

MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION



PARTICIPANTS: USSR: Leonid I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.  
Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR  
Georgi M. Kornienko, Director of the USA Department and Member of the Collegium, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  
Andrei M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, Assistant to the General Secretary  
Viktor M. Sukhodrev, Counsellor, Second European Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Interpreter)  
Andrei Vavilov, USA Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

US: President Ford  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Amb. Walter J. Stoessel, Ambassador to the USSR  
Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor, Department of State  
William G. Hyland, Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State  
Alexander Akalovsky, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs  
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff *PMR*

**DECLASSIFIED**  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5  
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines  
By KBH, NARA, Date 8/7/01

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, July 30, 1975  
9:35 a. m.

PLACE: American Ambassador's Residence  
Helsinki, Finland

SUBJECTS: US-Soviet Relations; Middle East; Emigration; Nuclear War.

[The President greeted the Soviet party at the front door. As they entered the Residence, the General Secretary called out "Where is Sonnenfeldt?" The President laughed. The group was seated at the table. The press entered for photographs].

CLASSIFIED BY HENRY A. KISSINGER  
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5 (B) (1, 3)  
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SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

Brezhnev: You've lost weight.

Ford: You look like you have too.

Brezhnev: I've been stabilized.

Ford: You look excellent.

Brezhnev: I'm about 78 kilograms. I'm 78.9, 80 at times, but within that limit. That's my stable weight nowadays. I've been stable the last six months or so.

Kissinger: I'm stable within a 10-kilogram range. (Laughter).

Gromyko: You're old acquaintances.

US-Soviet Relations

Brezhnev: Mr. Kissinger, I was saying to the President that we've done a very good job in space.

Kissinger: Yes.

Ford: The handshake was indicative of the progress we have been making.

Brezhnev: Your boys came down at 1:00 a. m. in our country, and our TV was still working.

Kissinger: You saw it.

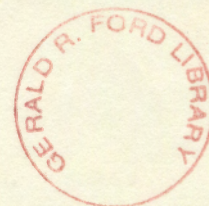
Brezhnev: We saw it live.

Ford: In our country it was after dinner.

Brezhnev: It is really fantastic when you come to think of it. They go up; they meet somewhere in the limitless vastness of space.

Ford: It's wonderful to know that the technicians and scientists have that capability -- to link up hundreds of miles away.

Brezhnev: [fiddles with his pocket]. I've been thinking -- I know Kissinger's mind works that way -- I'll take a little bomb, put it in my pocket, and....



Kissinger: As long as it's a little one.

Brezhnev: It's a long-range one.

Ford: I'm glad they were up there, and not you and I.

Gromyko: Those are the MIRVs.

Brezhnev: Of course, that is a very complicated issue, seriously.

[The last of the photographers departed].

Frankly speaking, Mr. President, the latest proposals we received on the night of our departure for Helsinki. We can't go into details today. I was just informed of them, and you can't get to the bottom of them right after getting out of the plane.

Kissinger: You mean on strategic arms?

Brezhnev: Yes. Maybe while we are here we can look them over and discuss them the next time we meet.

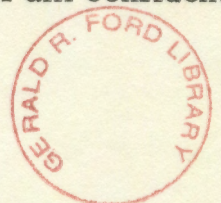
Ford: Mr. General Secretary, I'd like to make some comments first about detente.

Brezhnev: Please.

Ford: In the United States, there is a very encouraging overall attitude as to the progress we have made, the Soviet Union and the United States, in moving in the right direction on detente. On the other hand, I think it is fair -- and I want to be frank: we have those on the right as well as on the left, who for various reasons, political and otherwise, would like to undermine what we have tried to implement and to destroy detente.

[Mr. Hyland comes in to join the meeting.]

And critics of detente are Democrats as well as Republicans. They would like to slow down or destroy the benefits that come from detente. But I can tell you very forcefully I am committed to detente, and the American people agree with me. I strongly feel our negotiations and our agreements in Vladivostok were pluses, were very successful. I believe the CSCE negotiations, the documents we will sign here, are pluses, and I am confident



as we talk about SALT II, we can achieve success in this area. Perhaps as in our country, you have some critics in your own government who don't believe that Vladivostok, CSCE, and SALT II are in the best interests of your country. But I can tell you in my term of office -- and I expect that to be the next 5 1/2 years -- my aim, objective and total effort on my part will be to narrow our differences and achieve the benefits for your people, for our people, and I believe for the world as a whole.

