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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

MR01-101 #12: OSD Ltr 3/2/04, OALtr 11/27/01

del NARA Date 7/19/04

PARTICIPANTS: President Gerald Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
and Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
James Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense
Donald Rumsfeld, Assistant to the President
Paul O'Neill, OMB
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, August 5, 1975
3:15 p. m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House



The President: I want within a week a budget supplemental in the event SALT doesn't work.

Schlesinger: How about right now?

The President: I want it through channels, ready to go through the Congress. I want also a five-year projection. I want the JCS to sign off. I want it to go through OMB and have everyone ready to testify on it. It is a contingency action, but I want to be prepared.

Schlesinger: This is in response to your request at the NSC. It would amount to \$2-3 billion a year for R&D and procurement. This is the first for 1977. We would push all present programs.

The President: This program is an add-on in the event we don't get SALT II.

Rumsfeld: What kind of assumption is it based on with respect to what the Soviets will do?

Henry A. Kissinger
SECRETARY OF STATE

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Schlesinger: Good question. It assumes they would accelerate their program.

Kissinger: You would probably have to go to the higher CIA curve.

Schlesinger: I am not sure. They are probably pushing the limits of their capacity now.

The President: I think we have to assume the worst because the best will take care of itself. The Congress should know what we face. It will have a big impact. We will be tough, but if we are tough and fail we have to be realistic about what we face. All these hardliners on the Hill have to know what it is they have to put up. It will go one of two ways: We want a good SALT agreement but if we don't get one, they have to put out or it is their responsibility.

Kissinger: We may have to look at ABM also. Our SALT ABM agreement was predicated on our offensive agreement.

The President: We want a SALT agreement -- with give on each side -- but I don't want there to be any doubt as to the costs of failure.

Rumsfeld: Would you anticipate briefing the Congressional leaders on this?

The President: Perhaps.

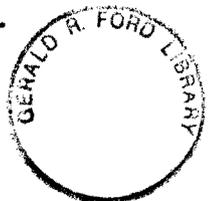
Schlesinger: It would have a good affect on the Soviets.

The President: This is not psychological warfare; this is for real. I am fed up with people in Congress and around the country accusing me of being a soft liner.

Schlesinger: Maybe we should tell the Soviets, from an arms control standpoint, that we don't want to get out in front of them and cause them to react, but that we will be watching their programs.

The President: That is a possibility. But I don't want this Administration to be caught short. The other option is to just go all out on it.

O'Neill: As you know, Muskie got the conference report turned back. If we got it in right away as a budget amendment, it may not get as careful attention as it would as a supplemental. We must watch the timing.



Kissinger: We will have six weeks anyway.

Schlesinger: SALT II won't fail. Maybe this year, but SALT I still has two years to run.

Kissinger: Brezhnev won't likely be around that long. If he isn't, there won't be a SALT agreement.

The President: We shouldn't talk about that, but I agree. We have big problems with cruise missiles and Backfire.

Kissinger: On cruise missiles, they claim that through them we could get 11,000 warheads for free. On the SLCM's at 1,500, they claim we could hit Moscow from Murmansk. On Backfire, they claim it is not strategic and has only half the capability of the Bison.

The President: Brezhnev really hit me on this. I said our intelligence showed that Backfire had a comparable capability to the Bison. Brezhnev called his military guys over and then said no, only about half.

Kissinger: On cruise missiles, they said they thought it was all resolved at Vladivostok and now we come up with these new ideas. On Backfire they didn't propose any ideas. I think they were first mad because they hadn't planned it as a strategic bomber. They listened to the throw weight, and didn't comment at all.

It is my impression that they are confused by the cruise missile complexity. I think if we came down on the range from 3,000/1,500 some and limited the numbers, we might get something.

Schlesinger: Let us look at the numbers and the arguments and see what we can do.

The President: See what you can do. They aren't going to buy 3,000/1,500 and won't also buy the Backfire.



