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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

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Date: May 27, 1978

Time: 8:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

Place: Cabinet Room, The White House

SUBJECTS: SALT, CTB, Africa, Human Rights

U.S. PARTICIPANTS

- President Jimmy Carter
- Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance
- Secretary of Defense Harold Brown
- Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
- Ambassador Paul C. Warnke
- Ambassador Malcolm Toon
- Mr. David Aaron
- Mr. Reginald Bartholomew
- Mr. Hamilton Jordan
- Mr. Jody Powell
- Mr. Wm. D. Krimer, Interpreter

NODIS REVIEW	
Cat. A	Caption removed; transferred to O/FADRC
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Cat. C	Caption and custody retained by S/S
Reviewed by:	<i>John Bogan</i>
Date:	7 Nov 1982

USSR PARTICIPANTS

- Foreign Minister A. A. Gromyko
- Ambassador A. F. Dobrynin
- Deputy Foreign Minister G. M. Korniyenko
- Ambassador V. Makarov
- Minister Counselor A. A. Bessmertnykh
- Mr. V. G. Komplektov
- Mr. N. N. Detinov
- Mr. V. M. Sukhodrev, Interpreter

Drafted by: Wm. D. Krimer / OPR/LS
May 27, 1978 *W.D.K.*

Approved by:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Number: _____ Date: _____

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EXEMPTIONS

be found to the question of duration of the agreement.

The President asked Ambassador Warnke to touch on the other issues involved.

Ambassador Warnke said there appeared to be agreement in principle on the concepts of authenticated national seismic installations and on on-site inspections. Considerable differences still existed on the extent to which specific equipment to be used would be agreed upon at the present stage of the negotiations. There were also differences on the question of how on-site inspection would be carried out and what equipment would be permitted for that purpose.

The President said there was no need this morning to discuss the technical questions involved. He believed that one political question could be resolved, i. e., the length of the agreement. He thought that as termination of the agreement approached, negotiations could be held regarding extension of the agreement. His position was that five years was a reasonable term. As termination approached, negotiations could be resumed.

Gromyko repeated that if the other questions could be resolved in a positive manner, if the President's negotiators would manifest greater flexibility, he did not think a five-year term would present any difficulties.

The President noted that there were still differences between the United States and the Soviet Union at the SALT negotiations and at the CTB negotiations. He believed, however, that they could be resolved. There were two other items, however, which had now reached serious proportions and were tearing apart the mutual trust and friendship between our two countries which he believed were necessary to assure detente and future peace. These two items were different in nature, but equally important.

Africa

The first of these items concerned Soviet-Cuban intrusion and adventurism in Africa. We were refraining from having a military presence in Africa, but the Soviet presence there had increased to alarming proportions. We knew that the Soviet Union was in a position to exert a strong influence on the Cubans. The Soviets usually claimed that Cuba was an independent country that made its own decisions; we knew, however, of the enormous economic support the Soviet Union was rendering Cuba and could not believe that the Cubans could put 40 or 50 or 60 thousand men into Africa without the Soviet Union's tacit approval or encouragement. Referring to Zaire and the Katangans' invasion into that country, the President said we did not believe it to have been possible without Cuban assistance. As for Eritrea, he hoped that the dispute there could be resolved without Soviet or Cuban presence or involvement. With the United Nations we were trying to resolve the difficult questions involving Rhodesia and Namibia, and were doing so without any support on the part of the Soviet Union. He believed that it would be to the advantage of the Soviet Union and of our country to see all the parties involved come together in order to resolve the Rhodesian dispute by peaceful means. In this regard we were also consulting with Britain and other nations. If the Cubans were to refrain from interfering and if the Soviet Union were to lend its active support to our efforts, the Rhodesian problem could be resolved by peaceful means. Namibia was another instance requiring peaceful resolution. The Soviet Union did have an influence it could exert, all the way from public support of our efforts in Rhodesia and Namibia to exercising restraint in the Horn of Africa. He believed that elimination of Soviet-Cuban involvement in Africa would be a contributing factor to the

improvement of Soviet-American relations. We were quite concerned and believed the Soviet Union knew that many other nations were equally concerned over Soviet efforts to increase Soviet influence in Africa by supply of weapons and by encouragement of Cuban involvement. The President wanted to express this concern to Gromyko and ask him to report to President Brezhnev that we considered this to be an alarming development, one that was still in progress.

