

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

Handwritten: 1/14/76
1/14/76
1/14/76

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958 (as amended) SEC 3.3

MR # 10-119-#27

Handwritten: OSD Ltr 6/20/10: State Ltr 9/13/10

By *dal* NARA, Date 10/12/10

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense
Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the
President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME:

Wednesday, January 14, 1976
9:35 - 10:45 a. m.

PLACE:

The Oval Office

Kissinger: I think we have an urgent decision to make. I don't see how I can go, in the light of the DOD and ACDA memos, which will have to go to Jackson. The objection will be that we rushed to an agreement in the face of agency objections.

I just don't understand Option I. Either an agreement collapses if there is not a subsequent Backfire deal, or you must face the possibility of a treaty which leaves them running free permanently.

But my fundamental problem is that I can't go under these conditions.

Handwritten: Rumsfeld
The President: I didn't know until the meeting what the proposal was and that it would be discussed. You said you had this proposal and it was okay with Henry. It was clear I was out of the loop.

I went back and had a good session with the troops. Brown is staying wired in with the Chiefs.

Now for my memo. The first page just repeats the proposal. The first proposal is for a fixed number instead of limiting them to whatever is produced by a certain date. We think there is no problem with SLCM's as MIRV'd, but we haven't staffed it out.

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On the nuclear-armed thing, the Chiefs back away some.

There is no problem with the modified IV. This is just a different way to allow some Backfire, by not counting 115 Bison/Bear.

Kissinger: This issue has really never been discussed at the Brezhnev level. He won't even know it's a problem.

The President: This is the first time I have heard of it.

Rumsfeld: The paper recommends the Modified or the Variant IV. Then as a fallback, I personally would recommend combining the Modified and the Variant, thus giving them about 200-250 Backfire. Then I would think Option I is the most defensible, with an agreement on cruise missile and Backfire by a certain date.

Kissinger: But what if you don't get a Backfire agreement by that date? Either it cancels the whole SALT agreement or the Vladivostok part remains and the Backfire remains free.

The President: The surface ship section of Option III is better than Option IV Modified.

Rumsfeld: The problem is not that; it's breaking the 2400.

[More discussion].

The President: If Henry doesn't go, I think we have no chance for getting a SALT agreement. I would never forgive myself for not trying.

Rumsfeld: I agree.

The President: I believe after Modified Option IV he should try III and then go to I.

Kissinger: I have no problem with that.

[Discussion about using the IV Variant.]

Rumsfeld: What if Henry went and tried IV Modified, and added Variant IV as a sweetener, and if neither of those work, he could cable back; you would call an NSC meeting and we would get to Option III that way and get everyone on board.



Kissinger: That could be done.

Scowcroft: You won't be here, Don.

Kissinger: What if we had an NSC meeting on Monday, when you could tell me to use IV Modified, and then to add Variant IV if necessary. You could say if that is non-negotiable, you are leaning to III, but you wanted me to come back for instructions at that point. Then you could call an NSC meeting with the substitute people because the principals would have been forewarned.

The President: Let's do it that way.

Rumsfeld: I have a couple of points. The C-130 is ready to be billed to the French. I wanted everyone to know, in view of our press statements.

The President, Kissinger, Scowcroft: Go ahead.

Rumsfeld: Also about nuclear modernization in NATO.

Kissinger: I have no problem if it is just studies, and if you go through the NSC before you implement. I think we need to consider it at an NSC meeting.

Scowcroft: I have reservations about Nike Hercules.



P/K/R ✓

9:35-10:45 am 2

14 June 76

K

I think we have an urgent decision to make. I don't see how I can go, in the light of the DOD and ACSI memos, which will have to go to Jackson. The objection will be that we rushed to an agreement in the face of agency objections.

I just don't understand Option I. Either an agreement falls ~~apart~~ collapses if there is not subsequent backfire, or you must face a possibility of a treaty which ^{leaves them financing for permanently} But my fundamental job is that I can't go under these conditions.

P

I agree. It would ~~be~~ look like my recruiting agencies

RA

I ~~don't~~ didn't know until the meeting what a proposal was and that it would be desirable. You said you had this proposal & it was K w/ K. It was clear I was out of the loop.

I went back & had a good session w/ the troops. Brown is staying wired in w/ the Chiefs. Now for my memo. First page just repeats a proposal. The 1st proposal is for a fixed # vice whatever is produced by a date.

We think there is no prob w/ SKCNL MIRC but we haven't stopped it yet.

One more armed thing, the Chiefs talked away some.

There is no prob w/ Mod. IT. This is just a diff way to go allow some backfire, by not counting 115 Billion / Bases.

(Discussion about counting a Bases / Bases).

A

This issue has really never been discussed at a Brig level. He won't even know it's a prob.

R

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OSD ltr 6/12/10. Date 4/29/9/3/10
By dal NARA Date 10/12/10



* MINUTE Statement

13 Jan 1955
Contract Paper

The paper recommends Mod or Variant IV. Tom
-> fallback, I personally would recommend
combining Mod + Variant, thus giving them
about 200-250 Bankfire. ~~It~~ I would
think Option I is most defensible, w/ Can/Bankfire
agreement by a date certain.

K But what if you don't get Bankfire agreement by
that date. Either it comes & whole Salt agreement
or a bad part remains + Bankfire remains
file.

P The surface ship portion of Option III is
better than Opt II mod.

R The prob is not that; it is breaking < 24000
(more discussion)

P If K doesn't go, I think we have no chance
for getting Salt. I would never forgive
myself for not trying.

R I agree

P I believe after Mod Option II we should
try III + then go to I

K I have no prob w/ that.

(Discussion about using ~~the~~ IV Variant

R What if Kurent + tried IV mod, added
Variant II as a substitute + if neither of these
works, he would come back, you would call
NSC into + we would get to Option III that
way + get everyone on board.

K Could be done

S You won't be here, ~~to~~ Don.

K What if we had an NSC with on Monday, when
you could tell me to use ~~the~~ IV mod, then



add Variant IV if necessary. You could say if that was not your liking to III but you wanted us to come back for instructions at that point. Then you could call an NSC w/c substitute people because a proposal would have been forwarded.

P Let's do it that way.

R I have a couple of points. The C-130 is really to be linked to French. I wanted everyone to know, in view of our press statements

P, K, S Go ahead

R Also inc. modernization in NATO.

K I have no prob if it is just studies, if you go thru a NSC before you implement.

I think we must consider at NSC only

S I have reservations about Nike Hercules.

