

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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TRANSCRIPT OF BACKGROUND PRESS BRIEFING, FRIDAY,

JUNE 9, 1967, 5:05 P. M.

SECRETARY RUSK: Well, our usual weekender after a week that has been rather special, I suppose.

First, we don't know what the situation is about President Nasser. In his speech he raised the question of his resignation, but he seemed to indicate that he would respond to popular demand to retain his job. He announced that he will expect Zakaria Mohieddin to succeed him. And apparently there developed very large crowds in Cairo calling for him to stay on the job.

Cairo has announced that they will debate this question in their Parliament tomorrow. And I just saw in Agence France Presse a one-line ticker saying he had withdrawn his resignation. So we have nothing privately out of Cairo, or anywhere else, indicating anything more than you're getting on the tickers.

So if you're wondering what about President Nasser, I don't know any more than you do.

The most immediate problem is to get the shooting stopped. There seems to be a lot of fighting going on in

Syria. The Security Council got into that this afternoon. Both sides said that they would stop the fighting. But it has not been made effective on the ground yet.

On that situation there is United Nations machinery present and we would hope that the Secretary General could get his UN people on the ground in touch with both sides and get this shooting stopped as quickly as possible.

There is some violence now and again on the other fronts. But in general the other fronts have been relatively quiet. I did have one press report that there was some bombing in Cairo. I don't know quite what that means at this point.

Q Algiers, probably.

A The query would be whether, if additional planes arrive in the Cairo area, say, from Algiers or somewhere else, and they themselves come out over Sinai or threaten to, or the Israelis go after them, whether that is what is involved here. But, in any event, we are very much concerned about the continuation of the shooting and the hope is that we could get that stopped as soon as possible.

By the way, this is BACKGROUND, American official sources.

Now, looking ahead, in one sense it's going to be difficult to bring about a stable settlement because of the high state of emotions and feelings and the raw nerves that exist throughout the area. The humiliating defeat that Arab armed forces have suffered is not necessarily the best groundwork for a stable peace that comes anywhere near to being a peace of reconciliation of the sort that we would very much like to see take place.

It may not be impossible. After all, we did find ways to make a peaceful reconciliation, both with Germany and with Japan. But it will be a good deal more difficult out there.

On the Israeli side, they are buoyed up by their successes and it's not clear yet that their mood will be one to seek a peaceful reconciliation, although I was somewhat encouraged by some of the things that Mr. Eban said before he left. We would suppose it would be in the vital interest of Israel to try to, on its side, become a part of a stable Middle Eastern situation. I believe Senator Kennedy pointed out yesterday that in about 25

years there will be 200 million Arabs, given present birth rates.

Now, it would be very important for Israel to have a place in a Middle Eastern community on a basis of at least co-existence as distinct from a position of permanent confrontation. We would hope that out of it could come, as a minimum, a peace which acknowledges the existence of Israel and does not continue on a basis of a state of belligerence.

Now, I'm not getting into the details of how that might be done, or what forms it might take. But the existence of a state of belligerence is a highly dangerous business because it opens the way for one side or the other from time to time to claim a legal basis for doing things which are extremely bellicose and become, indeed, a cause of war.

The assertion of the right to close the Strait of Tiran, based upon the right of belligerence and the state of war between Egypt and Israel, illustrates the point very well. Because for Israel, the closing of the Strait was, as the Foreign Minister announced publicly, *casus belli*. So we had hoped that that state of belligerence could disappear.

Now, we would hope that something could be done about the refugee problem. Many efforts have been made over the years to find an answer to it. I don't despair myself that if the refugees were to be given personal and private choices that the practical results would be such that an answer could be found. But when an attempt is made to find an answer in principle, in theory, then it gets locked up as a part of the standing Israel-Arab confrontation. But that is a matter that will have to be tackled.

The Arab Governments are either unable or unwilling to assume full responsibility for the different refugee groups: the Palestine Liberation Army, the Fatah organization up in Syria. And that has produced a series of incidents over the years which inflames those borders with Israel and brings about periodic retaliation with all the excitement that that produces.

