

NEWS CONFERENCE
WITH
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD
AND
GENERAL GEORGE S. BROWN, USAF
CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
AT THE PENTAGON
MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1976

ASD/PA Alan Woods: You'll be addressed first by General Brown and then by Secretary Rumsfeld and both gentlemen will be available to answer your questions.

General Brown: I am advised that King Features Syndicate has, or will soon release an article, based on an interview with me last April, some six months ago, and that the **article** contains some quotes attributed to me.

I wish to have my thoughts understood and placed in proper perspective.

I was asked whether from a purely military point of view Israel and its armed forces were "more of a **burden** or more of a blessing" to the global strategic interests of the **United States**. It is correct that from that narrow point of view, I answered that I thought it had to be considered a burden, and I added that I could see in the **long** term where they might be a tremendous asset -- where they would bring **stability** to the area of the world.

Further, my point was that assisting Israel as we did, and, in my view, as we should have, did in fact require some draw down of some U.S. equipment. That is a fact of which everyone is aware, but it should not be seen as meaning that I in any way, disagreed with U.S. policy then or now. I did not and I do not.

Israel shares with the United States **basic** democratic values long cherished in our country. The defense of these values **is** crucial to the survival of a way of life on this planet which is **compatible with** our ideals. **Because of these overriding considerations, U.S. policy toward Israel over the years has been clear: we are fully committed to the security and survival of the State of Israel. I believe in that policy wholeheartedly. My personal actions in support of Israel, and in furtherance of its military needs and its military security give proof to my full personal commitment to the security and survival of the free state of Israel.**

The article also leaves the impression that I said the United States does not have the "stomach" to face up to challenges. **As our recording of the interview indicates, I did not say that. I had referred to a recent conversation, which ranged over many problems of the world, in which I said that the individual I had been talking with observed that we had not yet discussed the "prime problem of the world," the question about the United States and whether the U.S. had "really got the stomach for this." I answered -- "No, we hadn't" -- which meant, no we hadn't discussed that issue. My answer did not mean that the U.S. didn't have the stomach. I believe this interpretation is clear from our recording. Certainly, it is what I meant. For example, in the interview, I emphasized that the American people and the Congress make the right decisions on things that are really important."**

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Remarks concerning the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom were spoken out of compassion and understanding. I said we would miss them in the Middle East, where they were **withdrawing their** forces, because of their long experience. Americans understand and sympathize with the current economic difficulties of the British people. We also know their gallantry. There are no braver people. I have the greatest admiration and respect for Her Majesty's highly professional Armed Forces.

Finally, I want to say that, in my view, the Shah of Iran has done and is doing an immense amount for his country. He has done so in a way that has demonstrated his common interests with the United States and its allies. He correctly sees the need for Iran to be militarily strong, and thus, is strengthening his Armed Forces -- under conditions that not only serve Iran's security interests, but also those of the Free World. I have no reason to believe that he has any aspirations beyond continuing to ably lead his nation and contribute to stability in that part of the world.

I trust this statement will place my comments in their proper perspective.

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Q: General, down in the text we were given, next to last paragraph it says "the Shah of Iran has done and is doing an immense work for this country." You mean for his country?

A: Yes, I think that's the way I read it.

MR. RUMSFELD: I just have a few remarks to make **with respect** to the questions that have come up concerning the article that's been prepared for release by King Features concerning this interview that General Brown has just commented on.

I have read a draft of the article that I understand is to be released. I have listened to a recording of a portion of the interview, **the recordings** by both the author and by the department were made, of course, with the full knowledge of both **participants**. We have attempted to **prepare a** transcript from the recording, and I have **studied** the transcript that was prepared. It is imperfect because the recording is imperfect and the recording is not complete.

It does not enable a listener to hear every word, and I want that clearly understood at the outset. General Brown, has of course, made a statement, it is available to the press. His statement is a recognition by him that the article could be subject to misinterpretation. He is of course **communicating** as appropriate with respect to any misunderstandings that might occur as a result of the interview being published ultimately.

You know my view that General Brown is a dedicated and professional member of the United States Armed Forces, with an outstanding record as a military officer, who continues to serve this country with distinction.

At the completion of our press conference we will provide what we have as **a best** effort with respect to **a transcript of the recording**. There is a disclaimer on each page pointing out that it is very hard to **hear, but I** would like to say that the reason we're doing it is that we think **that** it will put into context his remarks and possibly clarify some misunderstandings that might have existed.

I'd be happy to respond to questions.

