He dismissed subject of Soviet technicians, saying that there had been 700 in the country eight years ago and the country had not gone Communist; therefore, the small number present today constituted no threat. The policy of the YAR has not been affected by source of arms, neither when he received U.S. equipment nor when he acquired Soviet arms.

7. Afghanistan. Referring to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, I said USG was disappointed that YARG had abstained in UNGA vote. In our view, Soviet actions marked new step in Soviet foreign policy that constituted a potential threat to YARG and Salih personally. Initially Salih responded that YAR abstained because that was YAR policy. When I pressed for a reason why, Salih said that USG kept saying it wanted an independent YAR; YARG vote was an expression of his government's independence. It did not always have to go along with the majority. At conclusion of brief discussion of this subject, Salih said YARG was opposed to Soviet invasion, but had not made public statement on this subject or voted against Soviets in UN for special reasons.

8. Unity talks. In response to my questions on progress being made in unity talks, Salih asked why I wanted to know, and said that it was not the business of the U.S. to concern itself with YAR-PDRY unity talks, or indeed YAR relations with any other country except U.S. I replied that unity was a question for the Yemen people themselves to

⁷ The letter, which was not found, was presumably delivered by al-Asnaj during his June 1979 visit to Washington. See footnote 4, Document 291.

decide, but we are naturally interested, given Soviet domination of PDRY and potential threat this presented both to YARG and to President Salih personally. After some bobbing and weaving, Salih said progress towards unity would depend largely on USG action. If USG was prepared to undertake direct military assistance program with YAR and provide the country with all the support and guarantees it needed, unity might be delayed a long time. If on the other hand, YARG could not count on USG backing, unity might come much sooner. Salih dismissed suggestions that unity with Communist dominated PDRY could pose any threat to Yemen independence, citing Yemen's history as the "graveyard of the conquerer" and fact that there were only one-half million people in PDRY. He suggested confidently that YAR would swallow PDRY, not vice-versa.

9. Relations with the Saudis. I repeated Mr. Newsom's remarks in para 8 reftel, saying that USG hoped for good relations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. We wished to cooperate with Saudi Arabia in Yemen but this did not mean we could not also have a direct relationship. Salih interrupted to say that YAR relations with Saudi Arabia were excellent and USG should not repeat not believe false intelligence reports to the contrary. He had nothing more to say on this subject.

10. Comment: Salih was in a confident and aggressive mood. In contrast to previous meetings I have had with him he was sure of himself and less friendly. Several times during the conversation Salih stressed that good relations between any two countries was the Ambassador's responsibility. I tried to explain that Embassy reported and made recommendations but there were many people in Washington who influenced policy. Salih persisted and told me not to believe false intelligence reports and street rumors but to keep in touch with senior YARG officials about YARG policies and plans.

11. Salih seemed to have no concerns whatsoever about greater reliance on Soviet weapons, closer relations with the NDF or unity with the PDRY, being confident that North Yemen's numbers and its tradition of independence would triumph over the small number of Communists in the South. He said that he was still interested in expanding direct bilateral military relationship with the U.S. but had no specific suggestions to make. He gave the impression that he has given up hope of getting what he wants from the U.S., has made other plans, and doesn't really care what we do at this point. I still think there is a chance that a specific offer by us to provide the kind of training, maintenance and logistical assistance Salih wants might pull him back from greater reliance on the Soviets but I am less certain of this today than I was before the meeting.

Lane

296. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) to President Carter¹

Washington, February 7, 1980

SUBJECT

Covert Action Program for the Yemens (S)

Attached is the SCC analysis and recommendation endorsing the proposed covert action program for the Yemens. It is a modest scale (\$12 million) program [*less than 1 line not declassified*].² (S)

The strategy would be to build up a moderate political force in North Yemen to resist Salih's drift toward integration with the PDRY while at the same time tackling the root of the problem—the extremely radical Soviet-backed government in Aden which has designs against both North Yemen and Saudi Arabia and which serves as a major military base for the Soviet Union. Our effort against the PDRY would consist of building up moderate political opposition to the Ismail regime, encouraging dissident tribesmen, aggravating divisions which exist within Ismail's government, and putting teeth into these political efforts by selected paramilitary operations by tribesmen and opposition against key PDRY communications and security facilities. (S)

Our objectives are, in increasing order of difficulty, to reassure the Saudis by engaging in a [*less than 1 line not declassified*] program to deal with a serious threat to them; to contain the PDRY's subversive effort by strengthening moderates in the north and by keeping the PDRY off balance in the south; and, finally, to encourage the accession of a more moderate government in Aden. (S)

