



Key U.S. report stresses Palestinian 'urgency'

Arab parties other than Egypt should be in talks'

By Mark A Bruzonsky in Washington

FORTS to bring Arab parties other than Egypt into settlement negotiations are urged in a report today by a top-level U.S. study group on Mid-east policy.

Expressing its "keen sense of urgency," the group says "time is of the essence" in its commendations on energy, on the Arab-Israeli conflict and on the situation in Turkey. In all these three areas, we are convinced that the U.S. should be prepared to make hard decisions, and to make them soon," says the report by the Brookings Institution study group, a working party sponsored by the U.S. Atlantic Council.

The group also reiterates "the urgency of a negotiated settlement to include agreement on the Palestinian situation."

The group's previous report became the blueprint for the Carter administration's Mid-east policies. This one is issued earlier, because the U.S. presidential election campaign has begun many months earlier than last year's.

The group, which brings together America's establishment. Figures, has a chairman, Lieutenant-General Drew J. Goodpaster, Commander of the U.S. Military Academy.

Among the members of the special working group were George H. Brown, Dean Brown, Richard Helms, Lyman Lemnitzer, Walter Rostow, William P. Rogers, Eugene Rostow, Joseph Sisco and Charles York.

The summary to the report states: "The Mid-east is of the most importance to the U.S. and the world for three principal reasons that can be briefly noted as oil, security, and conflict settlement.

"The region's oil, which is essential to the economy of the advanced industrial democracies, is not readily available to them.

Global balance

"Its territory, people, and resources, which are crucial to the global balance between the Soviet Union and the West, cannot be allowed to fall under Soviet domination.

"The conflict between the Arab world and Israel, which remains a source of dangerous instability in the area and a threat to world peace, requires the most intensive efforts to bring about a just settlement.

"The working group believes these problems to be related. What the U.S. and the other industrial democracies do about any one of them bears on their success in dealing with the others. The recommendations of this report, accordingly, are not aimed at isolated problems but at a regional complex and, beyond that, at

the global balance and the effect on it of Middle East developments.

"The primary requirement of American policy is to maintain a position in the Mid-east, in co-operation and good relations with key Mid-east countries, that will ensure the availability of oil over the coming decade, prevent the extension of Soviet control, and bring about sufficient stability in the region to make possible the achievement of these aims.

"The report's conclusions and recommendations focus on five major areas of policy.

"Availability of oil. The key lies in national and international energy policies on the part of the industrial countries that will gradually reduce dependence on imports of Mid-east oil and, in the interim, will make possible a working bargain between producing and consuming countries.

"Both share a common long-term interest in the development of alternative sources.

"The only foolproof way of assuring adequate energy supply is a comprehensive policy, adopted as a matter of priority, aimed at the development of alternatives to Mid-east oil and at maximum feasible conservation in energy use.

"Arab-Israeli settlement. The working group reiterates the urgency of a negotiated settlement, going beyond the Israeli-Egyptian treaty, to include agreement on the Palestine question and agreements between Israel and its other neighbours,

Syria and Lebanon.

"The American role will remain central, for the U.S. is committed to Israel's independence and security, is the only power with influence over Israel, and at the same time has vital strategic and economic interests in the Arab world.

"The U.S. should make clear its conviction that Israel's security will be better served by real, firmly-based peace with the Arabs, including the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza, than by continued war and violence.

"With respect to process, we urge... efforts to bring Arab parties other than Egypt into the negotiations and association of Palestinian Arabs in the process.

"While this is not the moment to bring the PLO into active negotiations, the U.S. should maintain informal contact with the PLO.

"Strengthening of Turkey. The working group stresses the critical importance of a strong and stable Turkey. The security of Nato and vital Western interests in the Mid-east are now jeopardised by Turkey's economic crisis. The international aid package presently under consideration (August 1979) by the OECD members and international financial institutions should be agreed upon and made available to Turkey as soon as possible.

"Turkey's economic health and continuing association with the West over the long term require not only the necessary emergency economic measures but a broader and deeper relationship based on respect for past performance and confidence in future common interest.

'Balanced U.S. power must continue to act as shield'

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"A stronger military posture.

Recent changes in certain countries in or near the Mid-east (e.g., Afghanistan, South Yemen, Ethiopia), plus the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran and the decline of American influence there, have given the USSR a relatively stronger military position in the region and greater political opportunities than before.

"This position is enhanced by the global build-up of Soviet strategic and conventional forces. In the face of this situation the U.S. must, as in the past, strive to keep Soviet influence within limits which do not threaten vital American and Western interests such as access to Mid-east oil, or the right of Mid-eastern peoples to independence.

"To this end, the working group recommends that the U.S. position itself to counter the Soviet threat by measures of military deterrence.

"Balanced American power must continue to serve as a shield against any major move of Soviet forces into the Mid-east or any

attempt at military blackmail.

"The group favours an increase of U.S. and allied naval power in the Indian Ocean.

"We question the advisability of stationing U.S. forces on land within the Mid-east region, believing they will be more effective if over the horizon.

"U.S. forces should not be intended for unilateral intervention in local revolutions or intraregional conflicts, although they might be called in by local states to help protect oil facilities and could have the mission of preventing any interference by force on the part of other external powers.

"Political relations. The key to the protection of American and allied interests in the Mid-east lies in a broad understanding of trends there and the creation of constructive relations with the governments and peoples of the region.

"As an outside great power, America is inevitably an object of suspicion in the eyes of many. There has also been a loss of confidence in America on the part of many who look to her for co-

operation and support.

"The remedies are not easy to find, but they lie partly in the field of better information, understanding, and cultural interchange.

"The continuance of good relations with Saudi Arabia is essential. Saudi Arabia's importance is obvious because of its oil supply and role in Opec, the need for assistance in the process of negotiation Arab-Israeli settlement, its central place in the maintenance of security on the Arabian peninsula and in the general area of the Red Sea and of the Arabian Gulf.

"Soviet forward policy in the Mid-east and Africa is, of course, a part of the over-all Soviet-American and Soviet-Western relationship and should be dealt with in the global context.

"It is also, however, a part of the Mid-east scene, where it has been countered both directly, by various means including the building of a stronger Western military posture, and indirectly, through the improvement of the political and economic position of the area and its allies within the region.