Q: Do you **think the** timing of this was politically **motivated**?

SECRETARY RUMSFELD: Oh, I wouldn't have any reason for saying that.

Q: No, the fact that it was **delayed---**

A. **Certainly** not on our part, but I have no reason to believe--

Q: **(inaudible)** that they could have done it earlier or --

A. I'm told that what happened was the individual, and Alan has some fairly detailed chronology, but I'm told that the individual who did the interview came in anticipating it would be **published** in one publication, a series of **cartoons**, and left on that basis, and it wasn't. He **then** made it **available** to another syndicate. And I have no reason to believe it was anything just perfectly normal process **of** discussing with different people the possibility of their carrying it.

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Q: Mr. Secretary, could you explain your role in arranging for the interview of Mr. Lurie with General Brown and other people in this building?

A. Well, I think I can. Possibly Bill Greener would be a better source for that, but my recollection is that whenever a cartoon appears of something concerning defense, that the press office writes requesting a copy, one of the-- not the original but one of the prints, and that that was done, and that Mr. Lurie sent it into the press office and then indicated his interest, either orally or in writing, I don't recall, in doing a piece on the Pentagon apparently similar to the one that appeared in one of the publications for which he writes that was done on the United Nations. So I guess you would say my role is practically zero.

Q: Mr. Lurie states that he saw you I think on March 31st and that you in turn cooperated in arranging for him to see other people in the Pentagon.

A. My understanding is that he made the request with Mr. Greener and Mr. Greener asked me if I would see him and I agreed to see him. He indicated he'd like to see some other people to Mr. Greener and to me and he saw the other people. But I certainly wasn't sponsoring his visit in that sense. I don't see that there's any great difference between what he said and what I'm saying.

Q: Did General Brown see him and talk with him?

A. No, I left it entirely to Bill as to who he'd see.

Q: We haven't been able to see General Brown for months, an outsider comes in and is able to see him, so you apparently have some pressure on him to see him.

A: That's not correct, as we did not have any pressure on him at all. Mr. Greener made a judgment as to, I suppose talking to Mr. Lurie as to who he'd like to see, and he then indicated he wanted to do this cartoon series and proceeded to do it.

Q: General---

A: As far as I know, John, Bill Greener, would be a better person to talk to because he was--

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Q: I have talked with him.

A: -- engaged in it, and that's my recollection. I've not talked to Bill about it in that sense, as to how it was initiated, except that I know there was either a letter or a phone **call** requesting a copy of the cartoon and that it was from that discussion that he indicated he would like to visit with some people and do a cartoon series on the Pentagon.

Q: Mr. Secretary, when did you first hear about this story and what conversations have you had with the White House about it?

A: Goodness, it was in recent days, somebody called somebody in this building and indicated that there was such an article.' This was, as I recall, a day or two before a copy of the article was provided. And then after that first indication a copy of the article was provided and I read it.

The conversations with the White House have been very recent. **I have** talked to the President about this. I've discussed it over there, and provided I believe today -- I could be wrong on when that happened, but **I** think we've just provided a rough transcript to them and I know that it's been read over there just recently.

Q: When?

A: Today, this morning.-

Q: Was he concerned about the possible **political impact** this could have?

A: Well, I don't personally see it as a political matter. It was an interview dated in April with a man who is in no way, shape, manner or form connected with the campaign, and who was answering some questions from a purely personal and military standpoint.

Q: Did the President express that concern is what **I** was asking?

A: **Well**, you know it's going to sound funny if I say no, he didn't, but to my best recollection that was not the subject of the discussion at all. We were talking substantively about **what was** said, and not any political implications. Not with me he did not, no.

Q: Mr. Secretary, Earl Butz left after his second mistake; is General Brown **going** to be staying on?

A: Yes.

Q: **Mr.** Secretary, if this interview had been published shortly after 'it was granted, would General Brown have been reappointed last June?

A: Well, that's a subject for the President, but I would certainly think so, **yes**. It's not for me to say, it's for the President to say, but **the President** has indicated his views on General Brown and he was reappointed.

Q: Was there any discussion of General Brown either resigning or being fired as a result of this latest incident?

A: My discussion, as I say, with the President, was related to the transcript and 'the remarks, and our mutual view is that General Brown is a fine officer and that this was the proper thing to do would be to discuss it with the press and just say, here's what-was said and here's what -- I mean, I can understand, quite honestly, the question of this business about -- in the

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article about -- I can understand how the article suggested that General Brown had said that the United States lacked the stomach. In point of fact, I listened to that portion of the recording several times. There's not a doubt in my mind but that there were several **questionsstrungtogetherandthe** tense the General used, the phraseology, leaves no doubt in my mind but that he was in fact saying, no, we hadn't, meaning discussed it, as he indicated in his statement. I think it's an understandable misunderstanding, but I'm fully satisfied that it is just that, a misunderstanding in the article.