I said on the way out of the Senate Committee this morning that I would hope very much that some understandings could be reached on the levels of arms in that area. To elaborate that just a little here, the introduction of Soviet arms into Egypt, Syria and Algeria has

had a very unsettling effect, because it has led other Arab states to believe that this is a threat to their own security. And, in order to get some balance among the Arabs, some assistance has been provided by us or the British or the French or others to some of the neighbors of those countries receiving Soviet arms.

Then when that gets over into the Arab-Israeli relationship, of course Israel felt that it had to have some balance over against the arms that were coming into the area. And we have tried not to become a major supplier of arms to the region. In the case of Israel, we were not the major supplier of arms.

But this steady build-up of a substantial arms race did result in a very dangerous situation. This is particularly true of a quick strike weapon such as aircraft tanks and brought everybody to the edge when the possibilities of the other fellow taking a first strike were very much on peoples' minds.

We haven't had much luck in the past several years in turning that arms race down. We have tried in Geneva. I have tried in conversations with governments to open up that question, but I found very little interest

in it, except on the nuclear side. I think there has been some general interest in trying to keep nuclear weapons out of that area. But maybe there is a fresh opportunity here to take up that question.

I think perhaps the situation is going to require something better than previously existing UN arrangements in terms of assuring stability. I don't quite know what that means yet.

I want to point out that this is not something that the Great Powers can sit down and just decide among themselves. Among other things, the Great Powers don't have these nations out there under their command, so I don't see this as something that is going to be answered by some under-the-rug conversation among the Great Powers. I would think the cooperation of the Great Powers in the Security Council might be very important to solutions, but the parties themselves have to grapple with the underlying issues affecting their own nations and out of that may come some basis for a future settlement.

The Arabs, on their side, must know that pursuing this policy of the non-existence of Israel and pursuing the hope that they some day would crush Israel has been

a most unrewarding path for them. And Israel, in turn, must look to the future when some sort of reconciliation with the Arab world is pretty vital to their own existence there on the Mediterranean.

So there is a lot of work still to be done, and I am not here today in a position to spell out for you what I think the shape of a final settlement might be. We are just a long way away from that, particularly while the guns are still roaring and the governments concerned haven't yet grappled with these issues.

Now, let's pause here.

Q Mr. Secretary, you didn't mention, when you were going through things you would like to see happen, the question of Israeli passage through the Suez Canal. But I assume that that would be covered in the ending of a state of war. Is that it?

A Well, I think that Israel is going to insist upon being one of a community of a hundred twenty-two nations and is going to insist upon exercising the normal rights of nations who are living at peace. They will go pretty hard, of course, for both the Strait of Tiran and the Suez Canal. But we will have to -- I would

expect that Israel would require international passage.

Q Mr. Secretary, you mentioned quick strike weapons. Do you have any information what happened to Egyptian rocket missiles, if they were ever fired?

A No. We were not very much impressed with the stories we heard about what they had. We have been interested that they haven't, so far as we know, used them in any significant way. Now, we don't know what they might have, or whether they still have some things to shoot that they haven't shot. But we did not have the impression that they had a battery of sophisticated rockets that would be militarily of much value.

Q Mr. Secretary, could you get back --

Q Mr. Secretary, do you see any prospect at all for a bilateral negotiation between Israel on one side and any one of the Arab states on the other?

A Well, I have no doubt that there will be bilateral contacts. As a matter of fact, there was a veteran of the Palestine affair in the UN 20 years ago at a time when things were very tense.

I was always under the impression that these people were having contacts that we were not fully

informed on, and I'm sure that they will find ways and means or being in touch with each other.

Q Mr. Secretary, could we return to --

Q What are the prospects --

A Excuse me. There was a question back there.

Q TO return to what the Israelis -- it's the formal kind of thing that the Israelis seem to be asking for, because implicit in that of course is the recognition of the existence of Israel. That is what I had in mind, something of the formal nature, perhaps a conference.

