

U.S.-Soviet Bilaterals, September 1973–May 1974

172. Editorial Note

Throughout the month of September 1973, President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger followed the pace of the second phase of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which began in Geneva on September 18. A transcript of a telephone conversation between Kissinger and Deputy Secretary of State Rush on September 12 reads in part: "K[issinger]: Now, one other matter. I keep reading in the newspapers that the Europeans complain that we are forcing the pace on the European Security Conference. That can't be right. R[ush]: That cannot be right, and we are not doing it. I will see that that is squared in this department. K: And I think we ought to let the Europeans know that they should stop—you know, not make a *démarche*, but, as they come in—that we really take these constant stories rather ill. R: OK. We're in complete accord. I think that's right. K: Good." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Henry A. Kissinger Telephone Transcripts (Telcons), Box 22, Chronological File)

Kissinger had a similar conversation the same day with George Vest, the Representative to the CSCE. Also present for the conversation was Lawrence Eagleburger of the NSC staff. A memorandum of their conversation reads in part: "Dr. Kissinger: Let's see, you're in charge of the CSCE operation, aren't you? Where did the idea of our pushing for a hasty conclusion come from? Mr. Vest: I have no idea. Probably it came from the Eastern Europeans to the Western Europeans. So far, however, the Western Europeans have viewed the whole thing in proportion. I've talked with the press and with the Western Europeans and nobody yet has the thing out of proportion. There are some danger when we were in Helsinki with the Foreign Ministers that too much would be made of the conference. But even there the Europeans took the lead and punctured that danger. Dr. Kissinger: There are two points. First, our friends have to learn that kicking us is no longer free. We're not going to protest forever our love for them. I see that the Luxembourg Foreign Minister has been going around Europe accusing us of duplicity. After all, it was they that got us into that conference in the first place. Second, we want a business-like conclusion. Of course we want it to end reasonably rapidly, but we want to do that without black-jacking the Europeans. Mr. Vest: This is understood in the delegations. The problem is the foreign ministers. Dr. Kissinger: How has the UK behaved? Mr. Vest: Excellently." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 335; Eagleburger, Lawrence S., *Memcons*, Books, Vol. I)

On September 19, Kissinger received Dutch Foreign Minister Max Van der Stoep in his capacity as Secretary of State-designate. Telegram 187324 to all NATO capitals, September 20, reported on the meeting. It reads in part: "In brief discussion of CSCE, Dr. Kissinger stated that we have no fixed date in mind for termination of CSCE, nor do we have any understanding with Soviets about summit meeting. We doubt that great deal of significance will come out of CSCE and therefore would like to see its work proceed as quickly as possible, avoiding impression that major issues are likely to be resolved by CSCE. Dr. Kissinger said that in our view a CSCE third phase at the summit is unlikely to be justified, but we have not noted that any Western European countries have flatly rejected idea of summit, and we do not wish to be isolated on this issue. If others oppose summit, we would have no difficulty in joining them." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 264, Agency Files, NATO, Vol. XV, Part 1)

173. Briefing Memorandum From the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Springsteen) to Secretary of State Kissinger¹

Washington, September 26, 1973.

CSCE: Developments in Geneva Stage II
Discussions since September 18

Discussions to date have overcome initial procedural disagreements, but have not yet addressed substantive issues in detail. Soviet nervousness about the freer movement issue has not been fully reflected in Geneva, where the atmosphere is amicable. The US and Soviet delegates (Vest and Kovalev) met September 21 for a full and friendly exchange of views, and agreed to stay in close touch.²

Procedural Issues

The Soviets wanted an immediate start on drafting final texts, but the EC countries preferred to begin with a detailed substantive discussion. The US and some neutral delegations, in corridor conversa-

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 71, Gromyko, 1973. Secret. Drafted by Floyd and Frowick.

² Telegram 5044 from Geneva, September 24, which contains an account of the meeting, is *ibid.*, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files.

tions, urged compromise, and a solution was reached September 25, involving initial point-by-point discussion, to be followed by drafting after substantive issues have been aired.

Humanitarian Issues

In their general statements, Warsaw Pact delegations have stiffened their position somewhat on freer movement questions, in the wake of growing Western criticism of Moscow's campaign against intellectual dissidents and Brezhnev's Sofia speech of September 19.³ They emphasized their willingness to make progress, but only if discussions were conducted on the basis of respect for the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs—a line stressed repeatedly in recent Soviet press commentaries, by Kovalev in his meeting with Vest, and by the Czech Ambassador in a call on me earlier this week.⁴

Security Issues

Principles of Relations between States. While the talks have not yet dealt with specifics, we expect—as at Helsinki—some difficulties between the Soviets, who will wish to proclaim the inviolability of frontiers as a separate principle of relations, and the FRG, which will insist on at least indirect linkage of frontier inviolability with non-use of force.

Military Security Aspects. All NATO allies except the US support including advance notification of movements and advocate joint study of maneuvers, observers *and movements* before attempting to draw up specific proposals. The Soviets, however, have firmly reiterated their minimalist position on this issue, signalling their resistance to inclusion of prior notification of military *movements* (as distinct from *maneuvers*) among agreed CSCE confidence-building measures. The Soviet spokesman has pointed out that the mandate approved at Helsinki called on the committees to “submit” proposals on maneuvers and exchange of observers and to “study” movements.

³ In his speech, Brezhnev said: “The second stage of the conference on European security and cooperation has now started in Geneva. . . . The purpose of the work ahead, as we see it, is to prepare, without unnecessary delay, the drafts of documents for the final stage of the conference, which, in our view, it would be quite possible and desirable to hold this year. . . . We and our allies are firmly convinced that there are opportunities for a radical and stable improvement in the international climate. We believe that a new system of international relations can and must be built by honest and consistent observance of the principles of sovereignty and noninterference in internal affairs, and by unswerving implementation of signed treaties and agreements without playing games or engaging in ambiguous maneuvers.” (*New York Times*, September 20, 1973, p. 11)

⁴ No record of this meeting has been found.

Other Issues

There has been no significant discussion of the substance of other agenda items: economic cooperation and conference follow-on. The question of presentation of views by non-European Mediterranean states—i.e., Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Syria and Israel—has been resolved in a satisfactory fashion.⁵

⁵ Telegram 4727 from Geneva, September 4, reported: “CSCE Coordinating Committee September 3 adopted compromise formula for receiving contributions by non-participating Mediterranean states. Formula accepts in principle oral presentation of written contributions by Algeria and Tunisia, and states that the same arrangements will be applied equally to any other interested Mediterranean country.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files.)

174. Editorial Note

On September 28, 1973, after visiting New York for the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko called on President Nixon in the Oval Office. Earlier the same day, Secretary of State Kissinger forwarded Nixon a memorandum prepared by the NSC staff to prepare him for the meeting. The memorandum reads in part:

“2. Mutual Force Reductions.

“Gromyko’s Position will be that if there is to be an agreement that does not damage either side’s security, the most reasonable approach would be to reduce by equal percentages. Moreover, he may say that both foreign and national troops should be reduced, though this could be done by stages, and that Moscow does not rule out some initial cuts for symbolic purposes.

“The Western Position, now being debated in NATO, is that the goal of these talks should be to reach numerical parity in Central Europe by setting a common ceiling (at about 700,000). This will mean far greater cuts for the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact than for NATO, in view of their advantage of about 100,000; in the initial stage US and Soviet forces could be cut by about 15 percent (29,000 for the US and 69,000 for the Soviets).

“—You may wish to say that the US and Soviet positions are not that far apart on an initial stage of reductions—that is, a reduction of our respective ground forces by the same percentage up to 15 percent

“—but that this must be done within the context of an overall goal of equality by moving to a common ceiling for both sides.

“—The virtue of numerical parity is that offensive potential is thereby reduced if there is no immediate numerical advantage in the area.

“3. *European Security Conference.*

“Gromyko may revert to the summit discussion on completing the Conference (now in its committee phase in Geneva) as soon as possible, preferably by year’s end. He may also bring up the possibility of a summit level meeting at the end of the Conference. Finally, he may complain that we are not taking a position that would advance the work, but are trying to put pressure on the USSR through the Western proposal for an agreement to facilitate freer movement of people and information.

“*Your position:*

“—The pace and the form of the final meeting of the Conference depends on the substance. You have told the General Secretary that we will not be the obstacle to progress or to a summit meeting if others agree.

“—Your impression, however, is that the Europeans feel very strongly about the idea of reducing barriers to contacts among the people of Europe, and improving the flow of information.

“—Judging from recent speeches by the General Secretary, he is agreeable to something along this line as long as sovereignty is protected.

“—We can support this position.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 71, Gromyko, 1973)

At the meeting on September 28 in the Oval Office, Nixon and Gromyko, accompanied by Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin, discussed the European security conference and mutual force reductions:

“Gromyko: Now with your permission, may I briefly turn to other matters, having in view the forthcoming summit. We would like very much to have the arrangements and understandings reached on European affairs to be carried into effect as they were talked about at the summit. We appreciate your efforts toward securing positive results for the CSCE. We believe there exists every opportunity for the Conference to achieve good and positive results. It all boils down to the policy of the countries concerned. They could, of course, just sit endlessly and talk. It follows from your discussions with the General Secretary that we have no intentions to prejudice your position in Europe and we feel it will be in both countries’ interests to have a positive outcome in the Conference. We should not pay too much attention to talk about US-Soviet deals. We must be above that and we should not be distracted from our policies, because the outcome will be in the interests of all countries regardless of what the shouters may say. After you took office, you yourself pointed to the importance of relations between our two countries.

“Another European question is the agreement to reduce armed forces and armaments. We would like to see a positive outcome. There was a general discussion during the General Secretary’s visit and he advanced certain views. I have nothing in particular to add now, but it would be in the best interests of all concerned to make progress on this and the prospects are favorable.”

Later in the conversation the President responded.

“The President: On MBFR, I am pleased to say we are not too far apart.

“On CSCE, as I told the General Secretary, we would be pleased to finish by the end of the year and, if others agree, to have a summit for the conclusion, but it is not easy to get a conglomerate of nations together to agree. I happened to be reading a biography of Wellington last night. There were only four countries at the Congress of Vienna, Russia, Prussia, Austria and Britain, and four at the Congress of Paris after the defeat at Waterloo. But it was very difficult. On CSCE, there are very many views but you and we have no particular problems.

“Secretary Kissinger: Mr. President, we now have to get down to concrete issues on this.

“The President: We must agree where we want to come out—I don’t mean condominium—otherwise it will be a shambles. I will leave it to the Secretary of State to work out. I made that commitment.” (Memorandum of conversation, September 28; *ibid.*)

175. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, October 10, 1973, 12:30 p.m.

SUBJECT

The Secretary’s meeting with the Belgian Foreign Minister

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 271, Memoranda of Conversation, Chronological File. Secret; Nodis. The meeting took place in the Secretary’s office. The memorandum was drafted by Vine and concurred in by Eagleburger. Van Elslande also met with Rush on October 9. A memorandum of their conversation is in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 248, Agency Files, CSCE and MBFR.

PARTICIPANTS

Belgium

Renaat van Elslande, Foreign Minister

Walter Loridan, Ambassador to the U.S.

Viscomte Etienne Davignon, Director General for Political Affairs, Foreign
Ministry

Paul Noterdaeme, Chef de Cabinet

U.S.

The Secretary

Walter J. Stoessel, Jr.

Ambassador Robert Strausz-Hupé

Helmut Sonnenfeldt

Richard D. Vine

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Mr. van Elslande: We have conceived of CSCE as a success from the Western viewpoint only if there were a certain balance among all three baskets. We believe that there will be real *détente* only if the economic and inter-human contacts follow the military and security measures. Progress on the third basket would be a step forward. We have the impression at times that the only interest of the U.S. is in the first basket, not in the second or the third.

The Secretary: (reviews with his colleagues the terminology of the three baskets) Up to now I have conducted foreign policy in a more restricted circle. I am not used to having my words passed to over 122 foreign chanceries and circulated among 850 civil servants. European-American relations would be in great danger if my remarks were to be widely circulated or put out in public. I am therefore a little reluctant to speak frankly.

Nevertheless, I will go ahead. As an historian, in connection with the third basket I have serious doubts about the proposition that the proliferation of human contacts will produce peace. It is like the premise that the working class throughout the world is peaceful. Even before the First World War people traveled freely without passports. And, nevertheless, we managed to get a good war started. I am not against human contacts, but I think that the idea has become an intellectual fashion and I want to see it put into perspective.

The American position on human rights will be to state our respect for human rights and advocate their furtherance where possible. The question is how far to push for them? Our foreign policy will be to attain what is attainable.

We have an amazing group in the United States who argue that by withdrawing our troops from Europe and by abolishing missiles we will produce a new era with trade. They argue that a couple of hundred million dollars' worth of trade will produce all these marvelous

results. I believe that a system which has successfully resisted for more than fifty years will not be bought off. We have to avoid a situation in America where we talk ourselves into the psychosis that talks with the Soviet Union become a precondition for the flourishing of human freedoms in the U.S.S.R.

We think there are realistic restrictions on what we can count on and expect from these talks. We want a minimum of drama, since we feel that nothing great can come of it. Perhaps that indicates a lack of imagination on my part. We need to avoid a great confrontation.

Our concerns in a CSCE are that it not become too dramatic and that it not undermine NATO. Those are our sole goals and they are modest. We are restricting our third basket ambitions. If we can get over that problem, then our hope is that the conference will end with a meeting of the foreign ministers, not a summit.

I suspect, however, that if we refuse a summit meeting the Europeans will agree to one. We will not be pressing for a summit. I want you to know that if you do not press for a summit you will have our heartfelt support.

I have just been advised that luncheon is ready any time we are. That is very courteous—what it means, however, is that luncheon is ready whether we are or not.

To finish up, it is true that political and military matters permit more concrete agreement than agreements on human rights. I believe, however, that we should take what is obtainable. I do not believe that the Soviets will be prepared to concede much on human rights.

Mr. van Elslande: We had the impression that you favored a summit.

The Secretary: My view has always been that the level of a final conference should be commensurate with the results achieved by the conference. It is a painful fact that in 1969 everybody in Europe was beating us over the head to agree to a CSCE. We reluctantly agreed to the views of our European friends and allies and now everyone appears to reason that it was we who were pushing for CSCE in the first place. I plead agnosticism. We are neither for or against a summit. We want to avoid a drama, but if there is a Wagnerian spectacle in the negotiations and then a resolution of the problem, a summit will be hard to avoid.

176. Editorial Note

On October 19, 1973, the French delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe tabled a draft declaration of principles for the first part or "Basket I" of a potential agreement on security and cooperation in Europe. Point 1 of the French draft reads in part: "1. The participating states recognize each other's sovereign equality with all the rights deriving therefrom." The draft continues: "2. Each of the participating states will refrain from the threat or use of force, whether against the territorial integrity or political independence of another participating state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations and those of this declaration. No participating state will carry out movements or maneuvers of its armed forces for the purpose of inducing another state to renounce the full exercise of any of its sovereign rights. 3. The participating states regard one another's frontiers, in their existing form and irrespective of the legal status which in their opinion they possess, as inviolable. The participating states consider that their frontiers can be changed only in accordance with international law, through peaceful means and by agreement, with due regard for the right of peoples to self-determination. 4. The participating states will mutually respect one another's territorial integrity." Point 6 states that "each of the participating states will abstain from any intervention or threat of intervention, direct or indirect, in matters falling within the national competence of any other participating state, whatever their particular relations may be," and Point 7 that "the participating states consider that, as the charter of the United Nations indicates, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all and without discrimination is also one of the bases of international cooperation and of the development of friendly relations among the nations. They accordingly proclaim their determination to respect and promote those rights and freedoms, especially freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief." Point 9 reads in part: "The participating states will cooperate with one another in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific, commercial and other fields and with a view to promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They will encourage cooperation and contacts among individuals and groups in all these spheres of activity and generally foster the development of contacts and exchanges, both individual and collective, private and official, among their nationals." Point 10 reads in part: "The participating states recognize that the obligations they have assumed towards one another in conformity with international law are binding on them and must be fulfilled in good faith. They note that this declaration cannot affect bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements previously signed by the participating states." Point 11 reads in part:

“The participating states declare that the development of their relations and the progress of their cooperation in all fields depend on the strict observance of the principles set forth above. They recognize that these principles have equal value and that each of them must be interpreted in the context of the others.” (Telegram 5646 from Geneva, October 24; National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files)

177. Minutes of Secretary of State Kissinger’s Staff Meeting¹

Washington, October 29, 1973, 3:15 p.m.

PRESENT

The Secretary of State: Henry A. Kissinger
Kenneth Rush
William J. Porter
Curtis W. Tarr
Jack B. Kubisch
Arthur W. Hummel, Jr.
George S. Springsteen
David D. Newsom
Robert J. McCloskey
Alfred L. Atherton
George Aldrich
Thomas R. Pickering
Winston Lord
Lawrence S. Eagleburger

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Mr. Springsteen: Sir, we have been hewing very rigorously to the instructions that with the heightened Middle East crisis we slow down on our progress and talks with the Russians on CSCE.²

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Transcripts of Secretary of State Kissinger’s Staff Meetings, 1973–1977, Entry 5177: Lot 78 D 443, Box 1, Secretary’s Staff Meetings. Secret.

² In telegram 203680 to Geneva, October 14, the Department advised Boster that given the Middle East crisis and war and U.S. concern about Soviet attitudes and actions, “we wish to adopt posture in CSCE meetings this coming week which will be passive and which to extent possible will ensure that no positive action or forward movement is taken regarding the various items up for consideration. We should not refrain from attending meetings and we should not be actively negative in discussing various issues. At same time, we should delay or postpone wherever possible in handling of

Secretary Kissinger: I think we can let that go again.

Mr. Springsteen: Because I have a delegation going off to Moscow next week on the implementation of the Joint Commission.

Secretary Kissinger: No—we can go on that again. Now, the Soviets have told me repeatedly what they are interested in is that they can make concrete proposals in that human rights thing—if we can agree to a statement that nothing will affect the domestic legislation of countries concerned. Now, I know we are in a madness where the intellectuals around the world are not content with messing up foreign policy and now have to get involved in the domestic policy of other countries. But how can we take the position as a country that we are making treaties that affect the domestic legislation of other countries? Since when has that been an accepted American position?

In other words, why can't we give them that?

I take it for granted that if they didn't want human contact there is not going to be human contact. They are not going to be like shyster lawyers. If one can establish quotas for exchanges of periodicals and students, why can't we give them the phrase that none of this interferes with their domestic legislation?

Mr. Springsteen: As far as I understand it, we are prepared to say we will not interfere in their internal affairs, but we went to the point of saying that nothing we would do would be in conflict with their internal legislation. This would give them an out in the future for walking away from any agreements they might make now—

Secretary Kissinger: You suppose they can't do that anyway?

Mr. Springsteen: I think they probably can. But I think that the atmosphere in the Helsinki talks and again now in Geneva is that that provides them a big escape.

Secretary Kissinger: But the question is if they are willing to do something and they need a face-saving thing, why can one not have a compromise whereby they agree to certain specifics and we agree to saying that these specifics are then achieved in effect in consonance with their domestic legislation. Obviously they can then introduce a law banning or barring what they have just agreed to. This wouldn't change the fact that they are in violation of that agreement.

Mr. Springsteen: I think stated that way, whenever any country does anything it has to be in consonance with its own domestic legislation.

issues." On October 16, Boster replied in telegram 5471 from Geneva: "It has been difficult for us to begin implementing refel instructions as it appears unlikely that any issue would have advanced this week beyond debating stage in normal course of events. In this situation, it is even possible that our passive posture may escape largely unnoticed." (Both *ibid.*, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 708, Country Files, Europe, Switzerland, Vol. II)

Secretary Kissinger: Why can't we give them that clause? What is it that suddenly possesses the West to believe that it can affect the domestic structure of the Soviet Union through a treaty signed in Geneva of peripheral significance?

Mr. Springsteen: Well, I think some language can be worked out—if they have certain specifics they are prepared to give—

Secretary Kissinger: Gromyko tells me they are willing to give specifics if we are willing to give them the theory of non-interference in their domestic affairs. You think we could have some informal consultation with our allies—

Mr. Springsteen: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: —on that subject without being accused of selling our freedom and liberty?

Mr. Springsteen: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: Could we try that?

Mr. Springsteen: There is a difference, sir, between interference in domestic affairs and the question of the legislation. This is where he is constantly putting his finger on—the legislation.

Secretary Kissinger: Who is putting his finger on?

Mr. Springsteen: Gromyko.

Secretary Kissinger: If I understand the Soviet proposition, it is that they are willing to agree to concrete improvements in what we call human contacts—if we are willing to agree to a statement that says that we are not interfering with their domestic legislation. Now, that is a perfectly clear measuring rod. Either these changes and human contacts are going to come about or they are not. If they are not going to come about, they don't need an excuse—they just won't come about. I have the impression that at this stage at least they need it for face-saving purposes.

Mr. Springsteen: I think that is probably right, particularly in light of the emigration visa and exit tax problem.

Secretary Kissinger: They want to be able to say what they did they did as an exercise of their own sovereignty rather than foreigners telling them what their domestic legislation should be. That is my reading of Gromyko. Because I don't believe that a bunch of revolutionaries who manage to cling to power for fifty years are going to be euchred out of it by the sort of people we have got negotiating at the European Security Conference through an oversight.

So the question is how we are going to get a formulation that everybody can accept.

Mr. Springsteen: Well, Boster is here tomorrow and the rest of this week, and I think we will talk to him about how we can handle this within the NATO caucus in Geneva.

Secretary Kissinger: You want to do that?

Mr. Springsteen: Yes.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

178. Editorial Note

In telegram 224321 to Geneva, November 14, 1973, the Department instructed the Chief of the Delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Davis Boster, regarding a "possible compromise over principles language:" "Dept believes that some gesture will have to be made soon toward accommodating growing Soviet concerns underlying their insistence on a reference to domestic law and customs in preamble to Basket III." The instructions continued: "We would suggest approaching the problem by undertaking detailed study of non-intervention language in Basket I when this subject comes up for discussion in next few days. Since Basket I principles can and probably will be incorporated by general reference into some preamble or chapeau for Basket III, progress in the non-intervention language could be presented to the Soviets as the most appropriate and promising way of meeting their concerns, without plunging the conference into a very complicated additional drafting job for Basket III. In this connection, we are prepared, if necessary, to work from the language contained in the French draft declaration of principles on which, heretofore, we have been somewhat reserved."

Boster replied in telegram 6103 from Geneva on November 16: "We appreciate suggested compromise in ref tel [telegram 224321] and have discussed this idea informally with interested NATO allies. We believe Department's suggestion may prove useful at later stage, but we feel it is not appropriate to the current negotiating situation, would not now receive any support from our allies, and would align us openly with Soviets against substantive positions and strategy being pursued by our allies. However, Soviets' larger objective of including preambular language in Basket III ('laws and customs' is only one of the sets of principles Soviet seek to include in this preamble) is being partially met in another way." Boster noted that with regard to Basket III, "the allies have held strongly to position that no preamble whatsoever is needed to precede concrete agreements. Strategy of allies is not to agree to have a preamble until Soviets have entered meaningful discussions of concrete proposals." He continued: "French have been working carefully for a month to find a compromise ('mini-basket') solution under

which synoptic presentations of all concrete proposals would be tabled in Basket II subcommittees. To satisfy Eastern bloc, formula has been found to apply this device also to preamble of Basket III, thus providing Soviets with tacit admission of possibility of a preamble to Basket III (which is where they want to include point on 'laws and customs'), as well as discussion of this preamble in parallel with discussions of concrete Western proposals." The telegram concluded: "Suggested action. If Department's concern is to show responsiveness to Soviet interest in this question, I am having lunch with Kovalev and Mendeleevich on November 20 and could say that we are giving careful attention to Soviet concern on point of preamble and that, as one way of trying to be helpful, we have given behind-the-scenes support to French proposal. I doubt that we should go further at this time in trying to reassure Kovalev about the 'laws and customs' aspect of the preamble as long as the NATO stand against it remains as strong as it is now."