Q: We are at a disadvantage because we haven't seen the transcript, and I would like General Brown -- did you go onto discuss whether the United States did have a stomach to meet the Soviet threat, was it clear to the interviewer that you were. . . .

A: As I said -- I can respond, since I've got the mike, but it is understandable that it was ambiguous to the interviewer in many months later looking at the transcript because there were several questions in a row. There is no doubt in my mind but that General Brown meant exactly what he says he meant, namely, **that** no, we had not discussed it.

Q: But in the. . . .

A: Because in the context of the remainder of the interview he makes positive comments about the people of the United States, the Congress of the **United** States, and the fact that the United States doesn't make big mistakes on big issues for very long.

Q: I believe the way I saw the story was that these comments were made during a dinner engagement, you had with a British Admiral, a British officer, and that he had asked you whether you thought the **United** States had the stomach to meet the Soviet threat. Did you go on to discuss that with him?

A: What he said was the -- the discussion that General Brown was having with a British Admiral, he related to Mr. Lurie and he said that the Admiral indicated to him, we have not discussed this big problem, prime problem, namely, whether the United States has the stomach. Mr. Brown said, no we haven't, meaning, no, we have not discussed it.

Q: We haven't or we hadn't?

A: Hadn't.

Q: Because Mr. Lurie has it in his transcript as haven't. Could we listen to the tape and. . . .

A: Yes, as I indicated we'll make the tape available to be listened to for that purpose. But I'm satisfied myself as to what was said, yes.

Q: Would you issue the transcript now and let us read it and then respond to questions? Say take a couple of minutes while we look through it and then ask you questions, rather than. . . .

A: Well, that's going **to take some** time. And we'll be happy to have Alan available and I'll be around to comment. But it seems to me that this approach is probably better.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the discussions, is one by Mr. Lurie and one by the Pentagon?

A: I can't speak with certainty about Mr. **Lurie's**, I do know that it turned

out that the individual who sat in with Mr. Brown, General Brown' and Mr. **Lurie,**

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did have a recording of it and we have that. Whether there's a second one is something you have to ask Mr. Lurie.

Q: Did you ask Mr. **Lurie** for his transcript?

A: We have asked and do not have it. But I really am reluctant to be his press spokesman.

Q: So this is the Pentagon's transcript?

A: **It** is. . . .

Q: Of the defense. . . .

A: It is the Department of Defense's tape deck from the meeting, and as I indicated it kind of starts in the middle of a sentence and it kind of ends in the middle of a sentence, which leads **me to** believe that it didn't contain everything that took place and it is very hard to hear. The transcript from the recording is a best effort on our part, and I must **say** I've listened to the entire thing, going through the transcript, and I **find** things that sound somewhat different to me depending on when you listen to **them**, so you'll just have to listen to it **yourse;f**.

Q: It's possible for us to listen to the tapes.

A: Be happy to have you listen to it.

Q: Does General Brown enter into any **understandingwith** 'you that he was going to provide a transcript of the interview and clear any quotes with you?

General Brown: Three points **I** think on the interview will cover three questions. First, there were, two tape recorders on the table during the interview, his and ours. Second, the Soviet Union was never mentioned in that part about stomach, as you'll see when you listen to it. We were **talking** about other problems around the world.

Third, it was my understanding that Mr. Lurie would check any quotes **he** wanted to use from the interview with me before using it. That was not done and I wasn't aware of it until I saw a copy of the **article yesterday or** the day before that was leaked, I understand.

Now, Mr. Lurie, I'm told, has a different view. He feels he was relieved from that commitment and has no such contract. But it wasn't relieved by me, it was never raised with me.

Secretary Rumsfeld: If I could amplify on that, and I think Alan would be in a position to amplify also, I would not want to let it stand there because I understand Mr. Lurie feels, and very likely did in fact ultimately receive some sort of approval from somebody in the Office of Public Affairs to go ahead.

So **General** Brown is stating it from his perspective, and I wouldn't want to leave the impression that Mr. Lurie was violating some sort of understanding because I don't know **that** to be a case, just in fairness to him.



General Brown: That's what I was trying to imply, John,

Secretary Rumsfeld: Yes.

