

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Baker-Shevardnadze Ministerial in Jackson Hole, Wyoming
Second Small Group Meeting (Regional Issues)

TIME AND PLACE: September 22, 1989, 3:30-5:30 p.m.,
AMK Ranch, Jackson Hole, Wyoming

SUBJECTS: Middle East, Cambodia, Afghanistan,
Central America, Africa

PARTICIPANTS:

U.S.

James A. Baker, III,
Secretary of State
Robert Gates, Deputy National
Security Advisor to President
Robert B. Zoellick, Counselor,
Department of State
Raymond G. H. Seitz, Assistant
Secretary of State, EUR
Jack F. Matlock, U.S.
Ambassador to the USSR
Dennis B. Ross, Director,
Policy Planning Staff (S/P)
Margaret DeB. Tutwiler, Assist-
ant Secretary of State, PA
Condoleezza Rice, Director,
Soviet Affairs, NSC Staff
Francis Fukuyama, Deputy
Director, S/P
Alexander Vershbow, Director,
EUR/SOV (notetaker)

USSR

Eduard A. Shevardnadze,
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Yuriy Dubinin, USSR Ambassador
to the United States
Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, First
Deputy Foreign Minister
Aleksey Obukhov, Head, USA and
Canada Administration, MFA
Vladimir Polyakov, Head, Near
East Department, MFA
Yuriy Pavlov, Head, Latin American
Department, MFA
Yuriy Alekseyev, Head, Middle East
Department, MFA
Yuriy Myakotnykh, Deputy Head,
Asian Socialist Countries, MFA
Sergey Tarasenko, Special
Assistant to Shevardnadze
Georgiy Ma edov, Deputy Head,
USA/Canada Administration, MFA
Vitaliy Churkin, Special Assistant
to Shevardnadze and spokesman

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After exchanging pleasantries with Shevardnadze about TASS reporting on the rumored U.S. Open Lands initiative, Secretary Baker offered a number of introductory comments on regional issues. He suggested that the Ministers hear from the Chairmen of the working groups at the beginning of the discussion of each topic.

The Secretary said that, as Shevardnadze knew, the U.S. attached great importance to progress on regional issues. The world would judge our relationship by our cooperation or lack

internal settlement. They did not want to continue supplying arms, as this cost a lot of money and was not a nice thing to do. This was the rationale for a moratorium.

The Secretary suggested that the best we might be able to do in our joint statement would be to say that the sides discussed efforts that would include a moratorium on arms supplies but also a comprehensive settlement. He suggested exploring whether this could be a basis on which to proceed. He added that we also had the interests of our ASEAN friends to consider. If we spoke of a moratorium and an internal settlement together, it would be consistent with the approach we had taken in Paris.

Shevardnadze agreed we should let the experts continue to discussing this question. He suggested that Afghanistan be the next topic. While he and the Secretary had discussed this in their private meeting, it would be useful to hear the main aspects of the working group discussions.

Alekseyev said the working group discussions in Washington and in Wyoming had shown that the sides had a common view about the necessity of a political settlement. Both sides' experts believed that Afghanistan should become a neutral and non-aligned state. The U.S. had said it wanted to see a future Afghanistan that was not hostile to the USSR. The discussions had covered, particularly on the Soviet side, the plan of President Najibullah presented in August and reiterated at the non-aligned summit. The Soviets had outlined the main points of the plan and answered questions. They had emphasized in particular that, if one analyzed the plan and how the Afghan leadership visualized a settlement, it was obvious that it represented a democratic approach. The goal was to have a general election monitored by the international community.

Alekseyev said it had taken great political courage for Najibullah to propose this plan. Of course, the Afghan leadership wanted to remain in the state and political structure. But the plan represented a compromise and showed that the Kabul regime did not insist on a monopoly of power. The Soviet side had suggested that the plan be reviewed in detail to see what could be worked out. Unfortunately, sometimes plans were rejected simply because they were put forth by Najibullah, not because of their contents.

Alekseyev went on to explain two elements of the plan. The first aspect concerned how the Kabul leadership envisaged an Afghan settlement. The second element concerned the holding of an international conference on Afghanistan. There was a link between the internal and the external aspects. An international conference, for example, would have to guarantee the non-

aligned, neutral and demilitarized status of Afghanistan. That status would be further reinforced by a new constitution, to be drawn up by the new parliament. As for participation, here again there was a lot of room for discussion. The position of the Afghan government was that all of the country's neighbors should attend the conference (Iran, Pakistan, China, Soviet Union) along with the United States and perhaps others

Alekseyev said that, in the working group discussion, the U.S. had emphasized the fact that the opposition did not want to have anything to do with the current Afghan leadership. In reply, the Soviets had explained the fact that in the current situation quite a few members of the opposition -- such as field commanders -- had held bilateral talks with the Kabul regime. Yet whenever resistance leaders got together, they put out the line that there could be no cooperation with the current government. The question arose as to why such bilateral contacts were all right, but higher-level contacts were not. One was tempted to draw a conclusion that when the resistance leaders met they could not agree on anything definite, and thus stuck to the position of not talking to Kabul as a means of showing their unity.