On November 20, the Department of State replied to Boster in telegram 228527: it concurred in his proposal "to indicate to Kovalev and Mendeleevich that you are fully aware of Soviet concern on point of preamble to Basket 3, and that we have supported French proposal for structuring Basket 3 subcommittee's discussion around mini-baskets as a way to keep question of preambular language for Basket 3 in play. At the same time, however, you should convey to Soviets your reading of strength of Western opposition to including 'laws and customs' in preamble to Basket 3 and inquire whether they have given thought to alternative approaches which might lend themselves to overcoming this difficulty. Beyond this, you may wish to inquire whether strengthening of language on non-interference in Basket 1 might not open way to possible compromise entailing specific reference in preambular language of Basket 3 to strengthened Basket 1 formulation, a possibility which had occurred to us as means to bridge important differences that persist." The telegram continued: "Begin FYI: We believe that we should not delay further in reassuring Soviets that we are giving close attention to this issue, and therefore you should begin now to seek to soften their position, looking forward to a compromise that will permit problem of Basket 3 preamble from becoming a major stumbling block in CSCE. At the same time, you should continue your discussions with the allies, urging them to give consideration to possible compromises."

On November 21, Boster replied in telegram 6208 from Geneva: "At luncheon given by Boster November 20, Soviet Delegation head, Deputy Foreign Minister Kovalev, took generally positive attitude toward current status CSCE work and for first time tacitly acknowledged—without complaint—that conference would not be over this year. He reiterated Soviet interest in principle of inviolability of frontiers and need for statement of non-interference principles in pream-

ble to specific humanitarian cooperation agreements. He responded only in very general terms to our suggestion that some new approach to 'laws and customs' aspect of preamble be considered in light of strong Western opposition to this principle." The telegram continued: "Inviolability of frontiers. Commenting on Boster's statement of our concern that treatment of this subject include a provision for peaceful change of frontiers, Kovalev said he would like to clarify Soviet position. In Soviet view, principle of inviolability of frontiers was quite different and separate from idea of peaceful change. Soviets accepted that rectifications of borders can always take place in exercise of sovereign rights of states concerned, but principle of inviolability of frontiers should be crystal clear and stand by itself; it should not have any 'cracks' which might serve to undermine it. Boster said we fully understood Soviet concern about this principle; nevertheless, since we all acknowledged possibility of peaceful change, we did not consider that this should be regarded as a 'crack' in the inviolability principle." The telegram concluded: "*Comment.* Kovalev's posture was somewhat more optimistic and relaxed than it has been in previous meetings. Apart from his implicit acknowledgment that CSCE would not be finished this year as Soviets had always hoped, his emphasis on quality of results and prediction of difficult drafting stage also implied acceptance of a longer phase II than originally foreseen. Kovalev showed no signs of flexibility on either issue of inviolability of frontiers or 'laws and customs' aspect of Basket III, but this is not surprising at this early stage of the negotiations. At the same time, Soviets are obviously building a basis on which to argue that conference progress now justifies beginning discussion of post-CSCE follow-on activity, a question which will arise for coordinating committee Nov. 29." (All in National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 708, Europe, Switzerland, Vol. II)

179. Telegram From the Mission in Geneva to the Department of State¹

Geneva, November 23, 1973, 1300Z.

6226. Subj: CSCE: Possible compromise over principles language. Refs: A. State 224321, B. Geneva 6103, C. State 228527, D. Geneva 6208.²

1. Boster took opportunity of NATO delegation heads caucus Nov 22 to express belief that we should be giving consideration to possible compromise solutions to satisfy strong Soviet desire for non-interference caveats in preamble to specific humanitarian cooperation agreements. He informed allies that he had stressed to Kovalev strong Western opposition to a preamble with reference to “national laws and customs,” and gave allies gist of Soviet reaction (ref D). Boster told NATO delegation heads that he had suggested to Soviets that they think about possible compromise solutions, as we were doing. He outlined solution we were considering (refs A and C), stressing that this was for possible future use and that he had not discussed any specific ideas with Kovalev.

2. Immediate allied reaction was negative, as foreshadowed ref B. French rep warned that principle of non-intervention means different things to East and West. Any “tampering” with this principle might weaken, not strengthen it. We should be very clear on broader effects of changes to this principle.

3. UK rep pointed out that principle of non-intervention (even as tabled by Soviets) applies only to actions by states, whereas much of specific content of Basket III (humanitarian cooperation) relates to activities of private individuals, companies and organizations. We should not allow Soviets, he said, to obtain language in preamble or principles which implies a measure of governmental control over private individuals and organizations. Such a result would be contrary to most fundamental allied objectives in Basket III.

4. UK rep added that, in any event, Soviets had not tabled any texts including the phrase “laws and customs,” and although this phrase is used in introduction to Bulgarian draft which constitutes formal Eastern position on Basket III preamble, the draft text itself does not include it, nor does Soviet draft of principle of non-intervention.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 708, Country Files, Europe, Switzerland, Vol. II. Secret; Exdis. Repeated to Moscow and USNATO.

² For relevant excerpts from all four telegrams, see Document 178.

5. Danish rep stressed Soviets should not get anything in return for dropping “laws and customs” phrase, as he anticipated they would seek to do, since they had already been forced to drop it in Helsinki. In Danish view, Gromyko exhibited bad faith in referring back to this phrase “before the ink was dry” on Helsinki recommendations,³ which already represented a hard-fought compromise. To raise an issue on which compromise agreement had already been reached went against whole spirit of Helsinki recommendations.

6. Netherlands rep suggested that a better way to satisfy Soviet need would be to draft language of specific humanitarian agreements in such a way as to identify role of governments without actually mentioning “laws and customs.” Such language should obviate need for preambular caveats. Canadian, French, Danish, UK, and Norwegian reps agreed with this approach.

7. *Comment.* Netherlands delegation head has told us privately that he does not think Soviets will accept his idea (outlined in para 6 above), but that this will show Eastern countries strength of Western opposition to preambular caveats in Basket III. When Soviets reject this approach, Dutch and other allies would prefer to fall back to innocuous preamble along lines of Helsinki recommendations, with unilateral Soviet explanatory statement. Dutch feel Soviets will accept this solution, basically the same compromise reached in Helsinki, but that they will only do so if Western opposition to their desires is firm.

8. Initial positions taken by our allies on this issue have been predictably firm. Nevertheless, ground has now been prepared for later recourse to our compromise ideas when negotiating process in drafting stage brings need for more flexibility on both sides.

Miller

³ For the Final Recommendations of the Consultations Preceding the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, June 8, see Department of State *Bulletin*, July 30, 1973, pp. 181–188.

180. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, December 5, 1973, 11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Nicolae Ceausescu, President of Romania
George Macovescu, Foreign Minister
Sergiu Celac, Interpreter

President Nixon
Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Harry G. Barnes, Interpreter

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

President Ceausescu: I might touch now upon some international issues beginning with Europe, since that's closer to us. We would like to have the United States show a still greater concern for the successful conclusion of agreements which would contribute to real security in Europe. In addition to any eventual documents, a matter of great importance is the question of measures of military disengagement and also the matter of establishing a permanent body. We hope, therefore, that the United States would favor steps in these directions.

Connected with these questions is the matter of the conference at Vienna on force reductions. In our opinion, things there are not going all that well. First of all, not even all of Central Europe is being discussed. Discussions for that matter of some symbolic reductions have actually only a symbolic importance and in fact very little practical significance. It is a real question when you get right down to it whether the troops in question are going to be shifted to some other country's territory in Europe or withdrawn to their own countries or reduced in numbers as far as national forces are concerned. These are some of the problems which concern not only us, but many other states in Europe.

President Nixon: First of all, with respect to MBFR, the discussions are going to be very difficult. We will have in mind the concerns of Ro-

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 279, Presidential File, Memoranda of Conversation. Secret; Nodis. According to the President's Daily Diary, the meeting took place in the Oval Office. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary) In telegram 243762 to Geneva, the Department summarized Nixon's conversation with Ceausescu. It reads in part: "Addressee posts [Geneva and the U.S. Delegation to MBFR] should have in mind statement made during discussions here December 4 and 5 with President Ceausescu on CSCE and MBFR." It noted that "the President asked the Secretary to see that the closest consultations take place with Romania on both subjects." (Ibid., NSC Files, Box 708, Country Files, Europe, Switzerland, Vol. II)

mania and other countries which are not directly involved in our discussions with the Soviet Union.

So far as CSCE is concerned, there is considerable difference of opinion in Europe, both in Eastern and Western Europe, as well as among small and large states, as to how the conference should eventually come out. But for our part, we are particularly sensitive to the interests of Romania and other countries which have supported the conference and which should have a major voice in bringing about whatever agreement is eventually reached.

Dr. Kissinger will see that the closest consultations take place with Romania on both subjects.

Secretary Kissinger: On the question of mutual force reductions, I understand President Ceausescu to be saying that Central Europe is not adequately covered because of the lack of Hungarian participation. Our interest is in getting rid of Soviet troops and even if Hungary had been included reductions would have amounted to only 3 or 4,000. Therefore we did not consider it a question of principle to insist on Hungary's inclusion at that stage. Of course, one doesn't know where the Soviet troops would go. That is a question which concerns Romania and also China for they might go somewhere in Siberia. Perhaps you would prefer that. In addition, there is the problem of our own troops whom we now have in Europe and whom we might want to have available to use elsewhere.

President Ceausescu: So far as the matter of troops in Hungary and Northern Italy is concerned, this does not represent a question of great importance for us because there are some troops still on our other frontiers. But where the troops go still has an importance which is connected with other countries, and I am sure you understand that I am referring to the implications for Yugoslavia. That is the reason why I should like to have these problems noted. Incidentally, we will plan to raise this sort of question in Vienna, but of course not in the same way as I have raised it here.

President Nixon: It is difficult enough when there are just two parties to reach an agreement. When you have a dozen or so, it is almost impossible. It is important, however, to try to make some progress. Other meetings at Vienna such as the one that took place a century or so ago have succeeded. There have also been ones which have failed, both at Vienna and Geneva as well. I think it is a good step that we have both the conference in Geneva as well as the MBFR meeting in Vienna, but we realize the difficulties.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

181. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Geneva, December 22, 1973, 1:30–4:25 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Andrei Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister
Viktor Sukhodrev, Soviet Foreign Ministry (Interpreter)

Secretary Henry A. Kissinger
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

Middle East; US–GDR relations; Summit preparations; SALT; CSCE; MBFR;
Trade; Brezhnev visit to Cuba; Pompidou and Brandt visits to USSR

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Minister Gromyko: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] Now on European problems.

Your representatives and ours at CSCE are in contact with each other, but we believe your representatives, even if they take a position favorable to success, should be nevertheless a little more active in bringing that success about. Particularly in view of the Summit. Because we should approach this Summit with more progress in this area.

Secretary Kissinger: I will call our representative back and talk to him personally.

Minister Gromyko: We would appreciate it. We should do our very best, both sides, to bring this to a conclusion before March. Even the pessimists thought it could not end before March.

Secretary Kissinger: We are not the problem. The Europeans are crazy on the subject of human contact. I've told you I believe you are serious people and won't be undermined by the introduction of newspapers in the Soviet Union. I'll speak to our representative personally. He's not in Washington now, but I'll bring him back and speak with him. There should not be slow progress.

Minister Gromyko: Just in brief on the subject of the negotiations on the reduction of forces and armaments in Central Europe, we can in a sense understand why some pose the question in this way: "Let's

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 71, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Gromyko 1973. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place at the Soviet Mission in Geneva. Kissinger arrived in Geneva on December 18 for the opening 3 days later of the Geneva Conference on Middle East peace. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974.

just set a ceiling and both go down to that ceiling and just cut off everything above that." We're convinced that kind of approach will yield no positive results; we need a more realistic approach. We need to keep the present alignment—preserving that correlation of forces, and non-harming each other, we can find some success.

You have said it will be a long journey; we agree it will be long. We for our part have patience.

Secretary Kissinger: If the correlation is the same but at a lower level, this gives a certain advantage for the offensive side. One approach is agreement in principle on a common ceiling and in the first step have a symmetrical cut, say 10–15 percent each.

Minister Gromyko: I should want to ask you to take another look at that entire area and at the positions made known by countries in Vienna. We were surprised by the oversimplicity of some Western nations in the talks. Perhaps you are not familiar with all the details.

Secretary Kissinger: Did I make that obvious?

Minister Gromyko: I said "perhaps."

So probably some of the countries are proceeding from the fact that this road will be a long one. If so, neither of us should regard that as a tragedy, even if it is long.

Secretary Kissinger: I've scheduled a review meeting when I get back. Then I'll have a more considered view.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

182. Message From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Nixon¹

Moscow, undated.

L.I. Brezhnev would like to frankly express to the President certain considerations on one of the major international questions which is constantly within his attention.

In our contacts with the President the essential positive changes, that occurred in the last years in European affairs, were noted more than

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 72, US-USSR Presidential Exchanges, 1974. No classification marking. A handwritten note at the top of the letter reads: "Delivered by hand from Soviet Embassy, 6:15 p.m., Thurs., 1/9/74."

once. And that is really so; the détente and cooperation in Europe are beneficial to all. They correspond to the interests both of the US and of the Soviet Union, helping in many respects to establish new relations between our countries while each of them continues to maintain their traditional ties with European states. And, vice versa, if anything happens in Europe, which would threaten to violate the stability, to hamper the process of détente, that would, as is clear, have a negative impact on the Soviet-American relations as well.

It would be advisable, from this point of view, to look attentively at what is the present situation at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Unfortunately, it has to be said, that the course of the second stage of the Conference is unjustifiably being delayed.

The question arises as to what is behind all this. Is it simply an intention to protract as much as possible the work of the Conference or is it generally an unwillingness to achieve constructive results? Or, maybe, it is done with the aim of bargaining out some unilateral benefits at the expense of other participants of the Conference, of the Soviet Union in particular? Whatever is the reason, the important business, on which people both within and outside Europe place their not small expectations and hopes, will only lose from all this. The all-European conference was thoroughly prepared during many years. How then can be solved other major international problems which have not been so thoroughly worked at? The President will, probably, agree that it would not be an easy task since there would be no certainty as to the results of the initiatives planned for the future. If the all-European conference did not come through then unwittingly one would look with no optimism at other important international questions.

As the President knows, one of the key questions which is to be precisely and clearly reflected in the final documents of the conference is the principle of inviolability of borders in Europe. We note with satisfaction that the US Government in general adheres to a consistent line in this question and we appreciate the position taken by the United States in connection with the treaties between the FRG and the Socialist countries.

Yet now some of the participants of the all-European conference are trying to water down the principle of inviolability of the borders by stressing the possibility of their peaceful change. The meaning of these innocent looking suggestions is quite transparent. Obviously some people would like to weaken—in a round-about way—the basic principle of the European security and to leave a loophole for the revanchist forces. And such forces do exist. True, they are weaker than before, but they did not lay down their arms and under the banner of “peaceful change” of the borders would like to return to the previous

dangerous policy. Of course, this cannot be allowed. It is not difficult to visualize where it could lead to.

It is necessary to untie in the spirit of realism also a knot artificially created in connection with the third item of agenda of the all-European conference—on the exchanges in the field of culture and education, contacts and information. Sometimes this item is called the “third basket.” The impression is gained that people of certain type like to be endlessly busying themselves in that basket, throwing into it more and more questions. All this is done to the detriment of the solution of the basic tasks of the all-European conference. But statesmen, understandably, adhere to a wider and more responsible approach.

We proceed from the premise—and we have repeatedly stated this—that we believe it natural under the conditions of *détente* to expand cultural ties between states, contacts between people, exchange of information. We are for the widest possible ties in those areas under the present conditions. But if someone wants to use cultural and other exchanges for unfriendly purposes, for interference into internal affairs, then we have but one reply: no. If there is a wish for real and serious development of ties and contacts in all those areas, then the way out is in strict observance of the principle of non-interference into internal affairs, in respect for the sovereignty, laws and customs of each country. Time has come to proceed at the Conference from the vocal recognition of those principles to writing them clearly and plainly down into the final document on the third item of the agenda of the Conference.

Outlining all these considerations, L.I. Brezhnev expresses hope that the President will review with due attention the situation at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in order to bring it by joint efforts to the successful outcome within reasonably short period of time.

We hope that the President is also for crowning the all-European conference with tangible results, which would be of historic significance for the present and for the future of Europe and would be countersigned by the state leaders at the highest level.

183. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 4, 1974.

PARTICIPANTS

Soviet:

Andrey Gromyko, Soviet Foreign Minister
Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to US
Yuly Vorontsov, Minister-Counselor, Soviet Embassy
Georgiy M. Kornienko, Chief, USA Division, Soviet Foreign Ministry
Viktor M. Sukhodrev, Soviet interpreter
Vasilii G. Makarov, Senior Assistant to Mr. Gromyko

State:

The Secretary
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor
Arthur A. Hartman, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
Ambassador Walter Stoessel, American Ambassador-designate to the USSR

(There was an exchange of greetings, a discussion of art in the Secretary's office and an exchange on how the Secretary was feeling.)

The Secretary: We are very pleased to have you here and to have a general discussion of some of the issues we face. After our general discussion, I would like to meet with you alone.

Mr. Gromyko: I wish to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your kind invitation. You must have noticed that I replied at once.

The Secretary: Yes and I thank you for that. This is a good time for us to meet.

Mr. Gromyko: What sort of matters do you want to discuss?

The Secretary: I think we should touch on our general bilateral relations, SALT, force reductions in Europe, and European security. We can cover the rest in private.

Mr. Gromyko: Do you want to begin or should I?

The Secretary: You're more disciplined than I am. Why don't you start?

Mr. Gromyko: I am not sure what that means in this case but since you have mentioned European security, I would like to make some observations. First, let me emphasize our appreciation of the extensive work that was done in the first phase and at Helsinki. There was in

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 71, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Gromyko 1974. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Hartman. The meeting took place in Kissinger's office. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974.

fact no small amount of work undertaken in the second stage, but I must say that we are not pleased by the current state of the conference.

The Secretary: I agree with you.

Mr. Gromyko: I would like to discuss several specific issues but also I would like to talk about the broader question which has an impact on our relations in the future.

The Secretary (As cookies were passed): I had always been told that there were cookie-pushers in the Department but I never saw the cookies before today that they are supposed to push.

Mr. Gromyko: The reason that we are not pleased by the progress in the All European Conference—and I will not express myself in diplomatic terms—is that I feel that all these representatives are beating the air without achieving any concrete advancement toward the aim of resolving the real issues. They are going around in circles. This could go on endlessly. It seems to me that issues are being invented out of virtually nothing. This is the impression I have. It seems to me that there are a series of artificial measures which are being put forward with the intent of preventing a solution.

The Secretary: Not by us.

Mr. Gromyko: I would not like to try to gauge how to share the blame among each of the Western Powers but the raising of these artificial issues is enough indication of the fact that some are misbehaving. It is a fact that these actions contradict the often-stated solemn, high-level declarations that we have agreed with most of these States on the necessity of achieving détente and peace. I question whether some of the political forces have forgotten or want to ignore what happened in World War II.

I ask myself is this a negligent attitude? All of us agreed after the conclusion of World War II that we must avoid the possibility of war. We had fought together as allies against a common enemy and we agreed that we must weed out the possibility of war. Can it have been forgotten?

I don't want to specifically accuse the US of taking this position. As we see and assess the situation, however, we note that the US Representative displays a knowledge of our position and an understanding of our general agreements. Our representatives have numerous contacts and, I must say, that these are highly appreciated. What also strikes the eye, however, is the passivity with which you approach this conference. We appreciate the words but where is the US voice for all to hear? This is not being done. Perhaps this is strategy or tactics. What we can do is voice our own desires and to recall that our common agreements were made at the highest level during the visit of Mr. Brezhnev last year and the visit of the President to the Soviet Union. We hope that the US will accord greater weight and interest in more firmly

setting out the position which has the aim of carrying out our agreements. It should not be beyond the means of the US to express its strong views. When the US wants to act it does so and in a loud voice.

We hope that your view will come out in the open in the most appropriate way.

The Secretary: Mr. Foreign Minister, first of all, let me make a general remark and then address the details. We attach enormous importance to maintaining the peace of the world. We do this because it is in the interest of the well-being of all peoples. Since it makes sense for us to do that, it underlies all of our actions.

In Europe, there seems to be a desire to treat most issues in a totally frivolous fashion. People who have maintained their power in a country such as the Soviet Union for fifty years are not going to be unseated by a declaration. Therefore, I want you to know that I don't attach much importance to the question of declarations as a solution to these problems. Leave aside any ulterior motives. There is just no way that one can proceed to undermine what exists in the Soviet Union.

On the question of the inviolability of frontiers, that is a question of German domestic politics. On human contacts—and I refer specifically to the letter to the President—we favor a maximum increase in these contacts consistent with the domestic laws of the parties. The Allies go farther. They don't like the reference, not only to "domestic laws," but also to "customs." This is a question of domestic politics among our Allies. I don't want to say whether it is right or wrong. What we have to decide now is what price to pay to get the Allies to change their minds. I think that you overestimate our influence with the Allies. In our negotiations of the bilateral declarations we are faced with a series of idiotic, juridical positions. In other words, they don't reserve their tactics for you. For one year, we have been engaged in trying to find a formula to describe our relations.² It is not easy for us to get them to agree.

We would like to conclude the Conference. We recognize it will not have a world-shaking result. We will not support measures which go beyond our common understandings (at this point the Secretary said he wished to be sure that he sees Ambassador Sherer before he departs). What do you think Art? Is it possible to make some progress?

Mr. Hartman: We have already tried out several formulae for dealing with the question of encouraging human contact and yet making reference to the non-intervention in the domestic affairs of States party to the Agreement. We have not yet had success in convincing the Allies that there is a means to handle this point.

² On April 23, 1973, Kissinger proposed the conclusion of a "new Atlantic Charter" between the United States and its European allies as part of the Nixon administration's "Year of Europe" initiative. Negotiations about the Atlantic Charter were ongoing.

The Secretary: I have stated and I will state again that we are in favor of an improved situation with respect to human contacts. But I will also say, as I have with many Congressional Committees, that we have trouble enough agreeing on our foreign policy problems without getting ourselves involved in each other's domestic affairs. We have not after all demonstrated we can handle our own affairs much less those of others. This is our view.

Mr. Gromyko: I would now like to try to turn to the specific issues.

The Secretary: But before you do, let me just say that our representatives should remain in very close contact.

Mr. Gromyko: I certainly share fully and associate myself with the desire for close contact. Now, very briefly on the specific issues, with due regard to the general principles. The first issue has to do with the inviolability of frontiers. There has never been any doubt in our mind that the US position is consistent with our views. We feel, however, that the US should use its influence to prevent certain other countries from burdening this conference with issues and propositions which are unacceptable and, indeed, absurd. Second, we see that the same countries are attempting to raise unacceptable questions with respect to maneuvers, large-scale troop movements, and the exchange of observers. We have the question of what is large and what is small. As to observers, we ought to be able to find some mutual way to solve this problem by invitation. You have discussed this problem with Dobrynin.³ You have made certain statements with respect to maneuvers and large-scale movements. I understand those statements. But what we can see is that the appetites of the Europeans are growing. I can qualify some of their proposals as nothing short of ridiculous. I won't even discuss these matters. For example, that all of the Soviet Union should be taken into account with respect to maneuvers taking place. We can't agree. We can't accept.