General Brown: By saying I understood he has a different view.

Q: General, is that quote accurate with regard to the British Armed Forces. You don't deny in your statement, referring to them, you said "it's pathetic now, it just makes you want to cry. They are no longer a world power, all they've got are generals and admirals and bands." Is that correct?

General Brown: You'll see the statement and hear it on the tape. And as I said in this statement it was made out of a statement of compassion and understanding not of ridicule and criticism.

Q: You also say the Arabs only have a short term interest in peace?

General Brown: I don't remember. Whatever I said is in that tape you're going to hear and the transcript you're going to get.

Q: Somehow--

Secretary Rumsfeld: I would just in that context, if I could make a brief comment. I **would** hope that when what transcript we have is read, **that** it will be taken **in** the context that it was given. It was in April, it was in 'a private visit between a Chairman of the Chiefs and an individual who **was on** assignment to do a cartoon article, and that General Brown's understanding was that any quotes that would be desired would be cleared with him, and that it would be taken in that light.

It was not given in the present environment we're in, which is a much more electric environment, if I might say so.

Q: Could I repeat that question about what he meant by the Israelis being burdened. What was your impression of what you were trying to say?

General Brown: Well, I think I have to stand by the comment in the statement, Lloyd.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Let me talk about the burden--

Q: Did you also say that--

Secretary Rumsfeld: Let me talk about the burden question, **let me** just comment on the burden question. The General's made his statement on that.

You know, it is obvious that Israel is **not a burden** on the United States. The fact is we have a policy that looks to the **security and** the survival of that state. Israel is one of the few free nations in the world.

Now, it is correct, as General Brown indicates in the transcript, that



there was a draw down on some **U.S.** equipment **during** the Middle East War. The answer is, yes, there **was**. But it seems to me that a response to that question should be responded to in the broadest context which is the total relationship between the United States and Israel. And it's obvious from what the General has said and what we all know the policy of this government to be, as to what our policy is, and that he supports.

Q: General, are you talking about the during the wars?

General Brown: **May I just** add to the Secretary's statement? I agree with what he said on the burden question. I would also add to the release of equipment from U.S. stocks to Israel that it had a bonus effect, and I've said **this** before. It made the Congress and the country aware of our need for a expanded tank production, which we now have authorization and funding for, and it's building up. Perhaps without that diversion and that dramatic action we wouldn't have had that attention brought to the problem.

Q: Mr. Secretary, do we understand that General Brown is not being reprimanded by neither the White House nor yourself that he's done anything wrong?

Secretary Rumsfeld: Well, I can't speak for the White House--in other words they have their own arrangements over there. I **can say** that I have listened to the tape, there is obviously things there that I would not have phrased that way.

But on the other hand General Brown is **not** now nor is he being nominated for the post of press spokesman for the Pentagon. He's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, he's a fine military man, and I can understand that situation that this article causes and it seems to me that **the** best thing to do when that's, the case is to come down here and talk about it.

Q: But could you answer the question; is he being reprimanded?

Secretary Rumsfeld: No, he has not been reprimanded.

Q: General **Brown**, have you met with the President since **all of** the hellabaloo came about, have you had a meeting personally with the President?

General Brown: No, I've not seen the President in two or three weeks.

Q: Well, in this article this morning it says here, and quote, that you had told Senator Javits the same thing about Israel being a burden right after you got ' in trouble down at Duke. Did you--

General Brown: **I'll** expand on that if you like. Last October, you know, I made the statement at Duke. In November; about the '1st of November **they** were reported **to** the Washington Post, and on the 11th of November the story appeared. Apparently it wasn't considered **newsworthy** for a couple of days.

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In any event I then went to call on Senator Javits, who invited me to have breakfast with him. We had breakfast and he asked me the question, **as I** said in **that** interview with Mr. Lurie, wasn't I aware of the strategic value of Israel to the United States. And I said, regrettably, no, I wasn't, I couldn't see a strategic value to the United States. I was thinking only in military terms, and so I made that statement to Mr. Lurie, since his question was very like Senator Javits'.

Secretary Rumsfeld: In answer to the question before that, where you asked about the reprimand, I want it clearly understood that the absence of a reprimand should not be taken as an endorsement of obviously inelegant phraseology and as I indicated in my statement General Brown has or is communicating with his counterparts in the appropriate countries involved.

Q: It **doesn't** need an apology, sir.