Brezhnev: [interrupts translation at reference to critics of detente:]  
The only two people who are against detente are Kissinger and Gromyko.  
[Laughter].

Kissinger: Because as long as there is no detente, we can keep meeting.  
[Laughter].

Brezhnev: [interrupts translation at reference to 5 1/2 years:] Why do you say only five years in office? Why not eight years?

[Mr. Akalovsky joins the meeting.]

Ford: Mr. Secretary, of course we have these critics of Vladivostok, the European Security Conference, and SALT, who would like me to have a term of office for 1 1/2 years. But I am convinced beyond any doubt, if we can move the Vladivostok agreement beyond SALT and implement the atmosphere in which CSCE took place, I believe the critics will be pushed aside and the American people will support what you and I want to achieve. If we can make the kind of progress [we seek] on SALT, today and Saturday, it would be a great delight for me to have you visit the United States this fall. I was up in Camp David two weeks ago and Mrs. Ford and I were discussing what a beautiful place it was. I know you enjoyed your visit there before. But the main point is to make headway that will result in a fruitful agreement, that will be of benefit to your country and mine, and will make possible a meeting in the United States between us some time in 1975.

Brezhnev: [interrupts Sukhodrev's translation at reference to Camp David:]  
I did like Camp David.

Ford: It is beautiful in the fall.

Brezhnev: Quiet and relaxing.



Ford: With those general observations, Mr. Secretary, I'd be very pleased to have your reactions and any suggestions or comments you would like to make, sir.

Brezhnev: I, too, want to be perfectly honest -- and I trust you will have the opportunity to see that this is so -- let me say once again that we received your latest proposals on SALT some time at night, practically before I was due to leave. They need a thorough working on. Let me say a new agreement on that is something you and we need equally. We had no less difficulties working out the earlier agreement, but we worked them out and solved them. I believe this time, too, it should be possible to work out an agreement that would be advantageous to both sides.

Gromyko: Difficulties ought to be worked out and we will solve them.

Brezhnev: Perhaps during the next few days we will have a respite and see things more clearly. Yesterday after I arrived I met with President Kekkonen, leaders of the GDR and Tito, and got back very late at night. These matters are complicated, serious and do not lend themselves to a cursory glance. As for our objectives, they remain the same -- Vladivostok determines those objectives. Of course, there are some details to be solved.

I would like in this meeting to turn to other matters of interest to the two sides.

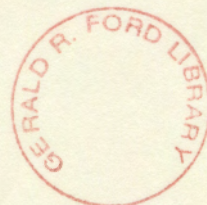
I was a bit surprised to learn that in the United States there were some people who were against the Apollo-Soyuz project, arguing that "their technology is weaker" or something. In the United States, everything is criticized. The only person who is never criticized is Dr. Kissinger, but they sometimes criticize even him for the fun of it. [Laughter].

Kissinger: I was going to say it's reached the point where even I am criticized. [Laughter]

Brezhnev: I saw a day or two ago some piece in the press that -- every paper has certain errors, typographical or letters missing -- and every day they print a little note correcting it.

Ford: Always on the back page.

Brezhnev: I often ask, why do they publish this note? They say "it's for the pleasure of our readers."



So, Mr. President, if you have no objections, we could turn to other matters, and when we meet on the second [of August] -- and we could go into the third if you want -- we could discuss the main issue.

The Middle East

Ford: Why don't you go ahead with the matters of interest to you and we will go ahead on matters of interest to us, and on Saturday when we meet we can discuss SALT.

Brezhnev: I think that's the right thing to do. There are quite a few questions. There is the Middle East, with its Arab League -- there we have to do some thinking about how to act. There are some who are calling for the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations. [Lengthy pause] That is a question that I would call a complex one. It's not a question that can be resolved by any kind of Assembly -- I refer to the United Nations under its Charter. Because if something goes wrong, we can impose our veto or someone else can do it.

Ford: I agree with that. If the Middle East problem hasn't been solved in the UN for so many years, the prospect of a solution in the UN now is very unlikely. So other means have to be found. I'd be interested in your observations, Mr. Secretary, on procedure and other aspects of the problem, because a solution there is essential. We don't want a confrontation in the Middle East between our two countries. A solution must come from the people who are there, the nations in the area. However, in the meantime we are doing what we can to bring the parties together, and in this I believe your actions there have been very helpful.

Brezhnev: [Before translation of the President's remarks] In short we must indeed do all we can to further detente and this must be our very businesslike conversation, and frank.

