

NATIONAL SECURITY FILE
National Security Council History
Middle East Crisis, vol. 7, App. G
Box 19

1

Monday, June 5, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 7:47 am

Received by US Molink - 7:59 am

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ КОСЫГИН ИНТЕРЕСУЕТСЯ, НАХОДИТСЯ ЛИ ПРЕЗИДЕНТ ДЖОНСОН У АППАРАТА.

ПРОШУ ПЕРЕДАТЬ ПРЕЗИДЕНТУ ДЖОНСОНУ СЛЕДУЮЩЕЕ СООБЩЕНИЕ

01

УВАЖАЕМЫЙ ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ, ПОЛУЧЕНО СООБЩЕНИЕ О ВОЕННЫХ СТОЛКНОВЕНИЯХ МЕЖДУ ИЗРАИЛЕМ И ОБЪЕДИНЕННОЙ АРАВСКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКОЙ.

СОВЕТСКОЕ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО УВЕРЕНО, ЧТО ДОЛГОМ ВСЕХ ВЕЛИКИХ ДЕР. ЯВЛЯЕТСЯ - ДОБИТЬСЯ ТОГО, ЧТОБЫ ВОЕННЫЙ КОНФЛИКТ БЫЛ НЕМЕДЛЕННО ПРЕКРАЩЕН.

СОВЕТСКОЕ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО ДЕЙСТВОВАЛО И БУДЕТ ДЕЙСТВОВАТЬ В ЭТОМ НАПРАВЛЕНИИ. ВЫРАЖАЕТСЯ НАДЕЖДА, ЧТО ТАК ЖЕ БУДЕТ ПОСТУПАТЬ И ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО США И ОКАЖЕТ СООТВЕТСТВУЮЩЕЕ ВЛИЯНИЕ НА ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО ИЗРАИЛЯ ТЕМ БОЛЕЕ, ЧТО К ЭТОМУ У ВАС ИМЕЮТСЯ ВСЕ ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ. ЭТОГО ТРЕБУЮТ ВЫСШИЕ ИНТЕРЕСЫ МИРА.

С УВАЖЕНИЕМ

А. КОСЫГИН
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ
СССР.

МОСКВА, КРЕМЛЬ
5 ИЮНЯ 1967 ГОДА.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 95-157
By , NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

8/

TRANSLATION

Monday, June 5, 1967
Sight Translation - 8:05 am.
Received by the President - 8:15 am.
Rough Translation - 8:30 am.
Final Official Translation - 10:08 am.

The White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President,

Having received information concerning the military clashes between Israel and the United Arab Republic, the Soviet Government is convinced that the duty of all great powers is to secure the immediate cessation of the military conflict.

The Soviet Government has acted and will act in this direction. We hope that the Government of the United States will also act in the same manner and will exert appropriate influence on the Government of Israel particularly since you have all opportunities of doing so. This is required in the highest interest of peace.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4
REF. 95-157
By 428, NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~

9

Monday, June 5, 1967

Transmitted by US Molink - 8:15 am.

Received by Soviet Molink - 8:33 am.

To Chairman Kosygin

From The White House

Dear Mr. Kosygin,

Preliminary to President's arrival we are repeating message dispatched earlier from Secretary Rusk for delivery to Foreign Minister Gromyko.

"We are astonished and dismayed by preliminary reports of heavy fighting between Israeli and Egyptian forces. As you know, we have been making the maximum effort to prevent this situation. We were expecting a very high level Egyptian Delegation on Wednesday and we had assurances from the Israelis that they would not initiate hostilities pending further diplomatic efforts. We feel it is very important that the United Nations Security Council succeed in bringing this fighting to an end as quickly as possible and are ready to cooperate with all members of the Council to that end."

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12336, Sec. 3.4
BY 95-157
By 120, NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~ - OADR
PER NLS 85-259

~~SECRET~~

10

Monday, June 5, 1967
Approved by the President - 8:47 am.
Transmitted by US Molink - 8:57 am.
Received by Soviet Molink - 8:59 am.

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin:

I welcome your message. We feel that it is the duty of all great states to secure a speedy end to the military conflict, as indicated in Secretary Rusk's earlier message to Foreign Minister Gromyko this morning. We are strongly supporting action to this end in the United Nations Security Council which meets within the hour and trust you will do the same. I have already made a personal appeal to all the governments in the area concerned and you may be assured we will exercise all our influence to bring hostilities to an end. We are pleased to learn from your message that you are doing the same.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12536, Sec. 3.4
REF. 95-157
By , NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~

Tuesday, June 6, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 5:34 am

Received by US Molink - 5:43 am

ПРЕЗИДЕНТУ ДЖОНСОНУ

ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ,

ВОЕННЫЕ ДЕЙСТВИЯ НА ВЛИЖНЕМ ВОСТОКЕ ПРОДОЛЖАЮТСЯ. БОЛЕЕ ТОГО, МАСШТАБ ИХ РАСШИРЯЕТСЯ.

СОВЕТСКОЕ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО УБЕЖДЕНО, ЧТО ИНТЕРЕСАМ ВОССТАНОВЛЕНИЯ МИРА ОТВЕЧАЛО БЫ РЕШИТЕЛЬНОЕ ТРЕБОВАНИЕ О НЕМЕДЛЕННОМ ПРЕКРАЩЕНИИ ОГНЯ И ОТВОДЕ ВОЙСК ЗА ЛИНИЮ ПЕРЕМИРИЯ. МЫ ВЫРАЖАЕМ НАДЕЖДУ, ЧТО ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО США ПОДДЕРЖИТ В СОВЕТЕ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ УКАЗАННОЕ ТРЕБОВАНИЕ. МЫ ЕГО ПОДДЕРЖИВАЕМ.