There are important risks to the program and the SCC has studied them carefully. Checkpoints for assessment of the program and of PDRY/Soviet reaction are built in. In sum, the projected reactions of the PDRY, the Soviet Union and their allies consist of actions which are already either under way or which we judge largely inevitable. Hence, the risks are essentially the same whether we proceed with the program or not. If we do not, the PDRY, and the Soviets are likely to try to keep the threat to Saudi security just below a threshold that would prompt strong US-Saudi reaction until it is too late. Conversely, proceeding with the program not only holds out the possibility of

¹ Source: National Security Council, Carter Administration Intelligence Files, Box IO 47, Yemen: 15 June 1977–13 March 1981. Secret; [*handling restriction not declassified*]; Top Secret Attachment. Sent for action. Carter wrote "Zbig J" in the top right-hand corner of the memorandum.

² Not printed.

ultimately ending the threat from the PDRY but also strengthens Saudi Arabia's, Oman's and North Yemen's capacity to resist PDRY subversion and paramilitary activity. (S)

If you approve the program, we will confirm our willingness to undertake it [*1 line not declassified*] you would sign the appropriate Finding at Annex 4.³ (S)

RECOMMENDATION:

The SCC recommends that you approve the proposed program for the Yemens. I endorse this recommendation.⁴

³ Carter underlined the phrase "undertake it [*less than 1 line not declassified*]," drew an arrow to the phrase, and wrote under the paragraph: "[*less than 1 line not declassified*]." Annex 4 is not printed.

⁴ Carter checked the Approve option and wrote in the margin: "Zbig—How about the French & others being encouraged to stabilize the situation—not joining in our clandestine activities. Saudis need to treat YAR well. Also, we should see who else can approach *either* Yemen to prevent Soviet success. Post-Afghanistan, Arab League members may be able to help—J." Carter added: "p.s. you always want to travel. How about a trip to PDRY? You may woo them over to our side." Carter then drew a line across the page, writing under it: "In general, having read the memo, I believe we are much more likely to have success by working *with* YAR than *against* PDRY. Also, Moslem believers in S Yemen may be a more important factor than assumed here. J." The covert action program was implemented through a number of Presidential Findings dated March 27, 1980. (National Security Council, Carter Administration Intelligence Files, Box IO 47, North Yemen Finding—27 Mar 80 South Yemen Finding—27 Mar 80)

297. Memorandum From Robert Hunter and Gary Sick of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Brzezinski) and the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Aaron)¹

Washington, February 26, 1980

SUBJECT

Yemen (U)

We attended an interagency meeting on North Yemen, today, at which Ambassador Lane was present. The meeting was called to find ways of implementing the President's directive on seeking a constructive relationship with President Salih. (S)

This effort *will* produce some ideas about assistance, and there was no disagreement about doing what we can. However, it became clear in the meeting—without dissent—that what we are talking about can't do the job. The "critical mass" for doing anything that will have any real impact on President Salih is far higher than we have any capacity of providing, unless we are prepared to indent for a major budget supplemental. This would be in the order of hundreds—not tens—of millions of dollars. (S)

[3 lines not declassified] The long and short of this aspect of the problem is that the Saudis have not sorted out their attitudes towards the Yemenis. Until and unless they do, there is little of value *we* can do that will have an impact on Salih (Lane stressed that Salih is unimpressed with symbols); and *if* the Saudis are prepared to act in a truly forthcoming way, then there is little we *need* to do independently, at least on the assistance track. (S)

Beyond these observations, our sense is that we are not thinking through clearly the assumptions behind the President's directive: i.e. that a) Salih is amenable to blandishments from us, of a size that is within our capabilities; b) we do have some real opportunities to affect Yemeni policy directly; and c) the Saudis are prepared to sort out their attitudes and take a line that can itself effectively shape events in North Yemen. Thus we believe we should do some hard analysis of these factors before proceeding further—especially in light of the budgetary implications of our trying at this point to beef up our relations with Salih. (S)

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Middle East, Subject File, Box 93, YAR: 1–3/80. Secret; Sensitive. Outside the system. A stamped notation on the memorandum indicates Brzezinski saw it. Brzezinski wrote in the margin: "DA your reaction? ZB 2–27–80."

[1 paragraph (5 lines) not declassified]

This memo is to forewarn you that the formal proposal that will come forward through the bureaucracy will not be what the President wants, for want of options, not lack of willingness to find them. We will keep a close eye on it. If you want, you could raise it at the VBB.² (S)

² Reference is to the weekly Vance-Brown-Brzezinski lunch.

298. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia¹

Washington, March 1, 1980, 0148Z

55179. Subject: US-Saudi Consultations on the YAR. Ref: State 42453.²

1. Secret-entire text.

2. In connection with Ambassador Lane's consultations in Washington, an interagency meeting on Yemen was held February 26.³ At this meeting there was a general consensus on several points:

—The situation in the YAR is fluid and dangerous. President Salih's flirtation with the left is risky and the US needs to be alert to the danger of leftist influence in the YAR. We need to keep in very close touch with the Saudis about developments in Yemen. Recognizing the political uncertainty in the YAR, we nevertheless believe it important that we be prepared to support effectively and efficiently the military equipment we have provided as a means of showing, not only

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800106-0508. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Drafted by Michael R. Arietti (NEA/ARP); cleared by Twinam, Walter Hayden (PM/SAS), Garrison (DOD), Richard Aherne (T), Sick, and W. Scott Butcher (S/S-O); cleared by Newsom. Sent for information to Sana, Amman, and USLO Riyadh.

² In telegram 42453 to Jidda, February 16, the Department instructed the Embassy that planning should go forward in order for the United States and Saudi Arabia to provide follow-on support to the Yemen Arab Republic if it so desired. The Department instructed West to meet with Sultan, if possible, in order to stress these points and collect information regarding ongoing Saudi-YAR talks. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800083-0204)

³ See Document 297.

President Salih, but other influential Yemeni leaders that there is an alternative to dependence on the Soviets for military support. Saudi involvement is essential.

4. Action requested: That the Embassy follow through quickly on instructions contained reftel, emphasizing proposal for a planning conference in Riyadh to discuss specifics of a follow-on program and the importance of funding Jordanian replacement MTT's to provide training and maintenance on army equipment and a sufficient number of Taiwanese personnel to maintain all F-5 aircraft now in Sana.

5. FYI: In light of recent reports from Sana and Jidda, we will want to keep under review implementation of these steps, but we should raise them immediately with the Saudis in order to be ready to move quickly depending on how the situation develops. End FYI.

Vance

299. Telegram From the Embassy in the Yemen Arab Republic to the Department of State¹

Sana, April 12, 1980, 1028Z

2566. Subject: Unity and Subversion—the PDRY, the NDF, and the YAR.

1. (C-entire text)

2. Summary: The impetus towards unity between the YAR and the PDRY appears to have stalled. For a variety of reasons, the PDRY and the NDF, supported by the Soviets, are now concentrating on infiltrating the YAR and building up the country with the ultimate goal of taking over the country from within. The SAG and the USG have not organized an effective program to block this drive. Unless we do so soon, the continued growth of anti-Saudi and anti-U.S. feeling within the YAR and an eventual move to the left is inevitable. End summary.

3. The drive for unity between the PDRY and the YAR, which was kicked off a year ago at the Kuwait summit meeting between YAR

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800186–0802. Confidential. Sent for information to Jidda, USLO Riyadh, the Department of Defense, and USCINCEUR Vaihingen.

President Ali Abdullah Salih and PDRY leader Abd Fatah Isma'el,² has run out of steam. This has happened for a number of reasons: First, those in the YAR who are opposed to unity with the present PDRY Government and who were opposed to President Salih's moves in this direction during the past year, have gained strength. Although they may not have convinced President Salih to give up the idea of unity entirely, they appear to have exerted enough pressure on him to halt the drive, at least temporarily. Second, the pressure for unity from the PDRY has eased. The so-called "Southerners" in the PDRY leadership, led by Defense Minister Ali Antar, who was never enthusiastic about unity in the first place, have gained more influence. One knowledgeable source says that this group is now talking about unity within five years. Even the "Northerners", led by Abd Fatah Isma'el, are reported to be less enthusiastic about immediate unity than they were a year ago. We hear that this group is now talking about unity in one or two years. Although the unity committees continue to meet regularly and YAR Presidential Advisor for Unity Affairs, Hussayn Dafa'i, constantly shuttles between Sana and Aden, what we are witnessing is a reconciliation and rapprochement between two independent countries rather than a serious effort towards unity.

4. This definitely does not repeat not mean that the Marxists of the PDRY and their NDF allies have given up their plans to take over the YAR. As the prospects for meaningful unity have faded, the NDF has increased its efforts to deepen and widen its influence throughout the country. The NDF is now using not only assassination and intimidation but is also establishing quasi-government organizations in various parts of the country that have traditionally been outside of the authority of the YARG in Sana. As these organizations grow in strength and legitimacy, the people are increasingly turning to them to carry out the normal functions of government. The visits of NDF leaders and PDRY unity committees to Sana provide excellent opportunities for these men to keep in touch with their agents in the YAR.