Secretary Rumsfeld: How would you characterize your communication with the countries involved? Certainly an apology of a misunderstanding that--

General Brown: A. I think I am wiring General Azari in Iran, General Gura in Israel, and Sir Andrew Humphrey, Marshal of the Royal Air Force in Great Britain, quoting what that article says that I am alleged to have said and telling them of my personal views concerning their **forces** in their country. And where I stood by a statement that was an accurate quote of what I said. In the case of Great Britain, I told them, assured them it was from compassion and understanding, just as I did in this statement and not in the sense of ridicule or criticism.

Q: Mr. Secretary, since you're not nominating General Brown to be the press secretary for the Pentagon, are you suggesting--

Secretary Rumsfeld: A. Nor would I want the job, either.

Q: Are you suggesting or **ordering or** telling the General to stop making statements to the press or giving interviews?

General Brown: I'd be delighted.

Secretary Rumsfeld: He said he would be delighted to be so ordered.

Q: Has he been so ordered?

Secretary Rumsfeld: A. No, he isn't.

Q: I would hope that this incident doesn't inhibit the general from finally seeing us.

General Brown: Fair enough.

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Secretary Rumsfeld: He has not been so ordered. in answer
to your question.

Q: Is there any suspicion at all in your mind that there may be something political about the timing in all this? What do you think?

General Brown: Oh, I'm not in a position to judge. I do think it's a little strange that if this guy had a story in April--

Secretary Rumsfeld: He's not in a position to judge. He's not in a position to judge, he's exactly right, I agree with him completely.

Q: A little strange what?

Sec. Rumsfeld: We have absolutely no basis for anything like that. The **fact of** the matter is we do not.

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(Transcript from an imperfect tape of a portion of **an interview** with General **George S. Brown**, and **Ranan Lurie**, on **April 12, 1976**, transcribed **October 18, 1976**)

Q: As to the person involved (inaudible) as to us, there were so many and there are so many of the rumors right now about us being behind the Russians, becoming the second most powerful nation do you agree with that?

A: I do on one assumption. It's a very big "if" and the "if" is if it is permitted to happen but certainly we haven't reached that point today, and if the United States people decide to let Congress to, that it's not worth **spending the** money to invest resources we need to do the Defense job, then **obviously we** are going to fall behind. Trends **over** the past five years and **in some cases** ten years are misleading in their appearances. Therefore, these trends have got to be reversed; we've got to change them. And that's what this President **starts to do**; it does, in fact, have some, some real investment about two percent, **which** isn't a lot, but it does break that curve.

See, the thing that, there's an erroneous opinion held by too many people that this military establishment in this country kind of feeds on itself; that the need for new **weapons** systems, investment in hardware, wouldn't be there if the Pentagon wasn't **always** pushing to have it there. Well, that's not true. The military establishment, you know really has no life of its own, it's based on what we see as the **threat**, on the task to be performed, and what risks there are. Now, the task to **be performed** is set down in effect in basic national security policy and they're the general sort of things that you **would expect** such as sharing the continued **safety** of the country, of deterring war; now if the deterrence fails, being able to fight on reasonable terms, **these** kinds of things.

Now the threat; there's **only one** threat and that comes from the Soviet Union and the estimate of that threat **within** this government is agreed if there is only a difference of view when you get **into the outyears** and there're the views expressed in the band of an estimate **high and low**. The Congress then, hearing the Defense posture statement of the Secretary and my statement in support of it, I made on the intelligence side, can do **two things**, since it can't change the threat, it can change the tasks we have but **just** don't have the other resources to do that, or it can ask the country to accept a **bigger** risk than the Chiefs feel is prudent. Having expressed that risk to the Secretary and the National Security Council and the President, and having that agreed in **the** Executive Branch, then the budget is structured, presented to the Congress, and **as** I say since they can't change the **threat, they've not seen fit to change the task** to be performed, can only ask the country to assume a greater risk.

Now that's what they've done in the past. For the past X-years, I guess five or six, since I've looked at the figures, it's between \$30 and \$40 billion in gross terms that they've taken from the President's budget from year to year. In the meantime, the Russians have spent, the Soviet Union has been building a very, very powerful military machine and I don't get carried away with the net assessment in dollar-ruble terms; others are totally absorbed in that business. The thing I notice is that they are able to equip their forces -- they are modernizing constantly and they have equipment ready to export. When they go, like last week to Kenya **(sic)*** and made a commitment...

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(Transcript from an imperfect tape of a portion of an interview with George S. Brown, and **Ranan** Lurie on April 12, 1976, transcribed October 18, 1976)

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Q: To Kenya?

