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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Report of Bush-Andropov Meeting

U.S. Participants

Vice President George Bush  
Secretary of State George P. Shultz  
Ambassador Arthur Hartman  
Mr. William D. Krimer, Interpreter

USSR Participants

General Secretary of the CPSU  
Yuriy V. Andropov  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
A.A. Gromyko  
Mr. Andrey M. Aleksandrov-Agentov  
Assistant to the General Secretary  
of the CPSU  
Mr. Viktor Sukhodrev  
Interpreter

TIME & PLACE: November 15, 1982  
4:40 p.m. - 5:10 p.m.  
The Kremlin, Moscow

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Addressing Vice President Bush and Secretary Shultz, General Secretary Andropov first wanted to express his personal appreciation for the respect manifested by the United States toward the Soviet Union on this sad occasion of the death of President Leonid I. Brezhnev as indicated by the high rank of the delegation dispatched to Moscow by the United States.

Andropov said that the recent remarks by President Reagan to the effect that he wanted to conduct a policy of improving Soviet/American relations had not gone unnoticed on the Soviet side, and he wanted to add that the intentions of the Soviet leadership were certainly analogous. At the recent Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU and at today's solemn ceremony, he had already had occasion to state that the principled policy of the Soviet leadership would remain unchanged and as consistent as it had been during the life of Leonid I. Brezhnev. In this connection he

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wanted to say that this consistent policy of the Soviet Union toward the U.S. had been and would continue to be based on equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Above all it would be a policy aimed at peaceful development of relations. He would not conceal the fact that the relations between our two countries today were quite complex. However, it was not the Soviet side which had dealt with the other as an adversary. Moreover, the Soviet Union invariably and consistently displayed restraint in the face of unfriendly and at times openly hostile remarks and steps on the U.S. side. Displaying such restraint, the Soviet Union was not doing it because it was unsure of its strength. The U.S. side or anyone else for that matter should have no illusions on this score. The Soviet leadership acted in this fashion because it believed that such a policy was sensible and that to act otherwise would hold no promise.

Andropov wanted to draw the attention of the U.S. side to the fact that due to U.S. actions, at present almost the entire stock of stability between the two countries, which had been built up over the years, had been carelessly squandered. This was true of almost the entire reserve of stability which served to insure both sides against unpleasant surprises. He thought that both sides clearly understood that if such an erosion of the productive layer of Soviet/American relations were allowed to continue, there would be no guarantee that this would not bring the sides to catastrophe. He therefore believed that the urgent task today was to put an end to this process. He understood, of course, that matters could not be helped simply by verbal promises, but it was surely a fact, and he would like the Vice President to understand him correctly, that it would be desirable for our two countries to halt further spirals in the arms race and to reach agreement at the current negotiations on European and nuclear arms on a mutually agreeable basis that would not prejudice the interests of either side and would be based on strict adherence to the principle of equality and equal security. Of course, there really was no other way out of the present predicament, because if the arms build up continues, the U.S. side would build up, the Soviet side would build up too, and one might well ask where this would lead in the end and

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-3-

what would be the end result. After all, all present here today were certainly experienced and sophisticated people, and he was sure that his friend A.A. Gromyko shared his views in saying that it would be completely impossible for either side to believe that it could come to any negotiation with proposals that were unacceptable to the other side. This applied to both sides. Of course, the two sides could engage in debate and even sometimes scold each other in the press or in some other forum, but when it came to specific matters it was absolutely necessary to act as sober-minded and normal people. There was no way of evading this requirement. Andropov noted that at present there was insufficient trust between the two sides, i.e. trust on the part of the Soviet Union as well as on the part of the United States, but the Vice President should understand that this was so because universally accepted standards of conduct had been violated and attempts had been undertaken to interfere in the internal affairs of the other side. The Soviet leadership resolutely rejected such a policy of dictating one's own standards to the other side. No one had the right to do so or to dictate what the other side could or could not do.

He wanted to point out that the entire Soviet leadership had been and continued to be in favor of an active and businesslike dialogue between our two countries with respect to matters of mutual interest and questions that required businesslike discussion. There were certainly many such questions and the Soviet Union was in favor of broadening the range of problems discussed in negotiations and exchanging views in a direct dialogue in order to give such negotiations specific content and to insure that they would result in developing good and stable relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. Such relations would certainly be conducive to a far more healthy international atmosphere than existed today.