The Secretary: Who proposed this?

Mr. Gromyko: It was submitted by the FRG Delegation in the name of the Nine.⁴

³ See Documents 123 and 143.

⁴ In telegram 651 from Geneva, February 1, the Mission reported: "Warsaw Pact delegations' criticism of the FRG working paper on CBM's culminated in a long statement on Jan 30 by Soviet Ambassador Mendelevich, who charged that the measures proposed by the FRG would break the balance of security in Europe." The telegram noted that "his remarks were ably countered in pointed statement by FRG rep. Discussion of FRG paper now seems to have ended, leaving Soviets in noticeably glum mood, and making complaints about West's lack of 'realism' and its failure to take Soviet positions into account." The telegram continued: "In corridor conversations with U.S. DelOffs, Soviets stressed their concern over the extent of Soviet territory to be included in the area for notification of maneuvers and attempted to probe us on our attitude towards exempting all but some band of territory along USSR's western border. Soviets have implied that West is trying to obtain some military advantage by including all of USSR's European territory." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files.)

The Secretary: That is becoming my favorite group of nations. However, I should say that we won't reject that idea if you want to agree to it.

Mr. Gromyko: We recall that at the outset there was no mention of this question. When the matter was raised by you, we agreed to consider it. We then made some agreements on how to handle maneuvers and observers. All those things have now been put aside and people are suggesting unacceptable solutions but I can tell you that, if anyone thinks that they can attempt to talk us into this position, they should know that it will fail. I hope for more realism. I hope you will try to persuade the others that it is groundless for them to pursue these unrealistic proposals. I have no doubt that your people are familiar with this problem in Geneva. Now my third point.

The Secretary: Let me say on troop movements that you have received a correct report of my conversation with Dobrynin. Your response was forthcoming but the proposals that were made in Geneva were not made at our instigation. They go well beyond our own intention. We will talk internally about how to approach this problem. The trouble is that you have a bunch of bureaucrats in Geneva who are trying to impress each other with their toughness. No one wants to admit that he is any less strong than the next fellow. On the other hand, I don't want to discourage you from accepting it but you are right that the Ambassador reported our conversation correctly. We must find a way to end this sterile debate.

Mr. Gromyko: The third point for us is the very crux of the problem. How to reach agreement on the rule or principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

If that principle can be met, we can inscribe in the declaration that all States favor maximum ties of cultural, scientific and other kinds. We will do our utmost to promote human contact. We are not afraid of this. Physically we cannot receive as many tourists as you can in the West. What with the war and the subsequent housing problem, we cannot give priority to hotels over housing.

The main point is that we must rule out entirely outside interference in domestic affairs. We have enough to do in the international area without meddling in each other's domestic affairs. This is a watershed that we must overcome. The crux of the problem is what solution can be found to deal with the third basket. I hope that the obstacles will be overcome and a common agreement found. We sometimes think that some circles underestimate the strength of our position. No one can hope that we will retreat from this principle and fling it to the floor so that others may meddle in our affairs.

The Secretary: The least dangerous people in the West are the intellectuals.

Mr. Gromyko: You have expressed your sober thoughts in the past. I recognize that you have no interest in attempting to interfere in our domestic affairs. I would say this that if anyone tries, while they might not be medically certifiable, they are politically not normal. These people are divorced from reality. Perhaps you are right that bureaucrats are competing to see who is toughest but they should remember the strength of the diamond because that is how tough we feel on this issue. In short, we must get rid of these artificial problems and get on with the conference.

The Secretary: First, there is merit in this position. The US is in favor of maximum contacts but without the ability to interfere. We recognize that your system will not be transformed by negotiation but that is the limit of the progress we would like to see. Second, how do we move ahead from here. Everyone agrees that there should be contact. There is a question about the use of the phrase “not inconsistent with the laws and customs.” It is much harder to deal with this because it is a domestic political issue in each of our countries. I assume that the Soviets can prevent any contacts they don’t want regardless of what a declaration might say.

Mr. Gromyko: But we don’t want to be in violation of an agreement we have made.

The Secretary: I wonder if it is possible to find some phraseology.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: The difficulty is that it is not in the mandate.

Mr. Gromyko: We must find a formula.

The Secretary: Art, can you get this thing going? What are the chances?

Mr. Hartman: We have already suggested several formulations to our Allies but they have been rejected. We have talked in terms of a preamble to Basket Three which would refer back to the principles in Basket One.⁵ Perhaps we could beef this one up.

The Secretary: This is all about words.

Mr. Gromyko: There is a principle behind the words (at this point the Secretary referred to Sonnenfeldt and Sisco—saying that if they ever got together he, the Secretary would be evicted from his office.)

Mr. Gromyko: It all boils down to whether there will be an opening of the door or whether the principle of non-interference will be left intact. This is after all the basis of all our post-war agreements, including the charter of the United Nations. That is the basic issue. All the rest are words. To sum up, we have the question of frontiers, of maneuvers and what is meant by non-interference.

⁵ See Documents 178 and 179.

The Secretary: Can we build on the principle of non-interference as agreed at Helsinki and drop the reference to laws and customs? Then we might have something concrete. Which of the countries have guts enough to push us on this?

Mr. Gromyko: Let us try jointly in the next few days to work out an agreed formula. Then it can be brought to the conference. I think it would be better if you introduced it at the conference or are you over-awed by the Nine?

The Secretary: You certainly know how to raise my ire on one of my favorite subjects. We should try to work out a formula but I think tactically it might be wiser if you introduced it. Otherwise, we will be accused of collusion.

Mr. Gromyko: But we ought to agree between us.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: It might be better for you to introduce it. It would help psychologically.

The Secretary: I am not so sure. I would like to think about who introduces it. The Ambassador has the best idea. We will introduce it and the Soviets will oppose it and then everyone will agree. Why don't Vorontsov, Art and Walt work on the problem this week and see if we can't get a formula on non-interference.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

184. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 4, 1974, 4:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Andrey Gromyko, Minister of Foreign Affairs, USSR

Anatoly Dobrynin, USSR Ambassador

Mr. Sukhodrev, Interpreter

The President

Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State

Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department of State

Walter J. Stoessel, Ambassador to the USSR

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 71, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Gromyko 1974. Top Secret; Sensitive. The meeting took place in the Oval Office. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Mr. Gromyko: On European affairs, I would like to recall the understanding reached in the relevant US-Soviet documents, and also in talks between you and Mr. Brezhnev on the theme of Europe and the CSCE.

I went into more detail about this with the Secretary this morning,² but, briefly, I would like to say that we are not completely satisfied with the progress in Geneva. We feel that some countries are artificially dragging their heels. We don't know the reason for this. Perhaps some countries want to find ways to interfere with the internal affairs of the Soviet Union—or perhaps it would be better to say of the Socialist countries in general and the Soviet Union especially. I don't know how to explain this. Perhaps there are some naive people who think they could divert the Soviet Union from its course, or perhaps there are other reasons.

I would like to underline that we feel that there are unjustified delays in the conference and we are not happy about it. We hope that the US can find ways of exerting its influence in Geneva on those who are dragging things out. We think you are able to do this, so as to achieve a positive outcome. We think this would be in the best interests of everyone and it would benefit US-Soviet relations. There is no need to go into detail.

Lastly, I would say that we hope that the possibility mentioned by you and Mr. Brezhnev regarding the holding of the final stage of the conference at the highest level could be realized. This would have enormous international significance. Secretary Brezhnev wanted me to underline this especially. We believe it would be a good thing to complete the agreements of the Conference at the highest level. This would be of historical importance for the world at large and especially for the US and the Soviet Union. I would appreciate your comment on SALT and the conference.

The President: I have already commented on SALT. As I said, our intentions are to reach agreement at the summit and this will have my personal attention.

About dragging feet at Geneva, this does not apply to the US. We are not doing this. I remember when Mr. Brezhnev pressed me at Camp David to agree to conclude the conference by the end of the year and I said this could be our goal but we can't commit others. That is still true.

² See Document 183.

As at Camp David, I would say that we want agreement at the Conference and, if they merit it, they could be signed at the highest level. We remain committed to that.

Dr. Kissinger will look into the question of who is dragging feet at Geneva, and see what can be done.

I know there are language problems at Geneva. If you could be flexible, we would have a better chance of influencing our allies. However, our two countries are together in their approach at Geneva; the problem lies with some of the allies.

Secretary Kissinger: Exactly. As I explained, some of the allies want to use the Conference to reform the domestic system of the Soviet Union, which is unrealistic since they failed to do so in several wars.

We agreed this morning on a procedure and we will try to work out some language. Then it will be a question of tactics as to how this should be presented at Geneva. Stoessel, Sonnenfeldt and Hartman will work with Vorontsov and someone else from the Soviet Embassy. They should find a formula this week.

The President: We are not dragging our feet. You want us not to drag our feet but rather to kick someone else in the tail.

Mr. Gromyko: We just want you to nudge them.

The President: When I think of the language worked out by Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt on world problems, it should be possible for us to get together on this matter.

Of course, we have our own ideas about your system and you have your ideas about ours, but we are not trying to change yours.

It is a question of how honest a person like Jackson³ is who seems to want to change the Soviet system—and here I speak as an old cold warrior myself.

Mr. Gromyko: If there are such people—and there must be, judging by the obstructions in Geneva—either they have lost all feeling of realism and are unable to see what is possible and what is not possible, or they are real opponents of *détente*. I was asking Secretary Kissinger can there really exist people who are oblivious to the results of WW II?

³ Senator Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson. In October 1972, Jackson first proposed an amendment to an East-West trade bill that would have made the granting of most-favored-nation (MFN) trading status to the Soviet Union dependent upon Moscow's ending its restrictive emigration policies, which discriminated against Soviet Jews. Although the amendment failed, Jackson demanded that the Nixon administration make improved relations with the Soviet Union dependent on changes in its human rights policies, especially with regard to Jewish emigration. He also continued to introduce legislation in Congress linking MFN status with the emigration of Soviet Jews.

I agree with most of what you have said and I see you are against procrastinating. We need a little more coordination and we will work with Dr. Kissinger to see what can be done to speed things up.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

185. Briefing Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Hartman) to Secretary of State Kissinger¹

Washington, February 16, 1974.

CSCE: Meeting with Vorontsov on Issue of Respect
for National Laws and Customs

Pursuant to the agreement you made with Gromyko in your recent conversation,² Hal Sonnenfeldt, Walt Stoessel and I met with Soviet Embassy Minister Vorontsov on February 15 to present our proposal for dealing with the Soviet desire to include a reference to “respect for national laws and customs” in the documents emerging from CSCE as they relate to human contacts.

We told Vorontsov that we had earlier tried with the Allies to introduce such a reference into the declaration of principles. However, the Allies were unreceptive and, in consequence, we did not underestimate the difficulties of finding a compromise. In our view, we said, a possible way to agreement was to build into the declaration on principles governing interstate relations more precise wording with regard to sovereignty. It will be easier for us to bring the Allies along, we said, if in the period immediately ahead the Soviets indicate willingness to agree to some specific measures in the third basket on humanitarian cooperation, particularly increased human contacts. If the Allies are in a position to point publicly to Soviet movement on those issues, the Soviets, for their part, could point to the strengthened language on sovereignty in the declaration of principles.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 3, Nodis Letters, HAK 1973–74, Folder 3. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Streator and sent through Sonnenfeldt.

² See Document 183.

We handed to Vorontsov the following language, which you had approved, building on the sovereignty paragraph in the French draft declaration of principles:³

“The participating States recognize each other’s sovereign equality with all the rights deriving therefrom. Each of them will respect the rights inherent in sovereignty in the case of each of the others. They will respect the right of each of them freely to determine its political, social, economic, (and) cultural, *legislative and regulatory system* and to define as it wishes its relations with other States. In particular, they will respect the right of each of them to belong to an alliance.”

We pointed out that the phrase, “legislative and regulatory system” was more concrete than “customs.” Virtually any practice can be referred to as customary, whereas rules or regulations were more than customs but less than laws, and therefore may be less objectionable than “customs.”

After a quick reading of the text, Vorontsov said that it may cover the point, but he would need authoritative guidance from Moscow.

We underlined that it was very important that the fact of our discussions be kept completely private, and we concluded by agreeing that there would be no contact between our delegations at Geneva on this subject, but only in Washington or with Walt Stoessel in Moscow

³ See Document 176.

186. Telegram From the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State¹

Moscow, February 28, 1974, 1517Z.

2909. For Sonnenfeldt and Hartman. Subject: Soviet suggestions for CSCE—Basket III.

1. Korniyenko asked me to call this morning Feb 28 to continue U.S.-Soviet discussion of language pertaining to Basket III at CSCE. I was alone; Korniyenko accompanied by Sokolov.

2. Korniyenko began by noting his understanding that present discussion was strictly confidential as between U.S. and USSR in respective

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 723, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XXX. Secret; Immediate; Immediate; Nodis.

capitals and that nothing has been said or will be said (pending mutual agreement) about talks to our delegations in Geneva or to representatives of other countries. I confirmed this also our understanding.

3. Korniyenko then asked clarification of Hartman's remarks in discussion with Vorontsov February 15² relating to actions Soviets should take re substance of Basket III if two of us could agree on language concerning principle of non-interference. I observed that Soviets at Geneva to date have given primary emphasis to non-interference point and have been extremely vague in regard to what they might be prepared to accept on substance of Basket III. We felt it would be helpful in convincing other delegations at Geneva of desirability accepting strengthened language on non-interference if Soviets could spell out in more detail their views on substance, which we hoped would give indication of flexibility and would be forthcoming. I thought this was one point which Hartman had wished to stress in talk with Vorontsov. Korniyenko said he understood.

4. Korniyenko noted that language we had proposed was intended to be part of statement of principles at beginning of overall document. Soviet side did not object to addition of phrase "legislative and regulatory" in this paragraph and in fact thought it would be quite useful. However, Soviets would prefer to have language spelling out meaning of non-interference included specifically in preamble to Chapter III rather than have preamble refer back to statement of principles at beginning. With this in mind, Soviets proposed following language (unofficial Soviet translation from Russian) for preamble to Chapter III. Korniyenko noted that phrase "laws and customs" had been dropped and replaced by "legal systems."

"Co-operation in the fields of culture and education, contacts and exchanges of information will take place with due regard for the differences in the social systems of participating states, with respect for their legal systems and with full observance of the principles governing relations among participating states, as defined in the general declaration, including the principle of non-interference in internal affairs."

5. I said I assumed, in event we could accept language along these lines in preamble to Basket III, Soviets would not require strengthened language of type we had suggested be included in paragraph on principles. Korniyenko said Soviets would not insist on such language in principles; as he had commented earlier, he thought our suggested addition was useful, but it would not be necessary from their standpoint to include it if preamble to Basket III could be agreed on basis his proposal. He suggested jocularly that something might be worked out tactically so that at Geneva we could propose new language for principles

² See Document 185.

and they could propose new language for preamble to Chapter III; thereafter, negotiation could develop so that we would concede and final agreement could be reached on Soviet language. However, he seemed realize this could cut both ways and did not press point.

6. I told Korniyenko I would report his suggestion and would be back in touch after I had received Department's views.

7. *Comment:* Soviet suggestion represents slight modification in revised Bulgarian draft preamble³ and appears to be improvement in that it drops objectionable phrase "laws and customs." However, given widespread Western objections at Geneva to detailed preamble to Chapter III, it may be harder to sell to allies than our proposal.

Stoessel

³ The Bulgarian preamble was transmitted with comments in telegram 5439 from Geneva, October 13, 1973. According to the telegram, the Bulgarians stressed that the committee should pay "particular attention to principles of sovereignty, non-intervention in internal affairs, and observance of laws and customs of participating states." Western delegations and neutrals countered "that it is premature to consider draft preamble and related general principles until we have clear picture of specific proposals which will emerge from subcommittees. Soviets stressed need to concentrate on 'what is possible' in this delicate area and to proceed with discussion of basic principles and specifics simultaneously." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files.)

187. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 5, 1974, 4:45 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary
Joseph J. Sisco, Under Secretary for Political Affairs
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor
Arthur A. Hartman, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
William G. Hyland, Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
Major General Brent Scowcroft, The White House
Harold Saunders, The White House

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Records of the Office of the Counselor, Entry 5339, Box 4, HS Chron Official. Secret; Nodis; Eyes Only. The conversation took place in Secretary Kissinger's office.

Secretary: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] But what about CSCE?

Sonnenfeldt: I sent you a memo suggesting we try one more time with our compromise language on Basket III and then fall back.²

Secretary: On CSCE we can give the Russians something. We can give them a text and we can give them a summit.

Sonnenfeldt: You will want to swallow a couple of times before you do that.

Scowcroft: What does it cost?

Sonnenfeldt: It costs something in Europe if we have a summit with the Russians and none with the Allies.

Hyland: You could give Brezhnev a target date in July for CSCE and hold open the question of level of participation.

Secretary: Nothing can happen at a CSCE summit. I wouldn't go until we have everything agreed. It would only be to make speeches and sign documents.

Hartman: I think we can be relaxed about the summit and follow-on machinery. But what will Pompidou say when he goes to Moscow?

Secretary: When does he go?

Hartman: March 12.

Secretary: Brandt told me that Pompidou is going to give CSCE away in Moscow and said he wants to give it away too. Why shouldn't we give it away?

Sonnenfeldt: I think we should graciously support the French and Germans giving it away.

Secretary: Just a moment. We can't be sons-of-bitches everywhere. We have to show the Russians they are getting something out of détente. I am looking for things to give them that don't cost us anything. We have screwed them at every turn. Can you imagine what the Jacks-sons are saying in the Soviet Union about Vietnam, the Middle East, the wheat deal, MBFR. We have not been softening up the West for the Soviets and they have discovered that it is possible for Western public opinion to be both for peace and anti-communist. The Soviets are totally stymied everywhere and I am afraid if we can't give them something, there is going to be an explosion.

Hyland: If we are going to give them a CSCE summit, let's do it before Pompidou goes to Moscow.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

² Not found.

Secretary: I would like a paper by tomorrow afternoon on long-range strategy with the Soviets, assuming we can do nothing for them in the Middle East.

[Omitted here is discussion of the Middle East.] But if we can give them nothing in the Middle East, how can we be responsive in CSCE, the summit and Berlin?

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Scowcroft: MBFR.

Secretary: I must say the present German position on MBFR baffles me. They tried to explain it to me in Bonn³ but it was over my head.

Hartman: They are willing to reduce, but they don't want to be singled out as the only Western country doing so in the second phase.

Sonnenfeldt: There is a new wrinkle. The Russians want to make sure that there is a freeze on Allied forces after the first phase so that the Allies cannot make up US reductions between the first and second phases. It is very logical, but it is not yet the US position.

Secretary: Could I have a paper by tomorrow afternoon that lays all these possibilities out?

Hyland: Why are you having an MBFR meeting this week?

Secretary: To educate myself.

Sonnenfeldt: The next operational MBFR issue is nuclear consultations with the British and Germans, and the British also want to talk about SALT.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

³ Kissinger visited Bonn March 3–4; he discussed MBFR with Scheel on March 3. A memorandum of their conversation is in National Archives, RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 7, Nodis Memcons, Mar. 1974, Folder 6.

188. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Soviet Union¹

Washington, March 9, 1974, 0146Z.

47937. Subject: CSCE: Soviet suggestions for Basket III. Ref: Moscow 2909.²

1. We have considered Korniyenko's suggestions for language to be inserted in the preamble to Basket III agreements and believe it would be helpful if you could follow up soon with him on this matter, making the points indicated below.

2. You could say we have given careful thought to Korniyenko's suggestions. In all candor, however, we do not believe it would be in the Soviets' own interest to table in Geneva the preambular language which Korniyenko showed you. We base this judgment upon the lengthy discussion of this issue during the Helsinki MPT and believe that the reaction of many Western participants at Geneva would conform closely to approach they followed at Helsinki. Thus they would certainly attempt: (a) to balance the reference to the non-intervention principle with a reference to the principle of respect for human rights, etc., and (b) very likely to balance "with due regard for the differences in social systems of participating states" with language conveying the opposite thought, to the effect that differences in social systems should not be an obstacle to freer exchanges.

3. This in effect would reopen the long argument that was finally settled, toward the end of the Helsinki talks—as Korniyenko will doubtless recall—by agreement on a general reference, in the Basket III preamble, to the list of principles of interstate relations agreed to in Basket I. The likely effect of tabling the language Korniyenko proposed would thus be to open an extended ideological debate in Geneva which thus far has been avoided.

4. We continue to believe our approach presented to Vorontsov³ would meet substantive Soviet objectives and avoid a long wrangle over the Basket III preamble that would slow CSCE progress. Moreover, if the Soviets proceed as Korniyenko suggests, the tabling by the East of such language would confirm fears on the part of Western governments that the Soviets intend to vitiate contents of Basket III provisions on enhanced contacts. This doubtless would leak to the

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 723, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XXX. Secret; Immediate; Nodis. Drafted by Streator, cleared by Sonnenfeldt, Miller, and Hartman, and approved by Kissinger.

² Document 186.

³ See Document 185.

Western press, and public pressures would mount on Western governments, allied and neutral, to resist such restrictive formulations.

5. Thus, we hope the Soviets will give careful further attention to our earlier proposed reformulation of the sovereignty paragraph in the principles declaration, given the consequences we expect at CSCE if the Soviets follow the tack proposed by Korniyenko.

Kissinger

189. Telegram From the Mission in Geneva to the Department of State¹

Geneva, March 15, 1974, 1611Z.

1722. Department for Hartman and Sonnenfeldt from Sherer. Subj: CSCE: Basket III preambular language. Ref: Geneva 1705.²

1. I invite your attention to reftel report of my conversation with Soviet CSCE delegation March 13 that suggests Soviets may be prepared to resolve problem of preambular language of CSCE Basket III on basis of Helsinki formula. This, as you recall, entailed a cross reference in Basket III preamble to principles in Basket I. I would underline, however, that my Soviet respondent said that they could not now accept such a formula, though he thought they eventually could.

2. I believe this is a significant development, reflecting an evolution in Soviet thinking along lines we have long favored.

3. You should also be aware that at March 15 meeting of committee on Basket III, Finns advanced portions of a text, provided to us on a confidential basis, that would explicitly propose Helsinki formula as a compromise. Finns have told us that they checked with Soviet delegation and others in course of developing this approach, and we doubt they would be prepared to advance it without assurance of eventual Soviet acceptance.

4. All of this appears to augur possible progress on the Basket III preambular issue in the period immediately ahead.

Dale

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 708, Country Files, Europe, Switzerland, Vol. III. Confidential; Exdis. Repeated to Moscow for Stoessel.

² Telegram 1705 from Geneva, March 15, is in the National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files.

190. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 18, 1974, 11:40 a.m.

SUBJECT

The Secretary's Visit to the Soviet Union

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department
Arthur Hartman, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
William Hyland, Director for Intelligence and Research
Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Executive Assistant to the Secretary
Brent Scowcroft, White House
Jan Lodal, White House
Denis Clift, White House

(Sonnenfeldt, Hartman, Hyland, Scowcroft enter Secretary's office.)

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Secretary: Let's go through the agenda for the Moscow trip. Hal, the President is yelling for that letter—to Brezhnev.² I promised it to him this morning. Where is it?

Sonnenfeldt: I have it but I want to take one last look at it to make sure it is what we want.

Secretary: I thought maybe you hadn't started it yet.

Sonnenfeldt: Bill, give me my copy of the letter. I am going to show it to you, Henry, but you can't read it.

