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THE OFFICIAL WEEKLY RECORD OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY

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The BULLETIN includes selected press releases on foreign policy, issued by the White House and the Department, and statements, addresses, and news conferences of the President and the Secretary of State and other officers of the Department, as well as special articles on various phases of international affairs and the functions of the Department. Information is included concerning treaties and international agreements to which the United States is or may become a party and on treaties of general international interest.

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Secretary Kissinger's News Conference of March 26

Press release 172 dated March 26

I would like to begin with a brief statement concerning the suspension of the Middle East peace talks.

The step-by-step approach pursued by the United States attempted to separate the Middle East problem into individual and therefore manageable segments. Now that approach has suffered a setback, and the Middle East issues have to be dealt with comprehensively, under more difficult circumstances.

A moment of potentially great danger is not the time to assess blame between the parties or to indulge in recrimination. We need a calm appraisal of the situation and the U.S. policy best suited to the new conditions. Let me sum up the U.S. position:

—With the end of the step-by-step approach, the United States faces a period of more complicated international diplomacy. Consequently, a reassessment of policy is essential. This reassessment has been ordered by the President.

—The dangers which produced the need for progress toward peace are still with us. The United States therefore is determined to continue the search for peace in the Middle East. It is prepared to go to Geneva and will be in touch with the cochairman of the conference, the U.S.S.R., in the near future.

—The United States is prepared to consider any other approach acceptable to the parties.

—The United States remains fully committed to the survival of Israel.

—The search for peace can be nurtured only in an atmosphere of calm. The parties involved in the Middle East conflict thus

have a responsibility to moderate words and deeds and to refrain from threatening acts.

—All outside powers have a responsibility to exercise restraint and to follow a course of moderation.

We face a difficult situation in the Middle East and throughout the world. The times demand a renewed sense of national purpose.

We must understand that peace is indivisible. The United States cannot pursue a policy of selective reliability. We cannot abandon friends in one part of the world without jeopardizing the security of friends everywhere.

We cannot master our future except as a united people. Our energies should be directed, not at recriminations about the past, but toward a vigorous and constructive search for a lasting peace. And to this, the Administration is dedicated.

Now I'll take questions.

Q. Mr. Secretary, with respect to American policy and what you have just said regarding selective reliability—in 1965 the United States equated the defense of South Viet-Nam with the commitment to NATO; now it appears to be equating the additional aid to South Viet-Nam with regard to the Middle East and so forth.

Do you feel that during the past five years, the policy and the techniques of diplomacy which we have pursued have been wrong? Have the conditions been wrong? Or what has happened?

Secretary Kissinger: As I understand it, you are asking two separate questions. One is the policy, the relationship between Indochina and other parts of the world; and the

second is whether the policies pursued in the last five years have been wrong.

First, let me talk—

Q. I didn't mean "policies"; I meant "strategies."

Secretary Kissinger: Well, that's a distinction without much difference.

Q. In what way?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, if the strategy is wrong—I don't see how you can have the right strategy and the wrong policy—or the wrong strategy and the right policy.

So let me answer your question.

With respect to Indochina, we are not equating the intrinsic importance of each part of the world, and we are not saying that every part of the world is strategically as important to the United States as any other part of the world. The problem we face in Indochina today is an elementary question of what kind of a people we are.

For 15 years, we have been involved in encouraging the people of Viet-Nam to defend themselves against what we conceived as external danger.

In 1973, we negotiated a settlement in which we withdrew our forces and, in return, achieved the release of our prisoners. This settlement, it is well to recall now, was—while we were negotiating it—generally criticized for our holding out for stronger terms.

The fact of the matter is that now that we have withdrawn our forces and have obtained the release of our prisoners, there was never any question that the United States would continue to give economic and military aid to Viet-Nam. And what we face now is whether the United States—not just “will withdraw its forces,” which we achieved—and not just “will stop the, or end the, loss of American lives”—but whether it will deliberately destroy an ally by withholding aid from it in its moment of extremity.

This is a fundamental question of how we are viewed by all other people, and it has nothing to do with the question of

whether we should ever have gotten involved there in the first place.

Now, with respect to whether the basic policies have been correct in the last five years, that, of course, is a rather sweeping question which would require an answer that could easily occupy the better part of this press conference.

With respect to Indochina, I would urge people to look at the newspapers and the public debate during the period that these agreements were being negotiated to see what the imperatives were on the Administration in negotiating these settlements.

And the general conviction was that the United States had done enough in expending American lives and that the people of Viet-Nam should have an opportunity to defend themselves without American support. There was never any proposition that the United States should withdraw and cut off aid.

And these agreements were negotiated on the assumption that there would be—that the United States would continue economic and military aid to South Viet-Nam and also that there would be some possibility of enforcing the agreements.

And this is the basic problem with the policy in Viet-Nam.

With respect to other policies, I would rather answer specific questions.

Yes.

Q. Mr. Secretary, if I may follow up on that question, it appears that the Congress, at least, has felt that the Nixon doctrine has outlived itself and that now supplies will not be provided as have been committed by the United States in the past. Do you plan to reassess the alternatives as a result of the demise of the Nixon doctrine, particularly in reference to Viet-Nam, Cambodia, and Thailand?

Secretary Kissinger: We have to face the fact that there are many countries in the world which have no conceivable opportunity to defend themselves without American economic or military assistance. And therefore, if it becomes our national policy

that countries must at some point be able to rely entirely on their resources, we will have brought about a massive change in the international environment that in time will fundamentally threaten the security of the United States as well as the security of many of our friends.

The so-called Nixon doctrine was based on the assumption that the United States would help those countries that were prepared to help themselves. If this is no longer true, then we are likely to find a massive shift in the foreign policies of many countries and a fundamental threat over a period of time to the security of the United States.

Q. Mr. Secretary, how serious did you find in your Middle East negotiations the concern on the Arab—on the Egyptian—and the Israeli sides, the problems you are facing in getting aid for Indochina? Was this a factor in the breakdown of the talks?

Secretary Kissinger: I cannot assign any particular cause for the breakdown of the talks. There is no question that events in Portugal, Greece, Turkey, and Indochina had an effect on the conduct of the negotiations. On the part of our friends, it raised the question of the durability of our assurances. And since one of our problems was to substitute American assurances for some physical terrain features, this was a factor. On the part of those who were threatening our friends, there was the feeling that perhaps concessions were less necessary because the drift of events was in any case favorable.

Nevertheless I think that the major reason for the breakdown of the negotiations was intrinsic to the negotiations themselves. But the surrounding circumstances were certainly not favorable.

Q. Mr. Secretary, to pursue the question of the interrelationship of Indochina and other portions of the world, where does the Administration go from here? It is clearly at loggerheads with the Congress on this fundamental question. The U.S. policy, ac-

ording to the Administration apparently is immobilized diplomatically on Indochina. Is there any way over this barrier except a constant head-on clash with Congress?

Secretary Kissinger: I don't agree that U.S. policy is immobilized over Indochina. There is a philosophical disagreement which I have attempted to explain earlier.

I have believed ever since I came to Washington that it is overwhelmingly in our national interest to put the debate on Indochina behind us.

The Administration has proposed to the Congress a three-year program for phasing out American military aid to Viet-Nam, which would, if the Congress and the Administration can agree, remove this issue from the yearly congressional-executive battles.

I believe, as I pointed out, that we face a grave situation. The Administration cannot give up its convictions simply for the sake of a technical compromise. But we believe that this three-year program, if the levels are adequate, might provide an opportunity to get the debate behind us.

Reassessment of Middle East Policy

Q. Mr. Secretary, is the reassessment of U.S. policy toward the whole Middle East primarily aimed at prompting Israel to adopt a more relaxed or less intransigent negotiating posture?

Secretary Kissinger: At this moment, there are no negotiations going on, and therefore we would have no concrete proposals to make to Israel, even if Israel asked us what negotiating posture it should adopt.

The assessment of our policy that is now going on is made necessary by the new circumstances. Our policy had been designed, as I pointed out in this statement, to segment the issues into individual elements, to negotiate each element separately, and therefore to permit each party to adjust itself domestically and internationally to a process of a gradual approach toward peace.

Now that this approach has to be aban-

done, we face an entirely new situation in which, in all probability, all problems will have to be negotiated simultaneously, and in which, instead of a forum in which Israel deals with one Arab country through the mediation of the United States, the strong probability is that Israel will have to deal with all Arab countries in a multilateral forum.

The assessment of our policy is not directed against Israel. It is not designed to induce Israel to alter any particular policy. It is designed to develop a position that the United States can take in order to prevent an increasing radicalization in the area and an increasing tension and, above all, in order to avoid a war in which inevitably the United States would be involved at least indirectly, given the international circumstances.

Q. A very quick followup. You and your spokesmen have denied that this reassessment contemplates a cutoff, but I don't think anybody has denied that it might contemplate a reduction. Can you respond to that?

Secretary Kissinger: There is no level of aid right now that has been set for next year's—for the next year. And therefore the question of a reduction is an entirely academic one.

We have before us an Israeli request of rather large size which at this moment is being staffed on the entirely technical level and has been staffed on the entirely technical level for weeks. It has not yet reached either my desk or the President's desk.

We will make our decisions on aid to Israel on the basis of our national objectives and on the basis of the statement that I made here, that we remain committed to the survival of Israel.

Of course whatever conclusions we come to will be submitted to the Congress, and the Congress can make its independent judgment.

We are not approaching the reassessment with an attitude of cutting aid. And we are approaching it with the attitude of look-

ing at the overall situation in the Middle East to determine what the best course might be.

Q. Mr. Secretary, now that you have written an obituary on step-by-step negotiating, does that mean that you are writing off the possibility of unilateral American action in the Middle East? Are you now going to be walking step-by-step with the Soviet Union? What will be your approach?

Secretary Kissinger: Our approach will be whatever is most likely to lessen the dangers of war and to produce steps toward peace.

As I pointed out in our statement, the United States is prepared to go to Geneva. The United States is prepared also to go along with any other approach that the parties may request of it. So, we are not insistent on any particular approach. We will follow whatever approach is most likely to be effective and is requested by the parties. The obvious forum that is now open is Geneva, but we are prepared to look at other approaches.

Q. Mr. Secretary, to follow that up, could you say when you go to Geneva, would it not be likely that the talks would themselves become segmented into the various problems and that would provide an opportunity for the United States or other parties to play a role in each individual problem—Israel-Egypt, Israel-Syria, Israel-Jordan?

Secretary Kissinger: If that is the turn that the negotiations take, the United States will be prepared to participate in it. The United States has no fixed idea on which course to pursue.

At this moment, we have to consult with the other parties, and we of course also have to consult now with the cochairman of the Geneva Conference.

The United States will do what is most likely to reduce the danger of war and to promote peace, and if it should turn out that separate negotiations develop at Geneva, the United States will certainly support them.

Q. Mr. Secretary, it seems that—

Secretary Kissinger: Go ahead, and then you.

Q. You adverted to difficulties in Portugal, Greece, Turkey, and Indochina. One could add the dismemberment of Ethiopia by an Arab coalition, the sellout of the Kurds, and so on. To what extent do you consider that this—

Secretary Kissinger: An objective question. What do you want me to say—"yes"? [Laughter.]

Q. Would this reflect what Dr. Schlesinger [Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger] has described as a worldwide perception of American impotence?

Secretary Kissinger: I have pointed out at many press conferences over the years that the central authority of a major country cannot be under persistent attack without ultimately paying a price in foreign policy.

We have gone through the experience of Viet-Nam, through the anguish of Watergate. And I think the cumulative effect of nearly a decade of domestic upheaval is beginning to pay—to take its toll.

Foreign governments, when they deal with the United States, make a bet in their dealings on the constancy of American policy and on the ability of the United States to carry through on whatever it is we promise, or fail to promise, or threaten. And this is one of the big problems in foreign policy today. It is not a problem of the Congress at this particular moment, because the executive also shares a responsibility for it over a period of a decade.

At this moment, it is senseless to try to assess the blame. At this moment, the great need is to pull together and to see whether we can restore a sense of national purpose. And as far as the Administration is concerned, we will do our utmost to do this in a cooperative spirit.