A I don't know. I prefer not to get into questions of form, not because we may or may not have some views upon that at the right time, but I think it's better to leave that question open a bit.

Now, in the case of Japan, they exchanged Ambassadors with the Soviet Union. They have trade. They have normal relations, but they don't have a peace treaty. Now, I think any particular form is secondary to the substance of the result. And I'm not now taking a view on form, but I would think that there are many ways to achieve a substantial result if there is a chance to do so. So I would not myself press questions of form at this point.

I do think the substance and, indeed, in this case the form of the absence of a state of belligerency is pretty important. There has to be some way to register that in some formal understanding so there could be no misunderstanding anywhere on that.

There was a question over here.

Q Mr. Secretary. I'm not sure you completed your thought when you were saying what comes --

A I want to be sure you don't -- I'm sorry. I want to be sure that nobody writes that I am opposed to a peace treaty. I mean that if these two sides want to sit down and sign a peace treaty, fine.

Q Could we go a little further than that?

A Let me take ~~his~~ and then I'll come back to you.

Q I'm not sure that you finished your thought when you said it's too early to tell what is going to come about in the relations between the two sides. Could you give us any idea of what might come about, what possibilities are there?

A Not really at this point, because, quite frankly, I don't feel in any position to talk to either side on what their thoughts are on these questions.

at the present time, and it's going to be very important to know what they can do.

Now, what kind of governments are you going to have in these immediately adjacent Arab states by the time you get around to this business? Is it going to be a Nasser government? What is going to happen to King Hussein? Is he in difficulty? Who is going to be talking? Who is going to be in business? Who has got to carry out the transaction? I don't know. We are in a very, very early stage here.

Q Could you --

A Please don't write -- I ask you this very seriously, on the Nasser thing, that is already opened up by them, but please don't attribute to American sources that there was speculation about the future of King Hussein.

Q Mr. Secretary, is there --

A If you want to pick that up from comments on the air, you can do it on your own. That is one thing. But don't attribute that to American sources.

Q Mr. Secretary, is there any sign that the Soviets in the past few days, in answer to Mr. Nasser and/or

other Arab countries, have started to move in weapons to help the Arab countries who urgently need it?

A We have had reports that additional Soviet arms were being expected. But we haven't confirmed thus far that significant shipments --

Q How have they been coming? Or how are they expected, by air or by ship?

A I would think some would come by air and some by ship, if it happens. Soviet vessels continue to go into Alexandria, and I have no doubt that some of those have arms on them. But we have had rumors about the possibility of planes moving from Alexandria over to Egypt and being replenished through Yugoslavia and things of that sort. We just don't have much hard information on that.

Q Mr. Secretary, what have you accomplished? What would you say the United States has accomplished here with the Soviet Union and what does it leave you to build on, sir?

A Well, Murrey, I don't feel I ought to get into that on a background basis. If you want me to speculate a little bit off the record on what stages we felt

we were in and what relationship we are in, I can do that. But I don't want to tie the hands of you fellows who live on speculations of that sort.

Q Well, on the BACKGROUND basis, could you project at all whether you feel you have any degree of basis here that you could build on?

A Well, let's compromise on this basis. I don't know whether you can write a story in which some of it is attributed to official sources, and some of it is not, but maybe on this point you can write a separate story but on a non-attribution basis, I will be able to comment a little on where we think we are with the Soviets. Is that all right or not?

Q Yes.

Q Yes.

A All right. Up through the Egyptian request for the withdrawal of UNEF, we thought that the Soviets were playing the full Arab game and, if anything, encouraging them to believe that the Soviets were behind them. This had to do both with the support the Soviet Union has been giving to the so-called Progressive Arab States over against the Conservative and Moderate Arab States on the

one side and on these issues between the Arabs and Israel.

When the chain of events started with the increased terror attacks on the Northern frontier of Israel, and Israeli threats that if these continued that they would strike against Syria and the invocation by Syria of the Egyptian Alliance and the movement of Egyptian forces into Sinai and the request for the withdrawal of the UNEF Forces, even up to that point the Soviets were pretty well aboard, pretty well on the Arab side.

