

Russian Mideast role concerns US government

WASHINGTON AP—The United States expressed serious concern Monday over Russia's growing role in the defense of Egypt, implying the latest Soviet arms shipments could upset the Middle East cease-fire.

The State Department, setting forth official anxiety over the situation, also sought to put pressure on Israel for some new peace move toward Egypt. A spokesman implied that the lack of progress in peace negotiations, which the United States has recently pinned on Israel, was to some degree responsible for the latest Soviet shipments.

Press Officer Charles Bray told a news conference:

"We're keeping careful tabs on the most recent flow of Soviet equipment to the United Arab Republic Egypt so we may have some idea of its effect on the military balance and because of the implications that this kind of action may have on the present cease-fire conditions in the area."

Officials told newsmen that the United States must be alert to a military buildup at a time when progress has slowed down on the negotiating front. These officials said that the greater Soviet involvement in Egypt's defense is the latest evidence of the dangers of big-power confrontation in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Since Bray in his formal statement emphasized "the absence of progress" in the search for a peace

settlement, he was asked whether he would be upset at the interpretation that he was "fingering Israel as a reason for the Soviet buildup." He said such an interpretation "would be an unbalanced implication." He did not deny that such an implication existed.

State Department officials in recent weeks have argued publicly and privately that the Israeli government should develop a more "positive" position in its exchanges with Egypt on a peace settlement. Egypt informed United Nations ambassador Gunnar Jarring more than a month ago that it was prepared to go into a peace agreement giving Israel secure future boundaries on various conditions, the chief one being that Israel should withdraw to the boundaries it held before the 1967 war.

While denying any diplomatic arm-twisting—and while maintaining U.S. arms deliveries to Israel—the United States has been pressing the Jerusalem government to spell out positively what boundaries it would settle for and to consider basing its future security arrangements on an international peace force.

Monday's formal statement was in effect a kind of muted public protest to Russia against its continuing military expansion in the Middle East and an implied public pressure on Israel to get on with the peacemaking.

News Roundup

from AP reports

COLOMBO—Government forces—heavily outnumbered on the ground—have stepped up their air war against the Che Guevarist rebels who are still reported in control of Ceylon's outlying jungle and plantation regions. There was increased air activity over Colombo Monday and the government announced aerial attacks on the terrorists in Kosgama and Waga, rubber plantation districts near the city. Both the United States and Britain are reported considering a request from Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike for helicopters. The United States already has agreed to supply spare parts for the four American helicopters in the Ceylon air force.

LEWISBURG, Pa.—Teamsters President James Hoffa returned Monday night to the federal prison where he is serving a 13-year term for jury tampering and mail fraud after a five-day leave of absence to visit his ill wife.

GOLCONDA, Ill.—Six miners were killed Monday by poisonous gas in a flourspar mine near Golconda, an Ohio River town in southern Illinois. The miners were killed by hydrogen sulfide—a deadly gas that gives off the odor of rotten eggs but is a rare hazard in mining operations, state officials said.

WASHINGTON—The Agriculture Department announced Monday Food for Peace shipments to East Pakistan will be halted until the situation there clears up. Officials said the halt in food aid, involving wheat not yet shipped, will be effective Tuesday.

7½-ton blockbuster

US planes drop giant antipersonnel bombs

SAIGON AP—U.S. planes are dropping 7½ ton blockbusters on North Vietnamese troops laying siege to Fire Base 6 near the Laotian border, U.S. military sources said Monday.

It is the first time in the war that the huge bombs have been used against enemy soldiers. They previously were employed to make instant helicopter landing zones by blasting away jungle growth.

Now they have been adapted as antipersonnel weapons because their lateral blasts rip across the surface of the target instead of derring a hole in the ground.

Past bombs

The biggest antipersonnel bombs used before by the Air Force were 2,000-pounders, and they were used infrequently, military spokesman said. Most of the bombs dropped by allied warplanes weigh 500 pounds.

Helicopter gunships, trying to block enemy reinforcements from joining the siege of Fire Base 6, reported killing 19 North Vietnamese soldiers in an area 10

miles south of the mountaintop base.

One military source said the blockbuster bombs were being aimed at suspected enemy troop concentrations.

The huge bombs—one to a plane—are pulled from four-engined C130 cargo planes by parachutes. A second chute stabilizes the bomb during its descent.

B52 attacks

U.S. B52 Stratofortresses for the sixth successive day struck at North Vietnamese positions near the fire base. This time they unloaded their bombs about a mile southwest of the base.

The artillery outpost, 300 miles north of Saigon and six miles east of the border juncture of Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam, has been under siege since March 31.

