

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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**BY dal NARA DATE 9/5/08**

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

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

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, December 6, 1975

PLACE: On Asian Trip

SUBJECTS: SALT Negotiation Procedures; Middle East

Kissinger: Between the firing of Schlesinger and Don's appointment, Clements and Brown put some SALT proposals together. That was on the 6th. On the 7th, Brezhnev asked that I come to the Soviet Union before Christmas. You approved offering the 18th and 19th, and they accepted only two days later.

Then we had a Verification Panel meeting which went very well. We had a Working Group meeting and then another Verification Panel meeting which went well. At that meeting, Don and I agreed to meet in Brussels on the 11th. Meantime, the Working Group put together an excellent paper.

Don first objected on the grounds of the budget meetings. Brent fixed that. Then he objected on grounds of orderly procedure and said that I must be at the NSC meeting. He wants me to come back on the 18th, have a Verification Panel meeting on the 19th, and an NSC meeting on the 20th and I go to the Soviet Union on the 21st. It is an impossibility. First, it is a strain on me, and second, if a snag develops, it would be impossible to handle.

With the leaks the way they are, if we keep to the schedule, it will be said that I rammed it through; if we delay three days it will be played



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as a Rumsfeld victory. We would look ridiculous being in Moscow with Christmas as a deadline.

The President: And I am leaving on the 23rd or 24th for Vail.

Kissinger: I recommend therefore that you send a letter to Brezhnev explaining we couldn't get organized by that time. Get Dobrynin in on Tuesday and explain it to him personally. The Soviets will take this very hard -- and they may not be able to do it before the Party Congress.

The President: [Reads the Rumsfeld cable, Tab A] What progress is there on the substance?

Kissinger: The Working Group has a good paper, with five options. The Verification Panel would probably strip off two of them. Then you will have to decide -- and that is the same whenever you make it.

Sticking to the 18th is impossible.

The President: When could we get Dobrynin in? On Tuesday?

Kissinger: I would like to talk to him on Monday and give him the letter. Then you could see him Tuesday. I would just tell Don to go over on the 7th and that you are thinking about it. Don't tell Don until you see Dobrynin.

Scowcroft: [Described why a three-day delay, as suggested by Rumsfeld, is impossible.]

The President: [Discussed Schlesinger undercutting Zumwalt.]

[There is discussion of violation issues and SALT I and loopholes.]

Kissinger: We also have a Moynihan problem. The basic problem is we are afraid to impose discipline on anyone because of the leaks. It is now being said that I prevented a veto in the Security Council of the UNDOF resolution. It is a total lie. You know that whole story.

Now we have a new problem. The Israelis have killed 200 people in a raid in Lebanon and the resolution is coming up. If they put something in the resolution condemning terrorist acts, I don't see how we can veto under these circumstances. This wasn't retaliation. But I am afraid to put it on paper.



There is another horror. If we don't protest the four new settlements they are building on the Golan, we will be blamed for acquiescing. But if we do protest, there will be an outburst.

The President: The question is do we let Israel run our foreign policy?

Kissinger: We got UNDOF extended with virtually no price. Anyone can get a Security Council debate. The Israeli strategy is to defeat you and destroy our foreign policy and credibility, or at least to isolate us and kill our relations with the Arabs.

The President: I think we should protest the four settlements.

Kissinger: It should be done while I'm in the country so I can share the blame.

Your foreign policy is going well. Sadat's visit went very well and this trip is being reported well now.

Rumsfeld should leave on the 7th as he planned. I will say the President is considering it and will let us know.

The President: On a happier note, the trip is going very well.

Kissinger: Our foreign policy is really going well if we would stop pissing on it and show some confidence. Martinique, Vladivostok, Rambouillet, this trip. Except for the Congressional-imposed defeats in Turkey and Vietnam, it has been an unreserved success.

The President: I am damned pleased with the trip. Not one thing has gone wrong.

Kissinger: Whenever you have been tough, we have been successful.



