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SPECIAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING

7482

December 17, 1979

Time and Place: 8:45-9:45 a.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: Iran

Participants:

The Vice President

State
Warren Christopher
Harold Saunders
Richard Cooper**

Defense
Secretary Harold Brown
W. Graham Claytor

JCS
General David Jones
General John Pustay

CIA
Admiral Stansfield Turner
Frank Carlucci
Robert Dean***

Energy
Secretary Charles Duncan**

Justice
Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti**
John Shenefield**

Treasury
Secretary William Miller**
Anthony Solomon**
Robert Mundheim**

White House
Hamilton Jordan**
Jody Powell**
Stuart Eizenstat**
Lloyd Cutler**
Zbigniew Brzezinski
David Aaron

NSC
Colonel William Odom
Gary Sick
Thomas Thornton***

**Domestic Issues Only
***Afghanistan Only

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Domestic Issues:

1. Economic Steps. A message was sent out on Saturday clarifying our understanding of the various steps which the allies will implement on a voluntary basis. We should have reactions from the various capitals today. Once those reactions are in, a joint message from Secretaries Vance and Miller will be sent requesting immediate implementation. That message will be prepared for President review today, in anticipation of its being sent tomorrow. State has prepared a matrix showing our present understanding of what the allies are prepared to do. A copy is attached. (8)

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Classified and Extended by Zbigniew Brzezinski
Reason: NSC 1.13(f)

Declassify on: OADR

PARTIALLY
Declassified/Released on 6/8/98
under provisions of E.O. 12958
by R. Soubers, National Security Council

State also prepared a paper on the steps available to us in invoking Chapter VII sanctions through the UN. A copy is attached. The SCC was briefed on the President's interest in taking the necessary preparations to move on Chapter VII if and when a decision is made and the President's preference for seeking maximum sanctions. The SCC did not believe that seeking Chapter VII sanctions would provide an excuse for delay of action by the allies since they already seem prepared to proceed with limited voluntary steps but will be reluctant to go beyond those measures in any event without Chapter VI authorization. We will wish to consult in advance with the Soviets since a veto could have serious implications for SALT, as well as preventing sanctions. We should seek Soviet abstention, if support is not possible. Mr. Cutler suggested that we move immediately to get a finding by the SC on Article 39 that the Iranian situation constitutes a threat to the peace, since the Soviets may be willing to support that. State pointed out that a call for a finding under Article 39 is, in effect, a call for sanction and should not be undertaken until we are prepared to follow through with the entire program. (S)

Let go ahead in my case

2 papers 39 & 7 together not a liability

Thurs. ok

Define immediately

The SCC agreed that it would be useful to wait for several days before invoking Chapter VII in order to see the outcome of allied decisions on voluntary steps, effects of the ICJ ruling, reaction to the Shah's departure, and the results of consultations between the new Iranian Ambassador to the UN, Mansour Farhang, with the Secretary General. In order to sustain momentum, it would probably be useful to be prepared to proceed with Chapter VII on about Thursday or Friday. Once the decision is made, the SCC recommended seeking steps 1 and 2 of the State paper (denial of military sales and credits, interruption of normal air, rail, post and telecommunications links, and a selective embargo except for humanitarian items), but stopping short of a total trade embargo which would involve extended debate and possible failure in the UNSC. (S)

APPROVE

DISAPPROVE

my guess: 5:45 for their 4:15 more in UN on sanctions

In order to maintain the public appearance of momentum, it will be necessary to publicize in some form the types of actions which our allies have agreed to undertake. Some will not object; others will wish to keep their advice entirely private. The SCC recommended that State contact the countries involved and determine what they would be willing to announce publicly. Depending on their reaction, we will probably want to do a careful backgrounder to get out the whole story. This can be linked to intelligence information on the decline of shipping into the Persian Gulf, to increase the appearance of effective disruption of trade. We would expect to do the backgrounder by Wednesday. (S)

APPROVE

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2. Presidential Views. Dr. Brzezinski briefed the SCC on the President's comments on the notes of Friday's meeting. The President approved the proposed strategy on the White Paper (that the informati

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be collected and papers prepared, but not to publish a formal document) but asked that the internal documentation be complete for selective use. Approval was granted for leaking information about certain banks' circumvention of restrictions on Iranian assets. At this point, however, there appeared to be no flagrant cases to be exploited. (S)

3. Trials. The President noted that it is important that we do nothing which would lend legitimacy to any trials of the hostages by Iran. The question of the lawyers preparing legal support for the hostages will be raised at the meeting tomorrow. (e)

4. French. The Iranian case against U.S. branch banks in France has been refiled. The SCC agreed that Giscard should be reminded of his assurance to Vance that this case would be tied up in the courts and not be subject to an early court decision. (S)

Political-Military Issues:

1. Afghanistan. Admiral Turner briefed the latest developments. Soviet forces had remained stable from July until recently, but now there is evidence of movement. Two new command posts have been created just north of the Afghan border, there is a buildup of air assets, and two divisions may be on the move. There are about 5,300 Soviet military personnel in Afghanistan and approximately 2,000 civilians, some with families. CIA does not see this as a crash buildup but rather as a steady, planned buildup, perhaps related to Soviet perceptions of a deterioration of the Afghan military forces and the need to beef them up at some point. Most of the countryside is now in rebel hands, but no major cities are expected to fall unless there are significant defections from the Army. We believe the Soviets have made a political decision to keep a pro-Soviet regime in power and to use military force to that end if necessary. They either give this a higher priority than successful completion of SALT, or they may believe it is irrelevant to SALT. They may be ready to dump Amin, but they have not found a suitable replacement. (S)

The SCC, after some discussion, recommended a three part strategy. First, for the record, we will continue our diplomatic demarches to the Soviets on a private basis. There is no benefit in going public at this time. Second, we will explore with the Pakistanis and British the possibility of improving the financing, arming and communications of the rebel forces to make it as expensive as possible for the Soviets to continue their efforts. Third, we will attempt to increase propaganda pressure on the Soviets worldwide. We will recommend to our European allies that they encourage their press to pay more attention to the subject. We will also step up our efforts to cast the Soviets as opposing Moslem religious and nationalist expressions. (S)

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 We are hamstrung by the divisions within the tribes, and an effort to organize them would be a mammoth undertaking. However, we can put in enough to keep them active and perhaps prevent the Soviets from wearing them down. One additional option would be to circulate a letter at the Security Council drawing attention to the Soviet role in Afghanistan. The SCC felt that it would be better to wait until the hostage problem was resolved before such a move since we want to maintain maximum Soviet cooperation at that issue. (S)

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