



Intelligence Information Cable

ROUTINE

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~~THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE~~

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DIST 3 NOVEMBER 1977

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COUNTRY: [REDACTED]

DOI : EARLY NOVEMBER 1977

SUBJECT: COMMENTS BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN CAIRO CONCERNING
SIGNIFICANCE OF VISIT OF FOREIGN MINISTRY MIDDLE
EAST DEPARTMENT CHIEF SYTENKO TO ARAB COUNTRIES

ACQ :
SOURCE :

[REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THAT THE VISIT OF
SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MIDDLE EAST DEPARTMENT
CHIEF MIKHAIL S Y T E N K O TO THE ARAB WORLD IN NOVEMBER
REPRESENTED A POTENTIAL SHIFT IN SOVIET POLICY VIS-A-VIS
MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. [REDACTED] CAIRO NEWS-

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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(classification)

[Redacted]

PAPERS ON 3 NOVEMBER 1977 REPORTED THAT SYTENKO WOULD BE ARRIVING IN EGYPT THE FOLLOWING DAY.)

2. [Redacted] THE 1 OCTOBER 1977 JOINT SOVIET-AMERICAN STATEMENT ON THE BASES FOR A MIDDLE EAST PEACE WHETTED MOSCOW'S APPETITE TO PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, WASHINGTON'S SUBSEQUENT RETREAT FROM THE JOINT DECLARATION, EMBODIED IN THE AMERICAN-ISRAELI WORKING PAPER SENT TO ARAB CAPITALS, RAISED SERIOUS DOUBTS IN THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY WHETHER THE GENEVA MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE (MEPC) WOULD EVER BE RECONVENED AND WHETHER BASING SOVIET MIDDLE EASTERN POLICY ON THE FADING HOPE THAT THE USSR COULD AGAIN BE ACTIVE AS MEPC CO-CHAIRMAN WAS, IN FACT, A SOUND IDEA.

3. SYTENKO'S CURRENT MIDDLE EAST MISSION IS ESSENTIALLY TO ASSESS WHETHER THERE IS REALLY ANY HOPE FOR THE MEPC AND IF, AS POLYAKOV SUSPECTS, GENEVA IS NOT POSSIBLE, THEN TO GAUGE PROSPECTS FOR SHARPLY INCREASED BILATERAL SOVIET DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY IN THE ARAB WORLD. THE SOVIETS WOULD PREFER TO GO TO GENEVA, BUT IF HOPES FOR THE MEPC FADE, THE SOVIETS BELIEVE THAT AMERICAN INFLUENCE AMONG THE

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CONFRONTATION STATES MAY BEGIN TO FADE ALSO, PRESENTING THE
 SOVIETS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE IN
 THE ARAB WORLD. THUS, IF SYTENKO FINDS THAT THERE IS LITTLE
 REAL POSSIBILITY FOR GENEVA, THE SOVIETS MAY WELL REVERSE
 THEIR POLICY ON THE MEPC, CONDEMN ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE AS
 THE CAUSE OF THE FAILURE OF THE PEACE PROCESS, SHIFT TO AN
 EMPHASIS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB STATES, AND,
 IN FACT, WORK AGAINST THE RECONVENING OF THE MEPC AS AN
 AMERICAN-ISRAELI DEVICE TO OBSTRUCT THE ROAD TO MIDDLE EAST PEACE.

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