I think perhaps at the beginning and about that time, Nasser went out ahead of the Soviets. I don't believe that he had their support on the closing of the Strait of Tiran. And I think from that point onward, we have the sense that the Arabs were moving ahead of the Soviets and were claiming to have more Soviet support than in fact they had.

Now, when the fighting broke out, and it became apparent that the Arab forces were in very poor shape, the Soviets then found themselves in favor of a cease-fire. They wanted a cease-fire plus withdrawal. But since the withdrawal was to a status quo of June 5th, which was unacceptable because it included a point which

was the casus belli for Israel, namely, the Strait of Tiran, it wasn't possible to work out a combination of those thoughts. And so the matter got to be simply a cease-fire and taking up these other questions at a second stage.

Now, we may have seen here -- this is still on a non-attribution basis. We may still have seen here another example of the way in which the Arabs have not been able to act in time to protect their own interests in this situation. There were negotiations, for example, during the mandate, before the British terminated the mandate, for a political and military standstill at the termination of the mandate, to give more time to try to find an answer that would be genuinely agreeable to both sides, to the then Zionists and the Arab neighbors.

That broke down on the number of Jewish refugees who could go into the mandate during the standdown, during the standstill. And that proved to be unacceptable to the Arabs. They missed that chance, from their point of view, to try to get more time for a satisfactory solution.

As you know, they bitterly opposed the original

United Nations resolution on this subject. But then some years later there is nothing they wanted more than to have that original resolution applied right down the line. The Arabs would have taken care of their own interests much better had they accepted the cease-fire at the point the Security Council first passed the first cease-fire resolution.

So these delays, because of strong feelings and public positions and things of that sort, have gotten in their way all along the line.

But I think the Soviets have gone through a period here where the Arabs went out ahead of them--when the Arabs got in trouble the Soviets did move in parallel with the other members of the Security Council for a cease-fire.

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Now, when you get around to cleaning up the debris and getting a permanent settlement, I think we will find again that we cannot assume that we and the Soviets are going to be working as closely together on some of these particular points as we were on the narrow issue of cease-fire. I want to caution you a little bit about this notion -- that because we used the hot line, because we voted unanimously in the Security Council on two or three resolutions; that, somehow, we and the Soviets see this Middle Eastern thing in the same terms. We don't. And they have been pursuing a policy of their own there; and we and they have crossed paths considerably out there in a great many different ways.

Does that help to --

Q Yes, sir.

Could you -- Beyond the question of the difficulty which you point out in trying to carry through a disengagement here on the rest of the problem with the Soviet Union, do you, nevertheless, see the degree of parallelism that you have had as providing much prospect, say, for an arms control limitation on the others?

A Well, I think there could be some interest

on both sides on that point -- on some sort of notion of arms limitation.

The Soviet Union -- we, both, have gone through some experiences in this that ought to make us both interested in it. The Soviet Union has put, probably, a billion dollars worth of arms into Egypt; and perhaps about the same amount into other Arab countries, combined. They put a billion dollars of arms into Indonesia. And returns on those investments haven't been very high.

Now, we have had some experiences of that sort ourselves. So maybe we can both get interested in this subject at this point. We would hope so.

Q Mr. Secretary?

A Yes, sir.

Q Why do you think that Mr. Kosygin went to the direct teletype link when he did, rather than the more conventional communications that had been used prior to that time?

A I think the urgency of the cease-fire problem; things were moving.

Q Mr. Secretary, can we clear up, before you get any further --

A Yes.

Q -- whether you have ended your non-attribution,
or not?

A Well, I will end it after talking about
sheer
Mr. Kosygin. I think it was the/time urgency of the
cease-fire problem, because things were moving very fast
by the hour out there. And, from his point of view, the
countries that he was publicly supporting were running into
trouble very fast; and the sooner you got a cease-fire the
better. I think that's the explanation for that.