Alekseyev concluded that he had asked his U.S. colleagues for their reaction to the idea of an international conference and had heard that they were cautious toward the idea. Nevertheless, he had been trying to explain the rationale.

Speaking for the U.S. side of the working group, Rice said she agreed there had been points of agreement. We both affirmed that the Afghan problem could only be resolved by political means. We had both restated our commitment to the Geneva Accords. We had both expressed a desire to end our involvement and to end the conflict. But when we turned to the details, there had been considerable divergence. From the U.S. perspective, the current composition of the PDPA was a block to a cooperative solution. Our understanding was that the resistance simply would not deal with the current government. Whatever informal contacts might be taking place, when it came to a formal solution of the Afghan problem, the current composition of the PDPA remained a problem. Thus the situation had to evolve if the parties were to sit down and work with one another. Nevertheless, we agreed to keep searching for a political formula.

Rice said we had found it useful to hear the Soviet explanation of the Najibullah plan. We had found one of its central features interesting, namely, the idea of a transitional committee to arrange elections. Our understanding was that this committee could take form before an international conference. We would like to explore this idea further. We also understood

that the transitional body could begin work before an arms cut-off had gone into effect. There were still some outstanding questions, Rice added. The composition of the transitional committee needed to be explored. Was it a body that could hand power to an interim government? Rice noted we were skeptical that such a committee could take shape in the current environment with intense fighting going on. Nevertheless, we found the discussions interesting. A political settlement was a problem for the Afghans to solve themselves and not for the guarantors of the Geneva Accords. But we agreed that a political solution was the only way to end this tragic chapter in our relations.

The Secretary said that he understood that the Kabul regime's plan envisaged elections. He asked whether the Afghan leadership would expect to remain in power until the elections had taken place.

Alekseyev said that nothing would be prejudged, neither the composition nor the results. These were just the steps envisaged in the plan. A guiding council would be set up, a loya jirga, and then elections would follow to elect a parliament; finally a new government would be formed. What would be the evolution of these steps? Alekseyev said this would be difficult to say. In presenting the plan, Najibullah was opening the door to the exploration of a solution. He did not want a monopoly of power.

The Secretary asked about the function of the governing council.

Alekseyev replied that it would exist at the transitional stage, during a roughly six-month period during which the transitional government and commissions to prepare a new constitution and elections would be organized. The guiding council would not consist of only one party, but rather would form a framework for a broad-based dialogue.

The Secretary asked whether the guiding council would have power in the transitional period, or would the national government continue to have authority?

Alekseyev replied that the guiding council would be a transitional stage from the present government to a new one. It would be the product of a dialogue, so its status would be determined by that dialogue. Of course, the guiding council would not be the last stage of the process, but would be followed by further steps.

Shevardnadze said it appeared that the idea might be worthwhile and could merit a closer look. An international conference could discuss such questions as a governing council and other institutions.

The Secretary asked whether it was correct that the guiding council would be created first and then elections would take place before the convening of an international conference. Rice noted that this was indeed the U.S. understanding.

Alekseyev responded that, under the Najibullah plan, it was not very definite when the conference would take place. As he understood it, the proposal allowed for a discussion of the question of timing. The plan also indicated that the demilitarization and neutral status of Afghanistan would be reinforced by the constitution as well as the international conference.

Shevardnadze commented that the Iranians were in favor of a conference and the Indians had also given active support to the idea. He thought the Pakistanis were inclined in favor, but had not yet decided. As for the Chinese position, he did not know.

The Secretary suggested that Najibullah's name should be taken off if the plan were to have any chance of flying. He asked whether the idea had been discussed with the resistance or the AIG.

Shevardnadze said no, this was a unilateral proposal.

The Secretary said it was time to move on to another subject but it would be useful for the U.S. to get as much detail on the plan as possible. He requested a written version.

Shevardnadze said that this could easily be done and asked Alekseyev to compose language for the joint statement reflecting those issues on which we were of one mind.

The Secretary said the joint statement could include the points Rice had made, but he would like to see the whole text before making a judgment.

Shevardnadze suggested that a joint Soviet/American group go to Kabul.

The Secretary asked whether the group could also go to Tel Aviv?

Shevardnadze, jokingly, readily agreed, saying we should do this. It would be of mutual interest.

The Secretary suggested turning to the next region, Central America. And he suggested that Mr. Zoellick make a short presentation.