[Sukhodrev then translates the President's remarks]

Brezhnev: When Mr. Kissinger last met Gromyko, he said the United States had not finalized its approach to that problem as yet. So let's discuss this. Because if we don't work out a solution, the Geneva Conference will be nothing more than an empty phrase.

Ford: And very controversial, with no possibility of a solution.

We still are in the process of analyzing the benefits and possibilities of



the step-by-step approach. We are at the point where either it will achieve another success, or else there is the possibility of a comprehensive proposal that will be presented to the American people and Geneva. It will be a comprehensive proposal that would encompass all of the issues that have festered there for years. So we would appreciate your recommendations and suggestions as we prepare our final conclusions.

Brezhnev: Mr. President, both at Vladivostok and now, our position has been that the occupied Arab territories must be given up, the Palestinians should be guaranteed their rights, and Israel should be guaranteed, through whatever means possible, to have free and secure existence without any outside interference. There is no other alternative.

[He confers with Gromyko].

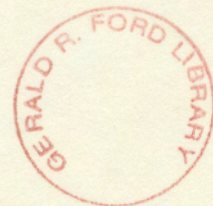
I remember one conversation I had on this with Dr. Kissinger. You'll recall you said to me the step-by-step has certain merits in that it makes some get used to moving back a little, and some to advance a little, so that finally there will be a solution to the complex of issues. I remember this, but this process must be written in the framework of the entire complex of issues. I agree this can't be done in one day.

Ford: The progress made in the step-by-step process will create a more optimistic attitude for that time when we seek a comprehensive solution. The easing of tensions will help create the conditions for a final settlement. So Secretary Kissinger and I see eye to eye on how we can create an environment for a full and final settlement at Geneva.

Gromyko: [To Brezhnev in Russian, not translated] The U.S. is tearing partial solutions out of the total complex of issues. Something gets solved, but what next?

Brezhnev: The only difference between your and our approach, Mr. President, is that in the step-by-step the giving up of occupied lands is in this context divorced from the overall complex, and no specific overall solution is envisaged.

Kissinger: I told -- if I may, Mr. President, -- the Foreign Minister when we met in Geneva that we no longer envisage a number of additional steps, and that after the next step we will have reached the point where a comprehensive approach will be required. Any further steps would be in the context of an overall settlement. So I think we are really reaching the point when we are converging on this issue.



Ford: It is my strong feeling that if we could come to some general agreement on how to proceed in the Middle East [Brezhnev whispers with Gromyko] and on the execution and implementation of the European Security Conference -- because the future of the Conference depends on execution rather than on signature -- and if on Saturday we can reach an important conclusion on SALT II, then our meetings will have a significant impact on detente, which I intend to pursue in the five and a half years that I intend to remain President of the United States.

Brezhnev: [Before translation] Do you mind if I take my coat off? [All take their coats off.]

Gromyko: Now the Americans and the Russians have a real working appearance. A business-like appearance -- still better!

Ford: I believe that was the approach we took at Vladivostok. I believe it is the approach we take here at Helsinki.

[Sukhodrev translates the President's remarks above.]

Brezhnev: Mr. President, I recall that quite recently you had a direct meeting with President Sadat, and that is one of the important countries involved in the conflict. Did you succeed in moving things one step further to a settlement?

Ford: I was encouraged by the good personal relations I established with him. We talked in generalities of the need for a settlement, for a solution that would encompass a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. We didn't get into details -- where the lines should be drawn or where action is to be taken. On the whole, it was a fruitful experience in my first meeting with him.

Gromyko: [To Brezhnev, in Russian, not translated:] Israel is holding on to occupied territories. There are the Palestinians -- where are they to live? So extremist tendencies are developing in the area. Objectively, the whole problem is ripe for solution, but it's all a question of politics. How much longer is it to ripen? There have been two wars already; is one more needed?

Kissinger: Is this a private conversation here, or it directed to us?

Sukhodrev: Private.





Gromyko: Private but not secret. [Laughter]

Kissinger: Is it a private fight or can anybody join? [Laughter]

Brezhnev: This problem is very complicated. It is very complicated for you, for us, and for the Arabs.

Ford: It's almost unbelievable that some of those nations can't talk as you and I do, Mr. Secretary. I am sure if they had the same understanding of the need for discussions and the same willingness that we do, then there would be progress towards a solution by them in that area.

Brezhnev: When things get difficult, the best way is to instruct Kissinger to go into the matter.

Gromyko: But only together with us!