Q Was he concerned, in any way, that we might
be coming, in those early hours?

A No.

Q No?

A No.

Q Mr. Secretary, what do you think Israel's
plans are for the Trans-Jordan, the western bank --
to retain it; or not to retain it?

A Quite frankly, I don't know.

We have had very little from them about
their thinking about the shape of a future settlement
here in this situation. So if you ask me to give their

own views, I wouldn't be able to do that.

Q In this connection, sir, given the President's statement of the 23rd, May 23rd, could the United States be in a position of accepting any kind of territorial claims, or acquisitions, by the Israelis?

A Well, why don't we start from the declarations made by Prime Minister Eshkol and General Dayan -- that they did not have territorial ambitions in the situation. Let's start from there, and see what happens.

Q Dayan has said something about Jerusalem, specifically -- going beyond his original statement.

A Yes. Well, there is, I think, a special international interest in Jerusalem. This was registered by the U. N., many years ago. There is a Jewish-Christian-Moslem interest in Jerusalem. I think there would be a lot of international interest in what happens on that point, on that problem.

Q May we infer that you are at least playing around with the idea intellectually of some kind of international operation in the Old City, as one possibly viable solution?

A It is just too early to be very specific

about it. I am just registering a general international interest in what happens to Jerusalem. I don't go beyond that.

Q Mr. Secretary, how do you think the United States Government came out of this whole mess? For example, did you or did you not tell some Congressman up on the Hill that this was a "diplomatic victory" for the United States?

A I did not. And I did not register "joy" up there, as I was quoted as having registered. I was quoted on a number of things that I didn't say at those briefings.

We feel a commitment to doing everything possible to avoid a conflagration of this sort.

As you know, we were working on the maritime issue in the Strait of Tiran. We felt that it was worth taking time, if necessary, to avoid what happened. We made our views very clear to both sides, including to Israel. We thought we had assurances, from both sides, that provided some more time in this situation. We did not have any advance warning from either side that the shooting was going to break out. We knew that the

situation was extremely touchy and dangerous because you had these forces lined up in a very small geographical area, in a situation where air forces are facing each other -- just a few minutes' flying time from each other's air fields; where the military, on both sides, would think very hard about this question of who got there first.

So we knew that this thing was subject to incidents, or to misjudgments, or miscalculations, or to the exchange of information, or the intelligence reports -- whether true or false.

So, in the sense that something flared up, we weren't surprised in that sense. But we did not have any advance indication from either side that this fighting was going to occur.

I think that, on the Israeli side, Mr. Eban laid out their thinking on this brilliantly in the Security Council. So there is no need for me to repeat it here. But they felt they were faced with a growing mobilisation of the Arab Forces right around their borders. They saw a growing commitment to a Holy War. They saw major forces moving into areas that immediately threatened what the Israelis considered vital places, like Eilat. They saw that Egypt had closed the Strait of Tiran, which

Egypt considered a casus belli. And so it didn't take much to persuade the Israelis that the other side was going to move.

And I have heard about these captured documents they have that had convinced them that the move was about to take place.

Q They didn't capture them until after they moved, so that --

A That's right.

Q -- didn't bear on their decision, did it?

A No. But they said, in the Security Council, that they had information pointing the same way. Like they said -- you are talking about 200 tanks to cut off Eilat. I still don't know the truth of the report that they saw a "good many Egyptian planes on their radars coming in from the sea" and things of that sort. I just -- We, quite, frankly, don't know the final truth of some of those events of the first few hours preceeding the events, on which we can make a real judgment.

But, as far as we were concerned, we were hoping that we could sort out this Strait of Tiran thing, internationally, and not have it become the reason for the

fighting between Israel and the Arabs. And that, if that could be settled, then the question of preventing a clash generally might have been simplified. And I think at that point the Soviet Union was taking the same general attitude.

Q In that connection, Mr. Secretary --

A But it didn't work that way.

MR. McCLOSKEY: Before this next question, I wonder if we shouldn't straighten out where we are on the ground rule.