НАДО БЫЛО БЫ СДЕЛАТЬ ВСЕ ВОЗМОЖНОЕ, ЧТОБЫ СЕГОДНЯ СОВЕТОМ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ БЫЛО ПРИНЯТО ПО ЭТОМУ ВОПРОСУ ПОЛОЖИТЕЛЬНОЕ РЕШЕНИЕ.

С УВАЖЕНИЕМ

А. КОСЫГИН
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ
СССР

МОСКВА, КРЕМЛЬ
6 ИЮНЯ 1967 ГОДА

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 95-157
37-118, NARA, Date 2-7-96

12

TRANSLATION

Tuesday, June 6, 1967
Sight Translation - 5:50 am.
Received by President - 5:50 am.
Rough Translation - 5:54 am.
Final Official Translation - 6:23 am.

White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President,

Military activities in the near east continue, more-
over their scope is spreading.

The Soviet Government is convinced that a decisive
demand for an immediate cease-fire and the withdrawal of troops
behind the armistice line would be in the interests of re-establishing
peace. We express the hope that the Government of the United States
will support the stated demand in the Security Council. We are
supporting it.

Everything possible should be done so that positive
decision be taken today on this matter by the Security Council.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4
BY 95-157
By sig, NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~

12 10

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 95-157
NARA, Date 2-7-96

Tuesday, June 6, 1967
Approved by the President - 10:03 am.
Transmitted by US Molink - 10:21 am.
Received by Soviet Molink - 10:43 am.

To Chairman Kosygin
From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Mr. Kosygin,

We continue to believe that the fighting in the Near East should be stopped as soon as possible. We were disappointed that the UN Security Council lost a full day yesterday in its effort to call for a prompt cease-fire. I understand that our representatives in the Security Council will be discussing this matter further this morning. The matter is urgent.

I was puzzled, Mr. Chairman, by what has been said by the Soviet Press and Radio since our exchange of messages yesterday morning. It does not help to charge the United States as a participant in aggression, especially when our only role has been to press for restraint at every step of the way.

I know you are not responsible for Cairo. But you should know that we were astounded that Cairo, just a few hours ago, alleged that U.S. Carrier aircraft had participated in attacks on Egypt. This wholly false and obviously invented charge has led to attacks on our representatives in various Arab localities in violation of the most elemental rights of legation. Since you know where our carriers are, I hope you can put Cairo right on this matter and help us eliminate that kind of needless inflammation.

We have expressed to your government our views on the strait of Tiran in my letter to you of May 28 and Secretary of State Rusk's letter to Foreign Minister Gromyko of the same date.

In this personal exchange I should like to emphasize one point which goes beyond general principles about international rights of passage through narrow waters. President Eisenhower, in 1957 was faced with the problem of obtaining the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai. In pressing for a withdrawal which was earnestly desired by Egypt, President Eisenhower committed the United States to international passage of the strait. President Nasser's declaration of May 22 that he would close the strait runs squarely into a commitment we undertook while supporting Egypt, quite apart from our interests as a maritime nation.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I suggest that we both do our best to obtain prompt action by the Security Council. The Resolution, submitted by Ambassador Goldberg to Ambassador Federenko last night, meets the points raised in your communication to me, as well as the realities discussed above. We earnestly hope you can give it your support.

For your convenience, the key paragraph in this Resolution is the following:

"Calls upon the Governments concerned to take the necessary measures for an immediate cease-fire and prompt withdrawal, without prejudice to the respective rights, claims or position of anyone, of their armed personnel behind the Armistice Lines, and to take other appropriate measures to ensure disengagement of forces, to refrain from acts of force regardless of their nature, and to reduce tension in the area."

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Tuesday, June 6, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 6:07 pm
Received by US Molink - 6:10 pm

БЕЛЫЙ ДОМ
ПРЕЗИДЕНТУ США ЛИНДОНУ В. ДЖОНСОНУ

РАССМОТРЕЛИ ВАШИ ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ. ДАЛИ НЕОБХОДИМЫЕ УКАЗАНИЯ
СОВЕТСКОМУ ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЮ В СОВЕТЕ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ. ВЫРАЖАЕМ
НАДЕЖДУ, ЧТО И ВЫ ДАДИТЕ СООТВЕТСТВУЮЩИЕ УКАЗАНИЯ СВОЕМУ
ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЮ О ПРИНЯТИИ СЕГОДНЯ ЖЕ РЕШЕНИЯ О НЕМЕДЛЕННОМ
ПРЕКРАЩЕНИИ ВОЕННЫХ ДЕЙСТВИЙ С ОТВОДОМ ВОЙСК ЗА ЛИНИЮ ПЕ-
РЕМИРИЯ.

А. КОСЫГИН.

06 ИЮНЯ 1967 ГОДА.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4
BY 95-157
By SP, NARA, Date 2-7-96

15

TRANSLATION

Tuesday, June 6, 1967
Sight Translation - 6:12 pm.
Received by the President - 6:15 pm.
Rough Translation - 6:17 pm.
Final Official Translation - 6:38 pm.

The White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President,

We have considered your proposals. We have issued the necessary instructions to the Soviet Representative in the Security Council. We express the hope that you will also issue corresponding instructions to your representative about the adoption today of resolutions concerning the immediate cessation of military actions with the withdrawal of troops behind the armistice line.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12336, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 95-157
By lip, NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~

16

Tuesday, June 6, 1967

Approved by the President - 7:45 pm.

Transmitted by US Molink - 8:23 pm.

Received by Soviet Molink - 8:28 pm.

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Mr. Kosygin:

Our two Ambassadors in the Security Council have been in close consultation throughout the day. We understand that our Ambassadors agreed to a very short resolution calling for a cease-fire as a first step. We authorized our representative to agree on behalf of the United States Government. The Security Council has just adopted this resolution unanimously. We shall do our best to assist the Security Council's further efforts to restore peace in the Near East on a lasting basis.