Gromyko said that the Soviet leadership had certainly noted some of the President's recent statements on African matters, which, whether the President liked it or not, also somewhat exacerbated and heated up the atmosphere as regards relations between our two countries. In this connection he was now talking about the specific matters the President had raised in connection with Africa. There was no increasing Soviet presence in Africa. The Soviet Union did not have a single soldier with a rifle in Africa and did not intend to send any to that area. The Soviet Union had indeed sent some quantities of arms to some African countries, as well as a very small number of experts who were helping the Africans master the use of the arms supplied. Not a single Soviet individual had fired a single shot in the course of the latest clashes in Africa, and not a single Soviet individual had taken part in any operation in that part of the world. The Soviet Union had condemned the Somali invasion of Ethiopia, had called it open aggression and had said so directly to the President of Somalia during his visit to Moscow. Later on President Siad Barre had acknowledged that he had committed aggression. He had asked the Soviet Union to help him extricate himself from that dirty war. The Soviets had told him by way of advice to withdraw all his personnel from Ethiopia and to settle

his dispute with Ethiopia by peaceful means. Quite recently, virtually several days ago, he had admitted that his invasion of Ethiopia had been a mistake and had asked the Soviet Union for help. The Soviet Union had given him some good advice--to withdraw all his personnel and arms from Ethiopian territory. Further, Gromyko had already told Secretary Vance that the Soviet Union had insistently advised the Ethiopians, including Mengistu, to refrain from having Ethiopian troops invade Somali territory. The Soviet Union had indeed supplied weapons to Ethiopia since Ethiopia had been a victim of aggression. Frankly speaking, he felt the United States, too, would have been fully justified if it had helped Ethiopia, since under the U.N. Charter a victim of aggression is entitled to receive assistance on an individual as well as a collective basis. That would have been up to the United States, of course, he was just mentioning this in passing.

Gromyko expressed the hope that the President was in possession of authentic information regarding the role of the Cubans in Ethiopia. The Ethiopians had asked Cuba for assistance just as they had asked the Soviet Union and other countries for assistance. It was very hard indeed to speak of numbers, because the numbers of Cubans involved there, as mentioned by the President, were exaggerated at least tenfold. He believed that the Somalis were deliberately exaggerating these numbers and that the United States was not sufficiently critical of the information it received from the Somalis. Incidentally, the Cubans, like the Soviets, had advised the Ethiopians not to cross the border into Somalia. The Soviet Union was indeed consulting with Cuba from time to time, but to speak of some sort of coordinated Cuban-Soviet plan, etc., was absolutely wrong.

As for Eritrea, Gromyko pointed out that the Soviet position was that Eritrea should enjoy a broad autonomy within a united and sovereign Ethiopian state. The Soviets had said this many times to the Ethiopian leadership. This was not the same situation as had been the case with Ogaden. Each of these issues had its own specific aspects which were quite different from case to case. The Soviet Union had called upon the Ethiopian leaders not to permit any bloodshed in Eritrea and to settle the dispute there by peaceful means. The Soviet Union had expressed this position to the Cubans as well, and they in turn had told the Soviets that their position in this respect was identical. There was not a single Cuban soldier fighting in Eritrea today. The Soviet leadership had been informed that this was Fidel Castro's firm position. As for further developments in that area, he was not at all sure that there would not be further bloodshed there. After all, there were certain circles outside that area, who urged the Eritreans to resist a peaceful settlement. What was more, Ethiopia, too, was not totally in sympathy with arriving at a peaceful settlement. If the Ethiopians had not been restrained by the Soviets and by the Cubans, blood would have flowed there long ago. Whether or not one could succeed in restraining them over a period of time, Gromyko did not know, but the Soviet Union was working in that direction. In Ethiopia the Soviet Union was a factor restraining hostilities rather than a factor prodding military action. To what extent this would be successful in the future he could not now predict. The Soviets had learned that one could not rely on the word of Siad Barre. If the United States had not learned that lesson yet, he was sure it would reach that conclusion soon. At the time when the Soviet

Union had supplied weapons to Somalia, it had been done on the condition that these weapons would not be used against third countries, but only for self-defense. Siad Barre had given the Soviet Union a pledge to that effect, but everyone knew what had happened subsequently.