I think after the last question on Kosygin we are back on BACKGROUND.

Q That's right.

A Yes. All right.

Q Hadn't it become known by then that you weren't going very far with the declaration -- that it was meeting resistance; that France wouldn't sign? Couldn't this have triggered the Israelis into doing what they did -- that the declaration wasn't making any real progress?

A Neither the Israelis nor the Arabs have been particularly enamored of anything being done in the

United Nations.

If you go back through the U. N. history of this, you will find a whole series of resolutions; and each side can pick and choose which parts of the resolutions that they have complied with, and those parts which the other side has defied. And it seemed to be pretty clear that the Security Council at that stage was not going to be able to take any effective action following U Thant's sudden withdrawal of the UNEF.

You remember, the Soviets said that we were "dramatizing" the situation when we brought it before the Security Council, and things of that sort.

However, there still was -- and I suppose the Israelis, who have a very alert and lively diplomatic organization probably could see, in counting noses around capitals, that there wasn't a rush of people to volunteer to press for this international right in the Strait of Tiran.

Now, I saw a ticker -- I don't know. We have asked for a text of what Mr. Eskhol said on that point. But the way he was supposed to have described it, today, was not the way I understood it at the time. In the first

place, we never promised anybody 40 or 50 signatories on such a move of that sort. And there were a number of governments who were interested in getting this thing solved by common action among the maritime powers.

But, nevertheless, they had -- they saw the hesitancy on this, in some capitals, and they saw the emphasis in our own Congress on concentrating on U. N. action, and on multilateral action. So they weren't at all sure, I suppose, that they could count on international action to open the Strait of Tiran. At least, that's apparently the judgment they made.

Q Mr. Secretary, I am still not clear from what you said whether we are wedded by the May 23rd statement to the idea that there should be no border changes; or whether now, as a result of the war having been fought, it is a new ball game? Does the May 23rd statement --

A No, the May 23rd statement stands. The May 23rd statement stands as a statement of U. S. policy.

Q Mr. Secretary, that wouldn't preclude our recognition of territorial changes that were made as a process of negotiations, bilaterally, between the various parties -- would it?

A The questions haven't even come up yet, Dave.

Q Well, I'm sorry.

A I mean the questions haven't come up among governments.

Q Mr. Secretary, one of your --

Q But the May 23rd statement wouldn't preclude our recognition of such territorial changes -- reached as a process of negotiation?

A I am not going to get into these questions that have not arisen among governments, in terms of trying to anticipate what governments are going to be saying to each other when they get around to trying to settle these things.

Q One of your predecessors did, Mr. Secretary. This same question came up with Secretary Dulles, on the borders.

A Yeh?

Q And he specifically pointed out that the borderlines were cease-fire agreements, and were not permanent borders; and, therefore, were not automatically recognizable as permanent borders. But I don't -- but so

far as I know neither that Administration nor this one has ever defined precisely what is meant by the term "territorial integrity."

You wouldn't care to give a definition at this point, would you?

A No.

[Laughter]

Q Mr. Secretary, are we thinking of --

Q Is there a definition, Mr. Secretary, or are you waiting to formulate your definition when you see what you are faced with?

A No. It doesn't do any good for the United States, for me, to try to tell you that we are going to proscribe the answer in the area, when, in the last two or three weeks out there, none of the governments in the area have taken our advice.

So why should I go down this trail?

Let's let them sweat with their problems for a bit. Let the Arabs --

Q I am not asking you for your definition.

A Let the Arabs face the practical consequences of the attitude they have taken in the past twenty

years; and let the Israelis face the overwhelming necessity that they are going to have some sort of a relationship or reconciliation with the Arab World.

Q Then, your policy is --

A Let's let some of these things ferment for a bit.

Q -- is to keep them guessing as far as the U. S. is concerned?

A Only to keep you guessing for the moment.

[Laughter]

Q Mr. Secretary, the Soviets have been deeply --

A It is not for me to sit here and proscribe answers in a situation where the United States can't proscribe the answers in every case.