A: . . . To start delivery **in thirty** days, **we couldn't do** that. The only way we could supply Israel was to take it out of our own forces. So we don't have that. Our rate of modernization is far slower than theirs and some of ours, armored vehicles primarily; aircraft is not quite as **big** in disparity. **So I** say that if Congress doesn't start by acting favorably on this budget request, and I must say that the signs are reasonably encouraging at this point, but that's **got** to continue and this is the: thing that the country has got to realize that it isn't going to be done this year, **it's got to** continue over the years. The Soviet Union -- and it's too bad that we **can't** somehow find a way to divulge to the people of the world at large that evidence we have in support of these things, but there's always the worry that you'll compromise a source or the means by which you acquire that knowledge and therefore we stamp everything in some way that, doesn't permit us to share it with the people that have got to know, it doesn't do any good for us to sit there and talk **to** each other. **If we** could find it **possible** to more adequately inform the people so that they in turn could press on the Congress to do what must be done seems to me that it would be far more useful. There's some interest in doing this. There's no small conversation about it, so I think they will loosen upon what I (inaudible).

Q: Didn't the 1973 Middle East War bring to the attention of the world the fact that you just brought up that the Russians can supply their several Allies with whatever they want and I have been on the 11th of October I **happened to be** on the Israeli-Syrian front and I simply couldn't believe my eyes, I held my hand on Soviet made tanks which had, and half trucks, which had twenty kilometers on their armament. Even (break in tape) brand new, and they're producing, I believe, **that while we are producing** about how **many--300 tanks, 400 tanks, a month, they are producing, can produce ten times as much per month.**

A: I **wish** we were producing 400 a month, we're producing; **we're** going to get a little over a thousand a year in another year or two -- 1203.

Q: This is almost numerically, it's a joke in comparison to what the Russians are doing?

A: Exactly.

Q: And I wonder what, the only thing that the Russians really have to do is to out maneuver us, shall we say **politically**, to a situation where no side can use **atomic** weapons and just remain in the conventional field, that's it.

A: Well, I think, we've reached that point today in the strategic nuclear field where we've said we have a rough equivalency, but that would mean we've got, you know, all these things -- they've got more and larger missiles; we've got more warheads; we're more accurate. It's kind of a standoff, I don't think in my own judgment that either side **has the** ability to launch a disabling first strike. That could change over a time. Again, I say could, because if they continue with the momentum even under the SALT Limitations set up by Vladivostok, they continue with the momentum they have, and we don't do anything, then conceivably it could give the Russians the point where you mentioned where they rule out the strategic nuclear thing and you're left with the non-nuclear general purpose force and there is an imbalance there in just the straight U.S. vs Soviet. It comes more nearly into balance when you take all of NATO into account with all of the Warsaw Pact, particularly if you add the French. You can't rule out the French, at least the Russian planner can't, because while they have said they will not relinquish command of their forces in peacetime; they will not join the military thing; **they** have not broken; they are still a member of NATO; they are still pledged to the basic premise of NATO. Therefore, I think the Russian planner has to assume that **France will be** in the force in time of war.

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(Transcript from an imperfect tape of a portion of an interview with General George S. Brown, and **Ranan** Lurie on April 12, 1976 transcribed October 18, 1976)

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It's more important that the Russian planner be concerned with that than the Americans.

I think there's an acceptance of these trends today as I go around the country and talk to people. It's sort of a frightening story but people are listening and taking it **seriously** where **two years** ago they could have, cared less.

Q: It's all fascinating how parallel we are now from quite a few aspects politically and militarily to the thirties where we had a quite a parallel situation and the advantage was Germany, Nazi Germany, and building all the arsenals and so on, and I wonder why no one brings up the fact that Mussolini invaded Ethiopia only after he learned that the students of Cambridge and Oxford signed petitions saying that they are not going to join the military and that encouraged him to invade Ethiopia assuming that the British would not fight. And Hitler made his moves in the latter part of the 30's when he learned that 11 million British signed again this kind of petition. To him, it was an obvious fact that the British do not want to fight. They will not fight **and** he could afford anything, and his gamble was not that bad. He pushed quite a lot before the British moved in.