It is manned by less than two battalions of South Vietnamese troops with a few U.S. advisers.

Each year the North Vietnamese have attacked the fire bases, which overlook infiltration

trails, but this year's drive is the largest.

Supply trips

From Pleiku, Associated Press photographer Neal Ulevich reported that U.S. helicopters flew in food, water and ammunition to the base Monday morning.

The defenders were running low on supplies and a helicopter mission Sunday was only partly successful because of Heavy North Vietnamese antiaircraft fire. Ulevich said a second resupply mission planned for Monday afternoon was called off because rains swept the central highlands.

On the ground, South Vietnamese rangers assaulted a hilltop position of an estimated North Vietnamese platoon—20 to 25 men—to knock out gun positions that were shelling Fire Base 6.

Saigon headquarters said the rangers killed 15 North Vietnamese and captured eight weapons. A spokesman, Lt. Col. Le Trung Hien, did not say whether the enemy guns were silenced.

Elephant killed

Ulevich also reported that U.S. helicopter gunship crews killed a pack elephant being used by

North Vietnamese troops to carry supplies in the jungles.

The elephant, wearing a cargo harness, was one of several in a supply train. It was the second time in the past two weeks that elephant supply trains have been countered.

The central highlands are populated by elephants and have long been used to haul lumber and for other work by the Montagnard tribesmen.

The latest elephant train was sighted near Fire Base Lonely, another frontier artillery post that has been under recent attack about 80 miles south of Fire Base 6.

SALT talks center on ABM's

WASHINGTON—The United States and the Soviet Union at the Vienna SALT talks now are deeply engaged in detailed discussion of an antimissile (ABM) agreement despite the fact that they still differ on how such an agreement should relate to a curb on offensive nuclear weapons.

This represents something of a shift in the American position since the Soviets last December at the Helsinki round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks proposed an ABMs-only agreement, leaving control of offensive weapons to later.

At that time Gerard Smith, the chief U.S. delegate, was forbidden by Washington to consider the Soviet proposal. The Soviets offered to go into details if Washington would agree to the principle. But since Smith was foreclosed on that, the details were not forthcoming.

Now it has been agreed that the details will be discussed with both sides reserving their positions on the principle.

The U.S. at Vienna thus has made clear it is talking details on the stated assumption that any agreement must include what President Nixon has termed "some mix" of both offensive and defensive systems. The Soviets agreed to the discussion without a resolution of the larger issue.

The U.S. last year put forward what amounted to a draft treaty covering both offensive and defensive systems. The ABM part of that draft is now matched against the Soviet ABM draft put forward at Vienna recently, and the two proposals are said to be "in the same ball park." In other

words, they are close enough together to make agreement possible in a technical sense.

In several past arms control negotiations technical agreements were reached while policy disputes were unresolved. Then once the policy framework was set, as in agreeing on a limited rather than a comprehensive nuclear test ban in 1963, it was an easy matter to finalize the treaty.

Hence agreement on ABMs in the technical sense could speed a SALT agreement if and when the two superpowers decide how it fits into a treaty.

One additional point on the ABM issue has now come to light. The U.S. last year was willing to accept the Soviet proposal that ABMs be limited to national capital areas, Moscow and Washington, the Nixon administration subsequently decided that, if Moscow would agree, the U.S. counterpart of the existing Moscow ABM system should be the initial phase of the safeguard ABM system now being built in Montana and North Dakota rather than scrapping that and building a system around Washington.

This idea has been broached to the Soviets in informal talks at Vienna rather than at the conference table. No firm Soviet reaction has yet surfaced, but it would be a surprise if Moscow agreed.

The second major element of the current Vienna talks, aside from the ABM issue, is the question of how to prevent World War III's being set off by an accidental missile launch by either the U.S. or the U.S.S.R., or a launch by a third country. The third country both have in mind is China, now just beginning to enter the nuclear missile age. LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Arrests made on Daley murder plot

CHICAGO—Two men were charged Monday with trying to hire persons to assassinate Mayor Richard Daley and black civil rights leader the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Chicago newspapers said two other men had been charged in the case earlier.

The names of Daley and Jackson were specified in charges of soliciting to commit murder placed against Earl Dillard, 37, and Howard Harris, 33. Police said "many other persons" are being sought in the alleged plot.

The two other men, Charles Whiteside and Terry Simmons, were charged April 6 with soliciting to commit murder.

Police refused to confirm whether they were involved in the Daley-Jackson case.

The newspapers said the four men were members of a black militant group that wanted Daley and Jackson killed in order to start a race war which would enable their group to assume power in the city.

All four men were held in lieu of \$5,000 bond and their cases were continued to the same date, April 21.