

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

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MR 04-79, #8, 02/22/11/23/04

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

del NARA Date 11/26/04

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and
Assistant to the President for National Security
Affairs
Dr. James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense
General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint
Chiefs of Staff
Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, July 19, 1975
9:45 a. m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

President: I thought it would be helpful if we got together informally to talk SALT. Henry had an interesting meeting with Gromyko and I am going to Helsinki for three days. I will see Brezhnev on this as well as other matters. Gromyko's attitude indicates that we may be able to get an agreement this year. If we can, with proper safeguards, get one this year, I think it is preferable to do it this year, out of the election heat. Brezhnev has his Party Conference in February, and he will be under pressure not to go there with a failure.

I got a bathtub plug for my birthday, "to stop the leaks in the White House." I would hope--especially in this area--that we could stop the leaks. These things are very harmful as far as the government is concerned, and are negative in any negotiation with our allies and opponents. The White House is as bad as the other places, but I want all the agencies to tighten up.

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CLASSIFIED BY Henry A Kissinger
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Schlesinger: There is no way to stop it. Most of these leaks come from the Hill. 90% of Bradsher, and all of Szulc came from Jackson. They just leak. DOD does in the technical areas like verification, but the Hill just leaks.

President: Let me mention one other item. I have approved the program in Angola. We should do more. We should have done more in Portugal. I notice now that the Soviet Union is openly backing the Communists. I think we probably most do more. I know some of the departments don't agree. Henry has a problem.

Schlesinger: I think it is important to do enough to succeed. Failing is worse than indifference. Losing gives the impression that if the U.S. backs you, you are a loser.

Kissinger: I agree with Jim. We gain nothing by getting a program and then losing. [He describes the program briefly.]

We don't need a decision until we get the Vance report.

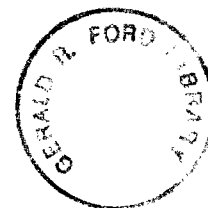
President: I agree we must do enough to succeed.

Kissinger: In May when I met with Gromyko in Vienna, I went through the U.S. position, with no new presentation. The only new idea was that of the complexes, which had informal agreement here. I told him the ball was in their court. We didn't insist on our positions, but they had to make some response. One problem is that Gromyko is not a negotiator on SALT. He can convey it only. Only Brezhnev is the negotiator, so we get more from the President's talks with Brezhnev than through me or Alex.

This meeting I just listened while Gromyko responded point by point through our proposals. Neither side has put these through the Geneva channels. Only Alex knows anything of this.

Gromyko put these forward as a package which he says is not separable.

On MIRV, they have accepted our counting rule: that any missile that has been tested as MIRV'd will be counted as MIRV'd. So all SS-17's, 18's, and 19's will be counted as MIRV'd. The same will apply to SLBM.



Schlesinger: There will have to be some other line on that. Like when a sub comes in for retrofit.

Kissinger: Yes, something like that. And any single-warhead missile will be distinguishable. So they accepted our position 100 percent on verification.

On cruise missiles--on bombers--anything of under 600-km range are free. Over 600-km range are counted. Cruise missiles of over 600-km range on surface ships, transport aircraft and subs are banned.

Land-based cruise missiles of intercontinental range (5500 kilometers) are banned. Missiles of range less than that are unrestricted.

On silo dimensions, the Interim Agreement is vague. It says the dimensions can't be increased more than 15%. The Soviets claim that means 15% in each direction; we say it means 15% in only one direction. Gromyko got this one totally screwed up, but what he said was that silo dimensions could be changed only once and then not more than 32% in volume and maybe in silo diameter not more than 15% -- though he screwed up on this. As Dobrynin interpreted this, you can't go more than 15% in any direction and the volume change can't be more than 32%.

Schlesinger: Silo dimension is primarily a political issue. The Soviet Union is now in a position to increase throw weight by increasing specific impulse. Putting SS-17 fuel in an SS-19 would make a helluva missile.

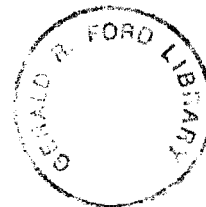
President: What would that be for us?

Brown: We can increase three to four times without changing silo dimensions. With a 32% increase, it would be at least six times.

President: If we used that, would our throw weight match theirs?

Schlesinger: No, but it would allow us to silence the argument. Easily we could go to six million pounds.

Kissinger: On light versus heavy missiles, we made a unilateral statement in '72.



Schlesinger: Which they rejected.