A: Of course, that's the one thing we haven't talked about and that is that it's the thing that we don't spend much time -- we don't spend as much time agonizing over that question as we do over programs for **hardware and** budgets, readiness of forces and the normal things we do and that is the will of our good people. And, of course, we came out of a very long and traumatic experience in Vietnam. We're starting to come out of it; people will talk about these things, as I say two or three years ago they wouldn't. And I am still enough of an optimist to think that once the American people are informed, they will make the right decisions on things that are really important. I think the Congress will, too. I think they will step up things that are most important. But we certainly didn't act that way in Angola and no one involved in Congress is prohibiting us from spending money **to** provide some balance to the Soviet initiative which we conceivably could have -- that it would have done locally wasn't as important, I think, as what we would have done in the long range in terms of Soviet assessment of the United States. And not only Soviet but everybody else.

I had a discussion last week in London with the First **Sealord**, I guess **Ashmore** is his name, and we were just talking at dinner about the problems of the world, the Mid-East, and first and foremost NATO community, and he said, you know, we hadn't touched the prime problem in the world. And I said, what's that? He said the big question mark about the United States. Has the United States really got the stomach for this? Are they going to see it through?

Q: What did you **answer**?

A: I said, no, we **hadn't**. I wasn't going to discuss it with him; **I would** like to **acknowledge** it is one whale of a problem. And I could have been nasty and said, well, you all have experienced that,, how do you see it, or something, because **they did** just what you said and **then, Great** Britain, it's a pathetic thing. It **just makes** you want to cry. **They are** no longer a world power. All they have got are generals **and admirals and bands**.

MORE



(Transcript from an imperfect tape of a portion of an interview with General George S. Brown, and **Ranan** Lurie on April 12, 1976 transcribed October 18, 1976)

4.

Q: And history?

A: They do things in great style -- grand style, God, they do them big on the protocol side -- but it makes you sick to see their forces talk about what they can do... to feel like they can come back sometimes, and we're going to miss them, they are going to miss them in the Middle East, they had a way with those people out there that we just haven't, we couldn't acquire in twenty-five or thirty years.

Q: Speaking about the Middle East from a purely military point of view, would you say that from the American global strategic interest, militarily, is Israel and its forces more a burden or more a blessing from a pure military point of view, to the United States?

A: Well, I think, it's just got to be considered a burden. I had this same conversation with Javits right after I got in trouble down at Duke. We had breakfast and were talking and he said to me, can't you see the great strategic value of Israel to the United States and I said frankly no, which wasn't the point I was talking about at Duke at all, but my concern there is that they're a burden, now if the trends were reversed, then I could see in the long term where that might be a tremendous asset, where they would gain power and could bring about stability in the area.

Q: If Israel would win for instance?

A: Yeah, but you see the problem today is, today there is stability because Israel is strong. She **could whip** Syria and Egypt handily and there is nobody else in control in that area unless the Russians **took** a direct hand. By that I mean send forces in addition to equipment and advisors and that's not likely, it's just not worth the gain at this point.

But with all the money, the wealth, that the Arabs have through Saudi Arabia (inaudible) primarily, and Libya is secondary. To buy weapons, to train people, and they're breeding at a hell of a rate. Their birthrate -- their population growth is far greater than Israel, and the long term outlook is that the Arab states are going to overcome the deficiency that they've had, which is leadership, and technology, and educated people. I just don't see **any** -- it's going to take a complete change in outlook on Israel's part where up to this point at least she's maintained her position. And I must say if I were in their shoes, I don't know, I'd be in a terrible dilemma because she's surrounded by people who would just as soon see her pushed into the sea.

Q: You don't believe they really want to do it, to have a legitimate down-to-earth peace, the Arabs?

A: I think they do in their short term, by that I mean in 15-20 years, they have no other option. I would think that if, for instance, Saudi Arabia, which is the key to the thing as she has the bulk, could just go on a nation-building program, to keep totally occupied for a long time and then they helped Egypt to get on her feet economically at one time. They couldn't worry about Israel, but they've got a thing, they're very, very sincere about these Holy Lands. And some **accomodation** has got to be found where Jerusalem can be shared by the religions to whom it would be meaningful. But I can't see Israel as an asset to the United States today.

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(Transcript from an imperfect tape of a portion of an interview with General George S. Brown, and **Ranan** Lurie, on April 12, 1976, transcribed 5. October 18, 1976)

Q: This theory that's paralleling it, for instance, to France once France detached herself from Israel, the fact is that France lost any leverage **whatsoever** she had with the Arabs because she put herself out of the game.

A: Yes.

Q: Right now the United States is the only power, the only force in the world that has any leverage whatsoever on the Israelis. Therefore, they have tremendous clout with the Arabs.

A: That **is** exactly right. We have got a little with the Saudis, I think if we use it wisely because of the Saudis concern for communism.

Q: Right.

