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?
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 Anatoly 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.
(Small Talk)

P: But one estimate what I have publicly said - that it is because subjective & often self-aggrandizement. If getting here I think - still some areas if the agreement but we can

work it out.

I have one armed on 12-19. Beat

first half of 11-8 & going over then

and may just wait longer apart to

work on a position. I know we have

realized go up some more within. I
can to make some sort of a
delay. But I hope a C, I will

agree to delay till mid-June. I know

you can't announce even but I wonder

if you would like to give you a little

to delay. I know it complicated again

or 3 days in your way.

B: Yes. I will even consider it.

* Last about 15 days. There are about 600

diplomats.

P: Will this present to any public figure?

D: What later? When were your

cases?

K: Week of 9. It's a 16.5, Mr. Kennedy if you stay

ON cases.

D: Your UN rep is not very helpful and

is pushing up & procrastination. But he to

to determine, they will consider it seriously.
If I will be a little surprised because I
want it was preparing for a week. He
will work hard - more you limited me.
K That it had nothing else of time
I Absolutely not. It was so bad
D

D After this change, must thing happen - be
in an addition year.
P Categorically sort of we don't that get timing
+ one thing doesn't go along, and will be in
a big position.
K Even if a big - the then & another paper,
we have to show better had as timing.

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I don't think this is quite the viewpoint others have. I don't think it is quite the viewpoint others have. This is another point of view. I don't think you would think that. I have no idea what you are doing or what you have been doing. It was a healthy sort of thing to be. If we could find some sort of settlement where we could live it would be so much better.

D: We have no time. That

F: But you have some difficulty with that.

D: If you could get some more information.

D: Why don't you talk to them?

D: I am not sure what we can do. But if you could sit with them and see whether we could get something a little closer to a resolution.

D: Already about 50 have come and told their

D: They have always opposed a settlement.

D: If you keep putting up in weeks, then no one will care. It is a matter of time. We have come because there were not many more. Then perhaps they could help.

D: It is easy to criticize. We don't do it directly, but there is something indirectly that we accused you of. You think on political solutions which are not

D: I was not interested in Anglophile. It was e.
process of desalination. But you know
how African guns. Don't expect you this way
another day that way.

K. We can't defend our people against massive
attack and a bomb. It can't be unless
we're sure that it's true. We must have
a plan on how to handle it. It's a match it.

D. I don't try to make a return. Anything is a long
way away. Keep I will work it out.

happen but are justified. Then there your
just shouldn't do this.

P. I can be criticized. But this is the best for me
to explain.