Secretary: I don't want to see it. Let me have it when you have taken another look.

¹ Source: Ford Library, NSC Program Analysis, Jan Lodal Convenience Files, Box 66, Memcons and Summaries of Discussion. Secret; Nodis; Eyes Only. The meeting took place in Secretary Kissinger's office.

² On March 18, Kissinger forwarded to Nixon the final version of a letter to Brezhnev, a response to Brezhnev's message (Document 182), and Nixon signed it. The letter reads in part: "As for other aspects of European security, I agree with you that the conversations concerning the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe have proceeded at a slow pace. You are aware that the US has been prepared to move rapidly, and there are no disagreements of principle between our two sides. Yet, for this Conference to be successful, it is necessary that we take fully into account the interests of all the participants, so that the final result will be a truly significant contribution to international peace and security. We have in fact made some progress since Minister Gromyko's visit to Washington, and during your discussion with Secretary Kissinger we can make additional progress. As you know, the US will not stand in the way of concluding this Conference by a meeting at the highest level, but this decision will depend on the views of others." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 69, Dobrynin/Kissinger, Vol. 22)

Bill, what did you think of the *Pravda* article?³

Hyland: It was a low-level account of second-rate journalists and if you read it closely, you will notice it quotes US press and not themselves.

Sonnenfeldt: It is getting a big play because it is the first comment of this kind, but it is unimportant.

Secretary: Let's leave SALT until Lodal comes in. What about MBFR? What can I say in Moscow about MBFR?

Sonnenfeldt: You have a good analytical memo Ikle did coming to you at the end of the day.⁴

Secretary: But what can I achieve?

Sonnenfeldt: US-Soviet cuts.

Secretary: Hal, did you hear about the MBFR VP meeting?⁵ The God damned Defense Department is becoming as cynical about MBFR as about SALT. We cut 29,000 men with no equipment and they cut 68,000 with their equipment. Then we put a ceiling on equipment so we are not penalized and they are. And to top it off, since Reformer is independent of MBFR, we have the right to send 50,000 troops into Europe each year for four months, so we withdraw 29,000 and have the capability to put in that 29,000 plus 31,000 more during the non-winter months when combat is most likely. Do you really think that position can be negotiated? I am willing to try it but I don't think it has much of a chance.

Hartman: The important thing is to link US-Soviet reductions in the first phase with a second phase.

Sonnenfeldt: In the first phase we get US-Soviet reductions, a commitment to the principle of general equality and ceilings on other than US and Soviet forces.

Secretary: Wait a minute. Let me get this straight. Ten to fifteen percent cut in the first phase of US-Soviet forces; a ceiling on the rest of the participants; and a commitment to a common ceiling in the second phase. But what do we do about the God damned Russian tank army?

Sonnenfeldt: That is probably a non-starter. Unless we are willing to negotiate nuclear weapons, the Russians are going to refuse to talk about pulling back a tank army. So you keep the nuclear option in

³ It is unclear to which article Kissinger is referring.

⁴ The paper, which Ikle forwarded to Kissinger with a covering memorandum on March 16, is attached to a memorandum from Ikle to Kissinger, March 21. (Ford Library, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box 15, MBFR Issues)

⁵ Regarding the Verification Panel meeting on MBFR on March 14, see Document 347.

abeyance until you can buy something in SALT with it. Do you agree, Bill?

Hyland: Yes.

Secretary: What will be the Allied reaction?

Hyland: They have agreed. One of our strengths in MBFR is that we have carefully developed an Allied consensus so they don't have any room to bitch.

Secretary: Not until we get an agreement with the Soviets. I want you and Hartman to go to NATO after we go to Moscow. You may want to go to London first but I definitely want you to go to NATO.

Sonnenfeldt: Who were you looking at?

Secretary: You and Hartman. I have read the CSCE memo, unless there is a new one.

Sonnenfeldt: There is a new one.⁶

Secretary: Then I haven't read it.

Sonnenfeldt: We have to be very careful on negotiating a CSCE summit with the Russians.

Secretary: I agree.

Hartman: I discussed this with the British in London last week-end and suggested we don't tie ourselves down firmly against a CSCE summit. Our political leadership may decide that they want one at the last minute.

Sonnenfeldt: And we may be able to use it as a sweetener for SALT.

Secretary: But Brandt will probably recommend it himself.⁷

Sonnenfeldt: That depends on what happens in Basket III. They are now doing a minuet in Geneva on the subject of Human Contacts. All the Europeans who drove us into the conference are now saying, and they repeated it when I was at NATO, that they have to have something on Human Contacts for their parliaments so they are getting themselves in the position of demanding exactly what the Russians cannot give. But the issue on Basket III is being narrowed to some extent.

Hartman: Our proposal . . .

Secretary: What is our proposal?

⁶ Hartman's memorandum to Kissinger on CSCE for his discussions in Moscow is in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 231, Geopolitical Files, Soviet Union, Trips, 1974, Mar., Background Books: CSCE, 1973–74.

⁷ In a meeting with Schlesinger on March 6, after they discussed the Middle East, Kissinger said: "What can we do to keep the Soviet Union happy? We have MBFR, but that may be premature. CSCE is cheap. The Germans or French will probably give it away anyway and we should beat them." (Memorandum of conversation, March 6; *ibid.*, TS 90, Subject File, Schlesinger, James R., Memoranda of Conversation, 1973–75)

Hartman: To make some reference in the principles to laws and regulations, to avoid reference to customs, and to insert a cross reference in the preamble to Basket III linking it to the principles.

Sonnenfeldt: But as Brezhnev said to Stoessel, Basket III is chickenfeed.⁸ What really matters to the Russians is the principle of inviolability of frontiers. But I think we are going to have to let the Europeans bleed themselves on that one.

Secretary: Who is siding with the Germans against the Russians on that issue?

Hartman: All the Europeans are backing the Germans.

Hyland: I think the Russians will buy some reference to peaceful change as long as it isn't juxtaposed with language on borders.

Sonnenfeldt: This is really the Germans' problem. We shouldn't get out in front of them.

Secretary: Hal, can we do a back channel to Bahr saying that in view of my trip we would like a rundown of his talks in Moscow and at the same time can we ask Von Staden officially if the German position is the same as Scheel outlined to me at dinner.

Sonnenfeldt: We have got some debriefing of the Bahr visit to Moscow⁹ but it hasn't been very specific nor helpful.

Secretary: (Looking at CSCE memo) Shouldn't we ask for a Soviet draft? Both of us should submit drafts.

Sonnenfeldt: That's right.

⁸ Telegram 3185 from Moscow, March 5, reported on Stoessel's meeting with Brezhnev: "Brezhnev dealt with Middle East and CSCE in routine fashion, except for thinking out loud that it might be necessary to elevate CSCE to Foreign Minister level to get the necessary documents ready for signing. He said he would talk this over with Pompidou and the Secretary. He dismissed Basket III issues as chicken feed compared to Basket I principles of inviolability of frontiers, etc. After noting that Basket III issues were a part of détente and attracted broad public interest, I mentioned the discussion of this topic with Gromyko in Washington and my own talks with the Foreign Office here and I hoped language could be found to meet the needs of everyone for Basket III. Brezhnev stressed the need to abide by national laws and customs in exchange of information and people, recalling his December 1972 speech language on this question. He asserted that a foreign tourist in the U.S. could surely not walk down the street naked, which was illegal, nor could he put his feet up on the table, which was not the custom. He drew the analogy that a foreign tourist in the USSR could not hand out anti-government propaganda, which was illegal." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 723, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XXX)

⁹ Telegram 3947 from Bonn, March 12, reported: "Bahr told US, UK and French Ambassadors March 12 of his discussions of CSCE with Soviet leaders during his recent 10-day visit to Moscow. Bahr said he was impressed by how much attention Brezhnev, Gromyko and others focused on the conference. He had the impression that they considered its success of importance. As Embassy Moscow has reported, Brezhnev complained about the slow progress being made in Geneva. Other Soviet officials raised more specific complaints. The FRG came in for heavy criticism for its positions on Basket One, especially the non-violability of borders, on confidence-building measures, which the

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Soviets charged were designed to create serious problems for the USSR, and on Basket Three, along standard Soviet lines. The Soviets also pressed hard for a summit meeting to conclude the CSCE." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1974)

191. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 20, 1974, 11:30 a.m.

SUBJECT

The Secretary's Visit to Moscow

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department
Arthur Hartman, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
William Hyland, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Brent Scowcroft, The White House
Denis Clift, The White House
Jan Lodal, The White House
Robert Blackwill, Notetaker

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Secretary: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] I am still bemused by our MBFR proposal to the Russians. They take out 68,000 with their equipment, we take out 29,000 without our equipment and Reforger allows us to put in 50,000 for four months each year. It's preposterous.

Hyland: But if the Soviets push and . . .

Sonnenfeldt: Bill, I didn't have a chance to mention to you Dobrynin's proposition of 30,000 yesterday.²

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Records of the Office of the Counselor, Entry 5339, Box 8, Soviet Union, Secretary's Trip, March. Secret; Nodis; Eyes Only. The conversation took place in the Secretary's office.

² No record of this conversation has been found.

Sonnenfeldt: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] But MBFR is a problem.

Secretary: Dobrynin's proposal was that we consider a 30,000 man cut for each side, fifty percent to be made by the US and USSR, fifty percent by the NATO and Warsaw Pact.

Sonnenfeldt: In the paper Lodal and I did,³ we gave you three options. Option 3 is the closest to what Dobrynin told you. That would be a token US-Soviet cut of 20,000 each, which is about two percent of NATO/Pact ground-air manpower, plus a framework for the next phase. The problem is it is unacceptable to the Allies.

Secretary: What did they propose in Vienna?

Sonnenfeldt: Basically in November a symbolic 20,000 man cut by each side, involving all participants and made across the board.

Lodal: That is a more interesting suggestion than the one Dobrynin gave you yesterday. Token cuts by everyone and a manpower freeze between phases.

Sonnenfeldt: The next paper you have there⁴ gives you the three options and the third is the 20,000 US-Soviet cut and the framework for the next phase.

Secretary: If I say to the Soviets that we propose a 20,000 US-Soviet cut, will they accept it? That is not an equal percentage is it?

Lodal: Not exactly. An equal percentage would be about 19,000 for us and 24,000 for the Soviets.

Secretary: So you are giving me two proposals. We either suggest a 29,000 cut for us without equipment and a 68,000 cut for them plus tanks; or a 19,000 cut for us and a 24,000 cut for them without any equipment. That's certainly splendid analytical work. I wonder which they will choose.

Hyland: But the 29,000 vs. 68,000 cut is an equal percentage cut of US-Soviet forces and is caused by the immense numerical advantage the Soviets have in Central Europe.

Secretary: Isn't the 19,000 and 24,000 an equal percentage cut of US/Soviet forces?

Hyland: No, that's two percent of the Warsaw Pact/NATO forces in the area.

Sonnenfeldt: Did Dobrynin say anything about armaments?

Secretary: I only talked with him about 15 minutes and during 14 of them he berated me for deliberately humiliating Gromyko in Damascus.

³ Not found.

⁴ It is unclear to which paper Sonnenfeldt is referring.

Sonnenfeldt: He doesn't know what a tight schedule you keep.

Hyland: I think the Soviets will eventually accept something like an equal percentage cut, though it may not be 29,000 on our side and 68,000 on theirs, but they may suggest . . .

Secretary: You really think they will accept those numbers or anything near them?

Hyland: They may suggest something like a five percent cut.

Secretary: What would those numbers look like?

Lodal: About 10,000 for us and something like 20,000 for them. But they're interested in the subsequent phase and what happens to the German army.

Secretary: Do we make these cuts contingent on the next phase?

Hyland: That's what the Russians will want; they will want it all spread out.

Secretary: So we cut five percent of US-Soviet forces and try to get them committed to a common ceiling framework. Will NATO accept that?

Hyland: That's what NATO wants. A link between that and what is in the last phase in some detail.

Secretary: What kind of detail?

Hyland: The Russians want to make sure that the Germans reduce in the second phase.

Secretary: But doesn't everyone accept that there will be indigenous reductions in the second phase. If there are indigenous reductions the Germans, being indigenous, will reduce.

Sonnenfeldt: The Russians will want your specific assurance of that.

Scowcroft: They don't want an independent German army.

Secretary: These God-damn jesuitical arguments. Obviously if the second phase cut includes indigenous cuts, the Bundeswehr will be included and without it the German Government will cut their army anyway.

Lodal: Of course the Russians realize we may also get cuts through the Mansfield amendment.

Secretary: So we get the Soviets to agree to a common ceiling, 3-1 against them in this stage, 10-1 against them in the second stage. I keep thinking there must be a limit to our cynicism.

Hyland: What hangs us up in dealing with the Russians is that tight procedural format we have in NATO and the Allies' insistence on staged negotiations eventually leading to a common ceiling approach. The Russians keep saying two stages are not necessary, that we should reduce everyone in one stage.

Secretary: Why don't we?

Sonnenfeldt: Because the Europeans don't want to.

Secretary: But if the Russians were willing to accept a common ceiling . . .

Sonnenfeldt: If that happens the whole picture changes. The Russians are going to want a clear indication of where the other Allied cuts are going to be. You are going to have national sub-ceilings no matter what you call them and you can bet that under the terms of Dobrynin's proposal to you yesterday the Russians are going to want definite word of where the other 15,000 is coming from.

Secretary: We will have to give him something on this issue since he gave me a fur hat yesterday.

What happened to it? Are you staffing it? Which reminds me of when we were hunting. The Russians brought out all these sows and piglets—they called them wild boars—and Sonnenfeldt started blasting away. You should have seen it.

Sonnenfeldt: That was a day to remember. Two shots and two carcasses.

Secretary: Hell, they had some guys hidden down in the trees who heard your shots and then threw out the carcasses.

Sonnenfeldt: It will be better in the snow than in the spring. Think of the beautiful sight of all that blood on the snow.

Secretary: I find it revolting.

What is Ikle's point on MBFR?

Sonnenfeldt: No point. I think you asked him to do an issues paper.⁵

Scowcroft: That's right. After last week's VP meeting.⁶

Secretary: I haven't read it yet. And on SALT, will Alex Johnson be there?

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Secretary: What about CSCE? Art, can you give me five minutes on where we stand?

Sonnenfeldt: You have a memo.

Hartman: I am a little hampered by not knowing what memo you have got there.

Sonnenfeldt: It's your memo.

Secretary: Never mind about the God-damned memo. Can someone tell me where we stand?

⁵ See footnote 4, Document 190.

⁶ See Document 347.

Hartman: The Soviet position in Geneva seems to be softening somewhat, although Korniyenko took a hard line with Walt Stoessel on our suggested changes in language.⁷ You remember we want to take reference to customs out and use a reference to laws and regulations in the principles, which would then be referred to in a vague way in the preamble to Basket III to meet Soviet wishes. That's basically the way this argument was settled in the original Helsinki compromise. They are also very serious about the question of inviolability of frontiers. And they regard peaceful change very much in the context of the indivisibility of their own sovereignty.

Secretary: But what do I tell Gromyko? Does Stoessel know he can sit in on all our talks?

Sonnenfeldt: I am sure he assumes he can but we can tell him definitely. Will he stay out there?

Secretary: No, for Christ sake, he can commute. He has got to understand there are limited facilities.

Hyland: I think the Russians will accept a reference to peaceful change in the principles portion, just so long as it is not juxtaposed with language on frontiers.

Hartman: But the Russian position doesn't make any sense. If we recognize their complete sovereignty . . .

Sonnenfeldt: Though the logic on our side may be impeccable, the Russians are not going to accept changing borders on any terms except their own. They are so sensitive about this, of course, because of their problems with the Chinese and language on peaceful change would simply highlight their difficulties. We should have no illusion that they are going to accept anything meaningful.

Secretary: Should our role be that we will accept anything the Europeans accept?

Sonnenfeldt: That's basically true—especially on Basket III.

Secretary: So we put language on laws and regulations into the general principles and refer to them in the preamble to Basket III.

Sonnenfeldt: Of course the Russians are claiming that you agreed to put language on this question into the preamble itself.⁸

⁷ See Document 186.

⁸ On March 19, Sonnenfeldt wrote in a memorandum to Kissinger: "The Soviets have insisted to Stoessel that they would prefer that the idea of respect for laws and customs be reflected in the preamble to Basket III, a procedure which would undo the Helsinki compromise and provoke the Allies into counterdrafts that would only exacerbate differences. Further, they alleged that you and Gromyko had agreed to place such compromise wording in the preamble (there was no such agreement)." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 49, Trip Files, Mar. 25–28, 1974, Misc. Papers)

Secretary: That's ridiculous. You were there. You know I didn't.

Sonnenfeldt: We can also give them something on confidence-building measures.

Secretary: That's right. The Europeans want to be told about every God-damn Soviet troop movement, but we accept some general formulation on maneuvers.

What about a summit?

Sonnenfeldt: There is no enthusiasm among the Allies now for a summit. Even the French seem to be backing away.

Hartman: Pompidou did leave a slight opening in Moscow. And I believe that the political leaders of all the Western countries may come around at the last moment.

Sonnenfeldt: The French have suggested a Foreign Ministers meeting at the end of Phase II.

Secretary: But what do I tell Gromyko?

Hyland: I think we simply repeat for the Russians next week the San Clemente formulation, that we support progress in CSCE which will result in holding a meeting at the highest level. That is in effect what Pompidou said.

Secretary: But what results are we asking for?

Sonnenfeldt: To remove all the crappy problems in the document.

Secretary: But am I right that no one is asking for anything that will last two weeks beyond the final meeting. And so, no matter what the Europeans are saying now, there will be a summit. I am just trying to understand how this is going to work out.

Hyland: The Europeans say that if there is a disaster, they will walk away from CSCE. But I think that is just a tactic . . .

Secretary: They don't have any tactics; they just want to hang it on us.

Hartman: I think we will get help on this from the current British Government.

Secretary: Let me understand. There are no serious problems in Geneva. What about borders?

Hartman: The Germans are serious about it.

Hyland: It is a real issue in Germany.

Secretary: I thought [*less than 1 line not declassified*] Scheel said he settled the problems in the first document.

Hyland: The Germans are trying to get through CSCE what they didn't get from the Russians.

Secretary: [*less than 1 line not declassified*]

Sonnenfeldt: That was Bahr.

Secretary: At least Bahr is a deliberate disaster. I really don't think Scheel means to do any harm. The only problem is that we can't get stuck with the decision about the summit. There will be a summit and we shouldn't be the last to agree to it. But we want to prevent the Russians from running around Europe blabbing.

Sonnenfeldt: We shouldn't go too far . . .

Secretary: You were wrong about me seeing Gromyko in Geneva—we can't drive them against the wall every time—with all due respect. What are we giving if we tell the Soviets we agree to a summit.

Scowcroft: That . . .

Secretary: But if Korniyenko accepts this telegram⁹ and some compromise on frontiers and then says what about a summit. What do I say?

Hartman: Say we are relaxed.

Secretary: That is fine, Brezhnev asks me what I think about a summit and I say I am relaxed.

Sonnenfeldt: We also have the problem of follow-on machinery.

Secretary: What is our policy on that?

Sonnenfeldt: We do not want any special political machinery.

Hyland: We want a small staff secretariat which receives messages but has no political or executive responsibility.

Sonnenfeldt: On the summit we are just talking about nuance. The question is whether you will give the Russians the ability to go all over Europe saying the US agrees to a summit and is pushing it. Or are you more cautious saying that if the issues are resolved, if there is a consensus in Geneva, then our position remains the same, that the conference should close at the highest level; but we should never doubt for a moment that the Russians will use whatever you say against us.

Hyland: We should just give them our existing position.

Sonnenfeldt: That we will go to the summit if progress in Geneva warrants it.

⁹ Reference is to a draft telegram to Moscow, attached to Sonnenfeldt's March 19 memorandum, which reads in part: "It would appear that Korniyenko is deliberately distorting informal understanding reached between Secretary and Gromyko on this topic. Secretary did not agree to develop jointly with Soviets Basket III preambular language covering respect for national laws and customs and other points Soviets wish to make in that context. Secretary did agree that we would work to develop with the Soviets compromise language which could bridge differences between Soviets and our allies. As indicated in previous instructions, we feel this can most effectively be done not through developing the preamble but in keeping with the Helsinki understanding." It is unclear whether the draft telegram was sent; no final copy has been found.

Hartman: We can say movement on the issues will define the final level.

Hyland: Of course, the neutrals will send who they want.

Sonnenfeldt: Prince Rainier?

Secretary: As long as his wife comes along. I agree, we are talking about nuances. We want to prevent Brezhnev from saying we have already agreed to come. We say instead that if the document is satisfactory, we will support a summit. We have a couple of loose declarations floating around; maybe we could put some paragraphs at their disposal.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

192. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 22, 1974, 7 p.m.

SUBJECT

Meeting on Moscow Trip and Other Topics

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary
Robert McCloskey, Ambassador at Large
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department
Arthur Hartman, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
William Hyland, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Brent Scowcroft, Deputy to Advisor for National Security Affairs
Lawrence Eagleburger, Executive Assistant
Jan Lodal, National Security Council
Denis Clift, National Security Council

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Secretary: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] (Turns to Hartman) Can you bear it if we talk about MBFR? That's something you know about. How did you like my trilaterals remark yesterday?²

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Records of the Office of the Counselor, Entry 5339, Box 8, Soviet Union, Secretary's Trip, March. Secret; Nodis; Eyes Only. The conversation took place in the Secretary's office.

² Kissinger, responding to a question at a March 21 press conference about the potential impact of U.S.-European differences on his upcoming discussions in Moscow, stated: "Under no circumstances will we sacrifice European interests in negotiations with

Hartman: It was great, especially if you put it together with the Vice President's statement today.³

Secretary: I wonder what he meant. Anyway, he has more than restored the President's youth. Let me look through the SALT book. (To Lodal and Sonnenfeldt) Will you guys be here tomorrow? Now let's move on to MBFR.

Sonnenfeldt: The talking points are being typed.

Secretary: That's OK, I want to focus on concepts. (To McCloskey). Bob, I think you will like our position. We want to withdraw 15 percent of US and Soviet forces, moving then to a common ceiling achieved through a reduction of indigenous forces. You should really appreciate this, Bob, especially its fairness. We would reduce 29,000 men without their equipment in exchange for a Soviet tank army of 68,000 men along with their tanks. We would also put a tank ceiling on them without any for ourselves. And then we could rotate 50,000 people for up to four months a year back to Europe. This is a fair proposal; why haven't the Soviets accepted it yet? For four months a year we would be allowed to have more troops in Europe under MBFR than without MBFR.

Hyland: Yeah, and in addition they should give us free emigration out of the Soviet Union.

Secretary: Right, and we can throw in 36 F-4's.

Sonnenfeldt: We sure could.

Secretary: It's a good basis for negotiating.

Hyland: Grechko will be away in Iraq during your visit.

Secretary: Then they can't make any decisions.

Hyland: They have already made them.

the Soviet Union, no matter what our disagreements may be with the Europeans. With respect to troop reductions—with the negotiations of troop reductions—they are continuing on the course that has been agreed to in NATO. We have had a trilateral conversation that has been foreseen with the U.S. and the Federal Republic this week. These conversations went well, and there is an agreed allied position which we will continue to pursue." (Department of State *Bulletin*, April 8, 1974, p. 353) On the trilateral discussions on MBFR, see footnote 13, Document 355.

