

U.S. Studying Protocol Problems And Other Issues of Soviet Trip

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WASHINGTON, March 30—The giant United States Government machine is slowly gearing itself for President Nixon's trip to Moscow in May.

Specialists on Soviet affairs in the White House, the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency have put in 12 to 14 hours a day trying to anticipate the big and little problems that may arise. But as in many Washington operations, there has been much spinning of wheels without much forward motion.

Many substantive issues that will arise during the talks have not yet been discussed in depth because Government positions

may change in the next few weeks. But a great deal of time is being devoted to solving such nagging questions as what kind of present Mr. Nixon should give Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet party leader.

Mr. Nixon is known to pay close attention to this aspect of his travels, but he usually likes to have some suggestions from the State Department's protocol office, which has on its staff a specialist, L. Nicholas Ruwe, who is the Government's "present man."

Mr. Ruwe said today that there had been only some pre-

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U.S. Gearing Itself for Nixon's Trip

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liminary thinking about presents for the Russian trip. Soviet affairs specialists in the Government have been asked to come up with ideas, he said.

Working under the rule that any gift must be of American origin, the specialists have been having a lively discussion among themselves about possible presents.

Among the suggestions have been an Accutron clock mounted in California redwood; a Corvette sports car (Mr. Brezhnev has expressed a love for cars, and received a Renault and a Citroën while in Paris last fall); a hunting rifle or shotgun for Mr. Brezhnev's bear-hunting weekends; a stereo set, and a home movie-making outfit.

Those ideas are for personal gifts. A more ceremonial gift on behalf of the United States people will probably be given to the Soviet people, represented by Nikolai V. Podgorny, the titular chief of state.

Brezhnev Proves Elusive

Mr. Nixon has also expressed interest in finding out as much as he can about Mr. Brezhnev, with whom he expects to have far-ranging talks. But Mr. Brezhnev has proven an elusive figure in his seven and a half years in office and has received no American except Gus Hall, the Communist party leader.

Neither the late Ambassador Llewellyn E. Thompson nor the current Ambassador, Jacob D. Beam, has had more than a brief conversation with him at a reception. Mr. Thompson had met Mr. Brezhnev before his

taking the top party post, however, and his early reports have provided some of the material used in compiling the Central Intelligence Agency and State Department analysis.

Chancellor Willy Brandt of West Germany has had extensive talks with Mr. Brezhnev, and has conveyed his impressions to Mr. Nixon. Egon Bahr, Mr. Brandt's close adviser, was in Washington for lunch on Tuesday with Henry A. Kissinger, the White House adviser on national security, and the two men discussed the Soviet leaders, among other topics.

The Administration has reportedly been somewhat disappointed in the reluctance of the French to provide more data on Mr. Brezhnev, who visited Paris last fall.

Brezhnev Shown in Photo

Mr. Nixon's experience with the Russians dates from 1959, when as Vice President he made an 11-day trip that included the famous Moscow "kitchen debate" with Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev at an American exhibition in Sokolniki Park.

Mr. Brezhnev was photographed during that debate, looking over Mr. Nixon's shoulder, and that picture, by The Associated Press, appeared in The New York Times and other papers on July 25, 1959. That photo has now become much sought after in the Government, and calls have been made to The Associated Press to obtain it.

During that visit, Mr. Nixon addressed the Soviet people for 30 minutes on Soviet television and his text was printed in Pravda, the Communist party newspaper, the next day. It was

the first time a Western leader had spoken to the Russians directly.

The White House has indicated to Soviet authorities that Mr. Nixon would like to speak on television again, but no response has yet been received from Moscow.

In the meantime, officials here have been drafting memos on what Mr. Nixon should say in such a speech. "It would be a great opportunity to explain the Vietnamization policy to the Soviet people," one aide said.

Itinerary Unsettled

Except for the starting date for the trip, May 22, few details have been worked out. The White House and the Russians have yet to agree on what other cities Mr. Nixon should visit or the exact length of the visit.

An advance party from the White House will go to Moscow sometime next month to work out these details. In the meantime there has been some active discussion within the Administration on what places Mr. Nixon might visit outside of Moscow.

Frank J. Shakespeare Jr. of the United States Information Agency, has suggested that Mr. Nixon travel to a non-Russian city such as Kiev, the capital of The Ukraine, as a gesture of support to minority ethnic groups. Others have advocated Tbilisi, the capital of Soviet Georgia, as a "fun city."

At the White House, plans for the Moscow trip are being coordinated by Mr. Kissinger and Helmut Sonnenfeldt, his chief deputy for Soviet affairs. At the State Department, Martin J. Hillenbrand, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, and his deputy, Richard T. Davis, have directed the paper flow.

"Six weeks ago, everything that came to us had to be treated in terms of 'How will Peking react?'" one National Security Council aide said the other day. "Now we have to see things through a Soviet prism."