5. At the same time, the Soviets are expanding their offers of assistance to the YARG. A steady stream of Soviet weapons of all kinds is now flowing into the country. We do not know exactly how many additional Soviet technicians have arrived, but the total number in country may well be about 300, up from 120 a year ago. At the same time, Yemeni military men are again being sent to the Soviet Union for training on these newly arrived weapons. In addition, the Soviets are pressing the YARG to accept their offer to train between 200 and 500 Yemeni students in the Soviet Union. The Yemenis have not sent

² See Document 281.

any new civilian students to the Soviet Union for the past two years, but they may not be able to resist these new Soviet offers.

6. The U.S.-Saudi response to this Soviet/PDRY/NDF challenge has been weak, confused and ineffective. Since the delivery of large quantities of U.S. arms a year ago, our military assistance program has been plagued with difficulties—the full complement of F-5s did not arrive until September 1979, combat ammunition for the M-60s is still not in country, and the Jordanians, who were playing a key role in training the Yemen armed forces on U.S. origin equipment, have been gone for three months. Nor has our economic aid program been large enough, visible enough or effective enough to have a significant political impact. We have some good projects underway but others are bogged down. This is partly our fault, because of the incredible slowness of AID procedures, compounded by the four month drawdown of U.S. personnel between November 1979 and March 1980³ and partly the Yemenis' fault because of their bureaucratic inefficiency and lack of high level understanding and support.

7. During this period, Saudi-Yemeni relations, which have never been warm, disintegrated still further. The Saudis have been worried about Salih's flirtation with the South in the unity talks, were furious that he lied to them about the Soviet arms deal, and have further exacerbated relations by taking a very tough position on the border incidents.⁴ Open hostility has been avoided because the YARG desperately needs Saudi money, but the distrust and suspicion between the two countries has grown. The overall result has been that for the past year the NDF and the Soviets have been gaining influence within the YAR while we and the Saudis have been losing.

8. The personality of President Salih has played an important role in this process. We have previously speculated on the question of Salih's intentions—does he have a long run plan for unity, toward which he is working step-by-step, or is he simply lurching from crisis to crisis, doing whatever he thinks is necessary to stay in power? To a certain extent Salih is operating from a politics of fear; he is afraid that if he does not cooperate with the Soviets, the PDRY, and the NDF, they will remove him. On the other hand, he knows from his own involvement in the Hamdi assassination⁵ that if he pushes the Saudis

³ Reference is to the personnel drawdown that occurred in a number of. Embassies following the seizure of the Embassy in Tehran.

⁴ Reference is to a reported incident on February 17 between Saudi and YAR military units along a disputed region along the border of the two nations. The Embassy reported on this clash in telegram 1355 from Sana, February 25, and telegram 2004 from Sana, March 19. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D800101-1014 and D800139-0738, respectively)

⁵ See Document 233.

too far, they may react violently. The Soviets, PDRY and NDF have probably promised to protect him against the latter threat but Salih may know that he cannot really trust them and that in any case the Saudis have a long arm in Yemen.

9. Conclusion: A year ago, the PDRY and the NDF, with Soviet acquiescence if not outright support, tried to bring down the YAR Government by a frontal assault across the border. They failed for a number of reasons—the PDRY and the NDF miscalculated the number of Yemenis who would rise against Salih the moment the attack began, they miscalculated the Iraqi-Syrian attitude, and the Soviets probably miscalculated the U.S. reaction. They have learned from their mistakes. This time they are patiently building support inside the country. The unity talks continue because neither side wants to take responsibility for breaking them off, but their main purpose as far as the PDRY and the NDF are concerned is to soften up the YAR for further NDF penetration. The Soviets are assisting this process by offering President Salih almost unlimited quantities of arms and by attempting to convince the YARG that they are the traditional friends of the Yemenis and can be counted on to assist the country's development. The purpose of the Soviet arms deliveries is not to provide weapons for Salih to use against the PDRY or the NDF but to weaken as much as possible the joint Saudi-U.S. military assistance program. We and the Saudis have so far been ineffective in countering this strategy. In fact, the Saudis have actually contributed to the weakening of anti-Marxist forces in the YAR by their policy along the border. Unless we and the Saudis can come up with a substantial and effective program to counter growing Soviet/PDRY/NDF influence, the continued erosion of our position seems inevitable.