I trust we can work together in the days ahead to help solve the problems before us in the Near East and elsewhere.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 95-157
By 450, NARA, Date 2-7-96

17

Wednesday, June 7, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 8:18 am

Received by U.S. Molink - 8:23 am

01
США/СССР
071218 P

ПО ПРЯМОМУ ПРОВОДУ

ВАШИНГТОН БЕЛЫЙ ДОМ
ПРЕЗИДЕНТУ ДЖОНСОНУ

ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ,

ПО ИМЕЮЩИМСЯ СВЕДЕНИЯМ ИЗРАИЛЬ ИГНОРИРУЕТ РЕЗОЛЮЦИЮ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ, ПРИЗЫВАЮЩУЮ ЗАИНТЕРЕСОВАННЫЕ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВА В КАЧЕСТВЕ ПЕРВОГО ШАГА ПРЕДПРИНЯТЬ ВСЕ МЕРЫ К НЕМЕДЛЕННОМУ ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЮ ОГНЯ И ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЮ ВСЕХ ВОЕННЫХ ДЕЙСТВИЙ В ЭТОМ РАЙОНЕ.

ТАКОЕ ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ ТРЕБУЕТ, ЧТОБЫ СОВЕТ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАЛ СВОИ ПОЛНОМОЧИЯ ДЛЯ ТОГО, ЧТОБЫ ОБЕСПЕЧИТЬ ВЫПОЛНЕНИЕ ИМ ЖЕ ПРИНЯТОГО РЕШЕНИЯ.

В СВЯЗИ С ЭТИМ НАМИ ВНЕСЕНО ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЕ О НЕМЕДЛЕННОМ СОЗЫВЕ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ДЛЯ ПРИНЯТИЯ ЭФФЕКТИВНЫХ МЕР К НЕМЕДЛЕННОМУ ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЮ ВОЕННЫХ ДЕЙСТВИЙ И ВОССТАНОВЛЕНИЮ МИРА.

С УВАЖЕНИЕМ

А. КОСЫГИН
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ
СССР

7 ИЮНЯ 1967 ГОДА.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 95-157

By 119, NARA, Date 2-7-96

18

TRANSLATION

Wednesday, June 7, 1967

Sight Translation - 8:29 am.

Received by President - 8:34 am.

Rough Translation - 8:36 am.

Final Official Translation - 9:20 am.

The White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President,

According to available information, Israel is ignoring the Resolution of the Security Council, summoning all governments concerned to take as a first step all measures towards an immediate cease-fire and cessation of all military actions in this area.

Such a situation calls for the Security Council to use its authority to guarantee the implementation of its own decision.

In this connection, we have proposed an immediate reconvening of the Security Council to take effective measures for an immediate cessation of military actions and the re-establishment of peace.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 95-157

7-189, NARA, Date 2-7-96

19

Wednesday, June 7, 1967

Approved by President - 11:00 am.

Transmitted by US Molink - 11:18 am.

Received by Soviet Molink - 11:25 am.

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Mr. Chairman:

We are instructing our Ambassador at the United Nations to agree to an immediate meeting of the Security Council when one is suggested by your Ambassador.

Our Ambassador reports that the Security Council was informed last evening by Foreign Minister Eban that Israel would accept a cease-fire, while noting that he did not know of the reaction of the Arab side. He also reported that the Arab Ambassadors were silent on this point. At the time of this message, we ourselves are not clear as to their attitude, with the possible exception of Jordan.

We are taking steps to see that the resolution of the Security Council is implemented by all concerned. We are prepared to work with all others to establish a lasting peace in the region.

The wholly false reports and invented charges that United States aircraft participated in attacks on Egypt have resulted in mob action against American embassies and consulates and a break in Diplomatic Relations by seven Arab countries with the United States. This despicable act on their part and failure to give adequate protection to American officials and private citizens in Arab countries will lead to a very serious deterioration in the situation. I repeat the hope that you will be able to counsel moderation where it is needed.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

DECLASSIFIED
NSC 10-29-79
By <i>DLH</i> NARS, Date 5-24-85

20
/

Thursday, June 8, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 9:48 am

Received by US Molink - 10:15 am

01
США/СССР
081348 4

ВАШИНГТОН, БЕЛЫЙ ДОМ
ПРЕЗИДЕНТУ США ГОСПОДИНУ ДЖОНСОНУ

ПРОШЛО ДВА ДНЯ ПОСЛЕ РЕШЕНИЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ О ПРЕКРАЩЕНИИ ВОЕННЫХ ДЕЙСТВИЙ НА БЛИЖНЕМ ВОСТОКЕ. ФАКТЫ ПОКАЗЫВАЮТ, ЧТО ИЗРАИЛЬ ПОСЛЕ ПРИЗЫВА СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ЗАХВАТИЛ ЗНАЧИТЕЛЬНУЮ ТЕРРИТОРИЮ АРАВСКИХ ГОСУДАРСТВ - ОБЪЕДИНЕННОЙ АРАВСКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ И ИОРДАНИИ, ИГНОРИРУЯ РЕШЕНИЕ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ. СЛОЖИЛАСЬ ОБСТАНОВКА, КОТОРАЯ ТРЕБУЕТ В СВЯЗИ С ЭТИМИ ДЕЙСТВИЯМИ ИЗРАИЛЯ НЕ ПРОСТО ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЯ ОГНЯ, НО И ОТВОДА ИЗРАИЛЬСКИХ ВОЙСК ЗА ЛИНИЮ ПЕРЕМИРИЯ. АРАВСКИЕ ГОСУДАРСТВА ПОСТАВЛЕНЫ ДЕЙСТВИЯМИ ИЗРАИЛЯ В ТАКОЕ ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ, ЧТО ОНИ НЕ МОГУТ ВЕСТИ ЗАКОННОЙ ОБОРОНИТЕЛЬНОЙ ВОЙНЫ ПРОТИВ АГРЕССОРА, КОТОРЫЙ ВРОСИЛ ВЫЗОВ СОВЕТУ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ И ВСЕМ МИРОЛЮБИВЫМ ГОСУДАРСТВАМ. ДО ПОЛНОГО ВЫВОДА ИЗРАИЛЬСКИХ ВОЙСК С ТЕРРИТОРИИ АРАВСКИХ ГОСУДАРСТВ НЕ МОЖЕТ БЫТЬ ОБЕСПЕЧЕНО В СЛОЖИВШЕЙСЯ ОБСТАНОВКЕ ВОССТАНОВЛЕНИЕ МИРА БЛИЖНЕМ ВОСТОКЕ.

