

ROUTING
Approved For Release 2007/03/08 : CIA-RDP79T00975A030400010094-0

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Friday 9 December 1977 CG NIDC 77/285C

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
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USSR - US - MIDDLE EAST: Comments

[redacted] *Comments in Soviet media yesterday on developments in the Middle East indicate considerable unease over Secretary of State Vance's visit to the area.*

[redacted] A TASS statement in English complained of "definite circles" in the US administration "set on pressuring" Arab states to support both the meeting in Cairo and direct contacts between Egypt and Israel. The statement attacked Secretary Vance's remarks at his press conference Tuesday; it said that his placing greater emphasis on the session in Cairo than on a reconvening of the Geneva Middle East conference was a "direct contradiction" of the Soviet-US joint statement of 1 October. The Soviets continue to be concerned that they may not play a significant role in the Middle East negotiating process.

[redacted] Both a Radio Moscow commentary in Arabic and the TASS statement noted the Egyptians' order closing consulates and cultural centers of the USSR and its close allies. The Radio Moscow language was the more vehement; it asserted that the action was "another link in the chain of political steps" by Cairo to undermine Soviet-Egyptian relations.

[redacted] Radio Moscow did not mention Egyptian President Sadat, and TASS referred to him only matter-of-factly. The contrast between this treatment and the virulence of earlier Soviet media pieces may indicate that the Soviets want to prevent a further deterioration of relations. [redacted]