³ In an interview with Reuters on March 22, Vice President Ford said with regard to the force reduction talks in Vienna that "some of our allies are saying that we won't negotiate, we won't have any compromises." Ford continued: "They seem to be saying that predicated on the basis that the United States is going to keep its present force there ad infinitum. With the sentiment that is in the United States for a reduction, it may mean there will be a unilateral reduction unless we can get a mutual agreement with the Soviet Union. Some of our allies have to be realistic—that we should get an agreement; otherwise, there could be a unilateral reduction." (John Heffernan, "Ford Renews Warning to Europeans," *Washington Post*, March 23, 1974, p. A1)

Secretary: Well, they would be in a position to float only one position.

Hyland: They have already floated it to us.

Secretary: When we were in Moscow discussing SALT, Brezhnev was having Politburo meetings every day. Where can I go from here on this subject, how do we break out from here?

Sonnenfeldt: Any straight percentage cut involves a disparity.

Secretary: I think we could get a five percent cut if I limited it with a second phase.

Lodal: Five percent of what, US-Soviet or NATO-Warsaw Pact? Five percent of US troops is only about 10,000.

Hyland: Five percent would give us some 9,600 vs. 23,000 Soviets.

Secretary: What about five percent of the totals of both sides?

Lodal: About 38,000 vs. 46,000.

Sonnenfeldt: That would be a large number.

Lodal: Yes, and it doesn't include air forces.

Secretary: What is NATO's total force in Central Europe?

Lodal: 777,000.

Secretary: Well, that type of a move would shock the Allies—this would be falling back from our current proposal of 29,000 for 68,000 to 38 for 45. And it won't look like great progress to anybody.

Sonnenfeldt: Right, but I think it is useful for you to look at it as one different concept.

Hyland: They might swallow 10,000 US for some 20,000 Soviets.

Secretary: Would this work in terms of verification?

Hyland: Our capabilities for units are not too bad.

Lodal: Or you could try eight percent.

Hyland: 10,000 in return for 20,000 is something they could probably accept.

Secretary: The advantage of this tack is that Brezhnev proposed it to the President last year. It would be hard for him to get off this concept now. If we included air forces, it might be better from their point of view. If we made reductions including air forces in the base, would each side be able to determine the forces it withdraws?

Hyland: You would have to negotiate this. For us it would be better to specify at least a certain amount of ground force that must be reduced. Soviet ground forces are obviously more important for us.

Secretary: We must have ground force reductions but the question is whether we should have air force reductions. We would need in effect a form of ceiling for ground force reductions indicating that they should be not less than 5,000. But could we allow them to take more than that in ground forces?

Hyland: It is hard to verify reductions of air manpower if no aircraft are involved.

Secretary: The Joint Chiefs are going to be interested in all this. They are marvelous at screwing up disarmament.

The only advantage of including air forces is to change the trading ratio somewhat, but we would still want to push for ground force reductions.

How would we link this with the last phase?

Hyland: We would negotiate that.

Secretary: The Soviets want a second phase link which includes specific reference to national forces.

Sonnenfeldt: The Soviets still haven't accepted the idea of a US-Soviet phase. You will probably have to accept some form of freeze on national forces.

Secretary: If we pull out less than 10,000 people after two years of negotiating, we would spur on Mansfield. After all, Laird took out 25,000 men from Europe to put them elsewhere. Haig and I had to stop that from the White House.

Sonnenfeldt: The only way to combat Mansfield in this context is to show him we are in a process, and not merely in a set of simplistic reductions. That involves a freeze and movement toward a second phase.

Secretary: Yes, gentlemen, but we will need a figure greater than 10,000.

Sonnenfeldt: What about three percent of NATO and Warsaw Pact totals?

Lodal: There is really no asymmetry involved in that.

Sonnenfeldt: I am talking of alternative concepts.

Secretary: I must say, I am coming to like the concept of withdrawing a Soviet tank army less and less. The problem here is that if we go through with it, we are logically signed up with a freeze on our tank forces as well. This will get us into the same situation of being criticized for codifying inferiority as in SALT, given all the demagoguery in this country. We will be accused of creating a tank gap. That's the problem. So I have come off the tank cut.

Lodal: A European freeze hurts us.

Sonnenfeldt: Jan's concept is to get the Soviet tanks to stay in Germany so that the Soviets will have to walk back to Russia.

Secretary: Why don't we base our withdrawals on how many forces we would be allowed to rotate back? That would be great. They could then bring back more than 100,000 for months at a time. In fact, both sides could have more forces in Central Europe as a result of MBFR.

Scowcroft: The exceptions allowing reintroduction of forces that you are talking about are there to help the Europeans feel better.

Secretary: We have less to gain from it than they do. Each August both sides would be free to go back to their old levels. In terms of working with NATO, can we negotiate a five percent US-Soviet cut without equipment, with the proviso that there would be a second phase and a common ceiling?

Sonnenfeldt: Probably.

Secretary: We would have three months to get this through NATO.

Lodal: It's when you move to having percentage cuts based on NATO and Warsaw Pact totals that you start having problems with the Allies.

Secretary: Yes, but we could have done it that way if we had started this way from the beginning.

We could justify that we were dropping nukes from the equation after the nuclear trilaterals, and thus also dropping our demands for Soviet equipment.

Lodal: The problem is with the common ceiling. As it now stands, they have to take out three for our one to get to the common ceiling.

Secretary: The Soviets do?

Lodal: The Pact does. You can change this disparity by lowering the common ceiling but never getting all that was there, and through phasing. For example, you could set a common ceiling at 600,000 but only go down to 700,000.

Sonnenfeldt: Yes, but think of who would be doing all this. For the FRG, these reductions mean demobilization.

Lodal: One could thus bring the ratio down to two to one.

Secretary: Let's not worry about this concept—it won't be very active.

Lodal: They have talked about movement to parity if air forces were included.

Secretary: Couldn't we jazz up the figures? If we add air forces, we may have to concede something on the commitment to the common ceiling. We could say that we continued to want it without requiring the Soviets to say the same.

Sonnenfeldt: All this amounts to one-tenth of an agreement. Questions of language, equipment, freeze, etc., would all remain.

Secretary: Another issue is how to handle the subject at the summit.

Hyland: The Soviets could agree to talk in terms of US-Soviet reductions at the summit.

Secretary: Well, that's that for MBFR. Now, Art, what about CSCE?

Hartman: OK.

Secretary: What can I tell them about European security?

Sonnenfeldt: The French version that you got just before this meeting about the Pompidou–Brezhnev summit is different from the other version you got.⁴

Secretary: I am inclined to believe the Soviets. (To Hartman) Is that information now circulating all through EUR?

Sonnenfeldt: I don't think the ambassador understood what was going on on the subject of concluding documents in CSCE.

Secretary: But it stands to reason in CSCE that if the documents are concluded, there must be a summit; this is simply so by definition. (To Hartman) What do we tell the Soviets about the summit?

Hartman: We say if the work goes on and is completed, we think there could be a summit.

Secretary: OK.

Sonnenfeldt: No, we could say that we would like a summit to take place and won't stand in the way of it.

Secretary: Right.

Now, can you explain this Basket III crap to me.

What is Basket III in the paper? Let's look through it. (Leaves to take phone call; returns)

What's in Basket III? (Reads portion of Helsinki final document)

Hyland: They haven't started writing on it.

Sonnenfeldt: The Soviets said they could be flexible if they got their view in Basket III.

Secretary: What's happening?

Hyland: The group in Geneva wants to add various portions on Human Contacts.

Secretary: This, as well as a link between Basket III and the general principles.

Where is the inviolability of frontiers issue? In the basic principles?

Hartman: Yes.

Secretary: And here our solution is to sneak in a reference to peaceful change in some other place in a way acceptable to the Germans. And the problem is that horse's ass Scheel now wants to get more out of CSCE than he got in his treaty with the Soviets.

What's that other abstruse point of Gromyko's on principles?

Hyland: Oh, the ascending order of principles for the non-use of force, the inviolability of frontiers, etc.—and the concept of borders comes first.

Secretary: Where is inviolability in this paper in my book?

⁴ Pompidou visited Moscow March 11–13.

Hartman: Here (Takes out separate spread sheet).

Hyland: The Soviet document is at Tab G.

Secretary: (To notetaker) Are you looking through the briefing books or taking notes?

Sonnenfeldt: He's taking notes.

Secretary: Where is the frontier language? What do I tell Gromyko?

Sonnenfeldt: In keeping with what the Soviets told Sherer about their willingness to see reference to peaceful change put on a separate sheet and inserted later somewhere in the principles, you can tell them that we could live with it being on a separate sheet and inserted later.

Secretary: What other problems in CSCE?

Sonnenfeldt: CBMs, follow-on machinery.

Secretary: That's it for CSCE. What else?

Sonnenfeldt: Test ban.

Secretary: We don't want one. What do we get out of it for détente? On MBFR, why should the Soviets agree to our formulas for mutual cuts? They would have had 25,000 out of Europe if Haig and I hadn't caught Laird.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

193. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Bonn, March 24, 1974, 12:15–2:45 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Willy Brandt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Walter Scheel, Vice Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs

Guenter Van Well, Foreign Ministry

Paul Frank, Foreign Ministry

Peter Hermes, Foreign Ministry

Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Martin Hillenbrand, Ambassador to FRG

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1028, MemCons—HAK & Presidential. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place in Schloss Gymnich. Attached but not printed are a letter given to Kissinger by Scheel on the establishment of FRG Federal agencies in Berlin and a copy of Kissinger's public remarks after the meeting.

Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department
Arthur A. Hartman, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

Middle East; Declarations; MBFR; CSCE; Energy and UNGA; Hungary;
Yugoslavia; European Unity; Consultation Procedures; Berlin; SALT; XXIV (6)

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

MBFR

Secretary Kissinger: [Omitted here are unrelated comments.] Then I must say my view on MBFR and the Vice President's view are not the same.²

Dobrynin has now proposed to me a 30,000 troop cut, 15,000 Americans and 15,000 Europeans with a guarantee that MBFR will include the Germans.³ We have already rejected this.

Minister Scheel: It seems to be the main policy of the Soviets to cut the Bundeswehr.

Secretary Kissinger: We will not accept the singling out of the Federal Republic in these negotiations.

Minister Scheel: It should be the US and Soviets in the first stage.

Secretary Kissinger: If we can reduce that number, on both sides, and still keep it to the US and Soviets, that is no problem. There is no great compulsion to get US troops out of there. We have the sense that the Europeans would not object to a smaller US reduction even if it means a smaller Soviet reduction.

Minister Scheel: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: It has to be linked to the second phase.

Minister Scheel: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: And we are not prepared to give up a common ceiling.

Minister Scheel: Yes.

² See footnote 3, Document 192.

³ Dobrynin apparently made the proposal to Kissinger on March 19. Sonnenfeldt wrote Kissinger on March 20: "Dobrynin's proposal [of March 19] that we consider a 30,000 man cut by each side, fifty percent to be made by the US and USSR, fifty percent by other Allies of each, is in fact a step back, from our viewpoint, from proposals already made by the East in the Vienna talks." Sonnenfeldt suggested that a formula for equal numerical reductions by the two sides, or by the United States and Soviet Union, was unrealistic: "It does not take account of the fact that the US is an ocean away from Europe while the Soviets are not, and that there are more than twice as many Soviet as American forces in Central Europe, or of disparities between NATO and the Warsaw Pact." (National Archives, RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 5, Nodis Memcons, 1974, Folder 3)

Secretary Kissinger: The basic principle of our position is that we will not accept a definition of the second phase that singles out the Federal Republic.

Minister Scheel: We should say that the next phase should “include all Conference partners.”

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. We will go no further than that.

Minister Scheel: It is not possible to accept a treaty that singles out the Bundeswehr.

Secretary Kissinger: That could begin a process of neutralization, or at least a special regime.

Minister Scheel: And supervisory rights.

Mr. Van Well: A treaty would probably be signed. In the Conference.

Secretary Kissinger: Our present view—and I wanted to discuss this with Walter—is that we can accept just the US and Soviets in the first phase if it is linked to a second phase with a common ceiling, and we are prepared to say it should include stationed and also indigenous forces. We will not accept “German forces.”

Minister Scheel: What we want is that it should include “all Conference participants who are full Conference members.”

Secretary Kissinger: We have no problem with that.

Mr. Van Well: We would very much like to have this as an arrangement between the alliance systems.

Secretary Kissinger: We would be prepared to have it as an arrangement between alliance systems that says it’s only the US and Soviets in the first phase, but between alliance systems.

They may try to make it bilateral.

We won’t conclude anything in Moscow, in any case. Sonnenfeldt and Hartman will brief NATO afterwards, and may come to Bonn.

We will stick to the common ceiling and to the principle that if there is any reference to the Europeans, it will be to the “states participating in the Conference,” rather than to the Federal Republic.

Chancellor Brandt: We must now give you something to eat.

Secretary Kissinger: How nice of you to come.

[The group moved to the doorway. The conversation turned to CSCE.]⁴

CSCE

Chancellor Brandt: We are open to one road or the other—I do not know how the others feel.

⁴ Brackets are in the original.

Secretary Kissinger: If we agree among ourselves that the present document, plus some changes, is all right, should we go to the summit or not?

If we go to the summit, we can sell it for a better document.

Chancellor Brandt: I am worried about the President coming to an understanding with Brezhnev before coming to an understanding with the allies.

Secretary Kissinger: I have been talking about it for a year.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

194. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Moscow, March 25, 1974, 5:45–10:32 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Leonid I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee
Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the U.S.
Andrei M. Aleksandrov, Assistant to the General Secretary
Georgi M. Korniyenko, Member of the Collegium of Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Chief, USA Department
Mikhail D. Sytenko, Member of the Collegium of Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Chief, Near East Department
Andrei Vavilov, USA Department
Oleg Sokolov, USA Department
Viktor Sukhodrev, USA Department (Interpreter)

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to the USSR
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department
Arthur A. Hartman, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
Carlyle E. Maw, Legal Advisor, State Department

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 20, External Classified Memcons, 9/73–4/74, Folder 1. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place in Brezhnev's office at the Council of Ministers Building in the Kremlin. Brackets, with the exception of those indicating omission of unrelated discussion, are in the original. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974. Kissinger was visiting the Soviet Union to discuss the upcoming summit meeting in Moscow.

Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., Assistant Secretary-Designate for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
William G. Hyland, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, State Department
Jan M. Lodal, Senior Staff Member, NSC
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

SALT; Other Arms Control; CSCE

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European Security conference or MBFR.]

CSCE

General Secretary Brezhnev: Perhaps we could have a brief survey of the European Conference.

Secretary Kissinger: Good idea.

General Secretary Brezhnev: If we delve a little into the past, we both recall in our meetings we agreed to consult with each other and coordinate actions regarding the basic objective of both of us, that is, to assure the success of the All-European Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. This was the policy principle we agreed upon and set in communiqués in Washington and Moscow. It would be correct if in this present meeting we carried out a brief survey, with a view to bringing the Conference to a successful conclusion in the nearest future. I would go even further and say that if we can bring about the completion of the European Conference before President Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union, this fact would give still greater significance and weight to the President's visit, and would be a greater political asset. It would lessen tensions and be in the interests of the United States and its allies and ourselves and our friends in the socialist countries. It would resound very well around the world. We have had occasion to speak of the significance of Europe and the importance of cooperation and peace in Europe.

Secretary Kissinger: We have spoken a lot of Europe unilaterally lately.

General Secretary Brezhnev: But, you will also recall, there was a time when we did our best to secure a successful end to the Conference by 1972. Then we decided to end it by 1973. Now we're in 1974 and the Conference has not yet ended. And a situation has developed where some people have tried to inject into the Conference elements which are alien to the principles the Conference is trying to establish—principles of cooperation and good-neighbor relations. I won't recall who they are; they are either opponents of the Conference, or people who want it to drag its heels, or who don't want anything to result. Surely that was counter to what our two countries have agreed upon.

Lately there are rumors that the United States and the Soviet Union lost interest in the Conference. I can't speak for the United States, but it's not the case for the Soviet Union. We are making every effort to conclude the Conference successfully and making preparations for its conclusion at the highest level.

Several days ago I met President Pompidou of France,² and I criticized those who are submitting proposals at the Conference that can only impede the work of the Conference. As a matter of fact, I read to him a proposal submitted by his own delegation—it suggested the right to open a company or a theatre in the Soviet Union, not subject to control of the Soviet Union. Surely that was counter to the first principle, that is, noninterference in the affairs of other countries. He was surprised at this and didn't know it had been submitted.

If it is allowed to drag on for years and years, people will lose interest, and people will speak of it like the old League of Nations, where so many words were spoken. President Pompidou listened to my words; he agreed on the need to sweep aside all obstacles to its rapid success. In my earlier meetings with Pompidou, he was reluctant to agree to a meeting of heads of state. This time he agreed that the leaders could sign the document provided the document was good enough. To this I replied, if the document were not good, I wouldn't allow the Foreign Minister to sign it either. [Laughter]

Regarding the United States delegation, it's not impeding the work of the Conference, but neither is it showing any great activity in the work of the Conference. That is something we could perhaps talk about.

Another thing I talked about with Pompidou: In the past, in increasing confidence in Europe, I suggested the possibility of foreign delegations being invited to observe various maneuvers of troops. But no sooner did we come out with that than we were presented with demands to give out information about all, even insignificant, troop movements, even in the Soviet Union, down to the regimental level. But that would require a Pentagon-like apparatus to observe.

Another matter: What if the states in Europe wish to bring about a change in frontiers? How do we reconcile this with the principle of inviolability of frontiers? Surely France has no intention to give up territory, or Belgium. We've heard rumors the United States is eager to give up Florida or California.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Florida is gone already!

Secretary Kissinger: To Cuba. [Laughter]

General Secretary Brezhnev: Who will support that reference to change in frontiers? The only country interested in that is the FRG,

² Pompidou visited Moscow March 11–13.

because they are nervous about the GDR. But that question is already resolved, because there is a treaty between the FRG and the USSR, and Poland and the FRG, and the GDR and the FRG—both of which are now members of the UN.

What we could do is agree on something like voluntary change in frontiers by the consent of the states concerned. But reference to that should not be in the part of the final document regarding inviolability of frontiers, but in some other part of the final document, so there will be no intimation of one state imposing its will on others. So that's how we see the solution to this question.

If Bonn and France act as has been promised, and if the United States acts in the same spirit, we think it would be a good thing to bring the European Conference to a close before President Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union. This would be a good and significant thing, because it is a fact that the United States is present in Europe. That is a fact.

We feel the All-Europe Conference has at present reached a stage where it is possible, given the mutual consent of all the parties, to end its work as quickly as possible, and then the Conference would yield its result as a contribution to the lessening of tension. That's my first point.

The second point is the United States has been pursuing a consistent line. The task is to find a way to prepare the final document. We are adding no controversial issues and we are adding no new legal considerations to the guarantees of existing frontiers in Europe. That is a very important fact.

On the basis of consultations between us, we agreed to introduce this element of confidence, that is, that of military observations. But that has now been turned into God knows what. We should eliminate those accretions and retain what is really useful. That is the task we now face. And I trust you realize the need today is to remove all these unnecessary and trumped-up elements and leave in only those elements which are truly necessary and useful.

Finally, there are the questions regarding Item III, regarding culture, information, human contacts, and so forth. I have already had occasion to speak publicly on this subject, but I want to repeat here in our official conversation. I want to emphasize we are in favor of human contact and increase of tourism, etc., but on condition of basic respect for the traditions and customs of every country and respect for whatever social order exists in that individual country. And if anyone is counting on being able to interfere in our internal affairs through the Conference, those hopes are to no avail, I can assure them. I will not conceal my satisfaction that after Comrade Gromyko's last visit to Washington, an understanding was achieved to act in that spirit, and

in accord. That would indeed display yet again the desire of both governments to strive for true understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union, in a matter of political importance.

I could speak at greater length on this, but I trust this exposition would be sufficient—unless Comrade Gromyko has anything to add.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: I would say Comrade Brezhnev has been very exact on this.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. General Secretary, we agree with much of what you have said. Above all, we agree a major effort should be made to bring the Conference to a conclusion this year, and within this year as soon as possible. We also share your evaluation that the objective conditions exist for bringing it to a conclusion. Finally, we also agree our two representatives in Geneva, working together tactfully, can speed up the work of the Conference.

General Secretary Brezhnev: That is exactly what I am calling for.

Secretary Kissinger: Let me talk first about various items you mentioned, Mr. General Secretary, and then we can talk about the level at which the Conference can be concluded.

General Secretary Brezhnev: Please.

Secretary Kissinger: Incidentally, I think the consultations between our representatives in Geneva should be handled with the same care we used at the time of the Berlin agreement. But I will work that out with your Foreign Minister and your Ambassador. And, of course, Ambassador Stoessel and Korniyenko have also been in active contact to work out the basic approach. [Korniyenko beams.]

Korniyenko is pleased I can say something positive about him. They've had useful talks.

On the individual items: On so-called confidence-building measures. You're quite right; they were introduced after an initial exchange between our two governments. We share your evaluation that too many items have been introduced that aren't really central to the main subject. So we believe we should concentrate on the question of maneuvers on which we started—maneuvers of a substantial size, for example, of units of 15–20,000 men. We think a practical means of achieving it would be by means of the British proposal at Geneva, which would be appropriately amended. Not the exact proposal, but . . .

Ambassador Dobrynin: Division or strengthened division.

Secretary Kissinger: Sixty days' notice. We would be prepared to amend it.

We've not incidentally, discussed any of this with our allies. This is what we are prepared to do on our own.

On the issue of inviolability of frontiers, we find that idea of the General Secretary has considerable merit. That is, we could put the

phrase about peaceful change in, for example, the section on sovereignty, or some other section than the frontier section. And I think the proposal . . .

[Brezhnev reads an article in *Izvestiya* about Secretary Kissinger.]

Secretary Kissinger: Is it friendly?

General Secretary Brezhnev: No. We knew you would reject all our proposals. This is *Izvestiya*, our evening paper.

Secretary Kissinger: It is a good picture. It makes me look thinner. That was before I came here this afternoon.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: It can be corrected.

Secretary Kissinger: The article, or the picture?

Foreign Minister Gromyko: The picture.

Secretary Kissinger: So tactically—I don't know whether it is worth talking about—I like the proposal of your delegate in Geneva, to write that sentence on a separate piece of paper, with the understanding that it will not be in that paragraph on frontiers. And we could cooperate in that effort.

General Secretary Brezhnev: Let me say we feel the most convenient thing would be to write it in that section on sovereignty.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Where sovereignty is mentioned. Sovereignty extends to frontiers.

Secretary Kissinger: The United States and Libya. Your intelligence is too good. You found it out. We wanted to make it a surprise.

I have not studied the exact formulation. We agree that the concept of peaceful change should not—need not—be in the section on frontiers. We agree it could be in the section on sovereignty. And it has to have some specific reference to peaceful change and not simply be related to the concept of sovereignty. But it is not primarily an American problem, let me say. Anything the Germans accept, we will accept.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Why must one country hold the key to the problem?

Secretary Kissinger: We will use our influence to move that sentence. This we promise you. What that sentence is, we will discuss. I think we will find a reasonable solution.

General Secretary Brezhnev: What's your view on ending the Conference before President Nixon's visit?

Secretary Kissinger: It will be difficult, for technical reasons. But we won't exclude doing it shortly afterward. For example, at the end of July. I am talking about the signature.

General Secretary Brezhnev: I take it you are agreeable to signing the document at the highest level?

Secretary Kissinger: This raises the following problem, about which I will be quite candid.

General Secretary Brezhnev: Please.

Secretary Kissinger: We don't want to be accused of giving up the position of our allies. So let me separate our formal position from what you can expect—if you do not use it with other countries . . .

General Secretary Brezhnev: That goes without saying. Unless we stand on that assumption, then there is no possibility of confidential communications between us.