Q. Mr. Secretary, it seems to me that part of the national debate over Viet-Nam has

come about because of what might be called the light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel syndrome. And now you are suggesting that possibly with three more years of aid the Indochina question could be more satisfactorily resolved. Isn't this just another way of buying yet another slice of time?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, Mr. Koppel [Ted Koppel, ABC News], my own personal conviction, about which I have left no question, is that the right way to do it is to vote annually what is necessary. There are some problems in the world that simply have no terminal date. And in Indochina, as long as the North Vietnamese are determined to attack, it is not responsible to say that there is an absolute date in which an end can be achieved.

On the other hand—given the very strong feelings in the Congress, given the cataclysmic, or the very dangerous, impact on the U.S. position in the world, of destroying a country where we have lost 50,000 men, where we have fought for 10 years, and which we, as a country, projected into this conflict—we are prepared to go to a three-year program in which, with adequate aid, we believe that there is at least a chance that then, with the development of oil resources and other factors, that this country could be put on a more self-sustaining basis.

It is our offer, in order to take Viet-Nam out of the national debate for this period and in order to avoid what we think would be a very grievous blow to the United States.

Visit to Latin America

Q. Sir, in another part of the world, this is a question about your projected trip to Latin America. Is it still on, and what is the main purpose of the trip? And whom do you expect to see there?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, I have planned a trip to Latin America for the last six months. And as I pointed out in the speech in Houston a few weeks ago, the United States attaches great importance to its re-

relationships with Latin America, with which we have had the longest uninterrupted tradition of foreign policy in our history, which is a part of the world which is in a position somewhere between the less developed nations and the advanced nations, and with which we share many cultural and political traditions. And therefore we believe that Western Hemisphere policy is a central part of our overall policy and a test of our relationship to many of the less developed countries.

Now, I am planning to go to—I will definitely go to Latin America before the meeting of the OAS here in May. So I will definitely go in April. Given the various pressures that exist right now in Washington, I am not in a position to announce the exact date. But we will determine that within the next few days. But it is definite that I will go in April. I am planning to visit Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Venezuela. And I plan to visit other Latin American countries later this year.

Reducing the Danger of War in Middle East

Q. Mr. Secretary, if the Geneva Peace Conference ends in a stalemate, as everybody seems to think it will, how great will the danger of another war in the Middle East be? And in that connection, do you expect Egypt and Syria to allow U.N. troops to remain in the buffer zone between them and Israel?

Secretary Kissinger: Let me take this in two parts. The longer there is a stalemate in the Middle East, the greater the danger of war becomes. The danger of war can best be reduced in the Middle East if all of the parties see a prospect of peace somewhere down the road and some plausible means of attaining it. And this is why we pursued the previous approach.

When the United States goes to Geneva, it will not go there with the attitude that it will end in a stalemate, but rather with the attitude of seeing whether this forum can now be turned into an arena for constructive progress. And therefore the United

States will go there with a positive attitude, and it will ask all parties concerned to go there with a similar attitude, keeping in mind the needs and requirements of everybody.

Was there another part to your question?

Q. What do you expect Egypt and Syria to do about the U.N. troops in the buffer zone between them and Israel?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, we believe that the U.N. Emergency Force in Egypt and the U.N. Disengagement Observer Force in Syria were essential components of the disengagement agreements. We hope that the mandates of both of these will be renewed as a contribution to peace and stability in the Middle East and to permit the process of negotiations to go forward in a tranquil atmosphere.

Q. Mr. Secretary—

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. Lisagor [Peter Lisagor, Chicago Daily News].

Q. Inasmuch as we deal with every Communist country in the world with the exception of Cuba today, why would we, to use your words, be "destroying" South Viet-Nam if it became Communist?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, on that theory we can give up all of our alliances, because we would not be destroying any ally if it were overrun by a Communist country. It is not a question of our not dealing with Communist countries. It is a question of countries that obviously have a desire to defend themselves being prevented from defending themselves by an American decision to withhold supplies. And therefore we would be destroying those people who have resisted, whom we have encouraged to resist, by such an action.

Now, I think it is interesting also to point out that, after all, the flood of refugees in Viet-Nam is going away from the Communist area of control. And even in Cambodia, under conditions that one would have to say are extraordinarily discouraging, somebody is still fighting around Phnom Penh. So that

we are here in a position where the United States is forcing people to surrender by withholding supplies.

Q. Mr. Secretary, Egypt, according to a senior American official, was willing to sign a pledge not to have recourse to force in the Middle East, that force was not the way to resolve the conflict in the Middle East, to refrain from military and paramilitary activities, and to allow Israel the right to renew any agreement at the expiration of its one-year term. In your view, did those concessions by Egypt satisfy the military side of nonbelligerency?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, the issue of nonbelligerency is a complicated legal position, because nonbelligerency is an international status which you cannot approach simply in components. I don't think any useful purpose is served for me to give an assessment of the various negotiating positions. Both sides made a serious effort, and they did not succeed in bridging their differences.

Middle East Developments and Oil Situation

Q. Mr. Secretary, what is the impact on the world oil situation, and is the United States prepared to go ahead with the consumer-producer conference? Is that about to take place? Would you discuss also the impact of King Faisal's assassination on that situation?

Secretary Kissinger: Of course, it is commonly believed that tensions in the Middle East do not particularly help the world oil situation. The United States has taken the position that it would conduct its negotiations in the Middle East independent of any oil pressures. And American policy will not let itself be affected by oil pressures. We do not see any developing at this moment.

We believe that the consumer-producer conference is being conducted in the interests of both sides for the common benefit, for the interest, of a developing and thriving world economy, which is in the interest of producers as well as consumers and should not be tied to the situation in the

Middle East. Therefore we are proceeding with our preparations for the consumer-producer conference, and progress is being made in that direction, and we find it essentially on schedule.

King Faisal ruled a country of extraordinary importance to the energy picture of the world. And also, due to his extraordinary personality, he had a major influence on all of the Arab countries, being one of the few Arab leaders with a major influence on both the moderates and the radical elements in the Arab world. King Faisal was an element for moderation in the negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries. And he was a friend of the United States. His great personal prestige will be missed, even though we are convinced that the basic policies of Saudi Arabia are going to continue.

Consequences of Cutting Off Assistance

Q. Mr. Secretary, I would like to follow up on that question about the "light at the end of the tunnel" that was raised here earlier by Mr. Koppel. It seemed to me that your answer to that question really was that you did, given a three-year program in South Viet-Nam, see another light at the end of that tunnel. And I think the real question that is involved here is whether the Administration is perceiving reality. I think you have a problem with the public in this country. We have given 50,000 men. We have given \$150 billion. And it has not saved South Viet-Nam. You are asking people now to believe that if you get three more years of help, you, Henry Kissinger, believe it can be saved. Now, I would like to know if that is not telling people that you see a light at the end of the tunnel.

Secretary Kissinger: I am saying that if you do not give enough, then you are bringing about consequences very similar to what we are now seeing. Since May last year, South Viet-Nam has received only ammunition and fuel. It has received almost no spare parts and no modern equipment. Under those conditions, the demoralization of an army is inevitable. And therefore some of the con-

sequences we now see are not surprising.

I am saying that, as a people, we should not destroy our allies and that, once we start on that course, it will have very serious consequences for us in the world.

I have stated that it would be better if we did it on an annual basis. Given the enormous divisions that have arisen in this country, for the sake of avoiding these divisions we are prepared to go the other route. It is not our first choice. The better course is to do it by determining each year what is necessary.

And in the nature of things, there are many situations around the world in which the necessity of assistance depends on the degree of outside pressure. And if we cannot control the outside pressure, then our cutting off assistance means turning these countries over to their enemies.

Mr. Binder [David Binder, New York Times].

Developments in Portugal

Q. Mr. Secretary, could you give us your assessment of the events in Portugal, what U.S. policy is toward Portugal, and whether it might have to change?

Secretary Kissinger: Portugal, of course, is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and has had close and friendly relationships with the United States.

What seems to be happening in Portugal now is that the Armed Forces Movement, which is substantially dominated by officers of leftist tendencies, has now appointed a new Cabinet in which Communists and parties closely associated with the Communists have many of the chief portfolios. This was an evolution that was not unforeseeable over recent months, and it will, of course, raise questions for the United States in relationship to its NATO policy and to its policy with Portugal.

With respect to NATO, this is a matter to be discussed with all of our allies, and we are in close contact with them.

With respect to Portugal, the United States has a tradition of friendly relations with Por-

tugal, and it does not intend to take the initiative in breaking these friendly relations. However, we are disquieted by an evolution in which there is a danger that the democratic process may become a sham and in which parties are getting into a dominant position whose interests we would not have thought were necessarily friendly to the United States.

Aid to Viet-Nam After Peace Agreement

Q. Mr. Secretary, you said earlier that in 1973, when the Viet-Nam peace accords were negotiated, there was no doubt about continuing U.S. military and economic assistance. What assurances did you have then, in '73, that the Congress would continue this assistance?

Secretary Kissinger: We had no assurances. If you review now the nature of our domestic debate—say, from 1969 to 1973—it was essentially that American involvement in Viet-Nam should be terminated but that the Vietnamese should be given an opportunity to defend themselves; and the entire pressure of the domestic debate was on the withdrawal—at least, insofar as I became conscious of it—was on the withdrawal of American participation.

We stated, on the date that the agreement was signed, if you read my press conference of that day, that economic and military aid would continue. And none of this was ever challenged in '73 and '74.

In fact, the debate started this year over appropriating a sum of money that had already been authorized by the Congress; so a question of principle could not possibly have been involved, because the authorization was approved last year with very little division. There were no assurances, but it seemed to us inherent in the whole posture that we had taken that this would continue.

Q. If I could follow up on that, did you give at that time the South Vietnamese Government assurances that this aid would continue?

Secretary Kissinger: We told the South Vietnamese Government—not a commitment

of the United States that aid would continue—but that, in our judgment, if the South Vietnamese cooperated in permitting us to withdraw our forces and, therefore, to reclaim our prisoners, that in our judgment the Congress would then vote the aid that would be necessary to sustain Viet-Nam economically and militarily. It was not given as an American commitment.

We're not talking here of a legal American commitment; we are talking here of a moral commitment.

End of Step-by-Step Approach in Middle East

Q. Mr. Secretary, do you think there will be another Middle East war?

Secretary Kissinger: I think there is always a danger of a Middle East war, as long as the parties have such irreconcilable differences. We do not believe a Middle East war is inevitable. We believe a Middle East war would involve the greatest dangers to all of the countries concerned, as well as serious dangers of great-power involvement. And therefore the United States will work with determination and with confidence to avoid a war and to use its influence to promote a movement toward peace.

Q. Mr. Secretary, sir, did you look at the record of the assassin of King Faisal? I'm sure you must have. And did you find, when he was in the United States, any input or anything that might have contributed to this action?

Secretary Kissinger: Frankly, I have not looked at the detailed—I have just seen a brief summary of the record of the assassin, but I'm absolutely confident that nobody in the United States had anything to do with such an action, because we considered King Faisal a good friend of the United States.

Q. Mr. Secretary, can we ask another question on the step-by-step—

Q. Mr. Secretary, why is there such a presumption in this country at this moment, in newspaper articles, in the meaning—in the interpretation—of the reassessment of Mideast policy, that Israel somehow was at

fault for the breakdown of the talks and should somehow be punished by reduction in aid or some other manner?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, I cannot answer why people make certain assumptions. Many of you were on the plane with me, and you know how I attempted to explain the situation. We—the Administration has made no assessment of blame, nor will it serve any useful purpose to engage in that now.

Secondly, punishment of a friend cannot be the purpose of a national policy. We now face a new situation. No useful purpose is served by conducting it in a fit of pique or by encouraging even greater tensions in the area. We will make an assessment of the American national interest in relation to our long-term commitments, as well as the necessity of preserving the peace; and our policy will be based entirely on this. And in no sense is any consideration given to punishing any particular country.

Mr. Kalb [Marvin Kalb, CBS].

