

JULY 30, 1975

POOL REPORT #4

Brezhnev Departure and Travel From U.S. Embassy Residence to Finlandia Hall to Embassy Residence

I think you probably already know that Nessen came out and gave us a little fill on the meeting with Wilson. He said that the topics discussed were Turkey -- the Southern Mediterranean, which he said meant Turkey -- CSCE, MBFR, the Middle East and economics. He called it a cordial meeting. It was held over breakfast.

For planning purposes only, Secretary of State Kissinger may come here and brief reporters later this afternoon. They are having some difficulty because of Kissinger's schedule. He has to be over at the Conference, and he also has to be dressed in a tuxedo.

He is staying over there for the dinner, and it is not certain whether he will come here or whether they will have it there, but they are trying to iron it out, if they can have one. Ron says that Kissinger is agreeable, but the main problem is logistics, and he will have more on this in a little while.

The four people from the American delegation that will attend the dinner tonight are the President, Secretary of State and two Ambassadors, he said. I take it that means Stoessel and the Ambassador to this country.

He identifies the two Ambassadors. The Ambassador to Finland is one and the other is Ambassador Albert Sherer. He is the American Ambassador to Prague, and he led the American delegation to CSCE during Phase 2 in Geneva.

The President's speech before this Conference will be on Friday. The text will be available probably Thursday in the p.m., according to Nessen. In some color material, he said he is keeping up with events back in Washington, mainly through Don Rumsfeld and Phil Buchen and other members of the staff there.

He said that he is getting together some reading material, which he may, while he is sitting in the Conference, as the speeches are going on, as the opportunity affords itself sit and do some of his homework back at home, some of the paperwork.

Last night Nessen said the President was extremely relaxed. He took a sauna. He had a drink on the patio in the evening. He said that the President liked Poland and he liked the Polish people very much. He felt that the meetings and the visits there did a lot for Polish-American relations.

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Now, the participants in the head-to-head meetings you probably know began at about 9:30 and they ended -- at least the two men came out -- at about 11:35 to 11:40. The time is not precise.

The participants on the American side included the President, Secretary Kissinger, Ambassador Walter Stoessel, the U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Counsellor Hal Sonnenfeldt, General Brent Scowcroft, Peter Rodman of the National Security Council staff, and Alex Akalovsky, an American interpreter.

A couple of people who were in and out of the meetings, not participating in the full sessions, were ~~John~~ Lodal of the NSC staff, and William Hyland of the State Department staff. They were in and out.

On the Soviet side, there was General Secretary Brezhnev, Foreign Minister Gromyko, G. M. Kornienko, described as the Chief of the USA division of the Soviet Office of Foreign Ministry. Mr. Andre Aleksandrov is described as a foreign policy adviser to Brezhnev. The interpreter throughout from there side was Victor Sukhodrev.

Summarizing again, when they came out, Helen Thomas shouted before this other session began, "Did you make any progress on SALT, Mr. President?" And President Ford responded, "Very constructive, very friendly, very businesslike." Then Helen shouted back, "But did you make any progress?"

With that, the two men started joking a little bit and started double clasp of hands and a crossed handshake with one another and smiling very broadly and giving a little enthusiasm, as if they were passing the thing off in answering it with their response.

Brezhnev talked for a few minutes in the driveway -- this was with the motorcade lined up and the press pool just a few steps away. Brezhnev talked in the driveway for a few minutes with Secretary of State Kissinger.

Then the President said, "I will see you there shortly," meaning at the Conference site. Both men were dressed in dark blue suits, both had on red neckties, the President wearing a pin-striped suit.

The Soviet camera crew and their reporter were behind the ropes and at this point, General Secretary Brezhnev talked at great length with the President through the interpreter very quietly. Even though they were only a few steps away, we could not understand or hear what they were saying.

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I believe, but it is only a surmise on my part, that he was telling the President that they had arranged this interview with Soviet newsmen and asking him if he would come along and stand with him or participate in it.

Again, that is only surmise, but I think that is what happened because they then moved up directly in front of the Soviet camera and began the interview that you have heard recorded and played back.

Brezhnev got in his automobile and left. The pool was ushered out, we got on a bus on the side. As we were being ushered out, Nessen said, "The topics that were discussed in the morning bilateral meetings were SALT, the Middle East and U.S.-Soviet relations."

The motorcade zipped from there following the Presidential limousine in the motorcade through the streets. We went from there over to the Helsinki Conference site, and everyone went inside.

Jarriel/ABC

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