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Friday, August 9, 1974
3:40 p.m.
Oval Office

SECRET/SENSITIVE

SOVIET CHARGE

Yuly VORONTSOV -- Minister Counselor

Background

Ambassador Dobrynin is on leave at home.

The Soviets have tended to see Watergate in the context of US-Soviet relations and to attribute domestic attacks on President Nixon to "forces" opposed to detente. Consequently, they have shown some uneasiness about the implications of the events in this country for the future of our relations.

Nevertheless, in the aftermath of the last summit, the Soviets have been actively interested in arranging a series of follow-up negotiations on (a) various bilateral cooperative projects such as housing construction, and artificial heart, etc., (b) several of the arms control issues agreed on in principle at the summit, such as controls over environmental warfare techniques and over chemical warfare, an agreement on inspecting peaceful nuclear explosions to ensure they are not used militarily (this was an issue left over in the underground test limitation treaty signed in Moscow) and (c) SALT, where the summit resulted in an understanding that we would seek an agreement running through 1985 to follow the interim offensive agreement that lapses in October 1977.

The Soviets will want reassurance that we are prepared to proceed with these and other negotiating projects. They will also be looking for some assurance that we will succeed in getting a Trade Bill that permits EXIM credits to continue and MFN to be granted. They have officially resisted the link to their emigration policy stipulated in the Jackson amendment but have privately been prepared to provide some assurances that harassments and other impediments to emigration will be moderated if the economic agreements go forward.

Most fundamentally, Brezhnev has acquired considerable stake in his detente policies and in his relationship with President Nixon. He is bound to be in a sensitive position at a moment when many in Moscow may see these relationships in jeopardy.

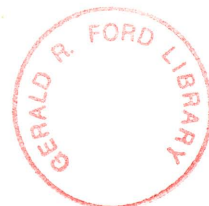
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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5

State Dept. Guidelines

By dac, NARA, Date 12/18/03



There may also be some in Moscow who see this as a time to test our resolve on some issue, especially since the Soviets have not done well in the Middle East and Cyprus crises; any such notion will be most effectively countered by the demonstration that our policy of firmness when challenged but reasonableness in negotiations will be continued.

TALKING POINTS

In your comments, you may wish to make the following points:

-- You supported President Nixon's policies in the Congress and participated in the preparations for the last summit;

-- You are therefore committed to their continuation and will put the authority and prestige of your office behind it, including in the Congress;

-- You have written General Secretary Brezhnev on this score and wish to reiterate it orally and directly;

-- You are aware that there is much follow-up work to be done after the last summit: on arms control, on SALT, on bilateral cooperation; you are taking a personal interest in all of these and expect our delegations to be ready to meet with their Soviet counterparts over the next several weeks, as already agreed between Dobrynin and Secretary Kissinger;

-- You will also continue the efforts of President Nixon to achieve an early and satisfactory outcome of the Conference on European Security and Cooperation;

-- Generally, you think the most important point to bear in mind as we move onto the period ahead is that our relations must be based on restraint and on respect for each other's interest; that is the best way to continue avoiding crises and to maintain the recent positive trend in our relations;

-- You look forward to seeing Brezhnev here next spring and have reaffirmed the invitation in your letter to him.

