

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Presidential Libraries Withdrawal Sheet

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REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL National security restriction
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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DECLASSIFIED w/ portions exempted

E.O. 12958 (as amended) SEC 3.3

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By dal NARA, Date 12/3/09

~~SECRET~~/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
and Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME:

Monday, September 15, 1975
9:20 - 10:20 a.m.

PLACE:

The White House
The Oval Office

The President: The trips are tiring but I think they are going great. The New York Times bitches, but they do on everything. I read the SALT paper and it is damn good. I am seeing Schlesinger and Brown at 4:30. Is it okay to indicate that Brent has seen that JCS paper?

Scowcroft: You should not mention it.

Kissinger: The Navy wasn't consulted on it and it is sort of hazy. How will you protect the cruise missile ship and give terminal guidance to the missile? Schlesinger is going around Europe next week talking about removing 2,000 nuclear warheads.

The President: He can't do that.

Kissinger: He can't remove them but it is hard to keep him from discussing them.

We have a speaking conflict on the 22nd. I can switch my UN speech. We shouldn't both speak on the same day.

CLASSIFIED BY Henry A. Kissinger
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5(b)(3)
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp. to Det.

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The President: It would be a difficult news sequence. Mine would be in the afternoon.

Kissinger: I think it would not be good. I will see if I can switch to Wednesday. The other problem is writing your speech. I usually like to spend up to a month preparing.

I am going to Orlando tonight and then to St. Louis to talk.

[Terry brings note in.]

The President: Schlesinger is out of town until Tuesday night.

Scowcroft: He was supposed to come back Sunday.

The President: I bet he is bird watching. Find out where he is.

Kissinger: I would get Clements then. You can't go into the NSC meeting and overrule them.

The President: There is a big bird watching convention or something.

Kissinger: There are lots of Congressmen going to be around on my Orlando-Cincinnati tour.

On SALT and Gromyko -- the DOD theory is that the Soviets are in deep trouble and must yield. There are two problems with that. They have been yielding for a year. Also almost everything they have done in foreign policy has failed, as Stoessel's cable suggests. They lost credits; Helsinki turned sour. If SALT fails, Brezhnev may want to go out in February as a strong man. On the 22nd speech, we should be cautious in criticizing the Soviet Union -- don't repeat the American Legion stuff. On every ground. No one compares the consequences of failure. Without an agreement Backfire will run free anyway, our defense budget won't be helped that much so we won't be in good shape on the cruise missiles. I am somewhat attracted to Ikle's idea of a moratorium on tactical cruise missiles and Backfire while we work out a trade-off.

The President: It is interesting that the Mahon subcommittee eliminated ALCMs.



Kissinger: The Navy is not on board on this idea of SLCM's substituting for carriers. And I think it is a nutty idea.

Scowcroft: Long-range Soviet cruise missiles are a threat to our carriers because they can launch from outside the carrier's protective envelope.

Kissinger: I have given Gromyko some movement on SLCM and held on ALCMs. It is a lousy procedure because they will think there is more coming and will want to wait.

The other thing Gromyko will want to discuss is the Middle East. We want to try to put the bee on the Soviets on Syria. Gromyko will probably want to go to Geneva. I won't give much on Syria -- it is short-sighted but that is a fact. So if we could get the Soviet Union involved, either through Geneva or in a direct negotiation, it will deadlock and they will share the blame. We shouldn't guarantee to him that we won't do any more directly with the parties; just say it depends on the parties. We can give him a piece of the "non-action" but don't give him the impression they have a veto on us. But be forthcoming on Geneva.

The President: What is the time frame?

Kissinger: We can mention the end of November. But then your China trip will be an excuse to slip it to January.

The President: Will Israel go along?

Kissinger: They will resist. They are such shits. We just found out they haven't turned over the water wells at Abu Rudeis. Their attitude toward Egypt is absolutely unbelievable.

The President: How about the Israeli cargo through the Canal?

Kissinger: The ship has been circling for two weeks, but that is another example.

Peres has a huge shopping list. We'll have to give him something, but I think we have to be careful not to get their capability so high they don't need us.

The President: How about the [US-Soviet] grain negotiation?



Kissinger: Robinson could have concluded this weekend but Lynn and Seidman threw up a lot of nitpicks. They aren't without merit, but I would have settled it over the weekend. But Robinson will go as far as possible today, come back and finalize it, then go back to Moscow next Monday.

The President: I think we should finalize it quickly.

Kissinger: You can't protect against every contingency. If we can guarantee them five [million tons] with a possibility to go to eight, the farmers will be happy.

The President: Let's move it quickly. It is a damned good arrangement. How about oil, too?

Kissinger: They are a little sticky on the oil. They are balking on the discount.

The President: If we could get just a slight discount.

Kissinger: There is some merit in the week delay. It makes us look less eager. That damn Butz, of course, has told them you would be doing them a political favor. But I like Butz. He is a true professional and doesn't do anything for selfish reasons. He is just an unguided missile.

The Egyptians got two Americans released by South Yemen.

The President: At the accreditation ceremony, Nat Davis was present. He was very quiet. Does he still have a problem?

[REDACTED]

The President: Civilians?

Kissinger: [REDACTED]

The President: I lean toward going heavy.



Kissinger: I do also. It is incredible that the Soviet Union can supply more effectively that far away than we can.

The President: How about Portugal?

Kissinger: Things are looking up. Azaredo is more anti-communist than we thought. They have replaced the radical commander of the northern region. We wanted a government without Communists, but Soares thinks that is too much and the best we can do is limit them to a couple of minor posts.

You should see the Saudi Foreign Minister. They are having a rough time right now and they need assurance. If you can tell the Saudis how important Saudi Arabia is to us, it will help.

The President: Will they stand firm on the oil [at the OPEC meeting in Vienna] ?

Kissinger: They never stand firm. They will do their best, but they won't stand firm.

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