СОВЕТСКОМУ ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЮ В ООН НАМИ ДАНО УКАЗАНИЕ ПОСТАВИТЬ ЭТОТ ВОПРОС В СОВЕТЕ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ ДЛЯ ПРИНЯТИЯ ИМ СООТВЕТСТВУЮЩЕГО РЕШЕНИЯ.

МЫ ХОТЕЛИ БЫ ВЫРАЗИТЬ НАДЕЖДУ, ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ, ЧТО ВЫ ЛИЧНО И ВАШЕ ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВО ЗАЙМЕТЕ ПОЗИЦИЮ, ОТВЕЧАЮЩУЮ ИНТЕРЕСАМ ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЯ ВОЙНЫ НА БЛИЖНЕМ ВОСТОКЕ, ИНТЕРЕСАМ МИРА, КАК ВЫ ЭТО УЖЕ ЗАЯВЛЯЛИ.

С УВАЖЕНИЕМ

А. КОСЫГИН
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ
СССР

ЦОМ ЦОМ

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-382

By , NARA, Date 4-5-95

TRANSLATION

Thursday, June 8, 1967
Sight Translation - 10:28 am.
Received by President - 10:31 am.
Rough Translation - 10:34 am.
Final Official Translation - 12:35 pm.

The White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President,

Two days have passed since the Security Council's Resolution concerning the cessation of military actions in the Near East. Facts show that Israel, after the Security Council's appeal, seized considerable territory of the Arab States -- United Arab Republic and Jordan -- ignoring the Security Council's Resolution. A situation has developed which, in connection with these Israeli actions, demands not simply a cease-fire, but also a withdrawal of Israeli troops behind the armistice line. Israel's actions have placed the Arab States in such a situation that they cannot but conduct a lawful defensive war against the aggressor, who has challenged the Security Council and all peace-loving states. Until complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from the territory of the Arab States, in the situation that has developed, re-establishment of peace in the Near East cannot be ensured.

We have instructed the Soviet Representative in the UN to place this question before the Security Council for the adoption of an appropriate resolution.

We would like to express that hope, Mr. President, that you personally and your government will take a position which will respond to the interests of cessation of war in the Near East, and to the interests of peace in the Near East, as you have already stated.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-382

By 128, NARA, Date 4-5-95

22

Thursday, June 8, 1967

Approved by President - 11:00 am.

Transmitted by US Molink - 11:17 a

Received by Soviet Molink - 11:24 a

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin,

We have just learned that USS Liberty, an auxilliary ship, has apparently been torpedoed by Israel forces in error off Port Said. We have instructed our carrier, Saratoga now in the Mediterranean to dispatch aircraft to the scene to investigate. We wish you to know that investigation is the sole purpose of this flight of aircraft, and hope that you will take appropriate steps to see that proper parties are informed.

We have passed this message to Chernyakov but feel that you should know of this development urgently.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

Relates to USS Liberty

DECLASSIFIED
NSC letter 6/20/79 re NLS 71-5
DCL
NARS, Date 4-15-83

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

Thursday, June 8, 1967
Approved by President - 11:35 am.
Transmitted by US Molink - 12:01 pm.
Received by Soviet Molink - 12:05 pm.

To Chairman Kosygin
From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin,

In the light of our understanding of yesterday, we went to all the parties concerned and strongly urged immediate compliance with the cease-fire resolution which had been unanimously agreed in the Council.

The representative of Israel agreed to comply as soon as the other parties also agreed. Of the Arab States, only Jordan agreed to comply; and we are informed that an effective cease-fire is being achieved on that front.

Although we are trying, we doubt that the United States alone can effectively persuade both sides to cease fire.

I instructed Ambassador Goldberg last night to present a resolution today. This resolution calls on all parties in the strongest terms to cease fire immediately.

I am glad to have had your message and have instructed our Ambassador in New York to maintain close contact with the Ambassador of the Soviet Union and trust you will want to do likewise.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

DECLASSIFIED
NSC 10-22-77
By DUK/m130 NARS, Date 5-24-85

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

24

Thursday, June 8, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 12:20 pm
Received by US Molink - 12:23 pm

02
США/СССР
081620 P

БЕЛЫЙ ДОМ
ПРЕЗИДЕНТУ ЛИНДОНУ В. ДЖОНСОНУ.

УВАЖАЕМЫЙ ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ.
ВАША ТЕЛЕГРАММА ОТНОСИТЕЛЬНО ИНЦИДЕНТА С АМЕРИКАНСКИМ
СУДНОМ ТИПА "ЛИВЕРТИ" ТОРПЕДИРОВАННЫМ ВЛИЗ ПОРТ-САИДА,
НАМИ ПОЛУЧЕНА И НЕМЕДЛЕННО ПЕРЕДАНА ДЛЯ СВЕДЕНИЯ ПРЕ-
ЗИДЕНТУ НАСЕРУ.

С УВАЖЕНИЕМ А. КОСЫГИН.

8 ИЮНЯ 1967 ГОДА, 19 P10 МИН.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 94-382
By sig, NARA, Date 4-5-95

Relates to USS Liberty

TRANSLATION

25

26

Thursday, June 8, 1967
Sight Translation - 12:25 pm.
Received by President - 12:30 pm.
Rough Translation - 12:34 pm.
Final Official Translation - 1:15 pm.