Lane

300. Memorandum of Notification From the Acting Director of Central Intelligence (Carlucci) to the Members of the Special Coordination Committee¹

Washington, January 5, 1981

SUBJECT

Implementation of Program of Assistance to the Yemen Arab Republic Security Service

REFERENCE

Presidential Finding on the Yemen Arab Republic Dated 27 March 1980

1. *Background.* This memorandum is to notify members of the Special Coordination Committee that pursuant to implementation of the 27 March 1980 Presidential Finding on the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR),² which in part authorizes training and other support with the aim of creating a broad opposition front to the National Democratic Front (NDF) to reduce People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) and Soviet Bloc influence in the YAR, this Agency is planning to undertake a program of assistance to the YAR intelligence service.

Since the signing of the YAR Finding, there has been an evolution in the policy trends of President Ali Abdallah Salih's government. Both discussions with YAR security officials and unilateral reporting indicate that Salih is increasingly disenchanted with his policy of rapprochement with the PDRY and is particularly unhappy over the recent increase in NDF activities. [7 lines not declassified]

—President Salih is deeply concerned about the security situation in the YAR and feels he must rebuild his intelligence service in order to cope with the threat posed by external subversion in general and the NDF specifically.

—The Soviet Union has made an official offer of assistance to the YAR in this regard, and pro-Soviet elements within the YAR government are pressuring President Salih to accept the offer.

¹ Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, For President or Brzezinski Only File, Box 89, Sensitive Foreign Commitments: 1/78–1/81. Secret. Gregg sent the Memorandum of Notification letter to Brzezinski under a January 15 memorandum, indicating that the CIA was reluctant to proceed with the implementation of the program until certain issues had been resolved. Gregg recommended that Brzezinski initial an attached letter to Carlucci which noted that the CIA's "current implementation falls within the original finding and that CIA has approval to proceed." Brzezinski approved, and the letter was sent to Carlucci on January 15. (Ibid.)

² See footnote 4, Document 296.

—President Salih has a strong preference for Western, and if possible, American, assistance to help him rebuild his security service.

—If he is unable to arrange such assistance, he will be left with no effective alternative to the Soviet offer. However, he would strongly prefer not to accept the Soviet offer, and as a quid pro quo for U.S. assistance would be willing to cooperate closely with CIA on targets of mutual interest—specifically the PDRY and the Soviet presence in Sana.

[10 lines not declassified] Although we remain skeptical about Salih's long-term commitment to a close security relationship with CIA, after consultation with interested parties, including the U.S. Ambassador in Sana and officials of the Department of State, it has been decided that it is in our best interests to respond positively to the YAR request for assistance in training and reorganizing their intelligence service. It is our view that undertaking such a program is clearly consistent with the YAR Finding of 27 March 1980.

The very early phases of the program will focus on activities which are solely for the purpose of collecting intelligence, [1 line not declassified]. In later stages the program will expand to activities which are not solely for the purpose of collection of intelligence and will fall under the activities authorized by the 27 March Finding.

2. [1 paragraph (16 lines) not declassified]

3. *Goals of the Program.* The goals of the program are:

—To preclude the Soviet Union from obtaining another foothold in a sensitive element of the YAR government.

—To reestablish a working relationship between CIA and the YAR intelligence service and in doing so support U.S. policy objectives in the YAR.

—To assist the YAR in establishing an effective intelligence service capable of dealing with the threat posed by the NDF, and in doing so limit the influence of the PDRY in the YAR.

—To establish programs and contacts which will enable [less than 1 line not declassified] to influence YAR leadership to adopt more moderate, pro-West policies.

4. [1 paragraph (6 lines) not declassified]

5. *Policy Authorization.* CIA believes that this operation is consistent with the basic spirit and thrust of the 27 March 1980 Finding on Yemen Arab Republic which in part authorizes provision of supplies, equipment, funds, training and other support with the aim of creating a broad opposition front to the National Democratic Front in order to reduce PDRY and Soviet Bloc influence in the YAR and encourage a moderate, pro-West government in the YAR. At the same time it should be noted that in earlier program proposals it was recognized that at some point it would be necessary to rebuild and train a YAR security

service capable of countering NDF activities. However, in view of the sensitivity of the operation and the lack of specific authority for it in the relevant Presidential Finding, CIA is hereby notifying the SCC of this proposed activity prior to implementation.

6. [1 paragraph (3 lines) not declassified]

Frank C. Carlucci
Acting Director

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