

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN AT MY HOUSE IN WASHINGTON ON THE EVENING OF NOVEMBER 4, 1976.

I asked Dobrynin what President-elect Carter and General Secretary Brezhnev could do in this interim period to help start relations on a constructive basis. Dobrynin stated that it would be most helpful if a single private channel be opened between President-elect Carter and Mr. Brezhnev. This was done both when Kennedy and Nixon were the Presidents-elect. He suggested that the channel be between him and myself or any other person designated by the President-elect. There would be no commitments, of course, just purely exploratory information to and from both sides. Three months is a long time to only guess what the true attitudes are. He also suggested some statement by President-elect Carter that he cared about improving US/USSR relations to help bring about peaceful solutions.

I told Dobrynin that the President-elect, I know, wanted to meet Mr. Brezhnev personally; but in accordance with his public statements he would be seeing the British Prime Minister, the French President, and the German Chancellor--and perhaps others--before he could meet with Mr. Brezhnev. Dobrynin said he fully understood and would convey

this to Mr. Brezhnev. He expressed his thanks that I had informed him of this procedure, as otherwise it might have been misunderstood in Moscow.

I also raised the case of Vladimir Slepak. He replied that usually in these cases demonstrators were held for fifteen days in jail, then released. I asked if he could help if he was not released. He replied that he preferred that this subject not be the first for him to raise. He would be quite willing to include it among several significant subjects.

In answer to my suggestion that Brezhnev make some goodwill gestures to the United States, Dobrynin referred to the speech that Brezhnev had made at the plenary session on October 25th and that there were several important points made which were not reported in the press here. In that speech, Brezhnev states that he continues to seek improved relations with the United States. There were several other points which he said ought to be read. He agreed to send me a copy. Dobrynin also considers that Gromyko's memorandum to the United Nations had some new formulations on comprehensive test ban and support for non-proliferation in which

President-elect Carter had shown an interest. I asked him to send me copies of these as well and to mark the parts that he thought were particularly important. (Copies enclosed of Brezhnev's speech at the plenard session on October 25th, Gromyko's memorandum to the United Nations in October and extracts from Brezhnev's speech at the Congress of the Communist Party on February 24, 1976.) I asked him about the question of Soviet peaceful explosions in connection with a comprehensive test ban. He said that Brezhnev indicated a willingness to have on-site inspection.

Dobrynin complained that there had been no willingness on the part of the administration to complete the SALT II agreement, in spite of the fact that Kissinger had agreed to the terms in January. The Soviet government didn't see any reason why an agreement reached should not be lived up to. They are quite upset about it.

I asked what ~~was~~ the deal was on Cruise. He replied that there would be a limitation for general use of Cruise up to 600 kilometers with a special use of Cruise on aircraft up to 2500 kilometers, but each plane would be counted as one of the total permitted. I asked about the possibility of limitation of test flights and he said they had never considered that. I said this was one of the subjects we

considered important as a way to prevent continuation of the qualitative arms race. President-elect Carter, as I understand it, not only wants to stop the quantitative arms race, but the qualitative arms race as well. He said that he understood that, but the matter had never been discussed.

Dobrynin raised the subject of Israel and the situation in the Middle East. He believes that only with US/USSR cooperation can a final peace settlement be reached. He also said the Soviet government was disappointed that their offer to negotiate an agreement for no naval bases in the Indian Ocean had not been considered by the U.S. government.

Regarding Ambassador-designate Toon, he replied that the US press had been full of statements that Toon was tough and anti-Soviet even before his government had had a chance to reply. It was particularly embarrassing, as this was his reputation, rightly or wrongly, in the Soviet Union. Of course, the Soviet government would agree, if President-elect Carter wants him. I said I felt sure this was a subject in which he would not want to be involved.

In my opinion, which I did not of course tell Dobrynin, it has been a mistake to conduct so much of our business with the Soviet Union here in Washington between the Secretary of State and Dobrynin. I have felt it was important to build up our Embassy in Moscow, which has been generally downgraded. I believe consideration should be given to the appointment of a non-career individual of stature in whom President-elect Carter has personal confidence. This would permit our Embassy to play an important role in the relations with the Soviet government.

I found that when I suggested to Dobrynin last summer that I go to Moscow to see Brezhnev, he enthusiastically accepted. He evidently felt that he was not able to give a convincing picture of the current situation in the United States in relation to the Soviet Union. Dobrynin told me that my visit had been useful and that he was pleased.

Paul Harris