

systems, etc., have changed the value of a place like Suez, obviously. The British realization of this was one reason why they were willing to get out of the Suez base in 1954, negotiate a deal with the Egyptians and not hang onto it at all costs. And the same thing has happened to some other positions previously considered vital.

Some of the airbases which we had in the early post-war period - Dhahran, for one - are now longer considered as essential to our global position of deterrence against Soviet aggression. We have had positions in the Middle East which have been important for Middle Eastern strategic reasons and also for global strategic reasons, and both pictures, I think, have changed to some degree. Nevertheless, the basic problem is the same; the basic question for us, which is to deny the Middle Eastern area to the Soviet Union. Whether you look at it from a military or political point of view, it's the same and it's still there. Some of the methods have changed, but our basic strategic task is still that same one.

Well, there's not much doubt, it seems to me, about Soviet aims in the Middle East. There's not much doubt about the kind of long-range strategy which we are up against on their part. This has been declared openly enough, not only under Stalin, but during Khrushchev's period. We don't have to assume that military means are going to be the main method by which they will attempt to establish their own control in the Middle Eastern countries. That's certainly not ruled out, but nevertheless, one thing which seems to be quite apparent from the record of recent years, is the great caution which the Soviets have shown about get-