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WITHDRAWAL ID 018313

REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL National security restriction
TYPE OF MATERIAL Memorandum of Conversation
TITLE Kissinger, General Alexander Haig
CREATION DATE 10/14/1975
VOLUME 2 pages
COLLECTION/SERIES/FOLDER ID 031400706
COLLECTION TITLE National Security Adviser. Memoranda of
Conversations
BOX NUMBER 16
FOLDER TITLE October 14, 1975 - Ford, Kissinger,
General Alexander Haig (SACEUR)
DATE WITHDRAWN 06/16/2004
WITHDRAWING ARCHIVIST GG

morning meeting

Administration Daily Split on Arms Control

Joint Chiefs Reportedly Oppose Proposal
That Kissinger Placed Before Gromyko

BY OSWALD JOHNSTON
L.A. Times Staff Writer

10/12/75

WASHINGTON—With barely two months remaining before the hoped-for year-end summit meeting with Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Ford Administration is seriously, perhaps hopelessly, divided over strategic arms limitation policy—the key issue at the summit.

According to informed sources, the arms control proposal now before the Russians is opposed fiercely in the defense establishment, especially by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the grounds that it would give the Russians a dangerously expanded strategic bomber capacity even while it hampered U.S. strategic weapons development.

The target of Pentagon criticism, which only in recent days has begun to surface publicly, is Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, who placed the disputed proposal before Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko at a New York meeting Sept. 21.

Kissinger himself reportedly believes the offer too hard-line for the Russians to accept in its present form. A reply is expected within a few weeks, and another Kissinger-Gromyko meeting will probably be scheduled for early or mid-November, probably in Europe.

The Pentagon, however, is reportedly opposed even to the concessions offered in the Sept. 21 proposal.

According to informed sources, Kissinger was "stunned" by Defense Department opposition to his proposal when it was discussed at a National Security Council meeting Sept. 17. So intense were the objections that consensus was deemed impossible, and no vote on the question was taken.

But four days later, according to this account, Kissinger offered the proposal to Gromyko anyway, with President Ford's blessing.

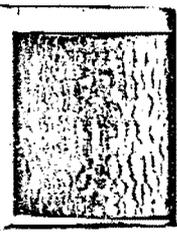
The issues causing this unusual tension within the government are two weapons systems that were not even mentioned during the summit talks at Vladivostok last November, when the basic guidelines for the negotiations now in progress were laid down. The disputed weapons:

—The Soviet Backfire bomber, originally classed by U.S. military intelligence as an intermediate-range bomber. The "B" version of this highly advanced supersonic plane is now thought to have a 5,600-mile range and a 20,000-pound payload.

—The U.S. long-range cruise missile. Still in an early stage of development, this highly sophisticated descendant of the World War II "buzz bomb" guided missile can be launched from a light or heavy bomber or through a submarine torpedo tube, travel 1,500 miles on a radar-evading ground-hugging trajectory and land within a few yards of a target. Its warhead can be either nuclear or conventional.

The Vladivostok agreement set an overall limit of 2,400 strategic nuclear delivery systems on each side. Under terms of the agreement, land-based and submarine-based strategic ballistic missiles on both sides would be counted toward the total, as was the case in the 1972 strategic arms agreement that gave the Russians a numerical advantage. For the first

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U.S. Administration Split on Arms Issue

Continued from First Page

time, long-range heavy bombers, of which the United States has an overwhelming majority, would each be counted as a delivery system.

But Backfires were not mentioned and not counted, and in tacit return for this, the Russians dropped their insistence that the nuclear-capable "forward bases systems" deployed to defend Western Europe be counted as strategic weapons.

Cruise missiles were not discussed at all, and as recently as 1974 were a stepchild in Pentagon planning with only a \$13 million budget. Ironically, Kissinger was at that time a partisan of the program, urging that they would be a useful "bargaining chip" in future negotiations.

But how the cruise missiles, along with Backfire, seem more a nightmare than a bargaining chip.