Secretary Kissinger: Our formal position is, like President Pompidou's, that the formal document could be signed at the Summit if it is an adequate document. Let me say that if the document, which we are now working on, is finished in the sense we are now discussing, we will consider it a satisfactory document. This is to explain, on a private basis, the thinking of President Nixon to the General Secretary. And we would work in that direction.

That gets us to the part on cultural exchange. I have said on many occasions to your Foreign Minister that a social system that was established with so many hardships and that has overcome so many obstacles is not going to be changed through cultural exchange.

So for us it is the problem of how to bring it to a conclusion. We think the best solution is the one discussed between Ambassador Stoessel and Mr. Korniyenko. I mean the solution proposed by Ambassador Stoessel, not the one proposed by Mr. Korniyenko! That is, to have the reference to national laws in the basic principles, and then refer back to it at the beginning of Basket III. And we would urge our allies to accept such an approach. We would still have to give some content to the whole basket, but we don't think that is an insoluble problem.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Let me just say, the solution as you explained is a possible one, that is, in the principles to make reference to national legislation and then to have a reference back to those principles, including the principle on domestic legislation, in the section on so-called human contacts. But since we are not dealing with a work of fiction, the link should have meaning. Namely, in the section dealing with cultural exchange, etc. there should be reference to the fact that these ties proceed on the basis of the principles set out at the beginning.

Secretary Kissinger: Exactly.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: We had no doubt of your understanding. But we were more than surprised that the representative of Holland came up with a proposal that included reference to the principles but the two are separated and there is a link between the two. And we were even more surprised when the other delegations—and yours was no exception—came out in support of that of Holland. What you just said is in accord with our thinking.

Another observation on another matter, that is to add to what Comrade Brezhnev has correctly pointed out, that other delegations have brought out of all proportion the so-called “confidence military measures.” You mentioned the British proposal. The first aspect is volume, that is the figures, the question of the size or figures starting from which information would start. We are told it starts from a division, or a reinforced division, though no one seems to know what a reinforced division means. If we take that approach, as Comrade Brezhnev said, we would have to have an enormous bookkeeping apparatus. The second aspect is geographic—the regions where this would operate. It is one thing to refer to a strip of land adjacent to borders; it is another thing if it includes the whole of European Russia. That is nonsense.

Secretary Kissinger: Certainly everything west of Vladivostok.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Some even include Vladivostok! Fortunately, the Urals are the limit of Europe.

You seem to take a realistic approach.

Secretary Kissinger: We want to be constructive, in the spirit of the agreement reached between the President and the General Secretary. Our preliminary view is that some distance from the frontier is more realistic than the whole of European Russia.

General Secretary Brezhnev: When I discussed this with the President, we talked only about foreign observers coming to maneuvers on a voluntary basis. But what is discussed now has a different aspect. In form, what Dr. Kissinger says makes sense, in the spirit of what was agreed upon. But in substance, Dr. Kissinger introduced a certain element of vagueness.

Secretary Kissinger: No, I’m trying to be constructive. I’m saying that what the Foreign Minister says, about a certain distance from frontiers, is what we will support as opposed to all of European Russia. I think the Foreign Minister will recognize it is an attempt to take into account the Soviet point of view, and it is not identical with the view of other delegations. And I believe on that basis a solution can be found.

General Secretary Brezhnev: I spoke about the basis for agreement; the question now is to find a concrete formula. And I certainly don’t want Holland to dictate its terms to the Soviet Union. I will never accept that. Holland should be grateful for our attitude toward it.

Secretary Kissinger: I was not familiar with this particular action of Holland. I think a solution is possible.

If I may make a concrete suggestion, Mr. General Secretary . . .

General Secretary Brezhnev: I think my meeting with President Pompidou at Pitsunda showed that Pompidou himself recognizes the absurdity of some of these ideas. And President Pompidou himself said: “Of course I realize the proposal now is that information be given about

all of the European part of the Soviet Union, but I realize the territory of the USSR is not limited to Europe but extends to Vladivostok.”

Secretary Kissinger: That is an ambiguous statement.

General Secretary Brezhnev: He said it in a concrete context.

Secretary Kissinger: May I suggest—if Ambassador Stoessel and Korniyenko can work out concrete formulas on these questions and agree on the tactics. Otherwise all Europe will act as Holland did. But if we can agree, we can manage it like the Berlin negotiations.

General Secretary Brezhnev: I agree completely.

Secretary Kissinger: We may need a little time to convince our allies, but if Stoessel and Korniyenko agree, we have a very good chance. In fact, if Korniyenko agrees to anything, it will be a historic event.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Korniyenko always agrees with correct positions.

Secretary Kissinger: He is a very good man. We admire his work very much.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: Stoessel too.

Secretary Kissinger: It is not your fault that Korniyenko always gets the better of Sonnenfeldt.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: I’ve never seen an instance of that.

Secretary Kissinger: We think we can meet that Dutch problem in the framework we described.

Foreign Minister Gromyko: You hope.

Secretary Kissinger: We think.

General Secretary Brezhnev: What kind of proposal is it if they want to arrogate to themselves the right to open theaters in the Soviet Union without any control by the Soviet administration? It is not a matter of our being budged from our positions; there is no danger of that. It’s just wrong to have ideas like that.

Secretary Kissinger: As we discussed, it can be solved with a reference to national laws in the basic principles and then refer back to it in Basket III.

General Secretary Brezhnev: Good. I certainly agree. Let Stoessel and Korniyenko talk about it.

Secretary Kissinger: I think we can find a solution.

General Secretary Brezhnev: I think so too.

Secretary Kissinger: Then the problem of the level will also be satisfactorily solved.

General Secretary Brezhnev: The question of the level is, to a certain extent, also an important problem. If the document is signed by the Foreign Ministers, that is one thing. On no account do I want to belittle the importance of our Foreign Ministers; they are empowered

to sign anything. But for the nations of Europe, Canada, United States, I believe signatures of the leaders will be of more significance.

Secretary Kissinger: We have understood your view, and if the document is finished as we discussed, it can be solved in that spirit and at that level.

General Secretary Brezhnev: We certainly wouldn't empower Gromyko to sign a bad document.

Secretary Kissinger: Mr. General Secretary, we all know what the document looks like.

General Secretary Brezhnev: We can't have two policies in this country, one that is the Foreign Minister's policy and the other that is official policy.

Secretary Kissinger: We have had that on occasion. We have recently united them!

We will consider it a satisfactory document.

General Secretary Brezhnev: That is the way I look at it.

Secretary Kissinger: I don't think you and President Nixon will disagree.

General Secretary Brezhnev: I don't think so.

I think we have had a useful exchange of views today. It has been useful because what Dr. Kissinger has been doing is to advance proposals that are to the advantage of the United States and to the disadvantage of the Soviet Union. But it is not difficult because we now know you better. It is now our sixth meeting.

Secretary Kissinger: I didn't have the impression that the proposals of the General Secretary threatened the security of the Soviet Union.

General Secretary Brezhnev: Whatever I put forward, I had one underlying motive, that is, strengthening peace.

Secretary Kissinger: That is in both of our interests. We will think over our discussions in that spirit.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

195. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Moscow, March 26, 1974, 10:35 a.m.–1:53 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Leonid I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee, CPSU
Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee, CPSU,
and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the U.S.
Andrei M. Aleksandrov, Assistant to the General Secretary
Georgi M. Korniyenko, Member of the Collegium of MFA; Chief of USA Dept.
Mikhail D. Sytenko, Member of the Collegium of MFA; Chief of the Near East
Dept.
Viktor M. Sukhodrev, USA Dept. (Interpreter)
Andrei Vavilov, USA Dept.
Oleg Sokolov, USA Dept.
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State, Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Walter J. Stoessel, Jr. Ambassador to the USSR
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Dept.
Carlyle E. Maw, Legal Adviser
Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., Assistant Secretary-designate for Near Eastern & S. Asian
Affairs
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

CSCE; Middle East

Conference on Security & Cooperation in Europe

Brezhnev: Dr. Kissinger, I got home late last night. I certainly can't say I was satisfied in the way things went [on SALT]. We spent all day talking yesterday but we decided on nothing.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think that is correct. I think we decided on the European Security Conference very successfully.

Brezhnev: That may be true, but nonetheless I still have many reservations on that, and I like precision. When I say I was displeased, that's of course a unilateral statement. There are two sides.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Kissinger Office Files, Box 76, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Secretary Kissinger's Pre-Summit Trip to Moscow, March 24–28, 1974, Memcons & Reports. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place in Brezhnev's office at the Council of Ministers Building in the Kremlin. Brackets, with the exception of those indicating omission of unrelated discussion, are in the original. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974.

Dr. Kissinger: My assessment is, on the European Security Conference, we'll be able to bring it to an early conclusion along the lines and at the level we discussed yesterday.

Brezhnev: If we really wanted to bring the Conference to a successful conclusion, we could have done it long ago. As it is, we've had communiqué after communiqué. It was always said, "There is a possibility of doing it in 1972, and in 1973." Now it's 1974 and we're saying, "There is a possibility." What kind of a way is this to do business? Holland and Belgium are playing around. But who are we? [angrily:] We are nations too and we have our views on this. Also there is the GDR, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria—they're playing in the Conference and not being capricious—but others are saying they want to establish theaters in the USSR and another wants to know everything that's going on in the USSR as far as the Urals. If they don't want any positive results to come out of the European Conference, why don't they say so? Then there will be, instead of security, insecurity.

Here we are, the second year passing, and no results. The United States in this time managed to fit out all its missiles with MIRV's and we still haven't managed to sign even a piece of paper. We've offered a straightforward proposal, and someone asks for a kind of freedom in someone else's country! What kind of freedom is this? We're not interested in other people's affairs, in Belgium and Holland.

That is just in addition, Dr. Kissinger, to what we agreed upon yesterday. We and you can sign it.

Dr. Kissinger: As you know, we haven't had success in achieving unanimity from our allies. And Senator Jackson yesterday made a speech accusing me of treating the Soviet Union better than our European allies. I know how pleased the General Secretary is to receive reports from Senator Jackson.

Brezhnev: Very happy indeed.

Dr. Kissinger: So as a practical matter, Mr. General Secretary, we are faced with the reality of a Conference of 35 nations. You yourself said we've put no obstacles to progress.

Brezhnev: That's true.

Dr. Kissinger: I think what we agreed on yesterday will bring results in the next few months.

Brezhnev: I didn't mean you to take my irritability to mean that all I said applied to the United States. I was simply saying I don't understand why they're taking all that time. They gathered in Helsinki, and the Ministers were charged with drawing up documents, and now they are sitting there drawing their per diems and doing sweet nothing.

Dr. Kissinger: I think we now have a procedure which should speed up the process.

Brezhnev: Then I'll proceed from the assumption our two sides will act more vigorously. After all, we're not the last fiddles in the Conference. But if delegations from Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg put forward proposals, we'll never get anywhere. I admire those people, but if they put forward proposals in a businesslike way, not if they make absurd proposals.

I'm not trying artificially to hasten the work of the Conference. But they've been dragging their feet three years now. I would like the Conference to end before President Nixon's visit, because it would be a solid foundation for the visit. We would then truly demonstrate to the whole world that our two major powers have shown the world an example of cooperation in bringing the Conference to an end. That is my main design.

Dr. Kissinger: I propose Ambassador Stoessel and Mr. Korniyenko work together as we discussed yesterday, both as to tactics and as to substance, as we agreed. And I think we can operate jointly as we did during the Berlin negotiations.

Brezhnev: Yes indeed, but trouble is some delegations there are putting forward things that have no bearing on the substance whatever. France says: "We hold no military maneuvers whatever. What are we supposed to do? Stop all our soldiers? Put them in their barracks?" We always carry out maneuvers—now as 20 years before. It's a war game of sorts, playing it out. Now they start addressing humiliating demands—giving notice three months in advance, and so on.

Dr. Kissinger: I said yesterday that the unit to be controlled should be of substantial size; second, that the territory should not include the whole of European Russia, and third, that notice should be reduced from that British proposal. And we'd be prepared to work with you in that sense.

Gromyko: One of the problems is the term "substantial size," because a country like Holland says a division is already a unit of substantial size and we have to inform them. For Belgium or Luxembourg, the movement of one division is a momentous development, but for us it's nothing.

Brezhnev: Look at it this way: in the final document of the Conference that we will sign, we are reaffirming such all-important principles as inviolability of frontiers, respect for sovereignty, non-use of force. Now someone comes up with a demand that we inform them of every military movement. Does it mean people don't believe us? We're signing it in seriousness. And can't individual movements be detected with earth satellites?

I discussed this subject with President Pompidou and I said we would be prepared to invite foreign observers to observe them. Say, around Kiev, we have one, two, or three divisions playing out

maneuvers, and we can give a few months' notice. It was something I proposed. But now they're putting forward impossible demands. It's not that we're not willing. Let them come watch them. I'm sure soldiers in Belgium go on maneuvers; I'm sure they don't just sit around in their barracks.

As to free movement, just by way of a joke, in addition to Solzhenitsyn, we can give you a few more Solzhenitsyns. That's free movement! [Gromyko and Brezhnev laugh]

Dr. Kissinger: If Solzhenitsyn gives a few more interviews, the *New York Times* will withdraw its recognition of him.

Brezhnev: Well, Dr. Kissinger, I accept what you say regarding this matter. I hope we'll be able to bring our useful influence to bear on the outcome of the Conference. If so, it will do credit to us, and everyone will be grateful. The true importance and significance of a major effort and major achievement can usually be discerned the further you are removed from the time. If Jackson accuses you of something, it doesn't mean the American people do.

Dr. Kissinger: I think improvement of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union has the support of the American people, and it is the fixed and determined course of this Administration. And it is our intention to fix it so firmly that it is an irreversible course.

Brezhnev: As I've said, our people and our party and its leadership value that very highly if that is the case.

Shall we now turn to the Middle East?

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

196. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Moscow, March 26, 1974, 5:09–9:43 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Leonid I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee
Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee,
and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the US
Andrei M. Aleksandrov, Assistant to the General Secretary
Georgi M. Korniyenko, Member of the Collegium of Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
and Chief, USA Department
Mikhail D. Sytenko, Member of the Collegium of Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Chief, Near East Department
Viktor Sukhodrev, USA Department (Interpreter)
Oleg Sokolov, USA Department
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for
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Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the State Department
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William G. Hyland, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, State
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Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., Assistant Secretary-designate for Near Eastern and South
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Jan M. Lodal, Senior Staff Member, NSC
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

Other Arms Control; CSCE; MBFR; Economic Relations

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Brezhnev: On the European Security Conference, we seem to have reached an understanding on our joint mode of action.

Kissinger: My impression is, on the European Security Conference we have reached an understanding both on substance and on procedure. That is my impression.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Kissinger Office Files, Box 76, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Secretary Kissinger's Pre-Summit Trip to Moscow, March 24–28, 1974, Memcons & Reports. Secret; Nodis. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place in Brezhnev's office at the Council of Ministers Building in the Kremlin. Brackets, with the exception of those indicating omission of unrelated discussion, are in the original. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974.

Gromyko: The important thing, however, is to implement that understanding in practice.

Kissinger: Of course. But we have implemented understandings in the past; it is not the first time we have carried out an understanding.

Brezhnev: But the Conference has been dragging out three years. There is no end to the Conference.

Kissinger: Up to now the issues have not been reduced to such a small number, with such a precise understanding.

Gromyko: You mentioned the possibility of the Conference ending some time in July. Do you see any way we can have it end before President Nixon's visit?

Kissinger: I think it would be very difficult.

Gromyko: What if we tried to prepare all the documents and have them initialed, and leave until afterwards only the signing? That is, have the documents prepared in substance?

Kissinger: I knew the Foreign Minister for years before I discovered his passion for initialing.

Gromyko: It is a very good thing.

Kissinger: That is more nearly conceivable. That I do not exclude.

Gromyko: Because of the substance of our opinion, and the General Secretary's opinion too, if President Nixon's visit is on and the substance of the Conference is still in mid-air, our public opinion won't understand that.

Kissinger: Of course, the visit of President Nixon has to be seen as in the mutual interest, and we can't accept it as being conditional on anything.

Gromyko: Yes, but it is a matter of atmosphere.

I have fresh information. During the lunch interval, I heard from our delegation at Geneva on the first item, inviolability of frontiers. This refers to the study they are undertaking, that we mentioned, on peaceful change of frontiers. You and we reached a fundamental understanding that the mention of this should not be in the context of the clause on inviolability of frontiers.

Kissinger: That is right.

Gromyko: What they are discussing now is a bare reference.

Kissinger: Right.

Gromyko: The question of where to put it is not yet decided. If you could give your delegation instructions in line with what we agreed. You know best how to work with your allies.

Kissinger: I've not exactly proven I know best how to work with our allies! Nevertheless, you correctly understood our discussion yesterday, and we will work in that sense. We already had a preliminary

discussion with the Germans in that sense before I came here,² and we will work with others after I leave. You can count on that.

Gromyko: Good. Incidentally, the French are better in Geneva yesterday than today. It seems our discussion with Pompidou had an effect.

Kissinger: I was going to claim credit for it. It was the result of our discussions last night. We immediately used all our influence with Jobert.

Gromyko: This gives you a chance to show your abilities.

Kissinger: One country at a time. Last night it was France.

In seriousness, we have agreed on this question, and we will proceed along the lines of our understanding.

Gromyko: Good. And during the interval I again looked into the situation regarding so-called “military détente.” The situation is confused to the utmost, and it has been confused deliberately.

When it came to light that some of the Western countries were putting forward impossible proposals, suddenly they put forward new ones putting the whole of the European USSR under control. This proposal is not yet withdrawn. Belgium, Holland, are putting out these ideas.

Kissinger: I have told you we will not support that proposal.

Gromyko: We appreciate that, but could we have an understanding to act more vigorously to eliminate all these?

Kissinger: Yes; this issue will take a little more time, but you have our assurance. I will discuss it in London on my way through.

Gromyko: Very good. Very good.

Kissinger: This may be a good way of proceeding.

Gromyko: Because it is the British who are acting as the motive force behind all this.

Kissinger: That is why I suggest it.

Gromyko: We thought the new Labour Government would see it differently, but the law of inertia was applying.

Generally speaking we like your attitude to this question of military détente and these measures. As you know, the matter has three elements: One is the exchange of observers—that is no problem. Second is presentation of information about maneuvers. The third is the presentation of information about troop movements. We share your view of the third, that is, to send it back for further study.

Kissinger: That is correct. We can weaken these proposals substantially. Basically we should talk about large units or substantial units on maneuvers, not about movement of all military units.

² See Document 193.

Gromyko: That would certainly facilitate the situation, because one of the complicated elements would be eliminated.

Kissinger: We will talk about this in London in that spirit and see if we can reach a common position. But it will be better if your Ambassador does not go there tomorrow and support the position we were taking on Thursday!

Gromyko: It will be impossible because he is not in London.

Kissinger: But you should not be active in London until we tell you how it came out.

Gromyko: We will do nothing. We can let one secret out: We believe perhaps the Labour leaders could take a more realistic stance; at least that is what our intuition prompts.

Kissinger: That is my impression. The Conservatives were more difficult for you and for us.

Gromyko: That is a page in British history that has been turned over.

On Basket III, I don't know whether you have seen the pile of documents they have piled on. If you take this pile here [shows stack of documents] you can multiply it by 10, most of it wastepaper.

Kissinger: I've never examined those papers. Because I don't think the Soviet system will be changed by the opening of a Dutch cabaret in Moscow. [Laughter]

Gromyko: Cabaret! I made myself go through the whole basket. If you clear away the rubbish, the real sense boils down to three items: borders; respect for sovereignty, noninterference; and the third is what we just discussed—matters of military détente. In fact, the third one, until recently, wasn't there at all. At Helsinki, it was decided merely to give some thought to it. I think it would be a good thing if you could look into this, because you will see a lot of those matters don't relate at all to the problem of security.

Kissinger: I understand your point about Basket III. It has two aspects: One is to relate it to the principles, and the second is to give it some content. Some of the Europeans think that for domestic reasons they have to give some content to Basket III. You and I discussed once that if we can establish a relationship to domestic legislation, you could consider some content for Basket III. I think that with good will on both sides, this is a soluble problem. The United States will use its influence not to embarrass the Soviet Union or raise provocative issues.

I have not seen any of the papers. I must be frank. I have not studied them. The United States has not put forward one concrete idea.

I will put forward one—compulsory visits by the United States Secretary of State to Leningrad.

Gromyko: We will be agreeable, if not in the document, but at least in a footnote. It should be bilateral, because I don't think the French would sign it.

Kissinger: We should initial it. But we should be able to solve it and you will have no difficulty with the United States.

Gromyko: The others have, though you haven't. But we agree the crux of the matter is something about domestic legislation. But as for what you say about us being prepared to insert substance into Basket III, it has been said on many occasions, as in the statement by Comrade Brezhnev that we are in favor of a broad expansion of cultural ties provided they are consistent with domestic legislation. We are in favor of a wide range of humane questions provided they are consistent with respect for domestic legislation.

Kissinger: We are prepared for substance. But I haven't studied any of the papers on substance. Because I have assumed we would work it out in practice.

Brezhnev: Dr. Kissinger, I have derived great pleasure hearing the two Foreign Ministers talk at length with each other, and I keep thinking "How are they able to do this?" My conclusion is that I can never be a Foreign Minister. I would have to set aside a couple of years to study the most complicated words from every encyclopedia in the world and insert them one after the other in each phrase. I will set aside a couple of years and maybe then I will be up to it.

My second conclusion is that Foreign Ministers speak in such an interesting way but resolve nothing.

Kissinger: That gives them job security.

Brezhnev: I am really thinking of volunteering for one of these commissions in Vienna. It will be a school of practical study.

Gromyko: But not on Basket III.

Brezhnev: The other day I phoned Comrade Gromyko and I said "My deeply respected Andrey Andreyevich—"

Kissinger: The President never says that to me—but then I am not in office as long as he.

Brezhnev: And I said, "I was quite convinced that as soon as I telephoned, you would raise your phone and reciprocate. And I was so impressed I ventured never to forget that. I was impressed by your gesture for me, and you can be assured of my feelings for you for many years. And availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to know how you feel and at the same time inquire about the health of Lydia Dmitrievna, your spouse, and please pass on to her my best wishes, and please let me express my hope that the forthcoming telephone conversation will give you the greatest pleasure and bring forth no problems. Because my many years of experience give me every confidence

you are directing every effort toward these goals that I and my colleagues are seeking, and I am sure our conversation will be a success. Now I will say a few words—but I forget one thing.” But he then broke into conversation saying, “I entirely reciprocate your feelings.” And I said, “Andrey Andreyevich, if I were not assured of your feelings I would not have called.”

Kissinger: He would say to me, “I essentially reciprocate your feelings.”

Brezhnev: My call was to find out when your plane was coming. [Laughter] He said, “It is coming one hour late.” We talked twenty-two minutes. But I wanted to hear the two Foreign Ministers talk to each other.

Kissinger: But I am a new Foreign Minister . . .

Brezhnev: I have one shortcoming: I like a precise discussion. But we talked for twenty minutes about our mutual respect and admiration, and we concentrate on the last word. So I listened to you most attentively. You agreed to inform each other. I will inform President Nixon, Korniyenko, Sonnenfeldt.

Kissinger: I knew Sonnenfeldt was communicating with somebody, because he is not communicating with me.

Brezhnev: I haven’t ever been able to suspect Sonnenfeldt of ever engaging in clandestine activity. The only thing I can guess is that he writes you notes and tells you “Don’t agree to anything they say.”

Kissinger: What really happens is, I move my lips and he speaks.

When I speak to your Foreign Minister, he never says, “I entirely agree.” The most I get is, “I essentially agree with you.”

