

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION, W. AVERELL HARRIMAN AND
SOVIET AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN, N STREET, 13 APRIL 1978

Ambassador Dobrynin came to lunch today and was as affable as usual. He is returning to Moscow on Saturday. We agreed that Cy Vance's visit to Moscow next week offers a real opportunity for getting things back on the track again. I said I didn't think many things could be settled, but he expressed the hope that there would be enough advances to make the meeting a success, particularly after the failure of March last year.

We discussed the neutron bomb decision, and I said that I understood he had told Vance we should have let Brezhnev know in advance. I said that this was exactly what I had recommended. It was a missed opportunity, just as the B-1 decision had been. He fully agreed on both scores and said that the principle of mutual example on restraint was a good one and Brezhnev would like it.

I raised the question very vigorously of their continuing buildup of conventional forces in Europe, tanks, heavy artillery, etc., as being one of the most difficult to explain and damaging subjects. I said it was a dangerous situation because there are those in this country who are thinking about military help to China in retaliation. I said they should stop the buildup in some manner as it was getting out of hand and causing trouble. I had maintained that it was for defensive purposes, but they had gone so far now that I could no longer do that. He said that he agreed and was going to so recommend to Brezhnev.

We discussed the Cubans in Africa, particularly the Horn, without any conclusion. He pointed out that they were better off when they had their relations with Somalia instead of taking on the problems of Ethiopia. And yet on the other hand his people were always keen to support a revolutionary movement. I urged him to do what he could to get the Cubans to reduce their forces substantially in Africa and under no circumstances to get involved in Rhodesia.

Dobrynin thanked me for sending him the telegram while he was in the Soviet Union the last time.