Zoellick noted that he had not been in the working group discussion of Central America and thought it would be useful to offer a few words on the setting. Events had been affected by the recent accord among the Central American leaders at Tela. This built on the regional accord at Esquipulas, which we believed both our countries supported. The key aspects were:

(1) to create democratic conditions permitting the safe return of the resistance and free and fair elections;

(2) the voluntary re-integration of the resistance into Nicaragua once conditions for their return had been agreed;

(3) an end to Nicaraguan support for the FMLN, which was required under Esquipulas, which included provisions against non-use of territory to support subversion; and

(4) the involvement of the UN, OAS and other institutions to verify the borders and the arrangements for integration.

Zoellick said we believed the Central American accords could sustain the election process, which was the center of our approach. A key issue was fair treatment of the opposition. In this regard we still had concerns that the election rules put the unified opposition at a disadvantage. Nonetheless, we were encouraging them to proceed and were encouraging the international community to get involved. The latter was important because, in order to assure the world and the United States that the elections were fair, there needed to be monitoring of the election process -- beginning now. As the Secretary had said, we believed the Soviet Union could play an important role in urging the Sandinistas to follow through on their promises regarding the elections.

Zoellick said another aspect of the Tela agreement was Nicaraguan support for the FMLN. The Secretary and the working group had both addressed this issue. We had had our conversations in the past regarding military supplies. Without repeating the details, we saw a distinction between Soviet and Soviet-bloc aid in terms of the role being played by Cuba. We believed that in our efforts to promote a diplomatic solution based on a political process, all countries putting military supplies into the region had to stop.

One final point Zoellick wanted to make was that our policy reflected new political thinking. There were still many in the United States who questioned whether this policy would pay off.

It was as important to our overall relationship that we be able to show cooperation in the process of assuring free and fair elections. Finally, the area, because of its proximity and the refugee problems that it produced, had a substantial potential for affecting the political attitudes of Americans toward Cuba and the Soviet Union. This made it all the more important that we work in a constructive fashion to support a democratic process.

Pavlov said he would not repeat the working group discussions, although he would note that the group had spent more time on Central America than on any other region. His impression was that the discussions had been worthwhile. In addition to both sides reaffirming their commitment to a negotiating process and to the agreements reached between the Central American states, and in addition to expressing mutual interest in an early ceasefire in El Salvador and promotion of a dialogue in that country, the sides had also been able to answer a number of questions posed by the other. Pavlov hoped that, as a result, there was now a greater understanding of the situation regarding military supplies from the Soviet Union and other countries.

The U.S. side, Pavlov continued, had been able to give the Soviets certain explanations about its position on questions relating to the elections and to the demobilization of the Contras. The Soviets had suggested that both countries resist the temptation to interfere in Nicaragua's internal affairs by trying to help their friends win the elections, no matter how much we might want them to win. He was glad to say that the U.S. had accepted this point. Pavlov believed that there was a sufficient degree of convergence in our views, and that a number of questions had been identified on which we could cooperate in creating conditions for a settlement of the Central American conflict — enough to justify a couple of phrases in our joint statement.

The Secretary said this was fine. He noted that the discussion was running well behind schedule and we would need to move on to Human Rights, unless there were other regional topics to discuss. We had spoken a bit about cooperation in Africa and he did not know if we needed a further discussion here. He wanted to note, however, that the U.S. was concerned about the situation in Ethiopia and particularly about the increase in the amount of military equipment going in. We were pleased that the parties had chosen to come to Atlanta and begin discussions about a political settlement. We believed it was fair to say that we had cooperated successfully in Namibia and Angola, and that our position on the situation in Mozambique were about the same. He asked Shevardnadze if he or his experts had any comments.

Shevardnadze suggested that the working group consider more carefully the situation in Southern Africa. They also needed to discuss the situation in the Horn and, specifically, the overall state of play in that region. We also might want to touch on Cyprus and other questions of that region. For the joint statements, Shevardnadze suggested we say that there was a discussion of African issues; if there were any questions needing the Ministers' attention, they could provide guidance later.

Shevardnadze said he did want to make one point because the Secretary for the second time had mentioned Soviet arms supplies to Ethiopia. He believed that this criticism was not deserved. Ethiopia was a country like any other, such as Pakistan or Egypt, to which weapons were sold. The Soviets supplied weapons to some countries and the U.S. to others. Why not Ethiopia? The Soviet Union had agreements and obligations to help the Ethiopians, not just with weapons but also training. How well they were able to fight was a different question. Ethiopian officers had studied in Soviet military academies. There was a wide range of relations between the countries. Therefore Shevardnadze could not accept the Secretary's critical remark.

Shevardnadze said that, given that he and the Secretary had had a far-reaching discussion of regional conflicts in their private meeting that morning, he agreed that the session could adjourn now. He suggested that the working group continue to explore the issues and give the Ministers its suggestions for the joint statement.

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