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was worried less about civil war in China, *per se*, than about the chances of Soviet intervention on Mao Zedong's side. Soviet occupation troops had yet to withdraw from the northeastern province of Manchuria; Truman wanted no confrontation in China with the Kremlin, whose designs on Western Europe already preoccupied Washington.

Hence, Marshall gave only conditional support to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists, even as he hoped to avoid a Communist takeover. Marshall, "the reluctant statesman," had few illusions about either side, but at one point, writes Levine, he thought (naively) that a coalition could be formed by nonextremists in both parties. He actually obtained a temporary cease-fire and a tentative agreement on a coalition regime before fierce fighting broke out in Manchuria in late 1946 as both sides tried to exploit the Russians' departure.

Thus, the 13-month Marshall mission failed to avert civil war and Mao's triumph in 1949. But, in Levine's view, the United States and the Soviets behaved circumspectly with regard to China. It did not become an issue between them. And Marshall's diplomatic apprenticeship served him well as Secretary of State (1947-50); he rebuffed suggestions that sending in U.S. forces could save Chiang's regime.

Yom Kippur Crisis

"The Yom Kippur Alert" by Scott D. Sagan, in *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1979), P.O. Box 984, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

"In a play of mystery and hazard," writes Sagan, a Harvard teaching fellow, President Nixon on October 24, 1973, approved a worldwide U.S. military alert in the middle of the Yom Kippur War between Israel and the Arab states. Why?

The machinery of Soviet-American détente diplomacy had broken down. Essentially, says Sagan, the U.S. alert was a response to uncertainty over Soviet intentions. Moscow, like Washington, wanted the war to end quickly in a stalemate and a cease-fire. But Egypt's President Anwar Sadat panicked as the advancing Israelis cut off his Third Army: He called for Soviet and American forces to enforce a cease-fire. On October 23, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev echoed this proposal in a message to Nixon, hinting that if Nixon held back, the Soviets might intervene on their own.

With hindsight, Sagan writes, it seems that Moscow only wanted to send a "harsh signal" to Washington to halt the Israeli advance. But at the time, the Americans could not be sure; and "raising the crisis to precarious heights was seen as the most effective way of deterring Moscow." Next day, a mutually face-saving solution was achieved as the Soviet Union accepted a UN resolution to send a non-superpower force to supervise a Mideast cease-fire.

The crisis showed that the two superpowers' ability to control events in the Mideast was limited; Egypt and Israel were less concerned with a global confrontation than with their own immediate needs. The lesson: Moscow and Washington must cooperate better in the future.