White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President,

Your telegram concerning the incident with the American Liberty Type Ship torpedoed near Port Said has been received by us and immediately transmitted for information to President Nasser.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NJ 85-85 appeal
By 40 NARA Date 7-28-92

Relates to USS Liberty

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

26
/

2

Thursday, June 8, 1967

Approved by President - 3:36 pm.

Transmitted by US Molink - 3:58 pm.

Received by Soviet Molink - 4:00 pm.

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin,

I deeply appreciate your transmitting the message to President Nasser. We lost 10 men, 16 critically wounded, and 65 wounded, as a result of Israeli attack, for which they have apologized.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

Relates to USS Liberty

DECLASSIFIED
NSC 644 or (4) 15 79-5
DUBB HARS, Date 4-15-83

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

27

Saturday, June 10, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 8:48 am.

Received by US Molink - 8:52 am.

У АППАРАТА НАХОДИТСЯ ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ КОСЫГИН И ПРОСИТ ВЫЯСНИТЬ, НАХОДИТСЯ ЛИ ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ У АППАРАТА+

УВАЖАЕМЫЙ Г-Н ПРЕЗИДЕНТ,

СОБЫТИЯ ПОСЛЕДНИХ ДНЕЙ ЗАСТАВИЛИ МЕНЯ СО ВСЕЙ ОТКРОВЕННОСТЬЮ ВЫСКАЗАТЬ ВАМ НАШЕ МНЕНИЕ. КАК ПОКАЗЫВАЕТ ОБСТАНОВКА, РЕШЕНИЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ - НЕДЕЙСТВЕННЫ. ИЗРАИЛЬ ПОЛНОСТЬЮ ИХ ИГНОРИРУЕТ. КАК ВЫ ПОНИМАЕТЕ, ПОСЛЕ МНОГИХ ПОПЫТОК, ПРЕДПРИНЯТЫХ В ЭТОМ НАПРАВЛЕНИИ И РЕШЕНИИ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ В ОТНОШЕНИИ ЛИКВИДАЦИИ АГРЕССИИ СО СТОРОНЫ ИЗРАИЛЯ НА БЛИЖНЕМ ВОСТОКЕ - ЭТИ ПОПЫТКИ ОКАЗАЛИСЬ НЕЭФФЕКТИВНЫМИ.

СЕЙЧАС НАСТУПИЛ ОЧЕНЬ ОТВЕТСТВЕННЫЙ МОМЕНТ, КОТОРЫМ ЗАСТАВЛЯЕТ НАС, ЕСЛИ НЕ ПРЕКРАТЯТСЯ В БЛИЖАЙШИЕ ЧАСЫ ВОЕННЫЕ ДЕЙСТВИЯ, ПРИНИМАТЬ САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНЫЕ РЕШЕНИЯ. МЫ К ЭТОМУ ГОТОВЫ. ОДНАКО ЭТИ ДЕЙСТВИЯ МОГУТ СТОЛКНУТЬ НАС, ЧТО ПРИВЕДЕТ К БОЛЬШОЙ КАТАСТРОФЕ. ОЧЕВИДНО, В МИРЕ ЕСТЬ СИЛЫ, КОТОРЫМ ЭТО ВЫГОДНО.

МЫ ПРЕДЛАГАЕМ ВАМ ПОТРЕБОВАТЬ ОТ ИЗРАИЛЯ, ЧТОБЫ ОН В БЛИЖАЙШИЕ ЧАСЫ БЕЗОГОВОРЧНО ПРЕКРАТИЛ ВОЕННЫЕ ДЕЙСТВИЯ. СО СВОЕЙ СТОРОНЫ, МЫ СДЕЛАЕМ ТО ЖЕ. ПРЕДЛАГАЕМ ПРЕДУПРЕДИТЬ ИЗРАИЛЬ, ЧТО ЗА НЕВЫПОЛНЕНИЕ ЭТОГО БУДУТ ПРЕНЯТЫ НЕОБХОДИМЫЕ АКЦИИ, ВКЛЮЧАЯ ВОЕННЫЕ. ПРОШУ СООБЩИТЬ ВАШЕ МНЕНИЕ.

А. КОСЫГИН
ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ СОВЕТА МИНИСТРОВ СССР.+

10 ИЮНЯ 1967 ГОДА, 15-50 МИН. ПО МОСКОВСКОМУ ВРЕМЕНИ.+

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NY 95-157

NY 100, NARA, Date 2-7-96

TRANSLATION

Saturday, June 10, 1967
Sight Translation - 9:00 a.m.
Received by President - 9:05 a.m.

The White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President:

The events of the last days have forced me to express to you with all frankness our view. As the situation shows, the resolutions of the Security Council are invalid. Israel has completely ignored them. As you can understand, after the many attempts taken in this direction and the resolutions of the Security Council concerning the termination of aggression on the part of Israel in the Near East -- these attempts have proved ineffective.

A very crucial moment has now arrived which forces us, if military actions are not stopped in the next few hours, to adopt an independent decision. We are ready to do this. However, these actions may bring us into a clash, which will lead to a grave catastrophe. Obviously in the world there are powers to whom this would be advantageous.

We purpose that you demand from Israel that it unconditionally cease military action in the next few hours. On our part, we will do the same. We purpose to warn Israel that, if this is not fulfilled, necessary actions will be taken, including military.

Please give me your views.

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 13526, Sec. 1.4
BY 75-157
By 428, NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~TOP SECRET~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECRET~~

29

Saturday, June 10, 1967

Approved by President - 9:30 am.

Transmitted by US Molink - 9:39 am.

To The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR
 A. Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin,

I have your message. You should know that late last night our Secretary of State sent a most urgent message to Israel to say that we considered it very important that Israel demonstrate by actions on the ground that its orders for a cease-fire are effective. We received assurance at 3 A.M. Washington time that Israel fully intended to achieve actual cease-fire on its side.