Brezhnev: As I see it, that is again a case of his reciprocating your words.

“Thank you, Mr. Kissinger, for thanking me for my gratitude. I am deeply indebted to you. Thank you for my hearing of these words so pleasant to my soul.”

That is what is called a respite or disengagement.

Kissinger: I don’t think I would achieve this felicity of phrase . . .

Brezhnev: [referring to Rodman] What is he writing this for?

Kissinger: We need this for our diplomatic language training.

Gromyko: I don’t know what he is writing.

Kissinger: We will initial it. We will introduce it into our Foreign Service charm course.

Brezhnev: I’m quite sure you and all your assistants, and President Nixon, understand full well the significance and meaning of the All-European Conference and are familiar with all the details to date.

I know your so-called allies regularly inform you of all the details of what they are going to do. We don't refer to our East European colleagues as allies but we get reports from them.

We would now like to hear precise firm words, not on details but on the principle. We want to know whether we can bring the Conference to an end in the next one or two months or whether it goes on and on. It is left a bit vague. I am a practical man and I wanted to know the facts. I have to report back to the members of the Politburo on what is going to happen. We hear about "efforts will be made with allies."

The situation is like this: Countries like Belgium want to set up a theatre here under their own control without the Soviet administration. You say your allies have put forward this or that proposal; that is just to let it go on endlessly. We can speak our mind. We can say the subject matter is European security, not a matter of organizing restaurants in each other's country. If the United States isn't interested in that, then I will take that into account, and that is another question.

When there is a question of who should participate, whether it is just the nuclear powers or others, I said, "No, it should be all European countries." This was the correct view. Luxembourg, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, should all participate.

This is why we are against all attempts to give evasive answers, which only creates unpleasantness in our minds.

We are not putting forward the question of the [withdrawal of] United States forces from Europe. That is a separate question altogether. Nor do we link it with your "allied commitments." But in spite of our straightforward approach, others are putting obstacles in the way and trying to gain certain advantages over the Soviet Union.

You know the United States publishes a magazine, "America," in this country, and we reciprocally publish, "Soviet Union" in the United States. [Brezhnev gets up and fetches a copy of "Soviet Union" and shows it to Dr. Kissinger.] I personally read "America" in my house, and my wife reads it too. So there is no problem about that publication in this country. But now there is a new demand, to set up a printing house in the USSR. Surely that would contradict the principle of noninterference in other countries' affairs and respect for sovereignty.

So all references to alliances are nothing but attempts to evade the question. What alliance can there be with a country like Holland on setting up restaurants in the USSR? Tell them straight out that it runs counter to the spirit of the Conference. You keep saying you have to consult with your allies.

But I want to be completely objective, Dr. Kissinger, and I appreciate the fact that you've made two serious statements. One is that you have the intention to make a serious effort to complete the documents and effect the signing as soon as possible, and second, that you will do

everything in your power to ensure the signing of those documents at the highest level. If that is your intention, I certainly welcome it and we can end the conversation on that note.

What is your view on those last words?

Kissinger: My opinion is, we have agreed to use our efforts to bring about an acceptable document, and that in that case conditions will be considered right for signing it on the highest level, as far as the United States is concerned.

Brezhnev: I agree. And I trust you agree in principle that if it were at all possible to achieve it before President Nixon's visit, that would be very good. Politically it would confirm the ideas President Nixon set out in his last letter to me.³ You will naturally recall the words in that letter—"that we have gone through difficulties but we remain true to the policy we have set, and that there is indeed no alternative to co-existence." Surely the final document of the European Security Conference would be very important in that respect.

Kissinger: I have said we will act in that direction and I am sure we will achieve it. But I have pointed out that I don't believe it will be completed before the President's trip. But we have no fixed view on that subject; it is my estimate. But we can certainly finish it, if not before, then shortly afterward. But you have our assurance we will act in the sense that I have described.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

MBFR

Brezhnev: I would like to say a couple of words on this question.

Kissinger: Please.

Brezhnev: On the question of reduction of forces and armaments in Central Europe.

We are gratified at the start of the negotiations in Vienna on the substance of this important problem. And we discerned in them the joint desire of our countries, together with the other European states concerned, to continue the process of strengthening European security and to complement political *détente* in that continent with measures of military *détente*. It is only too natural that negotiations should be conducted not for the sake of the negotiations themselves, but to achieve concrete practical results. We have to note, however, that so far there have been no such results. And in fact, people now are speaking of the deadlock that has taken form at the Vienna talks.

³ See footnote 2, Document 190.

And it is becoming obvious that our Western partners have come to Vienna with clearly exaggerated demands. The approach they are suggesting means nothing short of a desire to alter or amend in their favor the correlation of forces in Central Europe that has taken shape over many years. They start talking about some kind of ceiling or of reduction only of the Soviet and American forces, and also they are calling for a reduction of Soviet forces in a proportion of two-to-one, or even more, compared to American forces. They speak only about the reduction of infantry forces without talking of other types of forces and armaments.

You will realize that if that approach is taken, the talks are bound to end in deadlock. And it is quite obvious that no reasonable or acceptable solution can result from such an approach.

So, therefore, if there is a genuine desire to reach agreement on this problem, it is necessary to take a more realistic view of the situation. I don't believe you and I can here and now finally resolve this problem, and I have merely described in principle what is happening, emphasizing those things that cannot lead to real results, and I would be happy to hear from you some observations on this score. And then, depending on how you see things, we could decide either to issue our delegations with new instructions or to discuss the matter at a higher level, or take other appropriate steps.

Kissinger: The negotiations on MBFR have, as you pointed out, Mr. General Secretary, many complexities. One is the geographic disparity of the location of the United States as opposed to the Soviet Union. Any Soviet forces would withdraw a few hundred miles, while American forces would withdraw a few thousand miles. Secondly, we start from a base which is disparate: According to our estimates, the forces of the Warsaw Pact are larger than those of NATO, and the forces of the Soviet Union are larger than those of the United States. And there are some disparities also in individual equipment.

On the other hand, we understand the Soviet concern that as a result of this effort there not just be a substitution of other forces for those of the United States—in other words, that if we withdraw a certain percentage of our forces, the other allies not just increase theirs by the same percentage. And we also understand there should not be a change in the relative weight of the various allies as a result of these negotiations.

So we understand the Soviet desire to have some clarity about the process that would be started.

[Food is brought in.]

Kissinger: It's about time. I was getting hungry.

Brezhnev: When I got home last night, my wife showed me a picture in *Izvestia*. She said, Dr. Kissinger has lost weight. I said no, it is something in the photograph.

Kissinger: Your wife is a great diplomat.

Brezhnev: She usually takes no interest in the talks.

Gromyko: Did you tell her Dr. Kissinger was bringing great pressure to bear? [Laughter]

Kissinger: So, we understand that the discussions that have taken place in Vienna may have had some of the attributes that the General Secretary pointed out.

We wonder, therefore, what the General Secretary thinks now of the idea he discussed with President Nixon—of, for example, a cut of 5% of U.S. and Soviet forces, without equipment. In other words, this is a change in our position. With a ceiling to be put on allied forces so they cannot be increased to compensate for this. And with an agreement to move within a specified period to further discussions which would involve also forces of other countries, of all of the participants of the Conference.

Brezhnev: I did talk about this with President Nixon, and I spoke of it to Chancellor Brandt and to President Pompidou. I did indeed suggest that we agree on certain reductions in size of forces, perhaps in the initial stage symbolic reductions, and then let us wait and see several years, with talks continuing in the meantime, and then everybody concerned—the United States, the peoples of Europe, everybody—will see it is possible to live in Europe with a smaller number of armed forces. That would be just one first step.

But some time has elapsed since then, and here I have to use the language of diplomats. First Brandt told me he favored reduction of both national and foreign forces. Now I see there is a certain hesitation in this regard. Pompidou tells me he takes no part in these talks, and he says France is not going to cry over reductions of Soviet and American forces. That is what he told me in the last meetings. That prompts us to think about it.

Kissinger: I think the French army has a long way to go before it strikes terror in the Soviet Army. You can withdraw many forces before that point is reached.

Brezhnev: But I feel at this time we can limit ourselves to just an exchange of views.

Kissinger: Yes.

Brezhnev: Without, however, losing interest in this activity.

Gromyko: And let the talks in Vienna continue.

Brezhnev: And perhaps after we both thought things over, we could agree to both give our delegations new directives. I've been hearing it said that the EEC, which is of course not only a commercial but also a political union, feels one could contemplate a Western Europe without boundaries. This was said to me by certain politicians. I said

to Pompidou I didn't agree it would happen, but if it did, every one of them would have to learn German.

Kissinger: That might be one result of the current tendencies.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Brezhnev: So perhaps, returning to the subject of troop reductions in Central Europe, we could then agree the conference itself should continue to work. And in the meantime, say at the Ministerial level or other level, we could think of ways to give new impetus to the work and bring rapid results.

Kissinger: So as I understand it, the ideas you discussed with President Nixon last year are in abeyance?

Brezhnev: No, why? But for the time being, no practical solution has been found to that problem.

Kissinger: Including that idea advanced by the General Secretary?

Brezhnev: Yes. Because the suggestion is that only a certain percentage of land forces be withdrawn, which would violate the balance, a balance which has been in existence for 30 years. So obviously there is a need to dig a little deeper into this whole matter.

Gromyko: When Douglas-Home, the Conservative Foreign Secretary, was in Moscow discussing this subject, he said it was best to reduce land forces first, especially the number of tanks. When we asked why, he said, "Because the Warsaw Pact has more tanks." That is not a good reason.

Kissinger: I have never heard a NATO Minister who disagreed. That is very convincing to NATO people!

The question is how serious we are in promoting these negotiations. If each side wants to freeze the superiority it has, there will never be an agreement.

Gromyko: Then let the other participants take a more objective view instead of saying, "Reduce tanks because the other side has more tanks." Because all forces and armaments should be reduced. It should be a cross-section of all forces in Europe, including nuclear forces. So it is certainly expedient to give further study, but it is also necessary for the Western powers to take an objective view.

Kissinger: So you think at the Summit no understanding can be reached.

Gromyko: Perhaps as a result of further thought, something could be agreed. Let us agree to think this over. You may want to exchange views with your allies. This is certainly one of the topics we list as for the Summit.

Kissinger: But our experience is that unless there is a preliminary agreement before the Summit, it is very hard to reach an agreement at the Summit.

Gromyko: True, but surely there can be an additional exchange of views between now and the Summit.

Kissinger: I just told Sonnenfeldt I don't have the impression we will achieve a breakthrough on this subject tonight. But I don't want to be hasty; that is why I asked Sonnenfeldt.

Gromyko: A breakthrough today, maybe not. But between now and the Summit . . .

Kissinger: Because I would have offered to split the difference, if I knew what your position is.

Gromyko: Could you tell your position?

Kissinger: I already told you. A cut of 5% in U.S. and Soviet forces, to be followed by further reductions of other forces.

Gromyko: Yes, but we said that involved additional forces. What about air forces and other arms? We can't do as Home said.

Kissinger: But in that stage tanks would not be included, only personnel.

Gromyko: But that is not our proposal. When Comrade Brezhnev put his proposal, he said armed forces, not just personnel. Otherwise it is just counting heads.

Kissinger: By air forces, do you mean personnel, or aircraft too?

Gromyko: Those too.

Brezhnev: Because air forces include arms and not just personnel.

Gromyko: The question now in the discussion in Vienna is the question of reductions of armed forces and armaments.

Brezhnev: I am sure Dr. Kissinger is aware that that kind of approach is groundless.

Kissinger: Can I also, just for my education, Mr. Foreign Minister, ask about the content of your 20,000 symbolic cut put forward at Vienna? Is that personnel or equipment?

Gromyko: We named that as an example but we have never divorced the question of personnel from that of arms, and we have always said cuts should include air forces and nuclear weapons.

Brezhnev: That is what we wrote.

Kissinger: My quick impression is reinforced; I don't think we will find a solution this evening.

Brezhnev: I agree with you. But we should give thought to today's discussion. [Kissinger nods yes.] So let the Conference go on working, and we should give whatever help we can. [Kissinger nods yes.]

Gromyko: [Picks up a briefing paper] This is our proposal: "The Soviet Union and other participants in the talks suggest a reduction of 20,000 with appropriate materiel and equipment." That is in paragraph 2. This is something that applies to both of us.

And in fact, in the past, Western countries themselves never attempted to disunite personnel and arms. Only very recently this question cropped up. It seems they switch positions whenever it is to their advantage.

Kissinger: We are prepared to discuss cuts that move in the direction of equality. But we should consider the consequences if we fail to make progress in any of the fields of limitation of armaments. If armaments on both sides continue to grow while we declare we are in a period of *détente* . . . So this is not a question to be settled tonight, but it will have a serious influence.

Gromyko: We are in favor of continuing to give thought to this. Certainly it is quite possible we will have opportunities to make progress.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

197. Editorial Note

On March 29, 1974, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Arthur Hartman and Counselor Helmut Sonnenfeldt briefed the North Atlantic Council on Secretary of State Kissinger's visit to Moscow. Telegram 1747 from USNATO, March 30, summarized the briefing: "Counselor Sonnenfeldt and Assistant Secretary Hartman consulted with Allies in restricted NAC session March 29 about Secretary Kissinger's discussion with Soviet leaders in Moscow. Reviewing substantive discussions item by item, U.S. reps reported that General Secretary Brezhnev discussed CSCE at some length, expressing desire to complete all three stages of CSCE by early summer and to complete third stage of CSCE at summit level. U.S. had pointed out that pace of work could probably not match Soviet timetable. Allies asked whether evident Soviet desire for rapid conclusion of CSCE would be reflected in positive Soviet moves in Geneva. U.S. reps replied that some signs of movement had already occurred in Geneva talks and that NAC should now promptly consider in each basket what a reasonable and acceptable outcome would be for the West. Responding to further Allied questions, U.S. reps said U.S. had not committed itself to Soviets on level of participation in CSCE Stage III and would reserve judgement until

contents of final agreement became more clear." The telegram continued: "Hartman said Brezhnev had brought CSCE up in his introductory remarks, and he had come back to it several times. He commented on the length of time that conference was taking, and referred to 'trivialities' being pressed by others for Basket III. Brezhnev referred to domestic legislation each time he harked back to Basket III items. Brezhnev was also quite concerned about confidence-building measures, in particular the view of others that they should apply to all of the European USSR, and there would have to be 'a little Pentagon' if advance notification were expected to apply to military movements. He did say, however, that if there were a maneuver around Kiev, perhaps that could be notified. The Soviets had asked what a reinforced division was, with reference to the UK draft CBM text. They were rather negative on troop movements, as opposed to maneuvers. Soviets had also stressed importance of principle of inviolability of frontiers. They were willing to accept 'peaceful,' or 'voluntary' change, but not coupled with inviolability. They suggested that this principle might instead be linked with text on sovereignty. On Basket III issues, the Soviets had said they were interested in enhancing East-West contacts. Soviets had referred to exchanges of publications, tourism and cultural exchanges. They had referred once to easing the plight of separated families. There was always a reference in speaking of such matters to domestic laws. Only in his opening remarks had Brezhnev also mentioned limitations of customs and traditions in connection with Basket III issues." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1974)

198. Editorial Note

On April 4, 1974, President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs Scowcroft forwarded to Secretary of State Kissinger a memorandum prepared by Jan Lodal of the National Security Council staff and Counselor Sonnenfeldt on "preparation for the summit." The memorandum reads in part: "CSCE. With Art Hartman we are drafting instructions to our delegation and to Stoessel on CSCE aimed at keeping it ticking along slowly, so it can provide us some leverage at the summit. MBFR. We propose to let the MBFR bureaucracy and delegation proceed with the negotiations with no view toward an MBFR 'deal' at the summit." (Telegram Tohak 36, April 4; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 49, Trip Files, HAK Trip, Mar. 24–28, Bonn, Moscow, London, Memos, Misc. & State Cables)

On April 9, Sonnenfeldt sent a memorandum to Kissinger further updating him on developments since the visit to Moscow. With regard to the European security conference, the memorandum reads:

"Frontiers. Since your Moscow trip, a breakthrough in Geneva on the principle of inviolability of frontiers and progress in Moscow on Basket III make it increasingly difficult to control the pace of work on other Conference issues. We may soon be faced with a choice of being less forthcoming with the Russians or accepting the end of Phase II before the President's trip to Moscow. On the principle of inviolability of frontiers, the FRG and USSR have agreed to a text which says that participating States will 'regard as inviolable' each other's frontiers and refrain 'from assaulting these frontiers.' The 'assault' language in effect renounced use of force in the English text, although the Russian equivalent of 'assault' does not have this connotation. A related principle on peaceful change will be dealt with elsewhere in the text.

"Basket III. Following your visit, Korniyenko proposed to Stoessel that the wording of the principle on sovereign equality should mention the right of each State to determine its 'legislative and regulatory system' (we had earlier agreed with the Soviets on this wording) and that this be linked with Basket III by a preambular phrase indicating that cooperation in the fields of culture, information, etc., should take place with full respect for principles 'as defined in the general declaration.' This preambular phrase would serve to make the principles in Basket I a separate and more important document than the other Baskets, which our Allies would not accept. The Soviets also suggested that we jointly instruct our Delegations to work in concert to gain acceptance of this proposal in Geneva. In your absence, we instructed Stoessel to go back to Korniyenko and propose Basket III preambular language drawing upon the Helsinki final document ('full respect for the principles defined in the declaration on the principles guiding relations among participating States'). Stoessel also countered the Soviet proposal on tactics by suggesting that the Soviet Delegation or one of its Warsaw Pact Allies table the revised principles paragraph and the preambular language to Basket III, while we would make a 'major effort' to persuade our Allies to accept a compromise along these lines." (Ibid., RG 59, Records of the Office of the Counselor, Entry 5339, Box 8, Soviet Union)

On April 10, Hartman sent Kissinger a memorandum in preparation for the Secretary's upcoming meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko on April 12. The memorandum reads in part:

"Your discussion of CSCE with Gromyko will continue the dialogue in Moscow of last month. While our tactical objective will be to assure that Stage II talks in Geneva do not end before the President's visit to Moscow in late June, we assume you do not wish to signal to Gromyko any shifts in our current approaches to the issues."

Hartman then discussed timing:

“With regard to the timing for the conclusion of Stage II, *Gromyko’s pitch will likely be* that the agreement reached with the FRG last week at Geneva on inviolability of frontiers—which gives the Soviets a ‘crystal clear’ statement on frontier inviolability in return for their agreement to the inclusion of a reference to peaceful change of frontiers in connection with one of the other principles, such as sovereignty—opens the way for Soviet proposals in connection with Basket III on human contacts when the talks resume April 23. He will likely point to these developments as opening, in turn, the way to the conclusion of Stage II by mid-June.

“*Gromyko may fear, however, that a target of late June for completion of Stage II could slip* a week or so, given the unwieldy CSCE process, *thereby carrying Stage II into early July.* The Finns have announced that they need four weeks of advance notice to prepare for Stage III. Delegations interpret this generally to mean that Stage II must be completed at least four weeks prior to Stage III, which all anticipate will last at least three days. An August date for Stage III is out of the question because of Western European vacation habits, and Gromyko will thus react adversely to any indication that the Stage II could not be concluded in late June, or that Stage III might take place in the autumn.

“*For our purposes, we will wish to underline to Gromyko that we do not believe it realistic to assume that Stage II could end before the last week in June or, at the latest, the first week in July.* At the same time, *you could meet Gromyko’s concerns on this score to some extent by suggesting that all agree to a target date for beginning the Stage III meeting—say July 15—subject only to prior satisfactory conclusion of Stage II.* This would give the Finns a date for planning purposes, and thus permit Stage III to begin a week or two after the conclusion of the Geneva talks. However, *we could not assure Gromyko that all of the Western European participants would agree to such a target date.* Many of them might feel that this would weaken their bargaining leverage on substantive issues by virtually guaranteeing that Stage III would take place.

“Substantive Issues

“*At this point, it is difficult to judge the adjustments in Allied positions which would be required to assure that Stage II talks were spun out until late June.* Much bargaining and drafting remains. Current expectations, however, that the talks must end by mid-June will put the delegations under pressure to work for compromise and ways of speeding the drafting process when talks resume. Based on our Helsinki experience, time pressures could create a bandwagon effect beginning about mid-May.

“Initially we could encourage those Allies that have taken the stiffest line toward the Soviets to pursue their approach on issues like

human contacts, freer flow of information and confidence-building measures (CBM's), though the Allies would expect us to be as tough in plenary as in private. Otherwise, it will be difficult to disguise our hand for long. Moreover, we can encourage reticence on post-conference permanent machinery, though we might find ourselves the only maverick in the herd. Given our position to date on the level of Stage III, we probably should not use this issue as a bargaining chip unless essential.

"We will thus have to reassess periodically the approach to each of the issues that we will need to take with the Allies and others to insure that the talks extend into late June.

"Gromyko will likely solicit further US cooperation in speeding compromises on Basket III and CBM's. In this connection, he may wish to draw you into detailed discussion of various aspects of these and other issues. To serve our timing objective, we recommend that, while indicating our readiness to continue efforts to stimulate compromises between Eastern and Western positions, you underscore that the many issues remaining to be debated do not lend themselves to swift resolution, on the basis of positions advanced to date. Moreover, in order to further brake momentum on substantive issues, we recommend, if feasible, that you respond to proposals for detailed discussions of these issues by indicating that these could best be addressed later at staff and official level, once the Geneva talks resume and positions are clearer." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 404, Subject Files, USSR (Briefing Book), Foreign Minister Gromyko Visit)

199. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, April 11, 1974, 11:05 a.m.–12:55 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

The President

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor of the Department

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1029, MemCons—HAK & Presidential. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. Drafted on April 15 by Sonnenfeldt. The conversation took place in the Oval Office.

Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR
Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the U.S.
Viktor Sukhodrev, USA Department (Interpreter)

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Gromyko: I would like to say a few words on Europe, especially on the all European Security Conference. In this area, we are happy to see the US taking a more constructive position. We said so to Dr. Kissinger in Moscow² and also to you previously. In Moscow, Dr. Kissinger had certain interesting ideas. We told him we hoped the US Delegation would play a more vigorous role in Geneva. We are pleased to see that in recent days this has happened. We hope you and Dr. Kissinger will do everything to bring the Conference to a successful conclusion and to conduct the third stage at the highest level. You see, I have something pleasant to say.

President: Yes, we have made great progress. If the conferees can agree to important matters, then we will come to the summit. It is the same with you—you don't want to come if there is no agreement. Of course, there are also the Europeans and they also have ideas. So it is not all that easy to get agreement.

Kissinger: We have worked with the Allies and you will have seen that there has been progress.

President: I have talked with the Italians, with Wilson and Brandt³ and they are all on track. Also with the Dane.⁴ We are using our influence; I am.

² See Documents 194–196.

³ During an April 4–7 trip to Paris to attend the funeral of President Pompidou, Nixon conferred with interim French President Alain Poher, Wilson, Brandt, and Prime Minister Poul Hartling of Denmark. According to a memorandum of conversation, April 6, between Brandt and Nixon: "Brandt pointed out that the USSR wanted a CSCE summit and observed that he was not specially interested in it—the Foreign Minister level would do just as well. The value in a summit signing was it would be one additional commitment by the United States to Europe—beyond the NATO framework. He added that it would not be good if the President met only in a CSCE meeting and not beforehand with his European colleagues/allies. He had no fixed ideas on the forum, but perhaps NATO—anything we and the French could agree on. The President said that, in principle, it was, of course, good for the West to meet before any CSCE summit, if there was to be one, but we had made no commitment on a CSCE summit—the level should depend on a satisfactory outcome of the negotiations." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1028, MemCons—HAK & Presidential.

