

JULY 30, 1975

Brezhnev-Ford Pool Report

The Brezhnev motorcade arrived precisely at 9:30 a.m. Chairman rode in a long, black Soviet limousine called the Sil, modeled after about a 1972 special Lincoln. Chairman emerged smiling and nodding to newsmen. Appeared to be in excellent health and spirits, later claiming his weight had been stable for six months. (Kissinger joked that his weight had been stable "within 10 kilograms or so.")

President Ford and Kissinger met Brezhnev and Gromyko on the steps of the Embassy residence. Helicopter buzzing overhead obscured most of their brief small talk. At one point, Ford gestured to photographers and reporters and told Brezhnev, "These are your friends and mine." Then he added, "But mostly of Kissinger."

The two leaders wore charcoal grey suits with blue and white ties. Pool was admitted to the residence after the participants were seated at a small dining room table, Soviets on one side and Americans on the other, five on each side.

After the joking reference to their weight problems, they talked mostly about the Apollo-Soyuz space flight. Brezhnev, speaking through his interpreter, Viktor Sukharov, said, "We've done a very good job in space." Ford replied, "The handshake in space was indicative of the progress we've been making (presumably in detente,)" Brezhnev said, "Your boys came down at 1 a.m. Our TV was still working to show it all." Ford said, "I saw your boys live in the afternoon." Brezhnev said, "It's really fantastic when you think of it. They start from different places on earth and meet in space." Ford agreed, saying scientists have developed that capability now.

As the pool was being herded out, Brezhnev appeared to be kidding Kissinger about his secretiveness. He said, "I know Kissinger's mind works that way. I take something and put it in my pocket and nobody knows about it." As he spoke he gestured toward a pack of cigarettes on the table and pretended to hide it in his pocket.

Nessen said afterward Kissinger will hold a press conference at Finlandia Hall immediately after the close of the first plenary session, exact time and place to be announced.

Dudman/St. Louis Post Dispatch
Pierpoint/CBS

###