Q. Mr. Secretary, in that connection, going back to the step-by-step approach once again, since you started this approach, there was an agreement between Egypt and Israel in January of '74, an agreement between Syria and Israel in May of '74, an enhancement of the American diplomatic position in the Middle East, and one setback. In light of the balance on the pluses and minuses, why so radical and dramatic a change, a need for a major reassessment of policy? Why not continue along the old way, recognizing that there was one setback but a lot of pluses?

Secretary Kissinger: We obviously believe that there were large pluses. As I made clear before we went on this trip, it seemed to us that in any event, even if another step had succeeded, a reassembling of the Geneva Conference was the most likely next step, because we believed that the Geneva Conference would then have taken place under easier circumstances than will now be the case.

We have made the assessment that the

step-by-step approach, as it has been conducted up to now, is not likely to be able to be continued. And therefore we have to assess where we go from here, under conditions in which some of the presuppositions are no longer valid. And I don't consider anything particularly dramatic about assessing American policy when it finds itself in a new situation.

Q. Mr. Secretary, you have used the word "suspension" to describe the talks, and yet you said that the step-by-step approach is ended. Now, you just said it's not likely to be able to continue. Is there any chance whatsoever that the negotiations between Israel and Egypt on an interim settlement—that is, another step—can be revived?

Secretary Kissinger: My impression, from Egyptian public statements, is that this is extremely unlikely. Should, however, the parties request us, against our expectations, to undertake it, we would be prepared to do it. But we are making no effort to urge the parties to do so. We stand ready, if there should be any such request.

Q. Mr. Secretary, the question was being raised after your briefing on the Hill—

Secretary Kissinger: Miss Berger [Marylyn Berger, Washington Post], and then you.

Q. A question was being raised yesterday after your briefing to Congressmen on the Hill as to who made that decision that the step-by-step approach is now finished. Was

it your personal decision? Was it a decision of the parties? Could you tell us about how that decision was reached?

Secretary Kissinger: The Egyptian Foreign Minister announced, on the evening that he announced the suspension of the talks, that the step-by-step approach was now finished and that Egypt would return to Geneva. This is how the decision was reached.

The United States will do whatever it can—and whatever the parties agree to—to promote peace in the Middle East, and if the parties should request us to do it, we would be willing to entertain it.

Q. Mr. Secretary, would it, in your view, enhance the prospects to go to Geneva if the United States would move beyond the role of intermediary and take a publicly stated position on the substantive issues being negotiated there?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, we have generally refrained from taking a position of our own because we felt that when the peace and security of countries is concerned that they have to make their fundamental decisions. On the few occasions when the issues between them had narrowed sufficiently, the United States took a position.

Now, whether in the evolution of the negotiations—at Geneva or elsewhere—a moment will come when the United States should take a position of its own, that remains to be determined. We have not yet made this decision.

Secretary Kissinger Makes 16-Day Visit to the Middle East

Secretary Kissinger visited the United Kingdom, Belgium, Egypt, Syria, Israel, Turkey, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia March 6-23. Following are remarks made by Secretary Kissinger and foreign leaders on various occasions during the trip, together with remarks made by President Ford and Secretary Kissinger on March 23 upon the Secretary's return to Washington.

REMARKS, CARDIFF, WALES, MARCH 6¹

Coming here from overseas we realize that we stand at the center of a historic civilization. Cardiff and Wales have made seminal contributions to the life of Great Britain and the wider culture of the Western world. This is a land of great poetry and song, of economic leadership from the beginning of the industrial age, of social and political idealism. Wales looks out upon the ocean that touches all the Western nations. Your ideals and your spirit, which gleam far beyond your shores, have been among the beacons which join those nations into a single civilization.

I have been asked to speak for the assembled guests in extending our congratulations to the two men who have been honored today, James Callaghan and George Thomas. It is difficult to speak for so many and even more difficult to do justice to the achievements of our Right Honorable friends. Today, you have honored them for three decades of distinguished service to you in the House of Commons and as Ministers of the Crown.

¹ Made at a banquet given by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff in honor of British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan and George Thomas, Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons (text from press release 116).

I confess that I view their achievements, particularly those of my friend Jim Callaghan, from a perspective different than your own. By conferring the Freedom of the City upon him, you have symbolically welcomed him as a citizen of Cardiff and Wales. But I know him as a citizen of the world, as a statesman who has been my valued colleague in our common search for a more secure peace, a friend on whose word one can always rely and whose steadiness is a constant source of strength. By supporting Jim Callaghan during his long career in Parliament, Cardiff has given him the opportunity for the broad experience, at home and abroad, that now allows him to speak so effectively for Britain in the world community. Not only Britain but America must be grateful for your trust.

Over the past year, Jim Callaghan and I have been close partners in the effort to cope together with the serious new challenges that face us in the contemporary world. Jim Callaghan's wisdom has invariably been hardheaded and practical. But he has never forgotten that immediate solutions must prove barren unless they serve some larger conception and relate to some deeper human value. Our time needs strength and realism, but we must never forget that only idealists can have the strength to prevail and only men of vision can transform reality.

The cornerstone of all our efforts must be cooperation between Europe and the United States. For more than a generation, this transatlantic relationship has sustained our mutual safety and prosperity. And within that relationship the close tie of Britain and the United States has had a special place. Statesmen of both parties in both of our countries have contributed to its construction and have built on it in successive administrations.

It was Winston Churchill who foresaw, in the darkest hour of World War II, that the alliance of our nations could be a basis for the deliverance of the West from the dangers of tyranny, hardship, and war:

If we are together (he said) nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail. I therefore preach continually the doctrine of the fraternal association of our two peoples, not for any purpose of gaining . . . advantages for either of them, . . . but for the sake of service to mankind and for the honor that comes to those who faithfully serve great causes.

It was Ernest Bevin, one of the greatest British Foreign Secretaries, who joined, following the war, with the leaders of the United States to forge the system of collective security under which we still live.

Today, James Callaghan carries on that proud tradition. Under his guidance, we may be sure that the association between our peoples will, as Churchill happily put it, "just keep rolling along," as inexorable as ever. On a broad range of issues vital to our common security and progress—which means in effect the whole spectrum of international affairs—our intimate consultation, advice, and mutual assistance have become second nature. And the strength of our association has lent stability to the growing relationship between America and Europe as a whole.

And so as I leave tomorrow for the Middle East to seek progress toward a peace we all seek, I go reinforced by the opportunity to exchange views over many weeks with the British Government and especially extensive discussions with the Foreign Secretary. I also go saddened by the knowledge that innocent lives have again been sacrificed in the conflict between Arab and Israeli which has claimed so many lives over the decades. The terrorist incident in Tel Aviv last night and this morning—a random and senseless act—reminds us once more of the tragic dimensions of this conflict. Violence does not forward the cause of peace. It leads to counteractions in which more lives are lost, the tragedy is compounded, and the cause of

justice which both sides seek is made more difficult to achieve.

The peoples of the Middle East have suffered enough. They have earned a surcease from their agony. We shall therefore continue our efforts to promote negotiations and further steps toward peace in the Middle East, because we must, and because the alternative is more travail and tragedy, not only for the peoples concerned but ultimately for the world.

In the world at large much has changed in the last 35 years. Europe has gained new economic strength. Old reasons for economic solidarity, such as the cold war, have diminished in urgency. New motives, such as economic interdependence, have appeared. New powers, notably Japan, have joined the industrialized world; and new centers of influence, such as the oil producers, have arisen within the developing world. As we seek a new basis for Atlantic relations, we must be more aware of relations with the rest of the world than ever before.

But at a time of change, let us also reaffirm the enduring principles that have guided, and still guide, relations between America and Europe.

—Our association is based upon a deep community of values and interests. Our strategic interests closely coincide. Our economies are interdependent. Americans, most of whom are the descendants of Europeans, share Europe's commitment to the ideals of freedom, democracy, and a life of opportunity for all our peoples.

—A major common purpose of our policies is to preserve our civilization from pressures of insecurity or scarcity, to realize the opportunity for freedom and progress, and to achieve together a world at peace.

—Our relationship is based on partnership and friendship. Our inspiration is the need to vindicate man in an age of proliferating technology and to give hope to a world capable of self-destruction.

Jim Callaghan and I have the privilege of serving two nations whose historic partner-

ship has been central to the unity and the progress of the West. Our nations have common purposes that transcend the interests of Britain or America or Europe. We are the inheritors of a vision of what the unity of the West can mean for the future of all mankind.

Jim Callaghan and I are friends, as are our two peoples are friends, and we are partners as our two peoples are partners. I repeat to you my thanks for the opportunity to be here today. One understands a man better for seeing what shaped him. I want to extend my deep gratitude to Cardiff and to Wales for having helped make Jim Callaghan the man and the statesman he is. And I join my voice to yours in commemorating the great honor you have bestowed upon both our Right Honorable friends.

REMARKS TO THE PRESS, BRUSSELS, MARCH 7

Press release 121 dated March 10

Secretary Kissinger

Foreign Minister Bitsios and I have had another one of our series of friendly meetings to discuss the range of economic, military, and political matters concerning the Governments of Greece and the United States.

We paid particular attention to the urgent need of finding a solution to the problem of Cyprus. Foreign Minister Bitsios explained to me in detail the point of view of his government with respect to the full range of issues on Cyprus. I, in turn, explained to the Foreign Minister the readiness of the U.S. Government and my own personal readiness to do everything within my power to speed up a solution to this difficult and tragic problem. The Foreign Minister and I agreed to meet again in the near future at a time and place yet to be determined in order to review the progress that may have been made and that, we hope, will have been made on the issues that we discussed today.

Secretary Kissinger and myself felt that there was an accumulation of problems serious enough to make necessary another of our periodical friendly meetings. The subjects which we have discussed are difficult matters, so no spectacular results could be expected, but our discussion was to place in the spirit of mutual understanding and our determination and willingness to see progress made in all fields. We shall meet again, and I expect that by that time we shall have to report some further progress.

Thank you.

Questions and Answers

Q. Mr. Secretary, will that meeting take place jointly with the Turkish Foreign Minister?

Secretary Kissinger: We have not made any plans. I would expect that this will be a separate meeting between Foreign Minister Bitsios and myself. But we are of course in favor of anything that would facilitate negotiations.

Q. Mr. Foreign Minister, are you hopeful of early resumption of the negotiations with Turkey?

Foreign Minister Bitsios: The situation is such that I hope that there will be a breakthrough.

Q. Is there now a new approach that you have agreed on that could be presented to the Turks, hopefully, to lead to Turkish agreement to begin negotiations?

Secretary Kissinger: This was not a question today of discovering new approaches. I am sending Assistant Secretary Hartman [Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Arthur A. Hartman] to Ankara to report on the discussions. We hope that a framework can be found, both procedural and substantive, that will permit the progress of which Foreign Minister Bitsios and I have spoken.

Q. Have you proposed a solution to the Cyprus problem? [Summary of a question in Greek.]

Secretary Kissinger: I have not proposed any solution. The United States will do its best to facilitate a solution, but of course the basic positions will have to be taken by the parties concerned and it would not be proper for the United States to impose its own views on the parties. What the United States does do is to indicate its support for a speedy solution. The talks this afternoon in which Foreign Minister Bitsios explained, as I said, the full range of the Greek point of view will be studied with sympathy and will be dealt with in a manner that we hope will facilitate a settlement.

Q. How soon can a solution be found? [Summary of a question in Greek.]

Secretary Kissinger: I think it is premature to speculate as to time. I agree with Foreign Minister Bitsios that by the time we meet again, it may be possible to indicate a time frame and to report some specific steps that could be taken.

Q. Will you meet Foreign Minister Esenbel?

Secretary Kissinger: I am prepared to meet with the Turkish Foreign Minister, and I expect to meet with him within the next few weeks. We have not set a date.

Q. What is the status of the negotiations on U.S. bases in Greece?

Secretary Kissinger: That would be the last question, at least as far as I am concerned. Yes, we reviewed the negotiations that were started. They will be resumed in a few weeks after we have studied the Greek position that was submitted to us. These negotiations, too, are, in our judgment, being conducted in a constructive spirit.

Q. Are you now more optimistic?

Secretary Kissinger: I think it is premature to make any predictions. We are seriously trying to help toward a solution, and

again I think that after the Foreign Minister and I meet the next time, we may be able to hazard some predictions.