As for Rhodesia, Namibia and Zaire, he could tell the President firmly that the Soviet Union had no representatives in that area, not even news correspondents, and did not intend to send any representatives there. The Soviet Union knew absolutely nothing about the recent actions of the so-called gendarmes of Katanga. The very word brought back memories of the period when Tshombe had been in charge.

Gromyko noted that the President had spoken of the influence the Soviet Union had in Rhodesia and Namibia. If he had referred to ideological influence, he might have been right, because for many years the Soviet Union had argued against colonialism and racism. That was no secret. He would only point out that ideological influence knew no barriers at all. As for anything else, absolutely nothing was being done. He would guess that the President had received reports to the effect that the Soviet Union wanted to lay its hands on the entire area; he would tell the President, however, that the Soviet Union was doing absolutely nothing in that area, and knew nothing of the developments there except what was reported in the press. The Soviet Union was not sending any people to that area. He could imagine the hue and cry throughout the world that would be raised if any Soviets or Cubans travelled to Rhodesia or Namibia. They did not have a single representative there, unlike the United States.

Gromyko wanted to say a few words about Zaire. Whatever he knew about the recent invasion there, he knew from the reports of various press agencies and the reports of the Soviet representative in Zaire. The Soviet chargé d' affaires had been called in to see Mobutu recently and had been informed that some Katangan gendarmes had invaded the territory of Zaire from Angola. The Soviet Union had not even known of their presence in Angola. As for the Cubans, not a single Cuban had been caught or even seen in that invasion. Yet, for some reason people had started to blame first the Soviet Union and then the Cubans. He had questioned the Cubans at a very high level about this invasion and had been told that Cuba had absolutely nothing to do with the whole matter. The Soviet Union wanted to maintain good relations with Zaire and the Soviet chargé had said so to Mobutu. After all, what would President Carter want done? If there were some refugees in Angola who subsequently crossed the border into their own country, what should be done with them--should they be shot? They seemed to be running from repression. So much for the situation in Zaire. The President would note that Gromyko had said quite a few things about all these areas. As for Namibia, the Soviet Union was not looking for anything at all in that country and it had accordingly informed the British. On the other hand, the Soviet Union was totally against keeping the blacks in Rhodesia in bondage. 24 out of 25 people there were black, and the Soviet Union had stated that it was in favor of the majority of the people themselves deciding what kind of a government they should have. He could not agree with the thesis that foreigners would know best what should be done in Rhodesia. The Soviet Union was saying this, and that was no secret. That was its position of

principle, based on its ideology. Soviet policy throughout the world was based on the premise that people were their own best masters.

In conclusion, Gromyko wanted to thank the President for the great patience he had displayed. Knowing how busy the President was, Gromyko had nevertheless taken a great deal of his time, but this was so because the questions they had discussed were very important. The President had made some statements, as had others, reflecting on the state of our bilateral relations. That, too, was important and therefore Gromyko had provided appropriate explanations. The Soviet Union had no designs on Africa at all. The President could rest assured that the Soviets did not want to lay their hands on Africa; the Soviet Union had a large enough territory of its own with much to do there. He would draw the conclusion that it was necessary for our two countries to consult with each other more frequently, and to explain our respective views of the situation to each other. That should be done in person rather than just by written communications.

