

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

President Ford
Amb. Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, USSR Ambassador
to the United States

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

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, December 9, 1975
4:15 - 4:49 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

SUBJECTS Delay of Kissinger trip; SALT;
Middle East; Angola.



[There was small talk at the beginning.]

The President: Let me reiterate what I have publicly stated -- that it is in both our interests to get a SALT agreement. We are getting closer, I think. There are still some areas of disagreement, but we are working them out.

I know we agreed on Henry's going the 17th to the 19th of this month. But Secretary Rumsfeld is at NATO; Henry is going over there too, and we just won't have an opportunity to work out a modified position, and I know we shouldn't go there without some new ideas to present. I want to make sure our position is firmly backed by all the agencies. So I hope the General Secretary will agree to delay Henry's visit until mid-January. I know you can't answer now, but I wanted to tell you directly and give you a letter to deliver to General Secretary Brezhnev. I know it complicates your situation. When is your Party Conference?

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BY [signature] NARA, DATE 5/24/04

Amb. Dobrynin: The 25th of February. It will cover both domestic and foreign policy and it will last about ten days. There are about 6,000 delegates.

The President: Will this present too many problems for you?

Dobrynin: [reads letter] [To Kissinger:] When would you come?

Kissinger: The week of the 19th, or the 16th, or earlier, if you delay the UN debate.

Dobrynin: Your UN representative is not very helpful. He is pushing us to confrontation. But to get back to essentials. General Secretary Brezhnev will consider it seriously. He will be a little surprised because I know he was preparing for the visit. He will wonder why the delay. But now you have told me.

Kissinger: I told him it had nothing to do with China.

The President: Absolutely not. It was for the reasons I said.

Dobrynin: But these delays, aren't they harmful? Especially in an election year?

The President: They are potentially harmful. But if we don't do it systematically and one Department doesn't go along, we will be in a difficult position.

Kissinger: Even if -- or especially if -- the President has to overrule someone, we have to show that everyone had a hearing.

[More discussion reassuring him about the delay].

Dobrynin: The problem is the cruise missile and Backfire.

Kissinger: I told Anatoliy we were thinking of counting some of the ALCM's as MIRVs.

Dobrynin: It makes sense. They look like a MIRV.

Kissinger: We have to find some modification in your position also.

Dobrynin: How!



Kissinger: On the Backfire, for example. But another reason for the delay is for us to be able to get some ideas to Brezhnev ahead of time.

Dobrynin: How about a discussion between us on the Middle East, as Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference?

Kissinger: We have talked about having some substantive discussions between me and Dobrynin or between Dobrynin and Sisco.

Dobrynin: I have the impression that we are not communicating enough on this. This could be just to exchange ideas and let each other know what the thinking is.

The President: I think it is a good idea, especially on the Middle East.

There is another problem -- Angola. We don't think the turmoil there is good. I know in general what you are doing and some of the others. It is not a healthy situation to have that sort of tearing-up situation going on. If we could find some sort of settlement where no one would lose face...

Dobrynin: We have no troops there.

The President: But you have our neighbors to the south there -- Cuba.

Kissinger: If you could get the Cuban troops withdrawn . . .

Dobrynin: Why don't you talk to the Cubans?

Kissinger: We have almost no contact. But if you could withdraw them we would get other outside forces withdrawn. If you stop the airlift we will do likewise, and we could turn to a coalition.

Dobrynin: Already almost 50% of the nations have recognized one side. They have always refused a coalition.

Kissinger: If you keep putting equipment in and we do, then we create a strain on our relations because then someone must win and someone lose. Then perhaps the UN could help.

Dobrynin: It is difficult to check equipment. We have to do it directly, but through Zaire it can be done indirectly -- not that we accuse you of that. I think a political solution should come first. We are not interested in Angola. It was the process of decolonization. But you know how Africa goes. One day it goes this way; another day that way.



Kissinger: We can't defend to our people your massive airlift and the Cuban troops. It can't go on without raising serious questions here. We will have to find ways either to insulate it or match it.

Dobrynin: It is not up to me to argue. Angola is a long way away. I will convey to my government. If you had some proposal other than "you just shouldn't do this."

The President: I am for detente, but this is difficult for me to explain.



P/Derry in/K

9 Dec 75

(Small Talk)

P Let me summarize what I have publicly stated - that it is in both our interests to get a joint agreement. We're getting closer I think - still some areas of disagreement but we are working them out.

I know we agreed on 17-19. But Rumsfeld at Nato. K going over there and we just want to have a paper to work on a ^{draft} position. I know ~~we~~ we should get to us a serious new status. I want to make sure our position is fairly balanced, so I hope a G-S will agree to delay till mid-Jan. I know you can't answer now but I want to tell you directly & give you a letter to Bez. I know it emphasizes your job, which is your work.

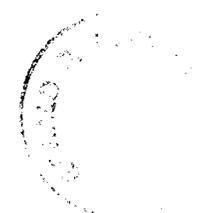
D 25 Feb. It will cover domestic & so & last about 10 days. There are about 600 delegates.

P Will this present to many jobs frozen?

D (Rumsfeld letter), ~~if~~ when would you come?

K week of 14th or 16th, as executive if you bring UN debate

D Your UN exp is not very helpful and is pushing us to compensation. But back to essentials, Bez will consider it seriously



A will be a little surprised because I
thought he was preparing for a visit. He
will undoubtedly - now you have told me.

K I told him it had nothing to do with China

P Absolutely not. It was a Israeli

D Best these delays, aren't they - horrible, say
in an election year.

P Potentially, but if we don't let it get out of
+ one digit doesn't go along, we will be in
a dig position.

K Even if - or say - the phone is a break reason,
we have to show everyone had a hearing.

~~D How about a broker~~

(were discussing measuring why a
delay)

D The part is over CMI + backfire.

K I think that's what we were thinking of wanting
kind of a ALCM or MIRA.

D It makes sense. They look like a MIRA.

K We have to find a way to deal with your
position also

D How!

K In Backfire, for ex. But another reason
for delay is to be able to get some other
things ahead of time.

D How about M+ C Chairman discuss -

K We have talked about some sub. chairman
but me + D or D + Sizer.

D I have impression we are not communicating



look over this - just to exchange views & let each other know what's going on.

P I think it is a good idea, up on a M.E. There is another prob - Angola. We don't think a tribunal there is good. I know in general what you are doing & some of others. It isn't a healthy fit to have that sort of thing up all going on. If we could find some sort of settlement where we could live peacefully.

D We have no traps there

P But you have some elephants to a south in Cuba

K If you could get a Cuban trap w/ drawers.

D Why don't you talk to the Cubans?

K We have almost no contact, but if you could w/ draw them we would get other ^{outside} faces w/ drawers, stop a aircraft we will do likewise & turn to a coalition.

D Already about 50% have every one with. They have always refused a coalition.

K If you keep putting things in & we do, then we create a strain on our relation because then someone must win & someone lose. There perhaps a UN could help.

D It is big. To check things. We haven't do it directly, but there is a ^{it can be done} ~~you can do~~ indirectly not that we access you of ~~from~~ that. I think a political solution should come out. We're not interested in Angola, so it was a



process of decolonization. But you know
how Africa goes. One day it goes this way
another day that way.

K We can't depend on one people you massive
airlift and a Indian troops. It can't go on w/o
raising serious questions here. We will have
to find ways either to neutralize it or mobilize it.

D It won't try to run to argue. Angola is a long
way away. I hope I will be able to support.
I hope had some proposal other than your
just shouldn't do this.

P I am for Castro, but this is up for us
to explain.