Andropov apologized to Mr. Bush for raising these questions on this, not the most auspicious occasion, realizing that, after all, he and Secretary Shultz had come to Moscow to express his condolences and sympathy to the Soviet Union at this moment of grief. However, the Soviet leadership wanted to have good relations in fact, and he would appreciate this being conveyed to

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-4-

President Reagan. Naturally, these relations had to be based on equality without prejudice to the interests of either country. He was well aware of the fact that Secretary Shultz and his friend Gromyko were used to this kind of dialogue because they were battle-hardened men, but he had felt that this first meeting between Mr. Bush and himself, even on this sad occasion, should be used as an opportunity to express these views.

Andropov thought that if this brief speech of his could contribute to improvement of relations between us, this meeting would have been well worthwhile. In conclusion he would ask the Vice President to convey the views expressed to President Reagan and to express to him best wishes on behalf of the entire Soviet leadership, wishes for continued success and good health. He also asked Bush to convey to the President the gratitude of the Soviet leadership for the condolences he had expressed on this sad occasion of the passing of L. I. Brezhnev, in particular when he had visited the Soviet Embassy in Washington.

Vice President Bush first wanted to express officially the condolences we had come here to express and to tender to Andropov and his colleagues our thanks for the extraordinary courtesies extended to us not only here but also in Washington by Ambassador Dobrynin.

Andropov interrupted to repeat his thanks for these condolences, and also for the condolences in writing which President Reagan had conveyed in Washington.

Vice President Bush said he felt that he knew Andropov and that he was delighted to meet him at this table. He thought the two of them had a somewhat similar background. When Bill Clark had become the head of the National Security Council Bush had invited Ambassador Dobrynin to his home for the purpose of meeting Clark. He had asked Dobrynin to be as frank with us as Andropov had been today. In the same spirit of frankness we could, even on this sad occasion, as he had done with Dobrynin, detail some of the problems of deep concern to us, such as Afghanistan, Poland, and human rights from the standpoint of international norms, and one or two others. He could assure the General Secretary that we did not intend to interfere

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-5-

in the internal affairs of others but had to say that the American people felt strongly about these issues. We were committed, under this President, to maintaining the strength of our military forces, at a level adequate for our security, but we are not interested in an arms race. We shared the commitment which seemed to be expressed here regarding the need to have fruitful talks, but we believe that, in the arms control field, these must be based on verifiable agreements which provide for real reduction in arms. The Vice President said that the President is deadly serious on this issue.

Bush said that he had noted some contentious areas of deep concern to us, areas where we hoped change would be possible on the Soviet side. He could assure Andropov that we would respond positively to any positive changes. He could not agree more that the objective of our negotiations had to be preservation of peace and stability. Andropov had said that the Soviet Union had acted with restraint in the face of what it considered to be hostile actions. Time did not allow Bush to develop this theme, to rebut Andropov's contentions, or to detail our list of Soviet actions which we considered hostile. Still, if both sides felt it was possible to make progress, it was an important fact. The Vice President said he had noted the young men who had marched in the parade at today's ceremony. He himself had four sons and of course could not help but hope that the negotiations in Geneva would bear fruit. The Vice President appreciated Andropov's taking time to meet with us and wanted to wish him well on his accession to great new responsibilities. We were ready to do our part.

Andropov thanked the Vice President and the Secretary for this meeting and once again for the goodwill manifested in coming here to share the grief of the Soviet people. He did not believe it necessary to go into the details of the questions each of them had raised today, but of course these problems did exist and they should be understood from a correct perspective. At present the US side had its own understanding of these matters, as did the Soviet side. It was therefore necessary to sit down and talk and resolve the differences between us, but this was not the occasion to do so. He would therefore once again thank the Vice President for the views he had

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-6-

expressed, and would ask him once again to convey his best regards to President Reagan and assure the President that the most sincere wish of the Soviet leadership was to improve and strengthen the relations between the Soviet Union and the U.S., since this would be in the interests of not only our two countries, but in fact of all mankind.

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