The defense establishment insists vehemently that the Backfire, with the enhanced range of its "B" version, is fully as dangerous to the United States, which has no strategic air defense against it, as the Air Force's still-developing B-1 bomber would be against the dense and sophisticated Soviet air defense system.

U.S. air defense against a strategic bomber attack has been dwindling ever since the first strategic arms treaty did away with the possibility of defending against strategic missile attacks. It is currently scheduled to be phased out altogether.

The nation now relies entirely on its ability to retaliate with devastating force against any attacker anywhere as a deterrent against an attack.

Navy and Air Force brass have become intense advocates of the cruise missile as the strategic weapon of the future—even as a substitute for the long-range bomber.

Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger is known to have his doubts about the high cost of the B-1 bomber program, and the air-launch cruise missile is already regarded as the most cost-effective substitute for bombers in the next decade.

Sources here believe that a trade-off between Soviet Backfire levels and U.S. air-launched cruise missiles would pose the most logical solution to the impasse if arms control alone were the objective.

Under this formula, which sources believe formed the basis of the proposal Kissinger offered Gromyko on Sept. 21, an agreed number of Backfires would be permitted above the 2,400 ceiling and a similar number of long-range cruise missiles would be allowed on U.S. B-52s.

Opponents of Kissinger's approach to the arms talks dislike this kind of formula, because in their view it trades off something Vladivostok does not limit—cruise missiles of any kind—against something it ought to have limited—Backfires as "heavy" bombers.

The Russians, meanwhile, are expected to resist the implication that all but a specified number of Backfires should come under the Vladivostok totals as "heavy" bombers while, in their view, the U. S. Air Force would be getting a free ride on a similar number of strategic missiles.

One reason for the impasse is that the aide-memoire negotiated last winter by Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador Anatoly F. Dobrynin as an official record of the Vladivostok agreement does limit air-launched missiles of a range greater than 400 miles—but does not specify whether they are to be "ballistic" missiles or cruise missiles.

U.S. officials insist privately that only ballistic missiles could have been intended, since cruise missiles were never discussed at Vladivostok. But the Russians have argued for half a year that the omission entitles them to claim that cruise missiles were also included.

Against this background, the dispute within the Administration has intensified quietly for months, and seems to have reached a new intensity since the stormy NSC meeting last month and Kissinger's subsequent proposal to Gromyko.

One longtime observer of the National Security bureaucracy confided recently that in his view the "passion and new fervor in the fratricidal war between State and Defense" has escalated to a level unprecedented in recent years.

Kissinger, circumspect in public, is reported to have spoken with unusual bitterness of his Pentagon opponents during a recent closed-door briefing before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Defense officials, counterattacking more in the open, only last week declassified a confidential Defense Intelligence Agency estimate excoriating Kissinger's detente policies. Within days the American Security Council, a locally based conservative group, had distributed printed

Rival forces are also taking sides on Capitol Hill. Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), a declared presidential candidate, is still investigating allegations that the Russians have cheated on aspects of the first arms limiting agreement and was firmly on record as a critic of the Vladivostok formula even before the latest controversy blew up.

Even if the Russians accept the latest proposal and a December summit goes forward smoothly to enshrine it in treaty form, there will be intense opposition in the Senate to its ratification.



MEMORANDUM

Scowcroft file 3

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET / SENSITIVE / NODIS

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958 (as amended) SEC 3.3
MR # 09-82, #24

030222 11/4/89 Date 2/3/10

By del NARA, Date 3/8/10

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, October 14, 1975
3:10-3:40 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

President: Are things moving in the right direction?

Haig: We have fundamental problems with the Europeans. We shouldn't kid ourselves.

President: I see the Dutch are continuing ASW.

Haig: Yes. The Brits are good; the Germans are doing better. Even the French are talking with us more.

There are some disturbing elements. We are getting mixed signals out of Washington.

President: I'd like to hear about that.

Haig: It comes down simply to Henry being the pushover and Schlesinger the tough guy. There is traditionally some competition between Defense and State, but it is especially dangerous now.

President: What did Schlesinger do about cruise missiles?

