

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
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*Scowcroft file*  
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*del NARA Date 7/20/04*

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

**PARTICIPANTS:** President Gerald R. Ford  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense  
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the  
President for National Security Affairs  
Richard Cheney, Assistant to the President

**DATE AND TIME:** Thursday, February 5, 1976  
9:35 - 10:30 a.m.

**PLACE:** The Oval Office

Rumsfeld: It appears to me from the Verification Panel meeting that because of the uncertainties, we will end up on a deferral option.

The President: Ikle came and talked to me. I was not impressed.

Rumsfeld: He is hard to understand but he honestly believes that the future of SALT depends on some symmetry, so he believes that some of the options which might be negotiable are dangerous because of that.

[Kissinger comes in.]

The President: I was saying I didn't like Ikle's position or his arguments.

Kissinger: Ikle has few positions, but he defends them with great tenacity. He wants cruise missiles to 2,500 run free as regional systems to offset the Backfire. We have a mad situation. Everything which the Soviets give up gets pocketed and we give nothing. We aren't negotiating with the Soviet Union, we are negotiating with Jackson.

The President: I think the Verification Panel should come up with what we will need if we don't have an agreement. What kind of additional funding will we need.

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Don, you got hit with a question on why you assumed SALT II in the defense budget. I would answer that it is predicated on SALT I, but that it is ending at the same time as the '77 budget. Let's get that judgment of what it would cost without SALT. From what Ikle told me, I don't buy his arguments.

Kissinger: The Soviets have asked for another position before the Party Congress. They wonder whether we are screaming about Angola to save detente or to sink it. We can use Angola to get a bit more on SALT if we play it right. After the elections, the Democrats will turn soft.

The President: I want an NSC meeting Thursday and I want the non-SALT paper by then.

[Rumsfeld leaves.]

Kissinger: I got a great reception in Laramie. The biggest crowd they'd ever had except for rock groups!

In Los Angeles, Tunney said to get off his back. All his supporters were after him on Angola once I got out there. He had to do it because he is running against Tom Hayden. Angola I think is lost, but we can use it to answer the "soft on the Soviets" theme.

The President: I think we were right to force the vote on Angola. It forced them to stand up and be counted and I think they are getting scared. The Pike vote I think shows that.

Kissinger: I think we should issue a statement attacking the Pike report as a breach of his word.

The President: Let's see what we said before and what we can say about the accuracy of the report.

Kissinger: My impression is that the mood about you has changed completely since my previous visits.

The President: I want to give some introductory remarks to the University of New Hampshire on foreign policy. Maybe the Laramie speech would be usable.

Kissinger: My impression is that Reagan is slipping.



Cheney: Reagan slips every time he opens his mouth because he has no background.

Kissinger: I hate to keep complaining but Callaway is saying you won't take me to the Middle East and you are fighting my selling out on SALT.

The President: I don't like talk like that, above all because it is not true. I think I am pushing harder on SALT than anyone. I want that assessment of what happens without SALT so we can lay the alternatives out. I am damned mad about some of the attitudes.

Kissinger: On the Middle East part of Callaway, I don't think you should lock yourself into a visit. It may blow up then and you wouldn't want that to happen.

[Discussion of delivery dates for Israel, what they need most and how it would impact on our or allied programs.]

The President: Giscard said he would send us some Angola ideas.

Kissinger: Ellsworth is blocking sending equipment to Angola.

Scowcroft: [Explained the Ellsworth idea.]

Kissinger: I think the Soviets are getting worried. But all our friends in Africa are panicking.

The President: I made a decision on supplies to Angola and I don't want anyone coming to a different judgment.

Scowcroft: There won't be any change without a decision by you.

Kissinger: I saw Nixon. He said he may be going to China soon. I feel he may be leaning to Reagan.

The President: I think he really is leaning to Connally.

Kissinger: No question about that. He is telling people not to attack Reagan.

The President: I think he would like a stalemate between me and Reagan.

Kissinger: I think you are in good shape with the leadership.



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