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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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April 19, 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

FROM: The Situation Room

SUBJECT: Additional Information Items

Gloomy Syrian Political Forecast: Syria does not expect that the Soviet Union will be able to intervene in the Middle East on behalf of the Palestinians or Syria, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Soviet backing is expected to be confined to words and political support, which will not be effective given the expected political developments in the area. [REDACTED] expects U.S. pressure on the Syrian regime to "increase and intensify", and feels it will be impossible for the "Steadfastness and Confrontation Front" to withstand "Israeli-U.S. plots and Arab collusion with the U.S." unless Egypt returns to its ranks.

FRG Debates ERW: Acrimonious debate among Bonn's political leaders over the President's decision to postpone production of the ERW reached its peak at the April 13 Bundestag session. According to a State analysis, the furor over this decision is expected to subside, but Schmidt is likely to be vulnerable to continuing challenge over his handling of relations with the U.S.

The Christian Democrats directed their fire at Schmidt, asserting that European procrastination was really what had triggered the White House decision. They accused the Chancellor, in particular, of withholding adequate support for the ERW in order to appease his party's left wing. Schmidt and Genscher argued that the deferral of production neither jeopardized the ERW's value as a bargaining counter nor foreclosed its ultimate deployment if the disarmament option should fail. Schmidt reiterated the condition that support for deployment of the ERW in West Germany required a NATO decision, as well as the willingness of another continental state to have this weapon deployed on its territory.

State Department review completed

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Brazilian Reactions to President's Visit:

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that the Brazilian Government (GOB) believes the primary motive of the President's visit was "peace making." The GOB considers the fact that President Carter said "not one word" directly about Brazil's human rights problems to be the single most significant indication of this "peace making" attitude. GOB officials were gratified that the President spoke of human rights only in global terms. The GOB does not view the omission of the human rights question as a sign of weakness, but it does believe that the President is softening his stance on human rights, while maintaining his image for U.S. public consumption. Geisel reportedly considers this "new attitude" the single greatest benefit from the trip and is now more receptive in general to the President than he had been previously. He has told his advisors that President Carter was "wiser than I thought."

Pinochet Makes Changes: President Pinochet has responded to a combination of internal and external pressures by stepping up the pace of transition to a constitutional government and by moving to improve Chile's international image. Pinochet, however, remains in firm control of this process and retains considerable political leeway. He has also moved to consolidate his position and to deal with outstanding problems by reshuffling his cabinet. Pinochet probably recognizes, according to a State analysis, that external leverage on his government is declining as Chile's economic situation improves and as foreign investors and lenders return. Nevertheless, he also recognizes that the internal process of constitutionalization probably would proceed more smoothly if problems in Chile's international relations caused by its human rights problems were resolved.

Thai Preparations for Vice President's Visit: Kriangsak requested recently that the Thai National Security Council (NSC) commence preparations for the Vice President's visit to Thailand on May 4-5. Subjects to be discussed include U.S. commitments concerning future U.S. military assistance to Thailand, political support to ASEAN, and financial and other assistance to Thailand's hill tribes and refugee programs. On April 5, Under Secretary of State and former Thai Ambassador to the U.S. Arun characterized Thai relations with the U.S. as "generally smooth." He said, however,

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that Thailand is disturbed by the weakening world posture of the U.S. in relation to that of the USSR. Arun added that the key issue in Thai/U.S. relations is the need for more U.S. military sales credits to Thailand and said that Thailand would like to see less restrictive trade controls between the U.S. and Thailand.

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