ARRIVAL, ASWAN, EGYPT, MARCH 8

Press release 122 dated March 10

I came to Egypt because I believe that progress toward peace is possible. I will do my very best, and I plan to stay in the area until we have achieved some definite progress.

Thank you.

NEWS CONFERENCE BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT SADAT OF EGYPT, MARCH 8²

Secretary Kissinger: As you know, the President and I have had extensive talks today, partly alone and partly together with our associates, to review all the elements that are involved in making another step toward peace in the Middle East. I will now go first to Syria and then to Israel, and I will discuss there a similar range of issues regarding the elements of another step. I will then return for further discussions with the President on Tuesday or Wednesday.

I am here because the United States believes very strongly that another step toward peace in the Middle East is in the interest of all of the peoples of the Middle East and of the world, and we are dedicated to making a major effort in this direction. I believe, based on the discussions that I have had, progress is possible.

Q. Have you discussed, Mr. Secretary, any possibility of another disengagement on the Syrian front?

Secretary Kissinger: We discussed the whole range of problems involved with peace in the Middle East, and of course that includes all fronts.

Q. Mr. Secretary, are you bringing con-

² Held at Aswan following their second meeting (text from press release 123 dated Mar. 10).

crete ideas to Israel that you have picked up here from President Sadat?

Secretary Kissinger: Obviously, in discussions with the Israelis we will be discussing ideas and elements of a possible step. I don't think the origin of these ideas and elements is of decisive importance.

Q. Mr. President, do you think enough progress has been made to make you optimistic about a settlement?

President Sadat: Well, as I said before, I am always optimistic, but I think we shall be having a very hard round this time.

Q. Did you discuss the Palestinian question, Mr. Kissinger?

Secretary Kissinger: I said we discussed the whole range of issues in the Middle East.

Q. Mr. President, when you said a "hard round," do you think it will take a long time? Do you think it might take three or four weeks?

President Sadat: Well, I shall be very happy to have Dr. Kissinger as long as he can afford to stay with me, but it is not a matter of weeks or so. As I said before, the mission of my friend Dr. Kissinger is very important this time because we are working on two very important points. The first point is the defusion of the explosive situation; the second is pushing the process of peace. For that I am saying it is the hardest.

Q. Mr. President, you said recently that you think now, for the first time, peace is possible. Can you please say what changed to make it such at this time? What elements have changed?

President Sadat: Well, I did not say this yesterday, or a week before. I said it a year before, when I met Dr. Kissinger, when we fulfilled the first disengagement agreement. My theory is this: For 26 years we have never enjoyed any confidence in Israel; and the same thing happened, that Israel never enjoyed any confidence in us. The moment came when Dr. Kissinger appeared on the stage, and he enjoyed my full confidence.

I think it must be mentioned also that he should enjoy the full confidence of Israel after all that he has done for Israel, and all that the United States has done. So I am saying, for the first time in 26 years peace is possible.

Q. Mr. President, do you think that no form of warfare is useful in the Arab-Israeli conflict?

President Sadat: This is quite true from my point of view, and I think the October war has proved that whatever power any party has, it cannot impose conditions on the other.

Q. What about other forms of warfare, Mr. President?

President Sadat: Well, do you have in mind what you call preventive war?

Q. Economic warfare.

President Sadat: When we discuss peace, we shall be discussing peace in all its dimensions. But let us first defuse the explosive situation; then after that we can discuss it.

Q. Mr. President, could you say that after your talks today you feel things look harder than they did before your talks today?

President Sadat: Well, my friend, it is true that I feel that this time it is harder. It is true.

Q. Is it harder, Mr. President, because you want to go further this time than you did last time in the range of what you are trying to achieve?

President Sadat: Well, as I told you, what we want to achieve this time is keeping the momentum of the peace cause and defusing the explosive situation.

Q. Are the prospects better or worse after today's talks?

President Sadat: I cannot tell until Dr. Kissinger returns.

Q. Mr. President, is the question of a written nonwar pledge by Egypt a negotiable issue as far as you are concerned?

President Sadat: We have not discussed this yet. We have not reached it. But do you mean nonbelligerency? As I told you, if I am going to agree to nonbelligerency while there is one Israeli soldier occupying my land, this would mean an official invitation to continue occupying my land, and I am not going to extend this invitation.

Q. Mr. Secretary, do you expect the Geneva Conference to meet soon?

Secretary Kissinger: We have always stated our readiness to go to Geneva. When I met Foreign Minister Gromyko [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko] in Geneva last month, we indicated that we were prepared for an early resumption at an early date.

Q. Have you discussed the visit of President Sadat to the United States?

Secretary Kissinger: President Sadat knows that he is always welcome, and I hope that after we conclude these negotiations we will be able to arrange some firm date.

DEPARTURE, ASWAN, MARCH 9

Press release 124 dated March 10

I can really add very little to what has been said. The President and I had a very good talk, and I am now going to Syria and Israel. We will try to formulate some ideas, and I will return here on Tuesday night or Wednesday.

ARRIVAL, DAMASCUS, MARCH 9

Press release 125 dated March 10

I just want to say that, as always, I'm glad to be in Syria, and I'll review steps that can be made toward peace, together with the President and the Foreign Minister; and of course we recognize that peace in the Middle East requires the participation of all countries.

Thank you.

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS AT A LUNCHEON AT DAMASCUS, MARCH 9

Press release 126 dated March 10

Secretary Kissinger

I would like to express the great pleasure we have in welcoming the Foreign Minister, Mrs. Khaddam, and all our other Syrian friends to the American Embassy. I had the pleasure of first meeting the Foreign Minister in December 1973. Since then I have been in Damascus about 30 times. I am one of the world's great experts on the route from the airport to the guesthouse, and on the tactics of the Foreign Minister, which consist of going on the attack immediately upon my arrival. In fact, I want to compliment him. He has compressed the time schedule now, and he can get into a full attack from a standing start in 10 seconds. [Laughter.] I can say with assurance that whatever else may happen in Syrian-American relations, it will not be due to the inadequate defense of Syrian interest by the Syrian officials that I have encountered.

In the year and a half that we have had the privilege of meeting, I have learned to understand the Syrian point of view, the Syrian pride, the Syrian dedication to its principles. We have worked together on one agreement, and while it was a difficult negotiation, I think it brought our two countries closer together. As I continue the American efforts in this area, it is based on the conviction that a lasting peace in the Middle East must include all of the concerned countries. This is our basic attitude in whatever contribution we can make to lasting peace. In the process, I believe that Syrian-American relations have dramatically improved, and we will do whatever is in our power so they will continue to improve. As we have learned to work together in mutual respect and growing understanding, I am confident we can surmount whatever difficulties exist from time to time. I have greatly appreciated the opportunity of working with the Foreign Minister, General Shihabi [Brig. Gen. Hik-

mat Khalil Shihabi, Chief of Staff for Intelligence], and of course with President Asad and others here. I would like to propose a toast to the friendship between the Syrian and American people.

Syrian Foreign Minister Abd al-Halim Khaddam

Mr. Secretary, ladies and gentlemen: From the bottom of my heart I thank you on behalf of myself and my colleagues and friends of the Syrian side for this gracious invitation to the residence of the American Embassy. And I also thank you for the gracious words you have uttered in appreciation of the good relations between the United States and Syria. You have referred to your repeated visits to our country, and I believe that during this period and through these visits you have come to appreciate and understand what we feel and how we feel about certain things.

As President Asad said ever since the first meeting, I would like to reiterate that our country wants and strives for peace. We have worked, we are still working, and we will continue to work toward the realization of a just peace. We were very clear when we said that peace means to us, first, the preservation for the Palestinian people of their legitimate rights; secondly, the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from our occupied lands. And it is from this angle that we view efforts in this direction toward a just solution, and from this angle appears the comprehensive look at a just peace. That is why we in Syria and the rest of the Arab countries want just and permanent peace. And it was on this basis that we welcomed all the efforts that were spent within this framework and in this direction.

I wish you, Mr. Secretary, and you, Mrs. Kissinger, a very good sojourn in our country. And I would like to emphasize and assure you that our country stretches out the arm of friendship to meet the arm of friendship extended by any other country in the same spirit. We stretch out this arm of friendship toward any country which shares with us

mutual respect and which has mutual interests with us. In this connection, reference must be made to the efforts made by Dr. Kissinger to return to normalcy the relations between Syria and the United States of America.

Finally, I raise my glass in a toast to Secretary Kissinger, Mrs. Kissinger, and to all our other American guests here.

DEPARTURE, DAMASCUS, MARCH 9

Press release 127 dated March 10

The President and I and our colleagues had a very extensive discussion of all the elements involved in the progress toward peace in the Middle East. The talks were frank and friendly. We agreed that while I am in the area I would return to Damascus to continue this exchange of views.

We also talked about bilateral relations between the United States and Syria; we agreed that they are excellent and that they will be fostered.

Thank you.

ARRIVAL, BEN GURION AIRPORT, MARCH 9

Press release 128 dated March 10

Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon

I would like to welcome Secretary of State Kissinger and Mrs. Kissinger and their colleagues on this visit of theirs which is already part of the great effort for achieving political progress in the area. It is quite natural that my colleagues and myself are very much interested to hear what Dr. Kissinger has to tell us about his impressions from his visits and talks in the neighboring Arab capitals.

I only hope that what he has to tell us would be more constructive and more hopeful than what the Arab media has to tell us from across the lines. Because, as you know, we are people who will never give up the idea of peace and would like to see progress taking place as soon as possible.

Mr. Foreign Minister: It is a great pleasure to be back in Israel again. We are here to see whether together we can make some progress toward peace. I will report to the Israeli Cabinet about my discussions in Egypt, also my discussions in Syria, and we will then see whether we can develop jointly some ideas that might provide the basis for further discussions.

Thank you.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 10³

As you know, we are at the beginning of the process of negotiations which are complicated and which will take some time. We are engaged here in analyzing all the ideas and elements that might be part of a possible agreement, and we are doing so with great care. We have done so in a very friendly, very comradely, and very positive atmosphere. I am going to Ankara this afternoon, and I am returning tomorrow evening—back to meet again tomorrow evening to continue this examination of the ideas and the elements of the possible agreement.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, you said the chances were 50-50 before you started out. Would you say they are better now or worse now?

Secretary Kissinger: I don't want to be in a position in which every day I have to give an assessment and a percentage figure, because we will be in a hopeless trap after a while. I came here because I believed that an agreement is possible. I have no reason to change my mind.

Q. Do you have any assessment of how long this mission will last?

Secretary Kissinger: I don't want to put myself into any particular time frame, because it is an agreement of some importance; if it is achieved, it has to be done with great care.

³ Made following a meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (text from press release 129).

ARRIVAL, ANKARA, MARCH 10

Press release 130 dated March 11

I would like to express our pleasure at visiting our old and trusted ally Turkey and our appreciation for the invitation on such short notice and in the face of many complexities. I look forward to an opportunity to exchange views with my old friend the Foreign Minister, with the Prime Minister, with your President, and with leading political personalities of Turkish political life. Our relationship with Turkey, which goes back 30 years, is based on mutual interest and a long tradition. It is a relationship which we value and which I have come here to strengthen. And we will do our best to settle together and to discuss together all the complex issues that confront both of our nations.

Thank you.

REMARKS, ANKARA, MARCH 10⁴

Mr. Eçevit and I had a very good and complete talk. As you know, we are old friends, and we reviewed all the relations between the United States and Turkey and other problems of mutual interest, such as Cyprus.

DEPARTURE, ANKARA, MARCH 11

Press release 135 dated March 11

Ladies and gentlemen: I came here to strengthen the old friendship between Turkey and the United States. This friendship, as the United States has repeatedly affirmed, is in the mutual interest of both countries, and it is not extended as a favor by one country to another country, and it is in that context that the Administration views the entire relationship between Turkey and the United States.

We are doing our best to overcome whatever difficulties exist in that relationship, and

⁴ Made following a meeting with Bulent Eçevit, Republican People's Party leader (text from press release 133 dated Mar. 11).

we are confident that we will emerge from these difficulties with an even stronger appreciation of each other's needs and with an even stronger commitment to the mutual friendship than before.