Kissinger: I told the Foreign Minister in Geneva that it is really impossible for either of us to reach a solution on its own, that it can only be done on a common basis. I also told the Foreign Minister -- on the instructions of the President -- that neither of our two sides can achieve a permanent advantage in the Middle East at the expense of the other. And I also said that it would be a tragedy if our countries were drawn into a confrontation because of the people whose record is so demonstrably volatile, as the people in the Middle East, people who one year are on one side and the next year are on the other. So after the next step, we will have to explore how to move towards an overall solution. If there is a step.

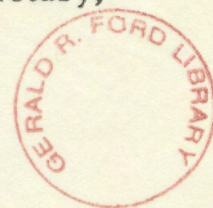
Brezhnev: I laugh, Mr. President -- why I say Kissinger should be brought into these problems -- [To Kissinger:] Didn't you get the highest award from President Sadat?

Kissinger: The second highest. [Laughter] President Nixon got the highest.

Brezhnev: I didn't even get a little medal!

Kissinger: But they took it away from me and will give it to the next visitor, because they have only one.

Gromyko: Mr. President, you made the interesting remark that if the Arabs and Israelis could sit across the table like you and the General Secretary,



they would come to a solution. But the hard fact is they can't. If they did, they would probably start throwing ink wells at each other as in the past. [Laughter] But the Geneva Conference was a forum that was agreed upon by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. You will be present, and we will, and Sadat and the Israelis and the Syrians. So discussions will be a natural thing. We can't understand why the U.S. is hesitant about such a forum -- one, I repeat, that was agreed upon by the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

The U.S. says "let's make one more effort to get a partial step going." But you did this once before. Did that step bring the problem any closer to a solution? The step-by-step doesn't yield results. Your earlier efforts have not brought a solution any closer. There should be a comprehensive solution. There should be preliminary discussions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union -- assuming the Israelis and Arabs agree -- and then our ideas should be put on the table. All parties will be present in Geneva -- the U.S., the USSR, Israel and the Arabs, so no one can bite off what has not been agreed to by all participants.

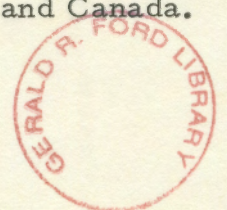
Ford: I believe, Mr. Foreign Minister, if there is careful preparation, if an appropriate environment is created, then a meeting at Geneva will be of benefit for an overall solution. But I would say what has been accomplished thus far has to some extent created a better environment, and another step, if achieved, will further enhance the atmosphere which is so essential for the successful work of Geneva. A failure in Geneva would have extremely serious consequences.

Gromyko: The Conference and its outcome cannot be any worse than the policies of its participants. So if the participants have a desire to achieve positive results, positive results will be achieved.

Ford: It seems to me we have an understanding of your position, and I trust you have an understanding of our position in this area. We do want a solution. So perhaps as we think it over, and as you think it over, we can reach a common understanding of the procedures and approaches we can take to a solution.

Would you like to pass to another subject, Mr. Secretary?

Brezhnev: All right. Maybe we could talk about this: We complete the European Security Conference. But we should not stop at that. We should make further headway. Relaxation of tensions doesn't stop with Europe, the U.S. and Canada.



We should extend further. Maybe we should talk about that. I think it was you who said detente is useful not only for Europe but for all the world, and I certainly associate myself fully with those words.

Ford: I agree. In this connection, I want to note that the United States Senators who met with you in Moscow came back with very favorable reactions to the discussions they had with you, Mr. Secretary. And the Senators join with me in the view that detente is the way our two countries should proceed. They were impressed with the very frank discussions they had with you on energy, economy, trade and other areas. Their impression was that there are distinct possibilities for cooperation in these areas. And I was greatly impressed by the hospitality extended by you and your associates during that visit and the frankness and spirit of cooperation with which these were discussed at the time of their visit.

Brezhnev: In Washington, Mr. President, when I met with a large group of Senators and Congressmen and answered some of their questions, there was one man who sat in the back and asked a question about something. He asked the question in a delicate way, and I said "You are not bold enough. You are obviously referring to the Jewish population in the Soviet Union." When they were in the Soviet Union, he admitted: "It was me." It was Senator Javits, and we then had an interesting discussion with him.

Ford: Javits sitting in the back of the room? [Laughter]

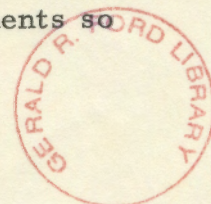
Gromyko: He admitted it was him. He was sitting to one side.

