

SECRET**DRAFT WORKING PAPERS**

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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**MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR
 NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

SUBJECT: Communications Between the US and USSR in Time of Crisis (U)

(U) The attached paper responds to your request for a description and evaluation of communications between the US and USSR in time of crisis.

(S) The paper concentrates on the capabilities and procedures associated with the USA-USSR Direct Communications Link (DCL-MOLINK or "Hot Line") which is operated by the Department of Defense. The normal diplomatic channels and circuits maintained by the Department of State are available when time is not a critical factor. In emergencies, however, the MOLINK provides the most rapid and direct communications linkage between the President of the United States and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Also included with the paper is a copy of a September 30, 1976 Protocol on the Use of Immediate Notifications in Implementation of the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971. The 1976 Protocol becomes effective on March 30, 1977 and provides for reduced MOLINK transmission times through the use of pre-agreed short messages, consisting of a code word and numerical designator.

(U) This report is based on data provided by the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and has been coordinated with the Department of State.

Attachment:
 a/s

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Classified by -----
 SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
 EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652. AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED
 EVERY TWO YEAR INTERVALS. DECLASSIFIED ON 31 Dec 1985

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SECRETCommunications Between the US and USSR in Time of Crisis (U)

1. (U) Two direct methods are available to the President for communicating with the USSR. In those situations where time is not a factor, communication through normal diplomatic channels and circuitry maintained by the Department of State will be available. In situations requiring rapid notification, the USA-USSR Direct Communications Link (DCL-MOLINK) operated by the Department of Defense will normally be used.

2. (S) The National Military Command Center (NMCC) in the Pentagon, is the primary Washington MOLINK terminal, and is responsible for routine testing, message accountability and translation services. A second terminal, in the Alternate National Military Command Center (ANMCC) near Fort Ritchie, Maryland, has the capability to serve as an alternate center for originating and receiving messages. NMCC personnel are responsible for periodic testing of this terminal, and for manning and operating it should the need arise. A third terminal, located in the White House, can act as an independent center for originating and receiving messages using special privacy and override features. The White House terminal is tested, manned and operated by White House personnel, though translator personnel may be relocated from the NMCC at White House request. It is anticipated, however, that all official exchanges of messages will be via the NMCC terminal unless otherwise directed by the President or his Assistant for National Security Affairs.

3. (S) All outgoing messages require Presidential authorization either directly from the President or through the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, or Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. The text of an outgoing message may be transmitted from the White House to the NMCC by secure long distance Xerox (LDX) secure teletype, secure telephone, or courier. Before releasing the message, the Deputy Director for Operations (NMCC) must contact the White House Situation Room and confirm that the text received is authentic and has Presidential approval. The message is then transmitted to the Moscow terminal. This process may take as little as five minutes, depending on the length and urgency of the message. All US initiated messages are transmitted in English. All USSR initiated messages are received in Russian.

4. (U) A more detailed description of facilities, procedures, and experience is provided in Tab A. Contained in Tab B, is a copy of a protocol between the US and USSR which describes accelerated communications procedures for use in connection with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971. The accelerated procedures become effective on March 30, 1977 and permit the use of pre-agreed short messages consisting of a code word and a numerical designator to reduce transmission time in emergency situations.

Attachments:

a/s

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MOLINK PROCEDURES

I. LINKAGE

A. WHITE HOUSE - MOLINK (NMCC)

1. KY-3 Secure Phone - used for voice communications between MOLINK and White House Situation Room.
2. Red Analog secure phone -
 - a. Used for conference calls including MOLINK, White House, and NMCC.
 - b. Back up for KY-3 to White House Situation Room.
3. Secure Long Distance Xerox (LDX) to White House Situation Room (hard copy communications).
4. Secure teletype: alternate means for hard copy communications.
5. Courier.
6. Deployment of MOLINK personnel to White House Direct Communications Link (DCL) facility.

B. MOLINK - USSR

Four teletype circuits:

1. Primary circuit (TGP-1): Secure teletype system uses two trans-Atlantic cables to London and diverse routes to Moscow.
2. Secondary circuit (TGP-2): Secure teletype system uses single trans-Atlantic cable to Rome and diverse routes to Moscow.
3. Satellite circuits (TGP-3 and TGP-4):
 - a. ~~Secure teletype system uses both US Intelsat and Soviet Molniya satellite systems.~~ Routed via landline from terminals to earth stations in the vicinity of Washington, D. C. and Moscow and then by satellite from earth station to earth station.
 - b. Still not officially operational but highly reliable and could be used if necessary.
 - c. Expected to be officially operational in 1977.

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C. ALTERNATE DCL TERMINALS

1. White House: MOLINK personnel deploy to White House Communication Agency facility on request from White House.
2. ANMCC
 - a. Manned by MOLINK personnel when activated.
 - b. Tested by MOLINK personnel on monthly basis.
 - c. Communications with White House available through Secure facsimile (LDX) and secure Red Analog phone.

II. PROCESSING AND TRANSMISSION**A. OUTGOING MESSAGES**

Very little time is required to process and transmit a message. A two or three sentence NUCFLASH message approved by the President during a NUCFLASH conference could be transmitted to Moscow within five minutes. A more lengthy, less urgent message would take somewhat longer. Personnel in the Washington and Moscow terminals work together closely on an hourly basis and maintain not only a high level of skill but a close professional rapport which makes possible very rapid and effective communications. Procedure for delivery of message from Moscow DCL terminal to Secretary Brezhnev is unknown but experience indicates that it is extremely rapid.

B. INCOMING MESSAGES

In the event of an incoming message, the Deputy Director for Operations (NMCC) notifies the Senior Watch Officer at the White House Situation Room. As soon as the message is translated a copy is sent to the White House Situation Room. Translation time varies with the length and complexity of the message; however, in the past, official government message translation time has been approximately ten minutes.