With respect to Cyprus, we reviewed the situation in a friendly spirit. The United States believes that the quickest possible solution is in the interest of all parties and of all of the countries. The problem is to begin the negotiations and to find a framework for the negotiations. And I believe that progress has been made in that direction during my visit.

Now I will be glad to take two or three questions [inaudible] from those who are not traveling with me. [Laughter.]

Q. [Inaudible] have you reached mutual grounds for discussions? [Paraphrased.]

Secretary Kissinger: Well, of course, the negotiations will have to be conducted, in our view, between Greek and Turkish communities. And we are trying to be helpful in finding a general framework. But the detailed plans and the detailed bases will have to be developed by the negotiators themselves.

Q. Mr. Secretary of State, do you think that in order to have further developments on the Cyprus issue it is likely you will return to Ankara or to Athens in the near future?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, Assistant Secretary Hartman is going to visit Athens, and I don't anticipate returning to Ankara before the end of May, when I will be coming here for a CENTO [Central Treaty Organization] meeting; and I look forward to that visit.

Q. Did you bring any specific concessions from Mr. Bitsios when you arrived in Ankara [inaudible] to Mr. Esenbel [inaudible] in any way instrumental in the progress you have made?

Secretary Kissinger: I did not come here with specific plans, and my purpose was in trying to interpret the ideas, as I had understood them, of the Greek side and to see

whether one could find a possible framework for the negotiations once the forum has been determined.

Thank you.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 12⁵

Secretary Kissinger: We continued our very detailed examination of elements of a possible agreement. In the nature of such an examination we cannot make a progress report every day, but the talks are being conducted in very friendly, very positive spirit, and nothing has changed in my estimate of the situation.

Q. Are you beginning to see the shape of an agreement even though it is kind of early?

Secretary Kissinger: I just don't want to give any estimates. I'll be back here in a couple of days. I'm going to Aswan—

Q. There are reports that you will be here another two weeks longer. What do you say?

Secretary Kissinger: I have absolutely no estimate of how long it could take, but I have some other duties in Washington, too.

Q. Have you found any areas of agreement between Israel and Egypt?

Secretary Kissinger: I just won't go into anything.

Q. Does that mean you might break off the talks and go back to Washington and then return?

Secretary Kissinger: No. I think that we will know within a reasonable time frame what is achievable, and I don't believe it will be necessary for me to go back and then return here.

ARRIVAL, ASWAN, MARCH 12

Press release 137 dated March 12

I am coming back to continue the discussion with President Sadat and Foreign

⁵ Made following a meeting with Prime Minister Rabin (text from press release 136).

Minister Fahmy, and I look forward to making further progress.

Thank you.

NEWS CONFERENCE BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT SADAT, MARCH 13

Press release 141 dated March 14

Secretary Kissinger: The President and I have had a very constructive and fruitful meeting. We have examined a number of principles and some concrete ideas, and I'll be taking some of these concrete ideas with me to Israel tomorrow.

Q. Mr. President, do you have anything to add?

President Sadat: I confirm Dr. Kissinger's statement.

Q. I would like to ask Dr. Kissinger whether he thinks that on the basis of the concrete ideas he is taking back to Israel the Israeli Cabinet will be in a position to make concrete ideas of its own on Saturday.

Secretary Kissinger: I am of course in no position to speak for the Israeli Cabinet, but I expect there will be some concrete Israeli ideas when I return.

Q. Mr. President, there have been reports this evening of troop movements on the Egyptian front. Can you tell us if these reports are based on anything substantial?

President Sadat: Not at all. The Egyptian side not at all.

Q. There has been no concentration of Egyptian forces along the Sinai front?

President Sadat: Not at all. We are honoring our signature on the disengagement agreement. We have with us General Gamassi [Gen. Mohamed Abdel Ghani el-Gamassi, Minister of War and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces].

Q. [Garbled.]

President Sadat: [Translation from Arabic.] In my talks with Dr. Kissinger, we have

moved from generalities to specifics, which Dr. Kissinger will take with him to Israel, after which he will return to us. At this stage there is no room for guesswork. We await Dr. Kissinger's return.

Q. Mr. President, you told us last time that you expected this to be a hard round. Do you still feel that way, or do you think it will be any easier?

President Sadat: I expect it to be difficult and hard.

Q. Mr. Secretary, do you have a better estimate now of how long the shuttle might last?

Secretary Kissinger: I don't want to make any estimates as to the length of time. Of course, I think all parties have an interest in moving it as rapidly as possible.

Q. Mr. President, is Egypt now prepared to give written assurances to refrain from beginning hostilities against Israel?

President Sadat: Well, maybe you remember the statement I made in Paris. We are not aiming at all to start any hostilities, but assurance must be on a reciprocal basis, and it is premature now to speak about specifics.

Q. Mr. President, on the basis of the progress that has been made so far, do you believe that an agreement is now likely?

President Sadat: I hope so, but I can't confirm it until after Dr. Kissinger returns.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, are you carrying anything on paper to show anything at all in the form of maps, drawings?

Secretary Kissinger: We have not reached that point yet. I have had long discussions with the President and his associates on two successive evenings, and I think I can reflect their thinking in a rather precise fashion without the help of maps.

Q. [Inaudible.]

President Sadat: Well, as I have said before, I think the mission of Dr. Kissinger has two main aims. The first is to defuse the

explosive situation that exists in the area now, and the second, to push the peace process. I have stated also that the defusion of the explosive situation means that there must be some Israeli gesture of peace on the three fronts.

Q. Mr. President, could you give us some hint what your ideas are about?

President Sadat: It is premature, still premature.

Q. Mr. President, is it possible that the agreement will be in some sort of phased format; in other words, a series of stages of action by Israel and by Egypt? Is it possible it will be more along those lines?

President Sadat: Why don't you wait until it is achieved?

Q. Mr. President, Dr. Kissinger has said that he believes that both sides in these negotiations want peace. Do you believe that Israel wants peace?

President Sadat: Well, I shall be waiting the return of Dr. Kissinger here. Dr. Kissinger can see both sides, but I can't see the other side myself. I shall be awaiting the return of Dr. Kissinger.

Q. Mr. President, are you more optimistic now than you were before you heard the latest Israeli response through Dr. Kissinger? What is your feeling now?

President Sadat: I am still optimistic, yes.

Q. More than before?

President Sadat: Still optimistic, because it is my mood. I am optimistic always.

Q. Mr. President, could you describe or would you define for us what is the most difficult area of the talks? Do you have any specifics about what has been the most difficult area of negotiations?

President Sadat: I think you should ask Dr. Kissinger this question.

Secretary Kissinger: At this point it is not possible to make a judgment on which is the most difficult point.

Q. Mr. President, have you considered having joint patrols instead of a U.N. force to police the area that would be demilitarized?

Secretary Kissinger: Remember our agreement, Mr. President. [Laughter.]

President Sadat: As I said, in all these details it is premature to say anything now.

Q. You do not rule it out, exclude it?

President Sadat: Certainly, certainly. But as I said, it is premature.

DEPARTURE, ASWAN, MARCH 14

Press release 142 dated March 14

I expect to be back, probably on Monday, to continue our talks on that occasion. Everything of substance was already given to you yesterday.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 14⁶

We are moving from a discussion of general principles to the examination of concrete ideas. I brought the Egyptian considerations in this regard to the Israeli negotiating team, and we reviewed these as well as other aspects of the problem in great detail and in a very comradely, constructive, and positive spirit. Tomorrow I am going to Damascus and Amman. Then I will return here Sunday afternoon, and we will continue our deliberations, and based on those, I will return to Egypt.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, do you see any very big obstacles that might prevent an agreement from taking place now?

Secretary Kissinger: I think it is premature to predict an agreement. As I said, we are moving from general principles to concrete ideas. So there is some progress being made, but it is premature to predict an agreement.

⁶ Made following a meeting with the Israeli negotiating team (text from press release 143 dated Mar. 17).

Q. Are you planning to stay in the area until you do get an agreement?

Secretary Kissinger: I am planning to stay in the area until it is known either whether it is possible to get an agreement or whether it is not.

Q. Is the problem of nonbelligerency still the big sticking point?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, I do not want to talk about any of the specific issues.

Thank you.

DEPARTURE, DAMASCUS, MARCH 15

Press release 144 dated March 17

First of all I would like to thank the Foreign Minister for having delayed his departure so that he could receive me and participate in the talks. President Asad and I had a very full and detailed review of the prospects of peace in the Middle East, and we agreed that before I complete my stay in this area I would return to Damascus to continue those discussions.

Thank you.

ARRIVAL, AMMAN, MARCH 15

Press release 145 dated March 17

As always, it is a pleasure to visit our friends in Jordan. I will report to His Majesty and the Prime Minister on the American initiative in the Middle East and the prospects of peace as we see them. We will also discuss our bilateral relations, which are excellent. And it is a pleasure to be with friends.

Thank you.

Q. Could I assume from your frequent visits to Jordan that you are trying to convince the Jordanians to go to Geneva?

Secretary Kissinger: The decision to go to Geneva is entirely up to Jordan. We are not trying to influence anyone.

Q. Arriving late, is it a good sign of your talks in Damascus?

Secretary Kissinger: I will repeat what I said in Damascus. I am returning to Damascus.

DEPARTURE, AMMAN, MARCH 16

Press release 146 dated March 17

On behalf of my colleagues, I would like to thank His Majesty and the Prime Minister for the characteristically warm and friendly reception we have had here. We have had very extended discussions, and I gave His Majesty a very full and detailed report about the state of the negotiations in which I am engaged, and we exchanged ideas about future progress toward peace in the area. We also discussed bilateral relations, which are excellent.

On behalf of President Ford, I invited His Majesty to pay a visit to the United States toward the end of April, and His Majesty has accepted. I will stay in the closest touch with His Majesty as these negotiations continue and will keep him informed of all developments.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 16⁷

Foreign Minister Allon

The Secretary of State and myself divided labor among ourselves. I'll speak in Hebrew for the Israeli press, and the Secretary will say the same things, I hope, in English.

[Translated from Hebrew.] We held a detailed conversation for a number of hours with Dr. Kissinger and his group on the Egyptian proposals he brought, and we have conveyed to our guest our proposals and evaluation of the proposals he brought to us in accordance with the spirit of government policy from previous sessions and today's session. I say with satisfaction that these talks were held in good spirits and with a positive trend on the part of both parties. But because of the importance of the subject and the great amount of detail, we could not

⁷ Made following a meeting with the Israeli negotiating team (text from press release 147 dated Mar. 17).

complete the discussion this evening, and we will continue tomorrow morning.

Secretary Kissinger

The Israeli negotiating team and we reviewed all the elements of the negotiations in very great detail, in a very constructive spirit, based on the discussions that took place in the Israeli Cabinet today. The Israeli side presented the Israeli ideas in response to the Egyptian ideas that I brought here from Aswan, and I plan to go to Egypt tomorrow to present them. The Israeli and American negotiating team will meet again tomorrow morning.

Q. Did you introduce any ideas of your own?

Secretary Kissinger: No.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 17⁸

We reviewed once again the ideas which I brought from Egypt and the Israeli reactions to those ideas as well as the considerations that the Israeli Cabinet and negotiating team are asking me to take to Egypt, and I will now go to Egypt this afternoon. I plan to be back by tomorrow evening, and we will meet again then. We had a very good and constructive meeting this morning in reviewing the Israeli ideas.

Q. How do you rate your chances for a settlement now, sir?

Secretary Kissinger: I am not going to make any guesses.

ARRIVAL, ASWAN, MARCH 17

Press release 151 dated March 17

Q. Mr. Secretary, reports here indicate that you have run into serious trouble in the talks with Israel. Is that true?

Secretary Kissinger: No. I am here to

⁸ Made following a meeting with the Israeli negotiating team (text from press release 150).

bring some Israeli considerations and ideas, and I look forward to discussing them with the President and the Foreign Minister.

Q. Mr. Secretary, can you say whether those ideas are concrete ideas as you mentioned here on Thursday?

Secretary Kissinger: They are specific ideas.

