

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NSC/Seabers to Smith 09/06/2002

By CP Date 01/24/07

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~SECRET~~

January 21, 1969

National Security Study Memorandum 2

TO: The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense
 The Director of Central Intelligence
 The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

SUBJECT: Middle East Policy

The President has directed the preparation of two papers on Arab-Israel problems for consideration by the NSC. One paper should consider alternative US policy approaches aimed at securing a Middle East settlement, including (1) direct Arab-Israeli negotiations (2) U. S. -Soviet negotiations and (3) Four Power negotiations. The paper should also consider the possibility that no early settlement will be reached, and US interests and policies in such a situation. The second paper should consider alternative views of basic US interests in the area and should include consideration of the issues listed in the attachment.

The President has directed that the NSC Interdepartmental Group for the Near East perform this study.

The first paper should be forwarded to the NSC Review Group by January 25, 1969. The second paper should be forwarded to the NSC Review Group by February 24, 1969.

Attachment

SECRET

1. What is the role of the Middle East today in U.S. global strategy? What are the real U.S. interests there and how important are they?
2. What is the nature of the Soviet threat to the Middle East? How likely is Soviet dominance or predominance? What forces will tend to limit Soviet influence?
3. What is the precise nature of the Soviet threat to NATO via the Middle East?
4. What is the present state of the U.S. position in the Middle East? Is it eroding drastically? Or is there a level of common interests shared with some nations in the area which will prevent it from deteriorating beyond a certain point? Is an early Arab-Israel settlement essential to preserving the U.S. position?
5. In the light of answers to these questions, what is the most appropriate U.S. posture toward the Middle East? What level and kinds of involvement are appropriate in view of our interests and U.S. and Soviet capabilities?