Consistent with this assurance, Israelis informed the UN Security Council that its authorities were meeting with General Bull of UN to make all arrangements for cease-fire with Syria.

We have no means of reaching Syrian Government and hope that you have been making similar appeals to them.

Our Ambassador Barbour in Israel has now sent us a message, at 7:45 Washington time, today, saying that Israelis tell him they believe the firing has stopped as of this moment.

We continue to watch developments most closely and will keep in touch with you.

Lyndon B. Johnson

DECLASSIFIED
 E.O. 13526, Sec. 1.4
 BY 75-157
 By [signature], NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~TOP SECRET~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECRET~~

30

Saturday, June 10, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 9:44 am.

Received by US Molink - 9:52 am.

УВАЖАЕМЫЙ ПРЕЗИДЕНТ,

Я ПРОЧЕЛ ВАШ ОТВЕТ НА НАШЕ ПОСЛАНИЕ И ДОЛЖЕН ВАМ СКАЗАТЬ, ЧТО ВАШИ СВЕДЕНИЯ О ПРЕКРАЩЕНИИ ВОЕННЫХ ДЕЙСТВИЙ В СИРИИ СО СТОРОНЫ ИЗРАИЛЯ НЕ ПОДТВЕРЖДАЮТСЯ. МЫ ИМЕЕМ ПОСТОЯННУЮ И НЕПРЕРЫВНУЮ СВЯЗЬ С ДАМАСКОМ. ИЗРАИЛЬ, ПРИМЕНЯЯ ВСЕ ВИДЫ ОРУЖИЯ, АВИАЦИЮ И АРТИЛЛЕРИЮ, ТАНКИ, ВЕДЕТ НАСТУПЛЕНИЕ НА ДАМАСК, ОЧЕВИДНО, ВАШЕ ПОСОЛЬСТВО В СИРИИ МОЖЕТ ЭТО ПОДТВЕРДИТЬ, ЕСЛИ У ВАС ЕСТЬ ТМ ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛИ. ВОЕННЫЕ ДЕЙСТВИЯ УСИЛИВАЮТСЯ, НАДО СРОЧНО ИЗБЕЖАТЬ ДАЛЬНЕЙШЕГО КРОВОПРОЛИТИЯ. ВОПРОС НЕОТЛОЖНЫЙ, Я ПРОШУ ВАС ИСПОЛЬЗОВАТЬ ВСЕ СВОИ ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ ДЛЯ ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЯ ВОЕННЫХ ДЕЙСТВИЙ И ВЫПОЛНЕНИЯ РЕШЕНИЙ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ, ЗА КОТОРЫЕ МЫ ВМЕСТЕ С ВАМИ ГОЛОСОВАЛИ.

А. КОСЫГИН

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 13526, Sec. 3.4

REF 95-157

by 108, NARA, Date 2-7-96

31

TRANSLATION

Saturday, June 10, 1967

Sight Translation - 10:00 a. m.

Received by President - 10:05 a. m.

White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear President Johnson,

I have read your reply to our message and I must tell you that your information concerning the cessation of military actions in Syria on the part of Israel is not borne out. We have constant and uninterrupted communications with Damascus. Israel, employing all types of weapons, aviation and artillery, tanks, is conducting an offensive towards Damascus. Obviously your Embassy in Syria can confirm this if you have representatives there. Military actions are intensifying. It is urgently necessary to avoid further bloodshed. The matter cannot be postponed. I request that you employ all your possibilities for the cessation of military actions and the fulfillment of the resolutions of the Security Council for which we both voted.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 95-157
By tip, NARA, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~32
/Saturday, June 10, 1967

Approved by President - 10:50 a. m.

Transmitted by US Molink - 10:58 a. m.

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin,

I have your last message and you can be assured that we have emphasized our position to Israel by every means. We have just restated our views in the strongest terms to Israelis here and in New York and by message to Tel Aviv.

Could you confirm that you have employed your means with the Syrians for this same purpose.

We are taking further steps to inform ourselves on the present situation in Damascus, through several sources, although we have categorical assurances from Israelis that there is no Israeli advance on Damascus.

You will have seen that President Nasser yesterday repeated his outrageous invention about American and British participation in this conflict. Since you know well that this inflammatory charge is a total lie, peace would be served if your Government could publicly state the facts known to you on this point.

You will have learned of the report just made in the Security Council that Israel has informed General Bull it will accept any arrangements for making cease-fire effective on the ground that General Bull's UN representative suggests. Bull himself replied it would take time to contact Damascus. Meanwhile Israel has announced that it regards cease-fire as in effect now. This seems to make it even more urgent that you use your channels to Damascus to ensure that Syrians also stop their fire so as not to provoke further response.

Respectfully,

~~SECRET~~

E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4

NY 95-157By 4ip, NARA, Date 2-7-96

Lyndon B. Johnson

~~SECRET~~

Copy LBJ Library

Saturday, June 10, 1967

Transmitted by Soviet Molink - 11:31 am.

Received by US Molink - 11:34 am.