A: You know, I think, genuinely the Saudis are more concerned with the Soviets probably than they are with the Israelis.

Q: Right.

A: I think the Saudis are genuinely concerned about the Soviet supplies. They are concerned about Israel primarily because of the Holy Land, they bought an entree into Jerusalem. I think they genuinely have a concern for the PLO and all these other general problems that are not real heartburn issues with them, at least that's what I detect from my conversations.

Q: **Among your** way of thinking, which I happen to agree very much about the Saudis computing the communist background and so on, I wonder if the Saudis are really that fanatically in love with the PLO, due to the fact that the PLO basically once they establish **themselves**, you are going to have another Albania.

A : (Inaudible)

Q: Sure. Therefore, maybe it is just some kind of lip service because basically I don't know if they are so happy to have this kind of threat because...

A: Not only that, they get some land and establish the Palestinian state; it's not going to be a viable thing, somebody's going to have to support them. They're going to look at other Arabs and the fellow with the money is Saudi Arabia.

Q: Rich uncle.

A: That's right. Now the other concern over there is Iran and there wasn't any question of why she's building such a tremendous military force. She couldn't with her population, do anything that would provide protection from the Soviet Union, there's a real threat. She's got adequate power now **to handle** Afghanistan and Pakistan, so that's -- so if they were a threat you can discount that. **Iraq**, she's a little better match for Iraq now. Gosh, the programs the Shah has coming, it just makes you wonder about whether he doesn't some day have visions of the Persian Empire.

Q: Certainly.

A: They don't call that the Persian Gulf for nothing. But, of course, our concern with the Middle East is her tremendous oil. Our dependence runs about 17-18 percent now, I guess, of our national consumption and you have all of Europe, Japan, it's **just** got to continue **to** flow or the world is going to change, it's not going to be the world we know.



(Transcript from an imperfect tape of a portion of an interview with General George S. Brown, **and Ranan** Lurie, on April 12, 1976, transcribed October 18, 1976) 6:

Q: What about Lebanon, right now, changing into what we can call in pragmatic **terms**, a new very extreme left regime in a very vital spot?

A: It could, but I'm not prepared to be quite that optimistic. If this ceasefire...

Q: I'm sorry, I'm pessimistic, because I said it's becoming a left regime.

A: I say, you're pessimistic, I'm a little more optimistic. I think that if this ceasefire holds through the **end** of the month. which it must, which they have that extension, until today... the Syrians have **been very** constrained in their military outlook and have provided the stabilizing balance there if you could get a regime, something comes out of this election that his not as radical as you suspect it might be, it will have Syrian support and maybe, just **maybe, they** can carry it out. If it comes out too radical, I think we're going to have plenty of trouble over there.

Q: Interior?

A: Continued trouble within Lebanon. It's amazing. It's been amazing to me that they've been able to fight this long on a scale that they have and the tremendous destruction and disruption of the country and have the rest of the Middle East kind of keep hands off. Syrians have sort of boxed it in order to maintain some degree of control without actually giving in and forcing them to take this place over. The **Israelis** have been very restrained. Both have watched it; both have made statements the other understands.

Q: Are **these** Israelis restrained also because of the American pressure?

A: As far as I know it hasn't been necessary to apply it. I think they're restrained primarily **because** this isn't a provocation over which they **are prepared** to go to war, and the lesson of the last war to them was that the casualties were a heck of a lot heavier than they were prepared to take. A few years ago in some of the earlier wars, they were quickly decisive, the casualties were reasonable (and/or) didn't want to take any, This last time, they took very heavy casualties the first four or five weeks. I don't think that smell country wants to see that again or can afford to see politically **can't do it.** I don't think, they have had tremendous internal problems as you know, better than I, you've been over there (inaudible). They are overextended because of the tremendous military burden they have, and I guess that if we were in their straights, we would be too.

Q: What about this peculiar **situation** that NATO is facing right now with, I can envision being a cartoonist myself, NATO war room with some Communist generals, or of course, I am talking extremes here but generals who represent a government that may have a communist Minister of Defense or at least a communist Minister of Transportation.

A: Well, of course, Kissinger has said we can't permit it.

Q: What can we do in order to execute this non-permission?

A: Well, we can do several things. The Council of Ministers, and under that, the Secretary General and Defense Ministers **can actually** take steps to restrict the distribution of any classified material. They can have restricted sessions of any council, particularly on the military side, as we have done from time to time with Portugal. We have done continuously with France when she opted out of the military side and we have done to a degree with . . .

(END OF TAPE)