Kissinger: Now they are willing to accept the definition that launching weight won't be more than that of the heaviest light missiles. That's not the best for us, because we would prefer throw weight, so they couldn't increase by improving efficiency, but it is a step forward.

Schlesinger: It is, but primarily for SALT III, not II.

Kissinger: If it refers to missiles on each side, it is unacceptable because that would restrict us to Minuteman III. But Dobrynin accepted an interpretation that the weight applied equally to both sides.

On the deadline for implementing 2400: They now have about 2600 systems. They agreed to come down to 2400 within 12 months of the signing of this agreement.

They are ready to begin reduction talks by 1977.

Mobile missiles: They want to ban land-based mobiles; they accept mobiles on bombers if they are counted; on other aircraft they are banned.

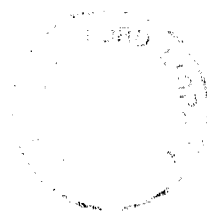
They say the Backfire is not a strategic bomber. If we look at it carefully we will see it isn't. My judgment is that in a package we can get some mobification of that if we don't insist on counting on every one.

[He recapped the list.]

This at least shows they have done some serious work and it is now up to us to get a response.

President: Can we get this into the proper hands to get a position?

Kissinger: If this gets into ACDA, we might as well give it to the New York Times. I thought if we can agree on the direction we want to go and then put it into the Verification Panel....if we could get a preliminary notion from Jim and George and then put it into the system. I could also give it to Ikle if you want. Perhaps Jim, George, Brent and I could meet Tuesday morning to see where we stand. If we agree, we would go through the system.



President: Then we could decide whether to go through the NSC or not? Jim?

Schlesinger: I think we would have to have some staff look at this. Then I think it would give you protection to have a formal NSC meeting.

I can give you some substantive comments if we have time. I am more concerned with the substance than the verification. The 2400 is key to me. That is why I am concerned with the Backfire. [He gives the President a Backfire paper]. At high altitudes, it has B-1 capabilities. I need to look at the cruise missile carefully. I am not so worried about the SLCM as I am about the ALCM.

Kissinger: We might be able to work something out combining range with a number limitation -- in other words, 2000 km but with only six aircraft.

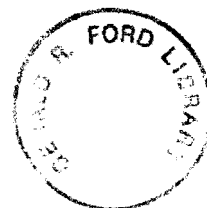
Brown: I read somewhere that you had discussed a figure of 2400 kilometers.

Kissinger: They never talked specific range numbers. I have never separated SLBM and ALCM's in talking with them. If we will separate them out, I think we could get more on ALCM for a SLCM ban.

The two areas unsolved are cruise missiles and Backfire. I agree we can't accept Backfire free, if only for cosmetics. Maybe we can tie the Backfire and cruise missiles together. I don't think they will count all Backfire. You, George, will have to see what range you need -- obviously the shorter the range the easier it would be.

President: How many Backfire do they have?

Schlesinger: They plan to have 400 by 1985, but they could have more. There are a number of combinations. I would maintain a tough position at CSCE but maybe we could allow these on naval aviation, if they tear down their present ones and count these in the long-range aviation.



Kissinger: If you could give the President your ideas. Brezhnev is the only one who can negotiate. We don't need a final position now, but we will get more flexibility in the President's meeting with Brezhnev than through any other channel.

Schlesinger: Their cruise missile proposal ratifies their cruise missile programs and bans ours. They have lots of them under 600 kilometers. Most of our cities are on the coast. We must realize there are asymmetries. The ALCM area is a problem. That is an asymmetry in our favor.

It is not in our advantage to ban mobiles. It is in their advantage. We have to think of the vulnerability of ICBM and submarines.

Kissinger: I think they made the proposal as a concession to us.

President: I remember the proposal for the railroad Minuteman. [There was some discussion of that].

Schlesinger: We would put them on government lands in the West.

President: If we can't get Sanguine, how can we get agreement on mobiles?

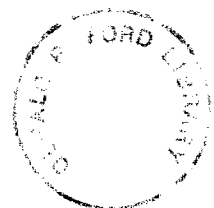
Schlesinger: I don't think we get anything from a ban on mobiles. We need to go on R&D and this is the only way to get it through Congress.

Kissinger: This need not be raised at Helsinki. We have to solve it sometime but I don't think it is a real issue with the Soviets.

The real issues are cruise missiles and Backfire and I think they should be tied together. They are worried about SLCMs, for example.

President: Can we put together some general guidelines which would be useful in a package decision?

[The meeting ended.]



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