

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON~~SECRET~~

September 20, 1978

## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin  
Zbigniew Brzezinski

DATE, TIME Wednesday, September 20, 1978  
AND PLACE: 2:20-3:15 PM, The White House

Ambassador Dobrynin came in to "renew our friendly discussions" after a prolonged absence. He asked me for my prognosis for U.S.-Soviet relations, pointing out that my earlier prediction of some likely transitional difficulties proved correct.

I pointed out to him that I thought that these relations would now improve. We would get a SALT agreement, provided the Soviet Union accepted our eminently fair proposals, and that subsequent to that we would probably have a summit meeting which would further improve the atmospherics. In general, I suggested to him that our principled and consistent policy toward the Soviet Union would contribute to such an improvement, provided the Soviet Union refrained from exploiting turbulence in the Third World, either directly or through the Cuban proxy, in a manner which then creates strong public reactions in the United States and gives us concern. In this connection, I specifically mentioned some potential dangers regarding Rhodesia and Yemen.

Dobrynin replied to the effect that we exaggerate these matters, but he conceded that the Soviets might have been more sensitive to our concerns had we not, in his judgment, artificially inflamed the human rights issue. He suggested that it was Soviet irritation over the human rights issue that made the Soviet leaders so unresponsive to President Carter's repeated expressions of concern regarding the escalating Soviet/Cuban involvement in Africa.

That turned the discussion to the human rights issue. Dobrynin inquired how the outstanding cases might be resolved. I suggested that we might quietly arrange for the resolution of the

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more glaring cases, since this would in itself contribute to a better atmosphere, which in turn will make SALT ratification easier. I pointed out that resolution of such cases is in our mutual interest, and that we are prepared to do our part. Moreover, I suggested that it is also in our mutual interest to establish some understandings regarding what is proper insofar as intelligence activities are concerned.

Dobrynin agreed that we do need to discuss seriously "new rules of the game" regarding such activities. With regard to the specific cases, he emphatically asserted that Shcharanskiy could not be involved in any discussions. His case has become symbolic and the Soviet leaders feel very strongly about it. Instead, we ought to release the two Soviets charged for espionage in exchange for some of the less notorious cases, for example the Vins family.

I pointed out to him that this was inadequate, especially since the exchange would be designed to have a positive political effect and hence would have to involve some of the cases that have attracted public attention in this country. Focusing on essentially obscure cases would not serve the political purposes of such accommodation.

There was a brief discussion also of CTB and its relationship to SALT. Dobrynin asked me whether opponents to SALT were the same as the opponents of CTB. I pointed out to him that the two were not identical, but rather tended to reinforce each other.

We agreed to have dinner on his return from New York.

Some of the conversation involved also exchanges regarding chess, involving analyses of my recent games with Begin as well as of the Karpov-Korchnoi matches.

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