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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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Not H.S.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Mikhail Moiseyev of the
USSR (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Vice President
Lawrence Eagleburger, Acting Secretary of State
Richard Cheney, Secretary of Defense
General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs
of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Robert Gates, Assistant to the President and
Deputy for National Security Affairs
Condoleezza Rice, Special Assistant to the
President for Soviet Affairs, NSC Staff
(Notetaker)
Peter Afanassenko, Interpreter

General Mikhail Moiseyev, Chief of Staff
Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, Ambassador to the U.S.
General Colonel Vladimir Denisov
Colonel Feliks Popov, Interpreter

DATE, TIME October 2, 1990, 9:30 - 10:00am EST
AND PLACE The Oval Office

General Moiseyev: We are glad to have this meeting so that
military-to-military ties develop as do the ties between our two
countries. (U)

Yesterday General Powell and I signed a plan for military-
military exchanges, and yesterday Secretary Cheney received us
for a substantive discussion. We addressed all outstanding
issues, including the Vienna Talks, etc. We discussed many other
points, and the exchange permitted us to understand the
contribution of the U.S. to what we are doing. (S)

The President: Dick Cheney told me of your talks. I'm glad
we're off to a good start. We are very interested in both START
and CFE. We have a common understanding that we must have a CFE
agreement to have a successful CSCE Summit. It is good that we
have the CSCE Summit on the horizon. We have said we must have
an agreement for us to attend, and the Soviet side agrees. We
told Mr. Shevardnadze that we want to push forward, but we don't

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want any bureaucratic blockage. START may take longer but I have pledged our flexibility. Shevardnadze raised my visit to Moscow. I look forward to it. He mentioned late this year or early next. We told Secretary Baker to move on out, to try to get both agreements wrapped up. We want both, no game-playing. That's all moving forward, even if it seems too slow sometimes. (S)

I am pleased with the military-to-military contacts. These help ensure that we will never have mistakes or conflict based on misunderstanding. (S)

Have you talked about the Persian Gulf? Let me make a couple of comments. We know it's not easy for you. You have had a close relationship with Iraq. We were trying to improve our relationship too. Some say we were stupid to try. I know it makes it difficult to take the position you have at the UN. Our meeting in Helsinki was important in that regard, and we thank you for that. The UN countries were solid in terms of Hussein's aggression. I want to hear your evaluation of what he means to do. Ershad of Bangladesh knows him well, and told me it will be hard for Saddam to turn back. The levelling of Kuwait worries us. I would welcome your comments. We still want to see a peaceful resolution. People also tell me we should be alert to terrorist acts. I'll understand if you don't want to comment. (S)

General Moiseyev: The position of the USSR and the President is clear. From the first day we have supported the position against Hussein. Annexation is impermissible. But it is not possible to use arms for this. Our idea of revolution is that it should be peaceful without using arms. We realize that a military solution would not bring additional dividends. The eastern character must be understood and that of Saddam as a person. We have not exhausted all the peaceful possibilities. Secretary Cheney and I talked about this. I said that the Military Staff Committee of the UN should be more active. They should have an assessment and judge the possible consequences. A resolution might come with deployment of the UN Emergency forces. This would add to the importance of the UN, and would make it capable of solving any critical situation. If necessary, a resolution should be passed to authorize their employment. A statement and ultimatum for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces should be set. If the deadline is passed, the emergency force should come into place. Today Saddam is nervous. There are rumors that a military overthrow is possible; there have been some erratic movements. Pressure exercised on Saddam should be concentrated and focussed. He is afraid for his life, actually. (S)

The President: We can't rule out terrorism against us. We know he is dealing with terrorists against us. This concerns us. I didn't realize he might be worried about terrorism against him. (S)

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General Moiseyev: He will not risk war against the rest of the world if we could have the emergency force employed. He has brought his people to the brink. Unusual processes are underway in Iraq. Economic problems have brought it on. Soldiers are beginning to desert. He cannot maintain order only by shooting deserters. (S)

The President: Maybe he's feeling the pinch of the sanctions. We have several assessments. Maybe they will be more effective than we think. We must stay in touch. The fundamental point is that we are together. The single most important point is containing him. (S)

What else did you talk about, Cheney? (C)

Secretary Cheney: We talked about the changes in the Soviet military and our own changes. (C)

General Moiseyev: We are experiencing difficulties. We are trying to address all the problems. We need to increase our knowledge of each other. My relationship with General Powell is growing. We met in Vienna, and now we are like old friends. We are trying to improve our understanding. (S)

The President: In spite of all the tensions, US kids never shot at Soviet kids. Now it's unthinkable. One of the best things is contemplating the changes taking place. Who would have thought that this was possible? The Soviet military is getting younger and younger. (U)

General Moiseyev: My life story is actually similar to General Powell's. We were commissioned in the same year, married the same year; we have a boy and a girl. I know this because General Powell took me to his residence. (U)

The President: Is your top command structure younger? (U)

General Moiseyev: No, I am the youngest at 51. The military chiefs are close to 67-68. Your military commanders are younger. The junior ranks are relatively young. (U)

It is always with gratitude that we have improved our chances for peace. Every generation has made a contribution. The historical circumstances have changed. We assess events of the past differently. (U)

The President: I wish you well. Please convey my respects to President Gorbachev. We have a good personal relationship. I look forward to staying in touch. (U)

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