⁴ A record of Nixon's conversation with Prime Minister Hartling in Paris on April 7 was sent the same day to Kissinger in telegram Tohak 63. (Ibid., Kissinger Trip Files, Box 49, March 30–April 9, HAK Trip, Acapulco, Mexico, Tohak/Hakto)

Kissinger: We have to do a little more with the British in regard to one item—confidence-building measures in the spirit we discussed in Moscow. These are the military things, Mr. President.

Gromyko: Well, thank you very much. Thank you for this conversation. I certainly appreciate it. It has been a very frank exchange of views. I express the hope that all that relates to the closeness of our positions will be brought to fruition. On those matters on which I had to say things are not so pleasant for you to hear, I hope they can be worked out too. I would like you to instruct your Secretary of State that when he addresses the General Assembly he should not fire too many arrows at us. Because in my own speech I had to do some “fighting,” you know against whom.

President: I would like you to discuss one question that you didn’t make much progress on—MBFR.

Gromyko: What is the question?

Dobrynin: Reduction of forces in Central Europe.

Gromyko: Yes.

President: I would like you to discuss it with Henry at lunch. It is very important for certain reasons here.

Gromyko: That is indeed a very important matter, as was said by General Secretary Brezhnev in Moscow. But the Western position in Vienna is not objective. No agreement can be reached on that basis. And what is more, we think they think so too.

President: Well, we discussed with Mr. Brezhnev a five percent cut by both sides.

Gromyko: Well, thank you very much Mr. President.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

200. Editorial Note

On April 23, 1974, Counselor Sonnenfeldt forwarded to Secretary of State Kissinger a paper containing talking points for an upcoming meeting with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin. With regard to “CSCE: Basket III Compromise,” the paper reads: “We have proposed preambular language for Basket III to the Soviets which is consistent with earlier agreed language emerging from Helsinki, and which would make reference to respect for ‘legislative and regulatory’ systems in the Basket I declaration of principles. The Soviets appear to have accepted

our noninflammatory wording in lieu of their preference for preambular language which would give Basket I a special and higher status than the rest of the final CSCE document. Last week, Korniyenko again urged Stoessel to engage the US in handling a major share of the tactical burden of tabling this compromise in Geneva, specifically suggesting that the US either table or arrange with our Allies or the neutrals to table both the preambular and 'legislative and regulatory' language. We have resisted this in the past on the grounds that our tabling of the compromise or parts thereof would surprise and annoy our Allies, and would be more productively done by the Soviet side as a substantial gesture which would facilitate overall CSCE drafting. In addition, we are, of course, reluctant to get out in front on this subject so as not to accelerate the pace of the conference prior to the US–USSR summit. Consequently, *we have assured the Soviets that if they table or arrange for the tabling of the compromise, we will then make a major effort with our Allies to ensure its acceptance.*" Sonnenfeldt recommended that Kissinger "continue to resist drawing the US into taking the lead in tabling this compromise." (National Archives, RG 59, Records of the Office of the Counselor, Entry 5339, Box 8, Soviet Union) No record of the meeting with Dobrynin has been found.

201. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Geneva, April 28, 1974, 10–11:45 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo, Central Committee, CPSU, and
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR
Anatoli F. Dobrynin, Ambassador to the U.S.
Georgi M. Korniyenko, Member of the Collegium, Chief of USA Division,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Viktor M. Sukhodrev, Counselor, MFA (Interpreter)
Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor, Department of State

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Box 1029, MemCons—HAK and Presidential. Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place at the Soviet Mission in Geneva. Kissinger was in Geneva to discuss bilateral relations with the Soviet Union. Brackets, with the exception of those indicating omission of unrelated discussion, are in the original. The full text of the memorandum of conversation is scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XV, Soviet Union, June 1972–August 1974.

Arthur Hartman, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs
William A. Hyland, Director, INR
Robert J. McCloskey, Ambassador-at-Large
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

CSCE; ABM Limitation; Threshold Test Ban; Environmental Warfare; Bilateral Agreements; Jackson Amendment

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Kissinger: Let's talk about Europe.

Gromyko: Good. The fact that we are not fully satisfied with the way things are going at the All-European Conference is well known. I said so in my meetings with you and the President in Washington;² General Secretary Brezhnev said so to you in Moscow. We think it is time to end the All-European Conference.

Kissinger: I have made an appointment tomorrow, after our discussions, with our Ambassador to the All-European Conference so I can talk to him personally about the direction we will go.

Gromyko: Good. That, I feel sure, would be useful. It is certainly high time to end it. The end of the second stage should be in the nearest possible future—to be more definite, in May. That depends only on the governments and peoples actually at the Conference.

Further, understanding should be reached on holding the third and final stage at the summit level and as soon as possible. It is best of all to hold it before the forthcoming Soviet-American summit meeting.

Kissinger: First, on the Conference. I agree the work now depends on the efforts governments are prepared to make. We could perhaps run over some of the topics while we are here.

As for the level, our position is the one we discussed in Moscow, and has not changed.

As for timing, as a practical matter, looking at the President's calendar and my calendar, there is no possibility of doing it in June. But I said this to you in Moscow.

Gromyko: What about the first half of July?

Kissinger: As far as we are concerned . . . the President will be in the Soviet Union from the 24th of June to the 1st of July. I think he should return to the United States. So closer to the middle of July would be better. But it would depend on the course of events at the summit and on the decision, of course, of many other governments.

² See Document 199.

Gromyko: What is the general mood of your European friends on that? This is the first time we have gone into concrete dates.

Kissinger: My impression is, I wouldn't be surprised if you told me Brandt has already told you he wants a summit.

Gromyko: With regard to Chancellor Brandt, even previously he spoke in general terms about holding it at the summit, though he always mentioned minor reservations.

Kissinger: I don't say it as a criticism.

Gromyko: Very minor, minor [reservations]. He was sympathetic.

Kissinger: To tell you candidly our problem: We don't want to be in the position of being accused of having forced our allies to go to the summit if they don't want to go. If they want it, we won't be the obstacle, to put it mildly.

Gromyko: You have now worsened your position—a little bit worse. Before, you spoke lucidly; now you say it is only if your allies agree. We think United States should have a say in this and not just follow, just follow.

Kissinger: "Just follow" is not my style.

Up to now, the West European governments have used the formula that they will go to the summit "if the results of the Conference warrant"—even while it is perfectly clear what the outcome will be. We believe the probable outcome is sufficiently clear so that we will next week take formal soundings of what their view is. Then we will inform you, when we know concretely what their attitude is.

Gromyko: Good.

Kissinger: Because I suspect we will see each other before too long.

Gromyko: Very good.

I recently had discussions with the representatives of a difficult country at the European Security Conference. Guess which.

Kissinger: Romania, or France. [Laughter]

Gromyko: No. The Netherlands.

Kissinger: Oh, the cabaret! [Laughter] Will you try to get a cabaret in Moscow?

Gromyko: He said to me: "I believe the complications which existed until now will be overcome in the very near future." He spoke of there being certain forward movement at the Conference in the recent period. Regarding the level of the third and final stage, he didn't express himself definitely.

Kissinger: We didn't want to take a formal sounding until the results would be more clear. My impression is the Europeans are a little more negative. There is no sense speculating, because in a week we will know. We are not bound by them.

Incidentally, our impression is also that things are moving forward at the Conference.

Gromyko: Let's agree then that if, for example, one, two, three small countries—maybe the Netherlands—decide not to send their Head of Government or Head of State to the third stage, all right; every country will be free to decide whom to send at the highest level. But if the major countries decide to send their highest officials, we are free to do so. Why be slaves to our procedural structures? The President I know is accustomed to think in terms of big categories.

Kissinger: It is true that one or two or three won't be able to veto, especially if they are the smaller ones. I agree with this general observation.

Gromyko: We are sympathetic with that idea. Brandt is. And even France.

Kissinger: That would be hard to verify.

Sonnenfeldt: By national means.

Gromyko: Pompidou was, and whoever wins will not go backward. And thank God China is not represented. Thank any God.

Kissinger: As I said in Moscow, I would think the chances are very good. Actually we have not taken concrete steps with our allies, but it is time to proceed.

Gromyko: Good. Now I think the time is more appropriate than before for you to do that—to get in touch with others. And not simply to compare yours with theirs.

Kissinger: But let *us* do it before your people ask them.

Gromyko: All right.

Kissinger: My reaction is that West European judgments on the level will depend on their assessment of Basket III. Our view doesn't depend on that to that degree. But I told you that in Moscow.

Gromyko: With the greatest of pleasure I would simply cut the bottom out of that third Basket, not because it is bad as such but because the questions in it have been inflated 100 times bigger than their real merits. The purpose of the Conference is to strengthen peace and security in Europe.

But I am sure there has been progress. In short, if all of these matters are tied in with the relevant principles and if it is indicated that the Basket doesn't represent an attempt to interfere with the sovereignty, then the problem is solved. I think the main difficulty will be in the area of so-called military *détente*—as regards troop maneuvering, and so on.

Kissinger: On Basket III, on the issue of domestic legislation, we are making good progress and it seems to be reaching a solution. I mentioned it not because we won't agree, but because for some West Europeans to go to the summit, the decision depends on what they can say is in Basket III. What are the issues? Art?

Hartman: We haven't really started on the details yet.

Kissinger: But something short of the Dutch cabaret would help. But we will be constructive.

Gromyko: What we should do now is take up specific forms of words. We are not far from you on this. We have looked at your formula, the one you gave through Stoessel.³

Kissinger: That is the preamble. That I think we can bring to a close reasonably quickly. Then we should do the content. We should have Stoessel get together with Korniyenko.

Gromyko: It would be better not to waste time and to decide the matter between our two representatives here. Ours came with me and you say you are meeting with yours. We have our Deputy Prime Minister, and you have your man.

Kissinger: I agree. Art, why don't you and Hal meet tomorrow morning with . . .

Sukhodrev: Kovalev.

Kissinger: When we are talking about the Middle East tomorrow. I agree.

Gromyko: I would like to ask you to look into the question of military détente once again. I recall what you said previously; it seemed reasonable. But there are some states in the Conference who are putting forth unreasonable proposals. Why don't they just say they are out to wreck the Conference?

Kissinger: Tomorrow, on the preamble, our people should resolve how it is to be introduced.⁴

On military détente, I told you I would talk to the British about modifying their proposal.

Gromyko: What was their reaction?

Kissinger: Their reaction was not negative. They said at the time they needed time to study. We urged that they not insist on all of western Russia and not insist on the smallest types of units, but something like a division. And there is the issue of the number of days.

Sonnenfeldt and Hartman are going through London Tuesday morning, and if you think this is a positive step, they can do it.

Gromyko: [referring to Sonnenfeldt] We shall certainly be expecting major results to come from his discussions with the British. All our eyes will be upon him.

Sonnenfeldt: You should talk to the neutrals, who are really the problem.

³ See Document 185.

⁴ See Document 200.

Kissinger: Who? Sweden?

Hartman: Yugoslavia.

Kissinger: What is Monaco's position? If you can assure me that the Princess is coming . . .

Gromyko: Your influence on the ladies is more limited now.

Kissinger: More covert.

Are there any other issues in the Security Conference of any major consequence?

Gromyko: The main issues with respect to military détente are the zones and the definition of large-scale troop movements. Because the tendency now is to define as large scale something that is negligible. We cannot adopt the scale of Monaco or Luxembourg.

Kissinger: We agree that on the zones, the definition proposed by some is too sweeping, and on the scale, a battalion is too small.

Gromyko: All right. Look into the matter and see what you can do. We certainly believe you can do much.

Kissinger: We will keep in touch, and we believe we can move in the direction we have indicated.

Gromyko: It would certainly be good if this entire question of the European Security Conference would be something we could see behind us. You can tell this to the President. Our cooperation since the beginning of the Conference has been on a rising scale, and this fact, that we could complete the Conference in that spirit, would give even further reliability.

Kissinger: What length of time do you foresee for Stage Three?

Gromyko: It should be short. We are open-minded. Brezhnev discussed it but never in terms of days.

Kissinger: Could we keep it to two days?

Gromyko: Two to three days.

Kissinger: Does everyone have to speak?

Gromyko: Two to three days.

Kissinger: It is not important, but psychologically. That is procedurally manageable. We can exchange ideas on this but I wanted to get your impression.

Gromyko: So you know our way of thinking.

Kissinger: And we will be in close touch with you.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

202. Backchannel Message From the President's Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Scowcroft) to Secretary of State Kissinger in Jerusalem¹

Washington, May 6, 1974, 2013Z.

Tohak 85. Deliver to Bremer/Rodman for the Secretary. Sonnenfeldt asked me to send you the following in this channel.

This is in regard to Secto 144² and your caution not to get the confidence building issue resolved before the President's trip. The CSCE situation is such that on several issues there seems little if any prospect that they will get resolved in the next several weeks.

On the Basket Three preamble we are getting close to a substantive resolution in our bilateral talks but there remains a total deadlock over the tactics of getting the compromise floated. In my talks with Soviet CSCE delegation head Kovalyev in Geneva³ he was rigid in rejecting any Soviet initiative in finding a "country X" that might be persuaded to introduce the compromise. We on the other hand simply must not risk having our own hand detected in this, at least in my judgment. Once a compromise is floated we should then of course exert our influence with the Allies to move toward it. The Soviets, incidentally told me in Geneva, that their plan once the compromise is on the table is to move toward it only very gradually, by first tabling a slight modification of their current position and slowly receding from it toward the compromise. Even assuming you can persuade Gromyko to find "country X" this whole process is likely to take time.

Secondly, there is the substance of Basket Three itself. The Soviets have yet to show their hand on precisely what content they are prepared to accept. This is bound to be less than what the Nine want. Hence there will be further haggling on this.

Third, as regards the CBMs the British will almost certainly move very slowly and the Soviets at the moment have a very rigid position, i.e. limited frontier zones for the notification areas, six days advance notice and only corps or army-size maneuvers to be notified. We will of course implement your instruction in Secto 144, but our problem with the British is that they interpreted your general endorsement of

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 216, Geopolitical File, Soviet Union, Dobrynin, Anatoliy. Secret. Bremer forwarded the message, along with other briefing materials, to Kissinger on May 7.

² Not found.

³ No record of this conversation has been found.

their approach on March 28⁴ as constituting full backing for it. In fact, you only told them that their approach is a good basis once the geographic area and unit size issues has been settled.

Fourth, the whole question of follow-on machinery has not even been broached yet in Geneva and it will undoubtedly take some time to resolve.

In sum, our problem is almost certainly not that of getting issues solved too fast but rather that of having a number of them still open when the President goes to Moscow and his being put under pressure from Brezhnev to get them solved.

Our whole position on CSCE has become rather ironic. We were always the most skeptical and yet today we seem to have become the key to success in both Soviet and West European eyes. The Soviets, evidently calculating that the President is eager for a successful summit finale, constantly badger us to get matters moving and we have to some extent encouraged this. The Nine meanwhile, having discovered that their earlier enthusiasm for this conference was misplaced and being increasingly subjected to domestic criticism about it, want us to use our clout with the Soviets to obtain results that will look good in European parliaments. Failing that, they are trying to position themselves in a way that a disappointing result, especially if consecrated at the summit level, can be attributed to US-Soviet connivance and the President's "success." Yet the stark fact is that now as before there is nothing of consequence in this exercise for us except to the degree that we can use the maneuvering about it for other purposes with the Soviets.

My own judgment would be that we ought not to extend ourselves much further beyond our efforts to get a tolerable Basket Three arrangement and to bring the CBM positions closer, and that we should do nothing further that might result in our being out ahead on the summit issue. The main point remains to get this operation over with as soon as feasible, if necessary with essentially minimal results and at Foreign Ministers level. I see little to commend the Brimelow view that since the Soviets are eager to get the summit we should use this to extort major Soviet concessions. We will not get such concessions—especially if the Soviets think that they can get a summit anyway—and even if we did they would merely be the source of subsequent disputes. Moreover, I see no reason why we should do the extorting, as

⁴ A memorandum of Kissinger's conversation with Callaghan and Brimelow on March 28 is in National Archives, RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 7, Nodis Memcons, Mar. 1974, Folder 5.

the Europeans seem to think we should. Finally, the sooner this conference ends the quicker we will remove a source of increasing irritation with the Allies for essentially a worthless cause. And on top of that, Hyland and I are both persuaded that we will not get the Soviets to move on MBFR until the CSCE is out of the way.

What all this argues for is that we proceed as we are doing until the President's Moscow trip; that on the occasion we avoid as much as we can further commitments to move the Europeans; and that after the summit we let matters take their course toward a fairly prompt and substantively modest conclusion.

I apologize for the length of this message but I wanted to give you my perspective on this matter before your next meeting with Gromyko. Art and I are sending you a front channel message with talking points and other pertinent material.⁵

⁵ Telegram Tosec 296/92763 to Jerusalem, May 6, is in Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box CL 216, Geopolitical File, Soviet Union, Dobrynin, Anatoliy.

203. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Nicosia, May 7, 1974, 12:30–3:15 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Andrei A. Gromyko, Member of the Politburo, Central Committee, CPSU, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR

Mikhail D. Sytenko, Member of the Collegium of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Georgi M. Korniyenko, Member of the Collegium of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Vasili Makarov, Aide to Minister Gromyko

Viktor Sukhodrev, Interpreter

Sergei T. Astavin, Soviet Ambassador to Cyprus

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Joseph J. Sisco, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, Ambassador at Large

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, Kissinger Office Files, Box 71, Gromyko 1973. Secret; Sensitive; Nodis. Drafted by Rodman. The conversation took place at the Presidential Palace. Kissinger was in Nicosia to discuss the Middle East and U.S.-Soviet relations with Gromyko.

Ambassador Robert McCloskey, Ambassador at Large
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

SUBJECTS

Middle East; CSCE; SALT; ABM and Test Ban; Bilateral Agreements

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]

CSCE

Gromyko: All right. On European matter, anything new?

Kissinger: On European matters? First, let's talk about the European Security Conference. As I understand it, what is holding up agreement on Basket III is the notion of what country should advance it.² I understand it will be Country X, say Finland. We will accept whatever solution Country X proposes but we do not want to propose it.

Gromyko: Do you have any idea?

Kissinger: We think perhaps Finland. We have no later reports?

Sisco: No.

Gromyko: Maybe Finland.

Kissinger: Maybe the German situation will affect it. I do not know whether Brandt will not change his mind.

Gromyko: All I have is factual information.

Kissinger: Yes. I have information that he sent in his resignation.³

Gromyko: And it was accepted.

Kissinger: They have to designate someone by the 15th.

Gromyko: All right, maybe Finland, maybe Finland. Somebody should approach them.

You think in your and my absence from Geneva, our people did something?

Kissinger: No. Why don't we have Sonnenfeldt and Hartman work out the tactics of who will approach them? Maybe the Netherlands.

Gromyko: I had a conversation with their Foreign Minister. I had the impression that the weakest part of his position is the Third Basket and the level of the third stage—especially the level. I do not know why; he did not give any reason. He said "Difficult, difficult." I know other countries have difficulties, but he did not develop this idea. At the end, he told me at the airport that he would look into the matter we discussed and it probably would be resolved. In this general form, he described it.

² See Document 202.

³ On May 7, Brandt resigned as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Kissinger: We have one other tactical problem with Basket III, Mr. Foreign Minister. When Kovalev talked with Sonnenfeldt and Hartman, he adopted the tactic somewhat borrowed from our Geneva discussion—to start with a proposal somewhat less favorable than the position we agreed on, and then the Soviet Union would make concessions. But if we choose Country X, we would have to give them more or less the same language.

Gromyko: Yes.

Kissinger: If the Soviet Union were to do it, we would play it like the Berlin negotiations, and move slowly towards it.

Gromyko: We would prefer the third—Country X.

Kissinger: We would prefer the third. How shall we do it?

Gromyko: What do you think?

Kissinger: Our idea is maybe you should approach Finland. But let me check in Washington how to proceed. It is a bureaucratic problem. I will let you know by the end of the week. Through Dobrynin.

Gromyko: Or your Ambassador.

Kissinger: But Sonnenfeldt knows the details. Let me sum up our understanding: that Country X will be Finland, that you will approach it, and we will support it. We may not come right out and say we support it, but you will understand. We do not want to appear to be pressuring our allies.

Korniyenko: It is not just the preamble, but some of the details in administration.

Kissinger: That is correct.

Gromyko: Please look at the matter of military détente.

Kissinger: That is what I wanted to tell you next. Sonnenfeldt saw Callaghan.⁴ They were rather difficult. I will see Callaghan either on the way back to Washington, or on the 21st in Washington when he comes for the CENTO Conference. Not later than 21st will I see Callaghan; not later than the 23rd I will get in touch with you.

Gromyko: All right.

Kissinger: On this I think I can be helpful.

On the substance of Basket III, there is one other matter. On the basis of our discussion at Geneva, we began consulting with our allies on the level of stage three.

Gromyko: You consulted?

Kissinger: We began the process. As you may know, it seems that

⁴ No record of this conversation has been found.

most Europeans are now opposed to a summit; they say it depends on the substance of Basket III. But on my personal judgment, Brandt was, of all European leaders, the most favorable to a summit. My instinct is Schmidt will be less favorable. What Giscard's view is, I have no way of knowing—I haven't even studied it.

As far as the substance of Basket III, the United States has never pressed you on it. I would not even know what it would look like. We have never even submitted a paper on it, have we, Korniyenko?

Korniyenko: No.

Kissinger: So this is a purely tactical question. Our position is not to oppose it, and to create a climate for it.

Gromyko: I do not see why Schmidt or Giscard would oppose it.

Kissinger: It is not a question of opposing it. Brandt I felt was inclined towards it and at an appropriate moment would have moved in that direction.

Gromyko: You have not finished the process?

Kissinger: No, we only began. With Britain, and Holland.

Gromyko: What is Britain's view?

Kissinger: Reserved. But dependent on Basket III.⁵ I do not know what good substance would be. I have never studied it. I do not think there is a United States view. I know the substance of Basket III has never been discussed.

Korniyenko: A great number of papers have been submitted.

Kissinger: But there has been no negotiation on it.

Korniyenko: Not yet.

Kissinger: I am in no position to be helpful here. I will immediately ask my associates what in their judgment good substance would be to make the Europeans more cooperative.

Gromyko: Just 5–6 pages.

Kissinger: It is not going to be a formal U.S. proposal just our judgment. I will make it a formal U.S. proposal, if you. . . . I will send it to you for your comment.

Gromyko: It is not needed to be a U.S. proposal.

⁵ During a meeting between Kissinger and Callaghan in London on March 28, Brimelow said: "On the subject of the level of the III CSCE stage. We have been saying that the level should depend on the progress made in the II stage. As Dr. Kissinger points out, there is no agreement on the level of progress. There is only one set of papers on the table. The question is whether the USSR will hold the line firmly on Basket III. We have doubted whether they will make sufficient concessions." (Memorandum of conversation, March 28; National Archives, RG 59, Records of Henry Kissinger, Entry 5403, Box 7, Nodis Memcons, Mar. 1974, Folder 5)

Kissinger: I am in the embarrassing position that if you now asked me what we wanted, I couldn't tell you. But in my judgment, that is the key to the European view of the summit, the substance of the third point. You know my view on it, several times.

Gromyko: The question of peace and war is reduced to: "Mr. Smith should marry Mrs. Brown and should be allowed to meet and complete it in a specified period of time." The question of war and peace!

Kissinger: You have proved your ability to stay in control of your country for sixty years.

[Omitted here is discussion of matters other than the European security conference or MBFR.]