NEWS CONFERENCE BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND PRESIDENT SADAT, MARCH 18

Press release 155 dated March 18

Secretary Kissinger: The President and I reviewed in the usual friendly atmosphere the ideas which I brought from Israel. The President has given me some additional considerations and ideas to take back to Israel. I am returning there this afternoon, and I expect to continue the negotiations there. This is all I have to say.

Q. Can you see a breakthrough, Dr. Kissinger?

Secretary Kissinger: One can't, in negotiations, speak of any particular point at which there is a breakthrough. I am trying to narrow the gap between the two sides by explaining the ideas as carefully as I can.

Q. Mr. Secretary, have you already narrowed the gap between the two sides?

Secretary Kissinger: As I have said on several occasions, the gap has narrowed, but it always remains to be seen whether it can finally be closed.

Q. Mr. President, how would you characterize the progress, if any, in this specific session?

President Sadat: Well, as Secretary Kissinger has stated, we had a fruitful talk, and I have given him some new considerations as an answer to what he has brought here, and I think it is premature now to say more.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, are you determined to stay in the region?

Secretary Kissinger: As I have said on

many occasions, I am determined to stay until we either reach an agreement or it is clear that we cannot reach an agreement, so I am determined to stay here.

Q. Mr. President, in view of the views brought from Israel by Secretary Kissinger, do you believe that an agreement that would involve an Israeli withdrawal from the passes and from the oilfields would be within the realm of possibility?

President Sadat: I can answer your question on Thursday, let us hope, when Dr. Kissinger returns.

Q. Mr. President, are there some substantial areas on which you and the Israelis do agree?

President Sadat: Well, I think you should ask the Secretary this question.

Q. Mr. Secretary? [Laughter.]

Secretary Kissinger: I think there are some areas of agreement, and there are several substantial areas of disagreement.

Q. Mr. President, do you get the feeling that there has been progress in the last session here, in the last round of exchange?

President Sadat: I have the impression that, as I told you at the beginning, it is a very hard, difficult, and complicated round.

Q. Mr. President, the Israelis appear to be talking about a demand for the elements or the principles of nonbelligerency from Egypt. Is this any more acceptable to you than the per se demand for nonbelligerency?

President Sadat: I have stated our position, and it is quite clear. We shall not agree to nonbelligerency as long as there is any foreign soldier on our land, and I said that doing so means that I am inviting them to stay, so I think that this is quite clear.

Q. The idea of joint patrols with Israel, Dr. Kissinger, has been dropped completely?

Secretary Kissinger: I think the Foreign Minister has put out a statement on the Egyptian position which is clear and fully understood and has been fully communicated.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that there should be a buffer zone in which there would be a strengthened U.N. Force between the Israeli and the Egyptian forces, if an agreement could be reached?

President Sadat: I think this is quite natural, because it is already there. There is a buffer zone between us in which the United Nations operates; it is already there.

Q. So that any area that will be evacuated by the Israelis as a part of a new agreement, could be replaced or could be soldiered by U.N. troops? Is that correct?

President Sadat: Well, you are driving again to try to find some of the details of what we are discussing.

Q. That's true, sir. [Laughter.]

Q. Mr. Secretary, the ideas you'll be carrying back to Israel now, are they a refinement or are they substantially different from the ideas you carried back last Friday?

Secretary Kissinger: In each round the ideas, of course, advance and sometimes cover collateral areas. But I don't want to get drawn into a discussion of whether they are entirely new or a refinement, but I think they represent, as I have said, additional input for the Israeli side.

Q. Do you think, Dr. Kissinger, that you can reach an agreement before the time of the renewal of the U.N. Forces?

Secretary Kissinger: Certainly, yes.

Q. Mr. President, do you have any time idea how long an agreement might take to implement?

President Sadat: We have not yet reached this point.

Q. But wouldn't time be a crucial element, some idea of how long it would take, would that not be a crucial element?

President Sadat: You were speaking of the implementation, and you are asking now about reaching an agreement.

Q. My point, Mr. President, is there has to be some understanding of how long it would

take to implement the agreement before an agreement could be signed.

President Sadat: When we agree first on the principles, I think the period of implementation can be discussed after that, but we have not yet agreed upon the principles.

Q. Do you think, Dr. Kissinger, you can reach the same kind of agreement?

President Sadat: We have not yet agreed upon the principles.

Q. Do you think there can be at the same time an agreement on the Syrian front?

Secretary Kissinger: The conditions in the different areas vary, so I do not want to say that principles can necessarily be automatically applied. But I have stated repeatedly and publicly that the process of peace applies to the whole area, that the United States will do its utmost to promote peace in the entire area.

Q. Have you discussed bilateral relations between Egypt and the United States?

Secretary Kissinger: We always discuss our bilateral relations, which we think are excellent. [The President nodded.]

Q. Do you think the idea of a single Arab delegation might be a way around the U.S. and Israeli objections to dealing with the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] in Geneva?

Secretary Kissinger: We have not had an opportunity to discuss this sort of idea, and when it comes time to organize the Geneva Conference, we can address specific issues of this nature.

Q. Mr. President, do you see any possibility of opening indirect trade to Israel, or indirect tourism, following a withdrawal from part of the Sinai?

President Sadat: I'll tell you, up to this moment we didn't agree on the principles of this very limited withdrawal, and you are raising issues that should be discussed there in Geneva after the final solution. You can't raise issues like this now.

Q. Mr. President, you must have an idea, though, what the final solution would look like. Can you give us in general terms what you would like to see so far as a final solution? Where would Israel exist? Where would its boundaries in general lay?

President Sadat: I have already stated this before—the borders of 1967. And if we can succeed in Geneva to end the state of belligerency, I think we would make a very big achievement for this generation. Sure, as I told you before and so I have stated before also, the core of the whole problem is the Palestinian problem. So if we can achieve in our generation the end of the state of belligerency between the Arabs and Israel and solve the Palestinian question, it will be a great achievement.

Q. With your foresight, sir—you always say "this generation"—can you look to the next generation perhaps with your foresight and tell us what situation you envision between the Arabs and Israelis in the next generation?

President Sadat: I have said before, it depends upon their conduct, and I can't speak for the next generation.

Q. Mr. President, clarification—do you mean to leave the impression in this current disengagement that you don't think it should include such things as improved commerce between Israel and Egypt or improved transportation between Egypt and Israel. There have been some proposals made in Israel that part of the agreement can be steps such as improving transportation from Cairo to Tel Aviv, or something like that.

President Sadat: Are you asking me?

Q. In answer to a previous question you said you thought that such matters should be taken up in Geneva and not within this disengagement agreement.

President Sadat: It is still premature, and it is really absurd to discuss such matters as this. As I said, if we had reached a state of ending the state of belligerency between the Arabs and Israel, this would be a great

achievement for our generation. There is no point at all in discussing these relations when we can't agree upon ending the state of belligerency.

Q. Mr. President, just how serious will it be if these negotiations fail?

President Sadat: Well, I have told my press that there is a possibility that we may not reach any agreement, and we are ready to face whatever comes.

Q. What would be the consequences, sir?

President Sadat: Well, as the British say, we can't cross that bridge until we reach it.

Q. And if an agreement is reached, is it a big push for peace?

President Sadat: Sure, it will be a turning point.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, do you believe it is at this stage the Palestinians would participate in these talks concerning their future?

Secretary Kissinger: I think the two press corps are competing in asking provocative questions.

Q. Mr. President, why do you think it would be a turning point? You said it would be a turning point if it succeeds. Could you elaborate?

President Sadat: The next time, the next visit of Dr. Kissinger, then I can elaborate.

Q. Thank you.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 18

Press release 156 dated March 19

The Israeli negotiating team and my colleagues and I reviewed the considerations and ideas that I brought from Aswan in reply to the Israeli considerations that I had put before the Egyptians. In the process, we have also reviewed the entire status of the negotiation, and the meeting was conducted in the characteristic friendly, comradely, and

positive spirit. We will meet again tomorrow morning, before I go to Saudi Arabia, and I will be back again in the evening for further discussions.

Thank you.

Q. Have you made any headway in these recent talks?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, we are examining the ways by which each side is trying to meet, or take into account, the considerations of the other, and in that sense we are making progress.

Q. There are reports, sir, that these talks have reached a dead end. Would you say this is justified?

Secretary Kissinger: That is not my view.

DEPARTURE, RIYADH, MARCH 19

Press release 157 dated March 19

Secretary Kissinger

First of all, I would like to thank His Majesty and his advisers for the very warm hospitality that has been extended to us and for the very useful talks that we have had. I reviewed with His Majesty the state of the negotiations in which I am engaged, and in which I am acting as a go-between, and the prospects of peace in the area in general. We also discussed with general agreement certain other issues in which the United States and Saudi Arabia have common interest.

In my conversations with Minister Yamani, the Acting Foreign Minister, and Prince Fahd, as well as with His Majesty, my attention was called to recent newspaper articles speculating on the military intentions of the United States in the area. I would like to state categorically here that our relation with Saudi Arabia is based on friendship and cooperation in which threats, military or otherwise, play no part and we base our relationship on cooperation and not on confrontation.

Mr. Secretary, this visit is a very constructive and fruitful one. We had a chance to discuss with you the future relationship between the United States of America and Saudi Arabia. We listened carefully to your report, and that strengthened our belief in the good intention and the good will of the United States in its efforts to bring peace to this area based on the implementation of the various resolutions by the United Nations. We just heard the official views about the fantasies of the newspapers, the articles written by certain groups of writers, and we are pleased that is now in public. We thank you for your efforts and wish you the best of luck.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 20⁹

Israeli Defense Minister Shimon Peres

As you know, the Cabinet yesterday empowered the team of Ministers that is negotiating with the Secretary of State to continue the negotiations. And in order to do so we had to clarify some points. This was done at the morning meeting, which was, as usual, conducted in a very friendly and serious air. Once we have the clarifications we are now returning to the Cabinet to report. That is the best news I can give you for the time being.

Secretary Kissinger

I can add nothing to the statement that the Minister of Defense has made. We had a good, constructive, and friendly meeting, and I will stay in Jerusalem until after the Cabinet meeting and meet again with our colleagues before I return to Egypt this evening.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, are you more confident now that you received the assessment of the

⁹ Made following a meeting of the U.S. and Israeli negotiating teams (text from press release 161).

Secretary Kissinger: Well, I have told you all along that I wasn't going to give you estimates. I do feel that each side is making a very serious effort to try to take into account the considerations of the other, and this is certainly true of the Israeli side.

Q. Sir, do you have plans to see Mr. Gromyko [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko] in the next few days?

Secretary Kissinger: I do not have any firm plans at this moment.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 20¹⁰

Secretary Kissinger

We have had another meeting with the Israeli negotiating team, and they presented to us the ideas and proposals of the Israeli Government in response to the proposals and ideas of the Egyptian side that I brought here. I am now leaving immediately for the airport and will go to Aswan and will be discussing these Israeli proposals with President Sadat and his advisers.

Thank you.

Q. New proposals? Are they new proposals?

Secretary Kissinger: I think there are some new ideas, yes.

Q. Is an agreement close, sir? Would you say that it was closer?

Secretary Kissinger: I do not want to speculate. I will be back, I hope tomorrow, and I will be able to give a better assessment then.

Defense Minister Peres

We gave the complete proposal of the Israeli Cabinet to Dr. Kissinger.

¹⁰ Made following the evening meeting of the U.S. and Israeli negotiating teams (text from press release 162 dated Mar. 21).

Q. Were there amendments to the original Israeli guidelines for a settlement?

Defense Minister Peres: We have concluded our proposals this afternoon.

Q. Is the gap closing? Is the gap very wide? Has it narrowed somewhat?

Defense Minister Peres: Can I see from here up to Cairo how many gaps are there on the way? I wouldn't guess.

Q. Did Dr. Kissinger raise any of his own ideas?

Defense Minister Peres: Well, it is a dialogue, and both sides are suggesting and questioning and answering, as the nature of things are.

Q. Has he introduced American ideas?

Defense Minister Peres: Well, how can I speak for the United States? But, usually it is a negotiation, a clarification, and it works in a way of conversations, you know.

Q. When do you expect him back tomorrow?

Defense Minister Peres: I hope as early as possible. Before Shabbat comes in.

Thank you very much.