- III. PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE. Former presidents have chosen not to release information about their uses of MOLINK, except for the exchanges which occurred during the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict. The line has been used infrequently since that time. Experience has shown that a message transmitted via MOLINK will receive the immediate attention of the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

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PROTOCOL

ON

THE USE OF IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATIONS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF OUTBREAK OF NUCLEAR WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1971

Pursuant to the provisions and in implementation of the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971, hereinafter referred to as the Agreement on Measures, and for the purpose of achieving maximum reduction of transmission time over the USA-USSR Direct Communications Link of notifications provided for in the Agreement on Measures in the event of emergency situations, the Parties thereto, within the framework of the Standing Consultative Commission, have agreed as follows:

1. To accomplish immediate notification over the USA-USSR Direct Communications Link in accordance with the objectives and provisions of the Agreement on Measures in the event of emergency situations, unless, in accordance with Article 5 thereof, the notifying Party deems another form of notification more appropriate, pre-agreed short messages, consisting of a code word and a numerical designator, shall be used.

The code word in a short message means that the message constitutes immediate notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures, and the numerical designator indicates the number of the emergency situation to which that notification corresponds.

For each short message to be transmitted, each Party possesses a corresponding pre-agreed text of a full message.

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2. The Parties shall be guided by the following agreed provisions regarding emergency situations, corresponding short messages to be transmitted, and pre-agreed texts of full messages:

a. Situation One: an accidental, unauthorized or any other unexplained incident involving a possible detonation of a nuclear weapon which could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR.

Short message to be transmitted: ATOM 111

Text of full message:

"An accidental, unauthorized or other unexplained incident, involving a possible detonation of a nuclear weapon which could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war, has occurred.

This message constitutes notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971.

"- Details follow."

b. Situation Two: detection by missile warning systems of unidentified objects, if such occurrence could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR.

Short message to be transmitted: ATOM 222

Text of full message:

"Our missile warning systems have detected unidentified objects, and this occurrence could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war.

This message constitutes notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971.

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We request urgent clarification. For our part, we shall provide appropriate additional information as soon as possible."

c. Situation Three: detection of interference with missile warning systems or with related communications facilities, if such occurrence could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR.

Short message to be transmitted: ATOM 333

Text of full message:

"Interference with missile warning systems or with related communications facilities has been detected, and this occurrence could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war.

This message constitutes notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971.

We request urgent clarification. For our part, we shall provide appropriate additional information as soon as possible."

d. Situation Four: an unsuccessful launch of a missile which is not carrying a nuclear weapon, as a result of which the flight trajectory of the missile has extended or may extend beyond national territory in such a direction that, in the judgment of the Party on whose side the aforementioned missile launch occurred, this event could be misinterpreted by the other Party, and when the former Party deems notification to be warranted by the interests of averting the risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR.

Short message to be transmitted: ATOM 444

Text of full message:

"As a result of an unsuccessful launch of a missile which is not carrying a nuclear weapon, its flight trajectory has

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extended or may extend beyond our national territory in such a direction that this event could be misinterpreted.

This message is sent for the purpose of precluding the possibility of misinterpretation of our actions and constitutes notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971.

Details follow."

e. Situation Five: an unexplained nuclear incident when one Party, due to the possibility of the actions of the other Party being misinterpreted, deems receiving clarification to be warranted by the interests of averting the risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR.

Short message to be transmitted: ATOM-555

Text of full message:

"An unexplained nuclear incident has been detected, and, to reduce the possibility of your actions being misinterpreted and to avert the risk of outbreak of nuclear war, we request urgent clarification.

This message constitutes notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971.

For our part, we shall provide appropriate additional information as soon as possible."

f. Situation Six: an unexplained nuclear incident when one Party, due to the possibility of its actions being misinterpreted by the other Party, deems notification to be warranted by the

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interests of averting the risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR.

Short message to be transmitted: ATOM 666

Text of full message:

"An unexplained nuclear incident has occurred, and, to reduce the possibility of our actions being misinterpreted and to avert the risk of outbreak of nuclear war, we provide this notification in accordance with the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 30, 1971.

Details follow."

3. The Party which has received from the other Party a message on any one of the situations provided for in paragraph 2 of this Protocol shall immediately take all actions within its power in accordance with the objectives and provisions of the Agreement on Measures in the interests of reducing the risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the USA and the USSR. In addition, when receiving messages in accordance with subparagraphs (b), (c) and (e) of paragraph 2 of this Protocol, that Party shall ensure urgent transmission of appropriate information at its disposal regarding the situation which is the subject of the request, and when receiving messages on the other situations provided for in paragraph 2, shall transmit appropriate information at its disposal regarding the situation which is the subject of the notification, as it deems necessary.

The Party which has sent a message to the other Party concerning any of the situations specified shall act in the spirit of the obligations ensuing from the Agreement on Measures, and

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shall also ensure transmission of appropriate additional information at its disposal regarding the situation which is the subject of the notification.

4. For the purpose of further reducing the transmission time of the short messages set forth in paragraph 2 over the USA-USSR Direct Communications Link the Parties shall improve, if necessary, their organizational and technical arrangements for transmission of these messages.

5. This Protocol shall enter into force six months after signature and shall remain in force for the duration of the Agreement on Measures, and may be amended by the Standing Consultative Commission as it deems appropriate.

Done at Geneva on September 30, 1976, in two copies, each in the English and Russian languages, both texts being equally authentic.

Commissioner,
United States of America

Sidney H. Newmyer

Commissioner,
Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics

[Signature]