The President said he would respond briefly. U.S. assessment of the same situation was quite different from the assessment Gromyko had provided. We looked at the Horn of Africa with a great deal of concern. From our perspective, the Somalis had invaded Ogaden using Soviet weapons. We understood that the Ethiopian response there had been directed by a Soviet general. While the Soviet Union had not sent troops to the area, the Cubans had sent more than 15,000 men. We recognized that the Soviet Union and the United States had persuaded the Ethiopians not to cross the Somali border once the Somalis had been pushed out of Ogaden. However, Soviet generals and Cuban officers remained, perhaps directing combat

against Eritrea. The Cubans had said that they were not involved directly that they had no troops in combat status in Eritrea. We certainly hoped that was the case. In Angola the Cuban presence had recently increased to 20,000 troops plus service personnel. The Katangans, to whom Gromyko had referred as refugees, had certainly been trained and supported by the Cubans in Angola and perhaps by some East Germans. In Zaire a major military force had appeared, well supplied with Soviet weapons. It had destroyed Kolwezi with major loss of life. The President had no doubt that the Soviet Union could have prevented that if it had used its influence with the Angolans, the Cubans and the East Germans, all of whom depended upon the Soviet Union to a great extent. The President had not claimed that the Cubans had troops in Zaire, but he did not doubt that the invaders had been encouraged and supplied by those allies of the Soviet Union.

The President said there were also some other concerns in Africa which he would not have time to discuss now. The Libyans, allies of the Soviet Union, had moved into Chad. We had no interests in the area except that we did not want to see borders violated by military action. There was a broad pattern emerging of Soviet supply of military weapons, some of which Cubans used to train black troops to keep military action going in many African areas. This situation had escalated in scope and intensity, and we were very concerned about it, as the President had said earlier. In addition to refraining from military action, we would like to have the Soviet Union's positive support for our efforts in Rhodesia and Namibia. The President had understood the statements Gromyko had made, and hoped that Gromyko understood the seriousness with which we viewed these developments.

Human
rights

There was one more item on which the President wanted to put great emphasis--that was the question of human rights. Trials were underway in the Soviet Union against people who had organized to monitor compliance with the Helsinki agreement. We did indeed look on this as an internal matter for the Soviet Union, and recognized that we had no authority to intercede. However, the President felt that he had the duty to express concern when the people tried were given maximum sentences, in violation of even Soviet laws. He was quite concerned over future plans in the Soviet Union to repeat the circumstances of the Orlov trial in the cases of Shcharansky and Ginzburg. These were matters of intense interest in the United States. The President was not questioning the right of the Soviet Union to act in these matters as it saw fit, but he did have to point out what detriment to mutual trust and respect between our countries and to certain other matters such as trade and scientific and cultural exchanges would come as a result of these trials. The President recognized the sensitivity of these matters for the Soviet Union, but wanted to be sure that Gromyko understood their sensitivity in the United States. The Soviet Union never refrained from criticizing us when it felt that we were acting improperly toward our own citizens. The President felt no restraint, therefore, in expressing the concerns he had just expressed.

Africa

Gromyko continued his response to the President on African matters. He called the presence of a Soviet general in Ethiopia a myth. Had the Soviet Union been invited to send a general there, it would have refused. There was no Soviet Napoleon in Africa. Evidently the President was being fed completely fantastic information. As for the Cuban presence, the Soviet Union had information that in Angola the number of Cubans was being

reduced rather than increased. The President's reference to GDR personnel in connection with Kolwezi could not be regarded as authentic. Even the U.S. press had not alleged anything of the sort. As for the invasion into Zaire, the press had first reported that Mobutu's soldiers in the area were shooting blacks, then that blacks were shooting whites, whites were shooting blacks, and had spoken of certain rebels. The situation appeared to be totally confused, but there was certainly no Soviet or Cuban involvement there.

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Turning to the question of human rights, Gromyko wanted to tell the President quite frankly that no matter how close to the President's heart were his feelings about these matters, he would ask him to realize that these were internal affairs of the Soviet Union, and that they would be decided in accordance with Soviet laws. No one else could tell the Soviet Union how to resolve these matters. Gromyko asked the President not to regard this statement of his as being directed at the President personally or at his concept of human rights. Human rights was a general concept, while what the President had been talking about involved domestic affairs. Throughout the entire world international law, as well as the Helsinki Final Act recognized that internal matters were resolved in each country internally, on the basis of its own domestic laws. With all due respect for the President, Gromyko felt he would be wrong if he failed to tell him this. No one in the Soviet Union was now being condemned or would be condemned in the future for something that he was not guilty of. That was not part of Soviet practice.

The President thought that the exchange he and Gromyko had today had been constructive in that he now understood the Soviet position better,