REMARKS, JERUSALEM, MARCH 21 ¹¹

I am running out of variations of these formulations, but I have brought the Egyptian countersuggestions to the Israeli proposals of yesterday to the Israeli negotiating team. It is my understanding that there will be a Cabinet meeting in a little while at which these Egyptian ideas will be discussed, and after that I will meet with the negotiating team again.

Q. Are you prepared to say now that an agreement is close?

Secretary Kissinger: I am not prepared to say that, no.

¹¹ Made following a meeting of the U.S. and Israeli negotiating teams (text from press release 164).

Q. Has the gap been significantly narrowed in the last 24 hours?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, as I have pointed out before, gaps can narrow and still remain, and there is still a gap.

Q. Dr. Kissinger, there are many reports that you are planning to leave the area in a day or two. Would you care to comment on that?

Secretary Kissinger: Why don't we wait until the Cabinet meets?

REMARKS BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AND DEFENSE MINISTER PERES, MARCH 22 ¹²

Press release 165 dated March 22

Defense Minister Peres: Well, as you know, we had an important and long Cabinet meeting this afternoon. Afterward we have reported to Dr. Kissinger about the deliberations in our Cabinet session, and we went into great details about the many and complicated problems ahead of us, and since today is Friday night we have decided to continue tomorrow. I hope the Secretary will remain so we shall be able to deal with the very serious matter in a relaxed and thoughtful way tomorrow night.

Q. Mr. Peres, are the talks deadlocked? Have you hit a really serious snag?

Defense Minister Peres: I would not like to conclude the negotiations as long as they go on. Let us be a little bit patient and not run ahead of time, neither with guesses nor with conclusions.

Q. Why the special session tonight, on Friday night?

Defense Minister Peres: Basically, I believe because we are a democratic country and decisions are being taken by the Cabinet.

Q. Could we get Dr. Kissinger's assessment?

Secretary Kissinger: I agree with what the

¹² Made following a meeting of the U.S. and Israeli negotiating teams (text from press release 165).

Defense Minister has said. We reviewed in great detail all the points that are involved in a potential agreement. We thought that both sides would benefit from a day of thinking over where we stand, and we are going to meet again tomorrow evening and continue our discussions.

Q. Secretary Kissinger, how do you react to these tales of deadlock? How would you characterize where it stands?

Secretary Kissinger: I would say that over the recent week the positions of the two sides have come closer to each other. Both sides have made a serious effort to take into account the considerations of the other, but a gap remains and, of course, as long as a gap remains there remains a lot of work to be done.

Q. Are you going to continue with the work? Do you plan to keep going, keep going to Aswan, keep up the shuttle?

Secretary Kissinger: I plan to continue the shuttle as long as I think there is a possibility of bridging the gap.

Q. And do you think so now, sir?

Secretary Kissinger: I think so now, and we will continue our discussions tomorrow.

Defense Minister Peres: Good night, gentlemen. Go and have a rest.

DEPARTURE, JERUSALEM, MARCH 23

Press release 166 dated March 23

Prime Minister Rabin

Mr. Secretary, I have come to see you off on your way back to Washington as an expression on behalf of the Government of Israel and the people of Israel for the special, unique relations that have existed and will continue to exist between our two countries. I believe that the relations between your country and our country have been based on many common concepts and interests, and I am sure that what has been done in 26 years will continue to be developed.

I have come here, Mr. Secretary, to express our deep appreciation to you. I know you, for many years, from my term as Ambassador of Israel to the United States. I know you as Secretary of State and especially in the last efforts to move this area from war toward peace. I know that you have done more than a human being can do in the efforts to move from war toward peace. I am sorry that the present efforts to bring about an interim agreement between Egypt and Israel have been suspended. I am sure that the United States and you will continue to find every possible option, every avenue, to move, or to help the parties to move, from war to peace.

Please accept our great respect, appreciation, and admiration for what you have done.

Secretary Kissinger

Thank you. Mr. Prime Minister, on behalf of my colleagues, let me express our appreciation for your consideration in coming to the airport to see us off. We have worked together for two weeks in the traditional spirit of friendship to move this area toward a peace that no people needs more than the people of Israel, gathered here after 2,000 years of dispersion and a generation of struggle. This is a sad day for America, which has invested much hope and faith, and we know it is a sad day also for Israel, which needs and wants peace so badly.

But the necessities that brought about this effort continue and the need to move toward peace cannot be abandoned. We will now have to look for different methods and new forums, but in any event the United States will do its utmost to contribute to a just and lasting peace in this area. We have had no other goal except to enable the young people in this area to grow up without the fear of war. And, as we leave, we wish the people of Israel all the best. And I want to thank, particularly, my old friend the Prime Minister for the wisdom with which he has conducted himself, for the friendship he has shown to us, and for the dedication that has animated all his action.

U.S. Mourns Death of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia

President Ford

Mr. Secretary: It is a great privilege for me to welcome you back on an extraordinarily difficult mission on behalf of the United States and the problems that are in the Middle East.

I know that you made a maximum effort. Unfortunately, for reasons beyond our control, it did not turn out the way we wanted it.

But let me say, the United States will continue to emphasize our desire to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East by working with one country, other countries, and all countries.

It is in the national as well as in the international interest that we do everything we can with the emphasis on peace. Although we have, on a temporary basis hopefully, not achieved all that we had desired, I continue to be an optimist that the good judgment and the wise decisions of all parties will result in the ultimate objective of peace in the Middle East and its ramifications on a worldwide basis.

Henry, would you like to add anything?

Secretary Kissinger

Mr. President: I very much appreciate your greeting me here as you sent me off from here.

The necessities that produced the mission continue and the need for a lasting peace in the Middle East remains.

As the President pointed out, the United States remains ready to work with the parties and other interested countries to promote a peace of justice in the Middle East.

Thank you.

His Majesty King Faisal ibn Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia was assassinated at Riyadh March 25. Following is a statement by President Ford issued that day, together with a statement read to news correspondents by Robert Anderson, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for Press Relations.

STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT FORD

White House press release dated March 25

It was with the deepest sorrow that I learned of the tragic death of His Majesty King Faisal, a close friend of the United States and a leader who achieved so much for his people and those of the Arab world and Islam, and whose wisdom and stature earned the respect of the entire world. On behalf of the American people I wish to extend my deepest sympathy to the royal family and to the people of Saudi Arabia, whose grief we share.

DEPARTMENT STATEMENT

It was with the greatest sorrow that the Secretary of State learned of the death of His Majesty King Faisal. As you know, the Secretary had the honor of an audience with the King only last Wednesday. It was the last of many meetings during which the Secretary had come to rely on His Majesty's wise counsels in the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. He will be greatly missed. The Secretary feels that this personal bond will form the basis for continuing close relations between Saudi Arabia and the United States. He has sent messages expressing his deepest sympathy to the royal family and the people of Saudi Arabia.

¹³ Made on the South Lawn of the White House (text from White House press release).

Prime Minister Dzemal Bijedic of Yugoslavia Visits the United States

Dzemal Bijedic, President of the Federal Executive Council of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, visited the United States March 18-21. Following is an exchange of toasts between President Ford and Prime Minister Bijedic at a luncheon at the White House on March 19, together with the text of a joint statement issued that day.

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS

Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents dated March 24

President Ford

Mr. Prime Minister, distinguished guests: It is a pleasure to welcome you to Washington and to this historic house. I understand that in your birthplace of Mostar in Yugoslavia, there is a famous stone bridge which has been standing for a very long time. I hope, Mr. Prime Minister, the relationship between Yugoslavia and the United States will be as long as the history of that famous bridge.

The foundation, Mr. Prime Minister, as you well know, is the cooperative relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of Yugoslavia. It was built more than a quarter of a century ago—as a matter of fact, I was in the Congress of the United States at the time that this new relationship began and developed—and is now flourishing.

This relationship, Mr. Prime Minister, is anchored, as I see it, in a strong mutual interest in Yugoslavia's independence, its integrity, and its unity, as well as a mutual desire, Mr. Prime Minister, to maintain peace in Europe as well as in the rest of the world.

I think it symbolizes the cooperation be-

tween two countries with entirely different social and political systems.

Like the bridge in Mostar, Mr. Prime Minister, the one between our nations and our peoples has withstood the test of time. It has facilitated an impressive growth in trade, in business, in scientific and cultural cooperation, as well as tourism.

While the currents sometimes passing, Mr. Prime Minister, beneath this bridge, have ebbed and flowed, its basic structure has remained intact. The principles upon which it rests remain as sound today as two decades ago.

I look forward, Mr. Prime Minister, to the further strengthening of American-Yugoslav cooperation, and I know we are both aware that this will require a continuing commitment from both governments.

Bearing in mind our common interest in continued peace and security in the world, I think we must strive to eliminate misunderstandings and any narrow differences which sometimes unfortunately arise between us.

The history of this relationship indicates that we have made an excellent start. I am sure—it is my conviction—that it will be successful in the future.

I raise my glass to your health, Mr. Prime Minister, and to the bridge between our two countries. May it continue to facilitate cooperation, understanding and friendship between our two peoples.

Prime Minister Bijedic¹

Mr. President, gentlemen: Allow me to thank you for the words of welcome and friendship addressed to me and my asso-

¹ Prime Minister Bijedic spoke in Serbo-Croatian.

ciates. Our visit to the United States of America constitutes a further expression of mutual desire for the promotion of friendship and cooperation between our two countries, a friendship established upon longstanding tradition and alliance during two World Wars.

Our visit to your country is taking place at the moment when you have started preparations for the Bicentennial of the United States, the anniversary of the day on which, as the result of the struggle of American people against colonialism and foreign domination, the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

Many years later my country, too, went through the liberation war and revolution. I accentuate this because both of our peoples aspired toward the same objective—to live in freedom and independence, to freely determine their destiny and vigilantly guard it.

I shall call forth, Mr. President, another date in the history of the relations between our two countries. That is the year 1881, the year in which the first interstate agreement was concluded—the trade agreement between the United States of America and Serbia signed at Belgrade in October 1881, which is still in force.

Rare are today bilateral agreements which have stood a test of time. Our two countries have experienced together the most severe historic tests of this century, fighting as allies against the joint enemies.

Over the whole period following the Second World War, they have continually voiced their determination to promote all-round equitable cooperation and mutual relations, for their own benefit and in the broader interest.

Particularly important for the development of relations between Yugoslavia and the United States was the exchange of visits between the two Presidents in 1970 and 1971 and the visit of Secretary of State Dr. Kissinger to Belgrade a few months ago.

We are highly appreciative, Mr. President, of the message you have addressed to President Tito and in which you have clearly set forth the desire of the United States to con-

tinue the policy of good relations with Yugoslavia.

Likewise, we highly appreciate your acceptance of the invitation extended by President Tito to visit Yugoslavia in the course of this year. We are confident that this confirms once again the preparedness of your government and your own, Mr. President, for the continuation and promotion of mutual friendly relations. We will welcome you in Yugoslavia as a dear guest.

I share, Mr. President, your view and that of your government that relations between the United States and Yugoslavia have been developing successfully, regardless of the differences of stances and views in respect to some international issues.

It is our sincere desire that these differences, wherever it is possible, be reduced through mutual efforts, more frequent contacts, mutual understanding and respect for the positions of the other side.

Yugoslavia, as an independent, Socialist, and nonaligned country, has a constant interest in developing relations with the United States based on principles of the respect for sovereignty, equality, and noninterference; that is, the principles that are outlined in the joint statement of the Presidents of Yugoslavia and the United States signed at Washington in 1971.

Yugoslavia is particularly concerned that the solutions for the existing hotbeds of military conflicts, which at any moment may become sources of new and even more difficult large-scale international crises, be sought through negotiation and full respect for the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, as well as through agreements reached between the parties concerned.

Mr. President, in expressing my thanks for the invitation extended to me to visit your beautiful country, the country of the people whose working energies and technological advances are admired throughout the world, I wish to emphasize our great satisfaction that we are coming here at a time when, in the relations between our two countries in many fields—particularly the economic, scientific, and cultural fields—a

significant upward trend has been registered.

