

*Excerpt from Memorandum of Conversation between M.S. Gorbachev and U.S. Secretary of Defense R. Cheney*

Moscow, October 17, 1990

Gorbachev: I welcome you, Mr. Minister. It is amazing that such visits as yours, mutual trips of chiefs of general staff, and other contacts between Soviet and American military have become a norm. This, I think, is no less important than the high level of political contacts between our countries. Such contacts on military issues reflect the growing trust and mutual understanding between the USSR and the USA. In this spirit, I welcome your mission.

Cheney: Thank you, Mr. President, for your kind agreement to receive us, notwithstanding how terribly busy you are.

Gorbachev: [...] Yes, truly, there is so much work. I even had to postpone foreign trips scheduled for the near future. The main work is here.

Cheney: I want to congratulate you on winning the Nobel Peace Prize. This is a deserved reward for your initiatives, a sign of respect that the whole world feels toward you. President Bush is joining these greetings. He also sends his best wishes.

Gorbachev: [...] In conclusion, I would like to touch upon an important theme. I am talking about the crisis in the Persian Gulf. In this situation we are acting in the spirit of mutual understanding. I would like to assure the President through you that it will be like this in the future. Unfortunately, Israel has recently thrown some favorable trump cards to somebody. Frankly speaking, we are intending to normalize relations with that country even further. But you cannot take it out of the general context.

All in all, this reminds us that everything in the Middle East is tied together in a single tight knot, and one has to see these ties. We discussed it with the President and we should try to deepen this analysis of interconnections of problems and opportunities, which exist. We are set on acting together with the United States. We are in favor of continuing a firm line, not allowing any cracks in the common position, and at the same time not missing a single opportunity for a political solution.

Cheney: Minister Yazov and I discussed the situation in the Persian Gulf. We believe that the cornerstone of the success of policy on this issue is the continuation of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is precisely this [cooperation] that gives us reason for hope for the success of the sanctions and for the implementation of the U.N. resolutions demanding Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and restoration of the legitimate government of Kuwait.

We believe that for the Soviet Union, the United States and other countries, a lot depends on the outcome of this crisis. As you know, President Bush highly values cooperation between our two countries on this issue.

Gorbachev: Tell the President that it will continue.

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