03
США/СССР
101531 Р

УВАЖАЕМЫЙ ГОСПОДИН ПРЕЗИДЕНТ,

ПО МОЕМУ ПОРУЧЕНИЮ ТОЛЬКО ЧТО СВЯЗЫВАЛИСЬ С ДАМАСКОМ. ИЗ ДАМАСКА НАМ СООБЩИЛИ, ЧТО ВОЕННЫЕ ДЕЙСТВИЯ ПРОИСХОДЯТ В РАЙОНЕ ГОРДА КУНЕЙТРА, ГДЕ ИЗРАИЛЬСКИЕ ВОЙСКА ПРОДОЛЖАЮТ СВОИ НАСТУПАТЕЛЬНЫЕ ОПЕРАЦИИ. Я МОГУ ВАС ЗАВЕРИТЬ, ЧТО МЫ СО СВОЕЙ СТОРОНЫ СДЕЛАЛИ ВСЕ ВОЗМОЖНОЕ ДЛЯ ТОГО, ЧТОБЫ ПРЕКРАТИТЬ ВОЙНУ ПРОТИВ СИРИИ И ОБЪЕДИНЕННОЙ АРАБСКОЙ РЕСПУБЛИКИ. ЕСЛИ СЕГДНЯ ВСЕ ВОЕННЫЕ ДЕЙСТВИЯ БУДУТ ЗАКОНЧЕНЫ, НЕОБХОДИМО ПРИСТУПИТЬ К СЛЕДУЮЩЕМУ ЭТАПУ - ОСВОБОЖДЕНИЮ ЗАНЯТОЙ ИЗРАИЛЕМ ТЕРРИТОРИИ И ВОЗВРАЩЕНИЮ ВОЙСК ЗА ЛИНИЮ ПЕРЕМИРИЯ. СЧИТАЮ, ЧТО МЫ ПО ЭТОМУ ВОПРОСУ ДОЛЖНЫ С ВАМИ ДЕРЖАТЬ КОНТАКТ.

С УВАЖЕНИЕМ

А. КОСЫГИНОВ

+?

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

REF 95-157

By 140, NARA, Date 2-7-96

TRANSLATION

34
Saturday, June 10, 1967

Sight Translation - 11:40 am.

Received by President - 11:43 am.

White House
To President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. President:

By my instructions, we have just communicated with Damascus. From Damascus we have been informed that military actions are in progress in the vicinity of the city of Kuneitra where Israeli troops continue their offensive operations.

I can assure you that we did everything possible on our part to stop the war against Syria and the UAR. If today all military actions are concluded, it will be necessary to proceed to the next step of evacuating the territory occupied by Israel and the return of troops behind the armistice line.

I consider that we should maintain contact with you on this matter.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12336, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 25-157

By ~~sig~~ _____, NARA, Date 2-7-96

35
41

~~SECRET~~

Saturday, June 10, 1967

Approved by the President - 11:54 am

Transmitted by US Molink - 11:58 am

Received by Soviet Molink - 11:59 am

To Chairman Kosygin

From President Lyndon B. Johnson

Dear Mr. Kosygin:

I have your last message.

It now appears that military action in the Middle East is being concluded. I hope our efforts in the days ahead can be devoted to the achievement of lasting peace throughout the world.

Respectfully,

Lyndon B. Johnson

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec 3.4
REF: 85-157
BY: [signature], MAR 1, Date 2-7-96

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM

~~SECRET~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 4, 1968

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: The Hot Line Exchanges

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4
NEJ 94-382
By ing, NARA, Date 4-5-95

Participants: Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson
Mr. Nathaniel Davis

I called on Ambassador Thompson today at Bethesda Naval Hospital to get his recollections of the hot line exchanges between President Johnson and Premier Kosygin. Ambassador Thompson refreshed his memory by leafing through the hot line texts, and made the following comments:

At the start, the Russians made quite a point that the President be physically present at our end of the hot line before they would start the exchange. They asked more than once when he would be there. (Notice that the first sentence of the Russian text of Kosygin's first message observes that Kosygin would like to know if President Johnson was at the machine.)

President Johnson's first message to Kosygin (Page 6, June 5, 8:47 a.m.) was actually addressed to "Comrade Kosygin." Apparently what had happened was that the American hot line telegraph operators asked the Moscow operators what was the proper way to address Kosygin. They got back the answer "Comrade Kosygin." So the message went. Ambassador Thompson talked with Dobrynin, about this afterward, and Dobrynin -- who had been at the Moscow end of the line -- said he had been quite startled. The Russians wondered if the President was making a joke, or making fun of them in some way. However, Dobrynin said he guessed how it had happened.

Ambassador Thompson said the first substantive question he remembered was that of cease-fire, or cease-fire and withdrawal. On Tuesday morning (Page 10, June 6, 10:02 a.m.) the President suggested that the Soviets support the resolution Ambassador Goldberg gave to Federenko the night before, calling for cease-fire and a prompt withdrawal behind the armistice lines. Kosygin did not reply for more than eight hours. In the meantime, Federenko had agreed to a simple cease-fire in New York. In Ambassador Thompson's words, he had agreed "to a resolution Kosygin now wanted to get away from."

There was some discussion in the Situation Room, according to Ambassador Thompson, whether we should take advantage of what Federenko had done -- that is the simple cease-fire -- or whether we should stick to the message sent in the morning (cease-fire and withdrawal). Everybody agreed we should take

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

advantage of what had happened in New York. There were some calls to Goldberg. The people in the Situation Room were elated -- and surprised Federenko had done what he had. There was some speculation around the room that Federenko would get into trouble. The fact of the matter was that we would probably have been prepared to accept the earlier formulation that included withdrawal. The Russians suffered from a communications problem.

What the President did in his message of Tuesday evening (Page 14, June 6, 7:45 p.m.) was to point out to Kosygin that Goldberg and Federenko had agreed to a very short cease-fire resolution, and suggest that both the Soviets and we assist the Security Council's further efforts to restore peace. What we wanted to do in this message, according to Ambassador Thompson, was simply to nail down the cease-fire.

In his message of June 8 (Page 20, June 8, 9:48 a.m.) Kosygin again called for withdrawal.

In his reply (Page 22, June 8, 11:00 a.m.), President Johnson informed Kosygin of the torpedoing of the Liberty and the dispatch of our aircraft to the scene. Ambassador Thompson comments that this was a very successful use of the hot line. We were using it in the right way, to prevent a danger of war arising out of misunderstanding. Ambassador Thompson says it made a big impression on the Russians.

The next crisis came with Kosygin's message of Saturday morning (Page 30, June 10, 8:48 a.m.). This message asserted the Russians were ready to act independently if Israeli military actions against Syria were not stopped in the "next few hours." It went on to say that such independent actions "may bring us into a clash, which will lead to a grave catastrophe." The message concluded by saying that Soviet actions "including military" would be taken if Israel did not cease military action.