Brezhnev: [To Kissinger] Were you present in Washington during the meeting?

Kissinger: No. I knew about your meeting. You presented some figures to the Senators in that meeting.

Brezhnev: I have some figures on that for this meeting too. It is soon going to be a veritable tragedy!

Ford: Let me say on that point, Mr. General Secretary. I have indicated to you that I intend to submit legislation as to trade and also as to credits. The handling of Congress is a very delicate problem. As you know, it is dominated in our system by the opposition party, so I have influence but not necessarily control. So the matter of timing when to submit legislation on trade and credits is very important. It is my hope this fall to submit remedial amendments so



that we can have trade relations as initially contemplated. I think it was very unfortunate that you were forced to cancel the trade agreement, although I understand the action in Congress might have compelled you to do this. Perhaps by some appropriate action you could help me convince the Congress to approve the changes we will recommend. That would be a very important step, so detente can proceed and we can move in trade relations forward as we anticipated in a constructive way.

Brezhnev: Mr. President, on the whole let me say, there has been no change in our policy. We want as before to have good relations with the United States.

Ford: Mr. General Secretary, a few moments ago you said you had some figures in mind to discuss. I would be most interested.

Brezhnev: I will look. I do have somewhere a brief on this question. We have already added Solzhenitsyn to the list! [Laughter]

Gromyko: What we won't do for the sake of friendship!

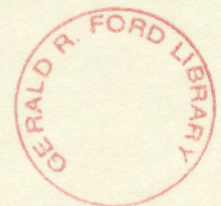
Ford: I have heard the name before.

Brezhnev: [Reads over his talking paper and confers with Gromyko] Here are some data. In 1972 -- the first figures are the number of requests for exit permits -- in 1972, there were 26,800 requests. In 1973, there were approximately 26,000. In 1974, there were 14,000. In the first six months of 1975, there were 5,000 requests to leave.

As regards the number of people who actually left for Israel -- actually some went elsewhere -- in 1972, there were 29,000. In 1973, 33,000. In 1974, 19,000. And in the first six months of 1975, 6,000. Some were carry-overs from the past year; there were only 5,000 requests.

I have another figure. From the start of the emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union, which dates back to 1945, until July 1, 1975, a total of 116,000 persons left the Soviet Union. This amounts to 98.4 percent of all requests submitted, 98.4 percent were met. You see, at present there is a process of falling off of requests, and probably it will continue. In your country, there are some to whom you don't give permission on security grounds; we also have such people.

[Secretary Kissinger gets up to leave briefly.]



Ford: I must say Mr. General Secretary, Mr. Solzhenitsyn has aligned himself --

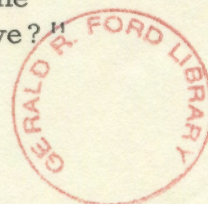
Kissinger: I am not leaving because you mentioned that name. [Laughter]

Ford: Mr. Solzhenitsyn aligned himself with those who are very severe critics of the policy I and you believe in, detente. Senator Jackson, Mr. George Meany, President of the American Federation of Labor, have spoken out critically. Meany has embraced Mr. Solzhenitsyn. Some of these critics encouraged Mr. Solzhenitsyn to continue his criticism of detente. As I said before, it is my firm belief that detente must continue and become irreversible if we want to achieve that kind of world which is essential for peace. The figures you mentioned, of course, are very disappointing to those who criticize detente. And any improvement there -- in the requests or the figures of those who get permission to leave -- would undercut some of the criticism and enhance our ability to proceed with detente as we want to do. But I repeat: detente can and will work and can be made irreversible -- particularly if this Saturday we can make headway on SALT.

Brezhnev: I mentioned Solzhenitsyn just in passing. There was some information that he wanted to change his way of life and become a monk or something. Reportedly there was some priest going around with him at some point. He is nothing more than a zero for the Soviet Union. But why do you feel these figures will be disappointing to the people you mentioned?

Ford: In the case of Senator Javits, and Senator Ribicoff, they want to be helpful in Congress to approve the legislation I want to recommend, legislation that will permit trade, to extend credits, that will be very beneficial. If the figures were more encouraging, Mr. General Secretary, they would provide them with arguments for revising legislation that was so harmful to the continuation of detente.

Brezhnev: Mr. President, maybe you didn't understand me correctly. I said we are reaching the point where there will be a tragedy. But what are we to do? Start talking people into leaving? I merely made a factual statement: The number of applications has been decreasing. The number of applications we have been receiving since I was in Washington has been declining. I am sure you and Dr. Kissinger realize this is so. I know virtually dozens of people of Jewish origin. Am I to go to Dymshits, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, and say "You've got to leave?"