Q No. I wasn't asking for your definition, because I know you wouldn't care to give that. I was just asking whether you have formulated -- whether this term "territorial integrity" has, within your mind -- and within the President's mind -- some specific limitations with regard to these things. I can understand why you can't tell us.

A Well, when you look at the ten-year application of this policy, beginning with the attitude in the Suez crisis; and the effort in Lebanon; and the support to Jordan, and to Saudia Arabia; and our support of Algerian independence, and, then, our support for our effort to steady the nerves of Tunisia and Morocco, when they felt threatened by Nigeria; our support for Libyan independence, when they were being pressed pretty hard from Cairo, through various pressures there agitating around the Wheelus Base two or three years ago -- the general weight of this policy has been applied in support of most of the States of the area at one time or another.

Q Mr. Secretary, are we thinking in any way of a new aid program to stabilize this area?

A Well, we would be interested in a more energetic and effective regional approach to economic development. There has been a good deal of discussion in the World Bank and other places about the kind of regional effort in the Near East; that has its first beginnings in Africa; which has much more impetus in Latin America; and which is growing very rapidly in Asia.

We would hope that, in a regional approach to some of these problems, that some of these bitter national problems could be absorbed and could be overcome. So we have a very definite interest in that side of it, particularly, since there are some countries in the area itself who can provide important resources to such a regional effort.

Q In that connection, Mr. Secretary, there was a proposal by us, in 1953, for a \$121 million project in the Jordan Valley, which would have enlisted the co-operative efforts of Jordan, and Syria. Are we thinking about trying to revive that?

A I wouldn't want to comment on the specific project of that sort. But, if we can get over this present situation, I am not at all sure that you wouldn't work out a good many things that were just talked about, in Latin America, as regional infrastructure projects in support of regional economic integration.

Now, you remember -- I don't know whether -- Some of you may not know this. But what Harry Truman called "Mesopotamia" was directly responsible for the Point 4 idea. Every time visitors would come to see

Harry Truman, and he would talk about social development, he would go over to that big globe in his office, and turn it around, and say, "Here is one of the places that was one of the richest places in the world. And here is this fertile crescent." And he would put his finger on what is now Iraq, and talk about what can be done there if they had the technical know-how.

Well, these are all possibilities if you get enough peace to make it possible.

Q I was going to ask if aid shipments -- our aid shipments -- are going to Israel?

A I am being briefed on that later this afternoon. So I can't get into that question. I think normal aid channels are flowing at the present time. But I have to check on the question of what is happening on the particular items.

Q Could you say a word, Mr. Secretary, about the diplomatic tangle here? How troublesome is it to you? How quickly might it be repaired?

A Which?

Q The breakdown of diplomatic relations, is this particularly bothersome; or is it something you can

live with here for awhile?

A Well, let me make one comment that is NOT ATTRIBUTABLE, and then I will go back to BACKGROUND on the second comment.

On the first point:

A number of these actions have been taken not as a matter of a preferred course of action for the governments in the particular countries concerned, but because they are under pressures from their own men in the streets flowing directly from Nasser's charge that U. S. aircraft took part in the attack.

Now, back to BACKGROUND:

The character of the breach of relations varies greatly from country to country. In the case of the U. A. R., the present prospect is that diplomatic officers will be retained in both capitals; although, technically, there will be a breach of relations.

In the case of the Sudan, it will be a diplomatic break, but not cultural, and so forth, break.

In the case of Lebanon, it is a withdrawal of each other's ambassadors, and is not a technical break of

relations from the diplomatic point of view.

In the case of another country -- unnamed -- the remark was "Don't go too far. I will see you in about two weeks."

[Laughter]

Don't write that, please.

But, in other words, this is a sharp political reaction to a political psychology, the duration of which we can't precisely estimate. But I don't look upon this as all that tragic at the present.

Q Mr. Secretary, thank you very much -- on AN ATTRIBUTABLE BASIS.

A That's all right.

5:50 p.m.

end /
elk,
B Sec.

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