

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Anatoliy Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador
Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME:

August 17, 1971 - Luncheon

PLACE:

The Map Room, The White House

The meeting took place so that I could give Dobrynin the answer to the Soviet invitation to a summit in Moscow.

Dobrynin opened the conversation by speaking about the new economic policies announced by the President on Sunday evening. He said it was the second jolt we had given to Japan. I said "Well, maybe this gives you an opportunity." He said "No, this gives China an opportunity." The real danger to the world was a combination of China and Japan, and he wondered whether we took that sufficiently into account. I said that the total effect of our policies might be healthy. Dobrynin was noncommittal.

Summit

We then turned to the business at hand. I gave him the date of May 22 for the summit and September 16 or 15 for the announcement. Dobrynin said that the announcement sounded good to him and that the date would have to be confirmed in Moscow; however, he saw no difficulty. He asked why we picked that particular date. I replied that the primary reason was that the President would be in San Clemente and would not be back in Washington until September 7 and that therefore it was important for him to have a week of preparing allies and telling the bureaucracy. Dobrynin said if we told the bureaucracy it would leak. I said that nothing that we have handled in the White House has ever leaked and this would not either. Dobrynin said that he would have an answer for us very soon.

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Berlin

Dobrynin then pulled out a slip of paper and discussed the Berlin issue. He said he had received instructions to get in touch with me immediately on the basis of a cable he had received that Falin had sent to Moscow. Apparently Rush had said that he was bound by Presidential instructions to deviate from the agreements already reached. Dobrynin said that this was making a very bad impression, if an agreement reached by the highest authorities was overthrown again later due to bureaucracy. I explained to Dobrynin that our problem was as follows. Neither our bureaucracy nor our allies knew of the agreement that therefore had to go through a procedure of negotiations. Sometimes the formulations might have to be altered. I wanted him to know, however, that if there were a deadlock we would break it in favor of the agreed position, unless overwhelming difficulties arose. I read to him the telegram from Rush speaking of Abrasimov's rough tactics towards the British Ambassador which certainly didn't help matters. Dobrynin said that speaking confidentially the Soviet Ambassadors in Eastern Europe were not used to diplomacy. They were usually drawn from party organizations and when they met opposition they didn't realize that they were not dealing with party subordinates. This was the trouble with Abrasimov. Falin would certainly have acted differently.

China

Dobrynin then asked whether there were any difficulties in our relations with the Chinese. Why, for example, were we delaying so long in announcing the date of our visit? I said that there were no difficulties and that the visit would be announced in due time, but that we wanted everybody to settle down for a bit first. Dobrynin reverted to his usual line that he hoped we were not engaged in an anti-Soviet maneuver. I said that events would demonstrate that this was groundless. He referred to the Alsop column that we had exchanged ideas on military dispositions. I said, "Anatoliy, do you think I would be this amateurish, and do you think that could be of any precise concern to us.?" He said he certainly hoped that this were true.

Subcontinent

We then turned the conversation to India. Dobrynin said he wanted us to be sure to understand that the Soviets were doing their best to restrain India. They wanted peace in the subcontinent. It was an ironic development

where they were lined up with who looked like we had a...
 the pillar of democracy while we were lined up with the Chinese. I said
 as far as the subcontinent were concerned, we were not lined up with any-
 body. We above all wanted to prevent the outbreak of a war, and we hoped
 that they did not inadvertently give the Indians enough backing so that they
 felt it was safe to engage in war. Dobrynin said that their interest was
 stability, and in fact they had invited the Pakistani Foreign Secretary to
 come to Moscow in order to show that they were pursuing a balanced policy.
 I said that they should not encourage Indian pressures for an immediate
 political solution since that would only make the problem impossible. I
 stated it would be best if we worked on the refugee and relief problems
 first and on political accommodation later. Dobrynin said that he was
 certain that the Soviet Union basically agreed.

Dobrynin then asked me whether it was correct what the Indians had told
 them, namely that we would look at a Chinese attack on India as a matter
 of extreme gravity and might even give them some support. He said that
 the Indians had been puzzled by my comment but had then put it all together
 after my trip to Peking. I said that I never commented about meetings in
 other countries, but that we certainly were not aligned with any country
 against India. Dobrynin commented that he admired the general conduct
 of our foreign policy even when it was objectively directed against the
 Soviet Union, but he felt that our arms policy towards Pakistan escaped
 his understanding. We were paying a disproportionate amount for what we
 were shipping. I said that we never yielded to public pressure and that he
 knew very well that the arms we were shipping were minimal and incon-
 sequential with respect to the strategic balance.

SALT

We then turned to SALT. Dobrynin said that whether I believed it or not
 the Soviet military were deeply concerned about a three site system, be-
 cause they believed it provided the basis for an area defense and could be
 tied together. Even a two site system was in principle hard for them.
 He said he thought there might be a possible compromise if we accepted
 one site for us with a wider radius than the Moscow radius, and if this
 were done there might be a basis for a compromise. I avoided an answer
 and told him that we would study this proposition.

Dobrynin said that he was ordered to stay here until the summit issue was
 settled, but he was very eager to leave because he knew he had to be back
 on September 20.

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