And Leibman of the Moscow Soviet -- should I grab him by the hand and tell him to go?

Ford: Certainly the figure of 98 percent is a good record.

Gromyko: Ninety-eight point four percent.

Ford: That is certainly a good batting average, as we say in the United States. I am not suggesting ways for increasing the number of applications. All I want to say is that Ribicoff, Javits and others must be made to understand that if the revised legislation is adopted, there will be the possibility, if not the certainty -- that the figures will be like those of 1974 or 1973. I understand you can't take people by the hand and tell them to leave, but the perception, the appearance, makes a difference.

Brezhnev: I really can't understand what I can do in this regard.

Ford: Let me summarize the situation as I see it from the point of view of detente. I came here, Mr. General Secretary, despite the criticism in the United States, because I believe in detente. The portions I have been connected with -- Vladivostok and here -- have been concrete forward steps, meaningful progress. As I said, the criticism at home has come from elements in America that can be, as I said, brushed aside. Coming here will contribute to detente despite the detente critics. I hope we will achieve in Helsinki what we talked about in Vladivostok. Thinking people in the U.S. know that Vladivostok was a success which serves the interests of both sides. The American people, the majority of the population, hopes for more progress. The majority feels the same way about this conference, and the implementation of the document we sign will be the most conclusive proof that we are on the right track. So I hope we can make progress in SALT. This will be a good preliminary discussion for what we discuss on Saturday. But I repeat with quiet emphasis, detente must be made irreversible. It was my conviction at Vladivostok. I hope we can leave Helsinki with the same feeling, leading hopefully to a visit by you to the United States this fall.

Brezhnev: [Interrupts the translation] And I appreciate very highly the fact that you came here despite the criticism in the U.S.

[Interrupts the translation at statement that detente is beneficial:] And I [Interrupts the translation at statement that detente is beneficial:] And I agree with you on that.



On the second [of August], we will not have too much time, but I want to devote that day to what is most important.

[He starts reading from his talking paper.] At this point, Mr. President, I would like to mention one thing which relates to our common goals. You and we have an agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War. We both pledged to act in such a way as to prevent a nuclear war between us. And we both, I am sure, agree that nothing should be done to weaken that goal. In this, all aspects are important -- economic, political, technical, as well as moral and psychological. The very possibility of a nuclear war between us should be made to be inadmissible in anybody's mind. So I cannot but call your attention to statements by certain officials in the United States, notably the Secretary of Defense, that suggest the possibility or even the probability of the United States using nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union. [Translated by Sukhodrev as "call to mind the permissibility or even the inevitability of nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union." ] What he implies is a preventive nuclear blow against the Soviet Union. When our people read that, they can't but be disturbed [translated by Sukhodrev as "it can only be read one way!"]. What if we began replying in kind? All our agreements would go to hell. It amounts to the possibility of preventive attack against the Soviet Union. How are we to take that?

Ford: Mr. General Secretary, I am sure you know that in the United States the President of the United States makes the policy and executes the policy. You and I have said in our discussions, and I have said publicly, that nuclear war is abhorrent to us. I can assure you that I intend to pursue that policy, that so long as I am President, policy will be set by me as I described it to you, publicly and privately.

Mr. General Secretary, I have two questions. Would it be possible to meet at 9:00 on Saturday?

Brezhnev: [Confers with Gromyko] There is the grain question. I think that is an easy one. We have given you the relevant information. I think that will not be a problem.

Ford: The main subject I think we should discuss, of course, is SALT.

Brezhnev: That is the main issue.

Ford: Is 9:00 all right?



Brezhnev: All right.

Kissinger: We have to tell our press something. I propose we just list the subjects we discussed.

Brezhnev: We have something.

Kissinger: You have already got a statement?

Gromyko: A unilateral statement.

Kissinger: I have to brief them tonight. If we don't mention SALT, they will wonder, because we told them it was the main subject. The Middle East. No content. We won't write anything.

Gromyko: Unilateral. The Middle East and strategic -- these two in particular.

Kissinger: And Europe and bilateral.

Can we say there was a constructive atmosphere?

Brezhnev: We will say we kept fighting all the time. [Laughter]

Ford: I think "friendly." Very good.

[The meeting ended. The President escorted the General Secretary to his car outside where the party posed for photographs.]

