

**The original documents are located in Box 124, folder “Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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July 1, 1975

SOLZHENITSYN ON DETENTE

In an emotional speech to the AFL-CIO, the first he has delivered to a Western audience since his exile last year, Alexander Solzhenitsyn scolded the United States for its concessions to Soviet communism in the name of detente. His condemnation of Kissinger's Nobel prize for peace and of the United States concessions toward communism may provoke questions on the President's attitude toward Solzhenitsyn and detente.

Q: What is the President's reaction to Nobel laureate Solzhenitsyn's criticism of the U.S. concessions to the Soviets on detente and to Secretary Kissinger's acceptance of the Nobel prize for peace in 1973?

A: The President's views on detente are well known. From the outset of his Administration, the President has stressed his commitment to working for improved relations with the Soviet Union in the interests of world peace. He believes that such an improved relationship based on strict reciprocity is in our real national interest. In his April 10 speech to the Congress, he observed that during this process, we have had no illusions and that we are dealing with a nation that reflects different principles and is our competitor in many parts of the globe. (FYI: We would have no direct comment on Secretary Kissinger's Nobel peace prize.)

August 12

From Margy

Rustand's comments on Solynitzen

- q: Would you comments on reports suggesting that President Ford's appointments secretary, Warren Rustand, stated that recent White House snubbing of Alexander Solytzen was the result of an agreement by the United States not to exploit the poet's departure should the Soviets permit it.
- a: We have seen these reports. If you check further, you will determine that these reports do not accurately reflect Mr. Rustand's statements.
- q: Mr. Rustand's statements notwithstanding, are the facts of the report accurate?
- a: We can state categorically that there were no such arrangements.
- q: How can you be sure?
- A: To be certain we have reviewed the records of meetings and discussions between US and Soviet officials at the time of the poet's expulsion. We found no evidence that an arrangement of any kind was ever even discussed on Alexander Solynitzen's departure from the Soviet Union.

(Cleared by Bud McFarlane who talked to Scowcroft. Scowcroft should have a copy of this before you release it)

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SOLZHEN 7-3

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- PRESIDENT FORD IS "NOT CLEAR WHAT HE WOULD GAIN" FROM A MEETING WITH EXILED SOVIET AUTHOR ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN, AND NO GET-TOGETHER WITH THE NOBEL PRIZE WINNER IS SCHEDULED, PRESS SECRETARY RON NESSEN HAS TOLD REPORTERS.

IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS WEDNESDAY, NESSEN CONFIRMED THAT REPUBLICAN SENS. JESSE HELMS OF NORTH CAROLINA AND STROM THURMOND OF SOUTH CAROLINA HAD SUGGESTED FORD MEET THE WRITER.

FOR ONE THING, NESSEN SAID, THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE HAS BEEN TOO CROWDED THE LAST TWO DAYS TO SCHEDULE SUCH A SESSION WITH SOLZHENITSYN, WHO SPOKE MONDAY AT A WASHINGTON DINNER AND STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE U.S. POLICY OF DETENTE WITH RUSSIA.

"FOR IMAGE REASONS THE PRESIDENT DOES LIKE TO HAVE SOME SUBSTANCE IN HIS MEETING," THE PRESS SECRETARY ADDED. "IT'S NOT CLEAR WHAT HE WOULD GAIN BY A MEETING WITH SOLZHENITSYN." HE SAID FORD HAD READ SOLZHENITSYN'S SPEECH AND IS FAMILIAR WITH HIS VIEWS.

NESSEN SAID THE SENATORS' SUGGESTION WAS SUBMITTED TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL FOR ADVICE, BUT SAID THAT WAS ROUTINE -- THE WHITE HOUSE "STAFF SYSTEM ALWAYS RUNS" SUCH REQUESTS PAST THE NSC TO GET THEIR IDEAS.

THE RUSSIAN DISSIDENT, AT THE DINNER IN HIS HONOR HOSTED BY AFL-CIO PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY, URGED AMERICANS TO AID THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TOTALITARIANISM IN HIS NATIVE LAND.

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Q She is still around and is going to be around for a whole week. Why was that?

MR. NESSEN: I don't think she is going to be around for a whole week, is my understanding.

Q The East side says she is not leaving until July 7.

Q Ron, Larry Speakes said because the request was for Monday, only, that that was a day on which the President was unable to see him. Now an AFL-CIO spokesman tells me Solzhenitsyn will be in town through this weekend. Will the President ask him to come over?

MR. NESSEN: There are no plans for the President to see Mr. Solzhenitsyn.

Q Ron, I would like to ask this. One of the President's recent guests was Kaunda of Zambia, who Congressman Rangel said is a great leader that he was honored to have in the White House. Now, Kaunda has just seized control of the entire press of his country, and on that basis, I would like to know why is it that -- (Laughter) Could you give us some guidance? Why is it that the President finds room to entertain two Soviet Generals on the 38th anniversary of a polar flight and Dr. Kaunda, but no room for a Nobel Prize winner? Could you give us some real guidance on that?

MR. NESSEN: I tried to, Les. The meeting was suggested for Monday, and there was no room on the President's schedule.

Q He is going to be here.

MR. NESSEN: The fact is that there is no meeting scheduled with Mr. Solzhenitsyn. As I say, the President read what he said the other night and is familiar with his views. It does seem to me that we have talked from time to time here about doing things for -- would you call it image reasons. The President does like to have some substance in his meetings, and it is not clear now what the President would gain from such a meeting that he has not gained by reading Mr. Solzhenitsyn's remarks.

The specific reason why there was not a meeting Monday as suggested by Senator Helms and Thurmond is there was no time on Monday.

PRESS GUIDANCE - 9/2/76

WINSTON LORD ON SOLZHENITSYN

Q: Does the President agree with Winston Lord that Solzhenitsyn is a "Fascist"?

A: The President noted that today's column points out that Mr. Lord has denied calling Mr. Solzhenitsyn a fascist. With that denial on the record, the President feels that the allegations of this column, based on reports from an off-the-record briefing, do not merit further comment.

If pressed on President's views:

The President does not believe Alexander Solzhenitsyn is a fascist. As you know, the President has expressed his admiration for the great Russian writer on several occasions.

COMMENT ON SOLZHENITSYN

Q. What is the President's reaction to Solzhenitsyn's decision to move to the U.S.? Did the President personally approve the granting of a visa? Will the President invite Solzhenitsyn to meet with him?

A. The President is pleased Mr. Solzhenitsyn has decided to make his residence in the United States. The U.S. can ~~benefit~~ benefit from having a man of his talent and ideals join our society.

As he has stated before, the President would be pleased to meet with Mr. Solzhenitsyn if he should desire to meet with the President. However, we will also respect his expressed desire for privacy, which I understand was a factor in his desire to come to America.

FYI:

The visa was routinely granted by the Department of State in a low-key manner, consistent with Solzhenitzen's desire for privacy. The President was not consulted or informed. Solzhenitsyn entered the United States from Canada in August.