

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN W. AVERELL HARRIMAN AND
PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER AT PLAINS, GEORGIA, ON NOVEMBER 29, 1976

On November 22, 1976, I telephoned Dick Holbrook in Washington, as I knew he had a way to reach President-elect Carter on the telephone. I wanted to have him tell the President-elect of Ambassador Dobrynin's visit to me in Florida to give me General Secretary Brezhnev's message for the President-elect. Holbrooke then arranged with the President-elect for me to bring the message personally to Plains on the following Monday, November 29th. In my telephone conversation with Holbrooke, and subsequently, it was arranged that Holbrooke and David Aaron should come to Hobe Sound and accompany me to Plains. When they came to Hobe Sound on November 27th, we went over the communications and drafted the proposed message from the President-elect to reply to Brezhnev together with an oral explanatory statement for me to give to Ambassador Dobrynin.

On November 29, 1976, we flew in a chartered plane from Stewart, Florida to Americus, Georgia. Pamela and Luvie Pearson accompanied us for an unannounced sight-seeing visit to Plains. (As it turned out, Mrs. Carter heard of their visit and invited them to see her, and they had a cordial conversation.)

President-elect Carter received me at his home. We had approximately two hour's talk. (David Aaron took notes and agreed to give me a copy of his memorandum, but I have not received it as yet) In the first part of the conversation, Jody Powell, Dick Holbrooke, and David Aaron were present, but in the last half hour we were alone.

We discussed the Brezhnev statements. He agreed to our draft reply, except he added a paragraph. I am attaching some of his comments for me to use in my verbal statement.

In answer to my question as to how to communicate with him in the future exchanges with Dobrynin he said I could use either Dick Holbrooke or David Aaron. As it turned out, I used Holbrooke when I felt it required a telephone report and Aaron when it required a report in writing.

As we ended the conversation, the President-elect asked me if I would be prepared to continue to assist him in an advisory capacity in our relations with Brezhnev and the Soviet Union. I of course readily agreed. The same afternoon he stated this in a television interview with Walter Cronkite on CBS-TV.