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CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

Haig: I get this only through the back door. I wasn't with him. There is a new picture being presented of cruise missiles. I think there is some utility but we shouldn't be carried away.

The other problem is the US attitude toward the existing nuclear weapons capability in Europe. Whenever there is some tinkering with them, it raises the same spectre we had in the 60's. Especially with the Germans it's a disaster. In the 60's there was no option except the French one of getting out. Today there is a third force, in competition with the US across the board.

President: Did he go past the MBFR proposal?

Haig: The 1000 we can do. But there is this drumfire of drawdowns of more weapons, artillery, nuclear aircraft, etcetera.

The Germans have turned very anti-MBFR -- at least at the level below Schmidt.

President: Has the MBFR proposal been put forward?

Scowcroft: No, it's being discussed in NATO still.

Haig: The Germans are fighting it, and raising all sorts of questions.

President: Is there a sense of urgency in NATO to get Turkey moving now that the embargo is lifted?

Haig: Yes, there is, but it is a question of tactics. Sancar said he expected everyone to pour in on him to make concessions and that would be a disaster. He said he would move, but at his own pace.

President: We may not have that kind of time. In a month we will have the aid bill before Congress and Brademas and Sarbanes will be right in there. We have at best three months.

Haig: They can pull a lot of troops out right away. On territory, they will probably agree with about 29%. I think Greece will come back into NATO if the Cyprus thing is taken care of.



That really is the essence of the situation. I don't know what the answer is to the mixed signals, but they hurt you.

President: [Mentioned the Technical Panel report on strategic systems.] It is a difficult problem with Him. If I fired him, at worst we could have another Zumwalt running around--though now that Zumwalt has clear political ambitions I think he has discredited himself.

Haig: No one pays attention to him now.

President: What is the reaction in Europe to Helsinki?

Haig: It's a mixed bag. Your tough speech gave them something to rally behind, so basically, though it's rhetoric, the Europeans are okay.

President: How about Portugal?

Haig: I am more concerned that we paint ourselves into a Chile corner. But I think basically the situation is moving right. With the refugees coming back, the conservatives' strength should grow. But we are out of the woods.

President: How about Azevedo?

Haig: He is an opportunist. He's tough and able. The fact he is turning right shows that is the way he thinks the wind is blowing.

I think we must be patient. I'm getting their military people to visit NATO to see how professional outfits should operate. I am basically optimistic.



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P anything moving in a right direction

H we have fundamental problems with the Euro. We shouldn't lead ourselves.

P Tell me about an existing ASW

H Yes. The Brits are good, & Germans doing better. Economic Fx are taking w/vo small.

There are some disturbing elements - we getting mixed signals out of work.

P I'd like to hear about that

H Comes down roughly to K being a pushover & Cuhos & the yb guy. There is truthfully some competition bet Dept + State but it is say, dangerous now.

P What did Schke do about 211

H I got this only thru back door. I haven't w/ him.

There is a new picture being presented of E.M.S. I think there is some utility but we shouldn't be carried away.

The other part is US attitude toward existing some ECU in Euro. Whenever there is some tinkering w/ them it causes some spite we had in 60's. It's w/ a German it is a disaster. For a 60's there was no option except a Fx and getting out. Today there is a 3rd force, in competition w/ US across the board.

P Did he go past a NBRK proposal

H The 1000 we can do. But there is this drama - fire of devaluation of more open, anti, more anti, etc.



P What is a reaction to Habentis?

A It is a mixed bag. You might speak from then something is early behind, so basically the
it is rhetoric, the Euros are st.

P How about Port?

A I am more concerned that we partitioned
into a Chile crisis. But I think basically a
sit. is moving right. W/c refugees coming back
a considerable strength should grow. But we not
out of work.

P How about Agreals ^{through cable.}

A He is a ~~great~~ cutting opportunist. Fact he is turning
right shows that ~~even~~ he thinks wind is
blowing.

I think we must be patient. Getting a
voluntary people to visit Habentis see how prof.
outfits should operate. I basically distrust.