Ambassador Thompson said he personally checked the Russian text to make sure "including military" was actually there. He was impressed how much greater Soviet sensitivity was to the plight of the Syrians than to that of the Egyptians. At the time, the Syrians were the apple of the Russians' eye (although this changed later). Ambassador Thompson voiced a concern in the Situation Room meeting whether the Russians might suspect that our intention was really to knock off the Syrian government.

The main focus of the discussion in the Situation Room was over what was actually happening in Syria. Richard Helms was brought into the meeting to see if he could check the situation on the spot, and verify whether the Israelis were smashing ahead as the Russians said (see pages 34 and 38). The feeling of those in the Situation Room was that the Israelis were probably doing so. Mr. Helms tried in a number of ways to reach friendly powers with diplomatic missions still open in Damascus, etc.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

-3-

There was some discussion whether the Soviet message actually meant that the Russians wanted to move into the area with force. There was some back and forth about the tenor of the Soviet message, and the danger that the Russians might be testing us out. If our replies were too polite, we might look as if we were backing down under a threat. Nevertheless, the President -- while he could have gone back to the Russians making threats of his own -- chose to send the calm and reasoned message he did (Page 32, June 10, 9:30 a.m.).

Kosygin came back with a message saying the Israelis were "conducting an offensive towards Damascus, "and that action cannot be postponed."

There was some discussion whether the Soviets had actually weighed in with the Syrians to get their agreements to a cease-fire or not. A request for confirmation that they had was drafted into President Johnson's message of reply. Fortunately, the televised proceedings at the Security Council in New York soon showed that Israel had informed General Bull that it would accept any cease-fire arrangements General Bull's representative suggested and that Israel regarded the cease-fire as in effect. McGeorge Bundy drafted a paragraph for the President incorporating this information, and tension soon eased -- as it became clear that military action on the Syrian front was being concluded.

As a post mortem, according to Ambassador Thompson, there was some discussion among senior U.S. officials whether we might not have been well advised to let the Israelis move on to Damascus. It was clear the Israelis could have done so. Ambassador Thompson says this was strictly post mortem, however, and this possibility was not discussed at the Situation Room meeting.

Ambassador Thompson concludes that this crisis shows how important it was for the President to keep his cool. He adds, like Richard Helms (see Harold Saunders; memorandum of October 22) that June 10 was a time of great concern and utmost gravity.


Nathaniel Davis

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4

NEJ 94-382

By 129, NARA, Date 4-5-95

2a

~~TOP SECRET~~

November 7, 1968
2:30 p.m.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: The Hot Line Meetings and the Middle East in New York

Participants: Mr. McGeorge Bundy, President of the Ford Foundation
Mr. Nathaniel Davis

Place: Office of Mr. Bundy, New York

I called on Mr. McGeorge Bundy today to get his recollections of the hot line meetings. Mr. Bundy refreshed his memory by leafing through the hot line texts and Ambassador Thompson's and Director Helms' accounts of these meetings.

Mr. Bundy said he had one difference with the Helms and Thompson accounts. He didn't think the crisis of June 10 was as dangerous as the other accounts indicated. There was no question that the Soviets were doing their damndest verbally to protect their friends in Damascus. The real difference in judgement between him and the others was, perhaps, over Israeli intentions. Bundy didn't and doesn't think the Israelis intended to press to Damascus. Bundy agreed that the June 10 message (Page 30, June 10, 8:48 a.m.) which concluded by saying that Soviet actions "including military" would be taken if Israel did not cease military action represented a more serious situation than there had been before. Nevertheless, Mr. Bundy hopes that the President will not talk about the 1967 Middle East crisis in terms of its being the most serious crisis of the past two decades. Mr. Bundy said he thought

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-2-

the President should perhaps err on the side of a very careful statement about what was going on.

Mr. Bundy read through Kosygin's June 10 message again (Page 30, June 10, 8:48 a.m.). He agreed that it was a pretty rough message. He said he supposed his real difference with others in the hot line meetings was that he was convinced the Israelis would stop.

Mr. Bundy said there was considerable discussion about what, in fact, the Soviets would be able to do to the Israelis if they did try to carry out their threat. The Russians' possibilities were not really that impressive. At no time was a conflagration immediately in prospect. In any event, by June 10 it really was about time the Israelis stopped.

Mr. Bundy reflected about the whole sequence of hot line meetings. He had come down to Washington on Monday, June 5, as a new comer and freshman to the crisis. He went to Walt Rostow's office and the Situation Room to get briefed and found a hot line exchange cooking.

There was a meeting in the Cabinet Room at 11:30. Mr. Bundy's recollection of that meeting was that it was mainly concerned with the awful shape we would be in if the Israelis were losing. We didn't really know anything about the situation on the ground. When, in the course of that day, it became apparent that the Israeli Air Force had won, the entire atmosphere of the problem changed.

It was in a way reassuring when it became clear that the fighting was the Israelis' idea and that the idea was working. That was a lot better than

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-3-

if it had been the other way around.

There was a great deal of talk during the first day or so about the State Department's spokesman's statement that the U. S. was "neutral in thought, word and deed."

The hot line meetings themselves involved a very complicated process of tone and timing. It was pretty frenetic with drafts, redrafts and more redrafts. The President watched the drafts with great care. Bundy was impressed that Secretary Rusk did a great deal of the drafting -- which was particularly true of the earlier messages.

There were no real debates in the hot line meetings in the sense of choosing up sides with one group in favor of this language and another group in favor of that.

Mr. Bundy said he believes the hot line meetings were conducted well, in the sense of being an effective exercise of judgement and process of decision in a time of crisis.

Mr. Bundy had no recollection of the White House end of any discussions or consultations with Ambassador Goldberg in New York.

NDavis:gg

~~TOP SECRET~~