The trade between the two countries—and I mention this as an example—has increased by almost 60 percent in the course of one year. Significant banking and credit arrangements have been concluded. Joint ventures and the volume of industrial cooperation have been stepped up.

The same applies to the scientific and technological cooperation, the cooperation among universities, and the cultural exchange.

The celebration of the 200th anniversary of the United States, in respect of which preparations are in progress in Yugoslavia for participation in this historic jubilee, constitutes one more opportunity to display our constant concern for the continuation of our traditional cooperation and friendship with your country.

More than a million Americans of Yugoslav descent, loyal citizens of the United States, live here today. We feel proud that in the history of the United States, in its struggle for independence and the building up of its constitutionality, the names of many individuals of Yugoslav extraction have been inscribed, people who spared no effort and sacrificed their lives to contribute to the well-being of this country.

Allow me, esteemed Mr. President, to propose this toast to your health, to the health of your associates, for the progress and prosperity of the United States of America, for the strengthening and promotion of friendly relations and cooperation between our two countries, for peace and progress in the world, and for the same bridge that you have toasted for, which has already lived there for 410 years.

TEXT OF JOINT STATEMENT

At the invitation of the United States Government, the President of the Federal Executive Council of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Dzemal Bijedic, accompanied by his wife, is visiting Washington, D.C., from March 19 to 21, 1975.

The President of the United States of America, Gerald R. Ford, gave a luncheon in honor of the President of the Federal Executive Council at the White House March 19. During their talks, the

President of the Federal Executive Council conveyed to the President of the United States a message from the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito. The talks took place in an atmosphere of cordiality and openness.

The President of the Federal Executive Council will hold talks on bilateral relations and international questions of interest to the two countries with the Acting Secretary of State, Robert S. Ingersoll, who together with Mrs. Ingersoll, is giving a dinner on behalf of the United States Government in honor of the President of the Federal Executive Council and Mrs. Bijedic March 19. The President of the Federal Executive Council will meet with the Secretary of Commerce, Frederick B. Dent, the President of the Export-Import Bank, William C. Casey, and the President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Marshall T. Mays. These meetings will focus on trade and other forms of economic cooperation between Yugoslavia and the United States.

The two sides devoted particular attention to areas of continuing crisis such as the Middle East and Cyprus. In setting forth their views concerning the paths to be followed in attempting to resolve these and other outstanding world problems, the two sides emphasized the benefit of regular contacts and consultation at all levels to heighten understanding and mutual respect for one another's views and positions.

Reaffirming their mutual interest in the preservation and consolidation of peace in Europe and the further advancement of constructive cooperation among European states in a wide variety of fields, the two sides emphasized their determination and mutual interest in the continued coordination of efforts to attain acceptance of basic principles of inter-European cooperation and security, and an early, successful conclusion of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Both sides expressed continued determination to strive for effective disarmament measures which would strengthen the peace and security of all peoples.

The two sides affirmed that solutions to the problems which presently face mankind must be sought by peaceful means on the basis of respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the sovereign equality of all states irrespective of size or social, political and economic system. In this regard, it was recognized that Yugoslavia's policy of non-alignment contributes actively to greater understanding among peoples and the pursuit of peaceful resolution of international problems and conflicts.

Economic problems currently facing the world were discussed in the context of growing international interdependence. The two sides stressed the importance of finding solutions to such problems as energy and other raw materials, food, population,

the environment, and economic development. They agreed that genuine peace and stability in the world depend on the achievement of significant progress toward the resolution of these problems, and that such progress can best be achieved by cooperative efforts and agreements which take into account the rights and interests of all countries, and not by confrontation.

The two sides expressed satisfaction that continued progress has been registered in bilateral cooperation between the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the United States of America. They noted particularly the substantial and continuing growth of trade between the two countries in recent years and agreed to act to promote continued economic and financial cooperation, including joint investments. Both sides also expressed a desire to maintain a high level of joint scientific research between institutions and individual scientists of the two countries.

They also reaffirmed their intention to encourage the further expansion of cultural cooperation, reiterating their expectation that the participation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the forthcoming bicentennial of the United States of America will serve to deepen understanding between the peoples of the two countries. They also affirmed the importance to the development of the United States of America of American citizens of Yugoslav extraction who constitute an important link of friendship and communication between the peoples of the two countries.

The two sides underscored once again the continuing validity of the principles set forth in the Joint Statement of October 30, 1971, which constitutes a solid basis for stable, friendly relations and a broad spectrum of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

Congressional Documents Relating to Foreign Policy

93d Congress, 2d Session

Conservation and Efficient Use of Energy. Report of the House Committee on Science and Astronautics. H. Rept. 93-1634. December 18, 1974. 272 pp.

Trade Act of 1974. Summary of the provisions of H.R. 10710. Prepared by the staffs of the Senate Committee on Finance and House Committee on Ways and Means. December 30, 1974. 25 pp.

Multinational Oil Corporations and U.S. Foreign Policy. Report, together with individual views, to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations by the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations. January 2, 1975. 172 pp.

Foreign Diplomat Travel Program Praised by President Ford

*Remarks by President Ford*¹

It is really a great privilege and a very high honor to have the opportunity of being here again and participating in this sort of culmination of the program on a once-a-year basis. I was here once as a Congressman and last year as Vice President, and now I am equally honored to be here as President.

It has been said that in diplomacy there are no true friendships—only temporary alliances of convenience. In looking back on history and studying some of the things that have happened over the last two centuries, I think there is some truth to that. I think we have to recognize as well, this is not the whole picture, and the world would be a pretty grim place if it were.

There are many in this audience who are professional diplomats, and all of those who are know firsthand what it means to defend your country's interests and to negotiate on its behalf.

As participants and supporters of the Travel Program for Foreign Diplomats, you also know that human understanding, communication, and friendship between people and nations is also very real and a very vital force, an essential force, for peace in the world today.

In the past 12 years, this very worthwhile program has made it possible, as has been said on many occasions, for more than 4,000 diplomats to know the United States, to know America, our people, in a way that they never could have through official channels.

Cooperation of countless individuals, as well as individual families in the private sector, have supported this program and made it successful. I am delighted once again to

¹ Made on Mar. 20 at a luncheon at the Department of State for participants in Travel Program for Foreign Diplomats, Inc. (text from Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents dated Mar. 24).

say a word of strong, strong endorsement of the program. This year, as it carries forward again, I hope and trust that its past progress will be multiplied. You are doing a fine job, and I thank each and every one of you—the sponsors, the participants, as well as others.

To see firsthand the beauty and the expanse of this great country, to get to know the day-to-day joys and frustrations of an average working family in one of our great cities, to experience the immense diversity of regional tastes and traditions that we call America—all of this is perhaps the only way to really comprehend our ideals, our aspirations, and great strengths underlying our national policies.

You cannot understand a nation without knowing its people. And only by getting to know individuals can you begin to know the people as a whole. By introducing foreign visitors to such a wide, wide range of Americans, the travel program performs a great service to our nation.

I hasten to add, however, that I do not see the travel program as a one-way street. It is just as necessary for the U.S. diplomats to get to know the people of their host nations and to appreciate fully the traditions and cultural achievements of the countries where they are posted. The friendships that you forge today will pay dividends in peaceful understanding for the years to come.

I have often said that the keystone of this Administration is openness. But when you get right down to it, the keystone of our American way of life is openness. We do not believe in hiding the truth, whether it is flattering or unflattering.

We recognize, of course, we know full well, that we have our faults, and we certainly have our problems, but we want our friends from abroad to see the truth, to see how we solve our problems openly, and to judge for themselves the success of our democratic government.

We live in a time unique for both its peril as well as its promise. The potential consequences of war today are more terrible than

they have ever been in human history. But at the same time, the possibility of lasting global peace and prosperity is closer than ever before.

The road to such a peace is bound to be long and very difficult, but I firmly believe that we are making headway. We will have our disappointments. And one of the things that makes that road a little smoother and the trip far more rewarding is a program like this and the true spirit that it represents.

U.S. and U.S.S.R. Hold Second Round of Environmental Modification Talks

Joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. Release¹

The second meeting of representatives of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the question of measures to overcome the dangers of the use of environmental modification techniques for military purposes was held in Washington from February 24 to March 5. The American delegation was headed by Thomas D. Davies, Assistant Director, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Academician Y. K. Fedorov headed the Soviet delegation.

The first meeting of representatives of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. was held in Moscow in November 1974.

The discussions are being conducted in accordance with the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Joint Statement signed on July 3, 1974, at the Moscow summit meeting, and also on the basis of the understanding to continue an active search for a mutually acceptable solution to this question established in the joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. communique of November 24, 1974, on the results of the Vladivostok summit meeting.

In the course of the discussions conducted in the United States, the exchange of opin-

¹ Issued on Mar. 7 (text from ACDA press release 75-8).

ions on the most effective measures possible which could be undertaken to overcome the dangers of the use of environmental modification techniques for military purposes was continued. The examination of scientific and technical questions related to environmental modification and the familiarization with laboratories working in this area, which were begun in Moscow, were also continued.

The representatives of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. consider that these meetings facilitate better understanding of the points of view of the sides on the questions discussed.

The sides intend to participate actively in the discussion of this question in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which reconvened in Geneva this week, with the aim of achieving positive results.

TREATY INFORMATION

Current Actions

MULTILATERAL

Aviation

International air services transit agreement. Signed at Chicago December 7, 1944. Entered into force February 8, 1945. 59 Stat. 1693.

Acceptance deposited: Malawi, March 27, 1975.

Biological Weapons

Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (bio-

logical) and toxin weapons and on their destruction. Done at Washington, London, and Moscow April 10, 1972.

Ratifications deposited: Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom,¹ United States, March 26, 1975.

Entered into force: March 26, 1975.

Oil Pollution

International convention relating to intervention on the high seas in cases of oil pollution casualties, with annex. Done at Brussels November 29, 1969. Enters into force May 6, 1975.

Proclaimed by the President: March 19, 1975.

BILATERAL

Egypt

Loan agreement for the foreign exchange costs of commodities and commodity-related services.

Signed at Cairo February 13, 1975. Entered into force February 13, 1975.

Organization of American States

Agreement relating to privileges and immunities. Signed at Washington March 20, 1975. Entered into force March 20, 1975.

Agreement relating to privileges and immunities. Signed at Washington July 22, 1952. Entered into force July 22, 1952. TIAS 2676.

Terminated: March 20, 1975.

Portugal

Grant agreement for technical consultations and training. Signed at Lisbon February 28, 1975. Entered into force February 28, 1975.

Loan agreement for consulting services. Signed at Lisbon February 28, 1975. Entered into force February 28, 1975.

¹ Extended to British Solomon Islands Protectorate, Brunei, Condominium of the New Hebrides, Dominica, and territories under the territorial sovereignty of the United Kingdom. Not applicable to Southern Rhodesia until the United Kingdom informs the other depositary governments that it is in a position to insure that the obligations imposed by the convention in respect of that territory can be fully implemented.

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**Check List of Department of State
 Press Releases: March 24-30**

Press releases may be obtained from the Office of Press Relations, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

Releases issued prior to March 24 which appear in this issue of the BULLETIN are Nos. 116 of March 6; 121-129 of March 10; 130, 133, and 135 of March 11; 136 and 137 of March 12; 141 and 142 of March 14; 143-147 and 150-151 of March 17; 155 of March 18; 156 and 157 of March 19; 161 of March 20; 162 of March 21; and 164-166 of March 23.

No.	Date	Subject
*167	3/24	U.S.-Canada International Joint Commission report on Lake Champlain regulation.
†168	3/24	U.S.-Brazil shrimp fisheries agreement.
†169	3/24	Executive order issued designating developing countries for generalized trade preferences.
*170	3/25	Conference of educators on population, Mar. 27.
†171	3/26	U.S. and Indonesia exchange notes on reimbursable satellite launches.
172	3/26	Kissinger: news conference.
*173	3/26	Study Group 5 of National Committee for CCITT, Apr. 28.
†174	3/27	U.S. designates EPA as U.N. Environment Program information center.
*175	3/27	Buchanan sworn in as Ambassador to Austria (biographic data).
*176	3/27	Canadian Environment Minister to visit U.S.

* Not printed.
 † Held for a later issue of the BULLETIN.