



DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines
By WHTM, NARA, Date 10/24/00

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PLACE: OEOB Office
TIME: 11:50 a.m.
DATE: Tuesday, December 11, 1973

SUBJECT: Courtesy Call by the Soviet Ambassador

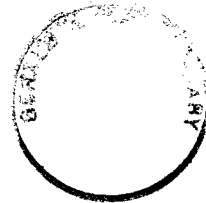
PARTICIPANTS:

Ambassador Anatoliv F. Dobrynin

The Vice President

Mr. Hartmann

Major General J. M. Dunn



The meeting began with a brief photo opportunity for an impressive number of still and TV photographers.

Upon their departure, the Ambassador stated that he had sought this early opportunity to call upon the Vice President after receiving specific instructions from his Government to do so. He wished to convey the best wishes and congratulations of the Soviet leaders upon the Vice President's accession to his high office. He also stressed the importance attached in the USSR to continuing good relations between our countries -- "It is literally the peace of the world which is at stake." He finds his assignment here occasionally difficult and certainly demanding, but is honored to have been chosen to represent his country in the United States because this is the most important position in the diplomatic service.

The Vice President thanked the Ambassador for his courtesy and indicated complete support for efforts still underway to improve further good, mutual relations between our countries. He would make whatever contribution he could working closely with the President and the Secretary of State. He intended to work also with the Congress, and expected a softening in the attitude of some members now less disposed toward further improvement in relations with the USSR

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than the Administration. He expressed the hope that the vote taken in the House today regarding MFN status for the USSR would not be adverse, but stated that, in any event, the legislation would not be considered in the Senate before early spring of 1974. There would be ample opportunity to make a good case for favorable consideration before that time.

Ambassador Dobrynin emphasized a very considerable progress has been made in establishing friendly relations between our two countries in the last five years. More than fifty percent of all agreements reached between the United States and the USSR have been accomplished during this Administration. The principal problem facing us now is the Middle East situation. Soviet leaders hope for a good settlement and are pleased with the progress of SALT. A permanent agreement is now in view, but it will take further strong efforts by both sides to reach it. Clearly, the Congress requires more explanation of the Russian position on emigration. The USSR is taking a stand that those who want to go should go. They have no desire to retain anyone who doesn't wish to stay in Russia. However, there are certain security problems in some instances. Israeli influence with certain Congressmen is clear. The Ambassador stands ready to cooperate in making information available to them but wishes to deal with the Congress on this problem through Administration contacts. He is very confident, however, that the question is going to be solved. Regarding the Russian request for MFN, they simply want the same treatment which has been given already to more than 100 other nations. The United States now stands in the number one position as exporter to the USSR. It is difficult to understand why American labor feels that jobs are threatened by MFN treatment. On the contrary, job opportunities are expanded when trade increases.

MBFR also is not an unsurmountable problem.

The talks will take time but with regard to the basics, the two countries are more closely aligned each with the other than either is with its own allies. It is more difficult now for small nations to play off one of the super powers against the other. Thus, with growing maturity, it becomes more difficult for other nations to

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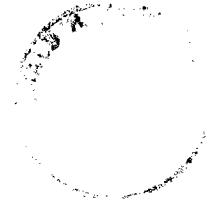
profit from differences between the United States and the USSR.

With regard to the United Nations, the principal problem is that certain small countries -- particularly the African countries do not yet understand that their voting power does not translate readily into an ability to implement policy. The United Nations' participation in the Middle East, however, has been most useful. The participation of the Secretary General in the opening session in Geneva is good, and the provision of the United Nation's flag to truce teams and observers is also helpful.

The important thing to remember about the current Middle East crisis is that it gives us all a chance to push forward toward the happy day when all such crises may be eliminated. Ambassador Dobrynin then indicated to the Vice President that he might wish at some point to drop in on the Geneva Conference simply to emphasize the great importance which the United States attaches to it. Vice Presidential travel abroad can be very important as a diplomatic initiative.

For now, the main thing is to halt the war permanently, keep the peace.

The meeting concluded with a further exchange of pleasantries.



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