

November 14, 1973

**From the Journal of A.F. Dobrynin, 'Record of a
Conversation with US President, R. Nixon 14
November 1973'**

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Summary:

Nixon receives two Soviet academics. Afterwards, Nixon and Dobrynin discuss Brezhnev's latest letter to Nixon and Nixon's plans to "force" Israel to agree to a peace settlement. Dobrynin comments on Watergate.

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION
with US President R. NIXON
14 November 1973

First. President Nixon received Academician Ye. K. Fedorov, who was participating here in the second session of the Joint Soviet-American Commission on Environmental Protection, at the White House.

The initiative for the reception came from the White House as a response to N. V. Podgorny's reception of [Russell E.] Train, the Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency, in the Kremlin. Train, was also visiting the President today.

At the same time the President invited to his office Prof. Ye. I. Chazov, who is making a short business trip to the United States (where he was awarded an honorary diploma from the American Heart Association) and whom the President remembers from the last summit in the United States.

Cdes. Fedorov and Chazov briefly informed the President of progress in the corresponding fields of Soviet-American cooperation.

After listening attentively, the President said that the benefits already received by the peoples of our two countries from cooperation in the areas represented by his today's guests, Soviet scientists, are another convincing proof of the vitality and usefulness of the policy of détente in relations between the USSR and the USA being pursued by the leaderships of both countries .

In the Soviet Union, Nixon said further, such a policy does not require any special evidence or agitation. In the United States, unfortunately, it is subject to fierce attacks from influential and vocal groups pursuing their goals, but hiding them under demagogic phraseology.

[“]Some of our (American) allies in Europe and the Middle East, as well as some in the Far East, do not like this policy either,” Nixon noted further. However, we must not succumb to these attacks and, despite the difficulties and disagreements that sometimes arise among us, we must not lose sight of the main thing: to not allow anyone to really push us apart, but we must continue to go - although each goes along its own path of development, so that these paths in international terms, in key places and situations, have always run parallel towards resolving conflicts and promoting cooperation for the benefit of our two great nations. I, as President of the United States, have set and continue to set myself exactly this great task in relations with the Soviet Union, with the Soviet leadership and personally with General Secretary L.I. Brezhnev, Nixon emphasized in conclusion.

When at the end of the conversation they began to say goodbye, Nixon, turning to Cde. Chazov, in a joking manner, gave him a “presidential order” to closely monitor the health of the General Secretary and ensure that he gets more rest. He, the President, had the opportunity to see L.I. Brezhnev “in action” during his visit to the United States and he was greatly impressed by the working ability and energy of the

General Secretary. He, the President, remembers well their farewell working meeting in San Clemente, which lasted until 3 o'clock in the morning, after which he, the President, "needed two [days] rest due to its great concentration and political intensity."

In conclusion, the President asked us to convey his greetings to L. I. Brezhnev and the other Soviet leaders.

Second. After the reception of Cdes. Fedorov and Chazov, the President detained me alone in his office.

Nixon said that he had familiarized himself with the General Secretary's latest letter very carefully. He is preparing his written response, but would now like to thank L. I. Brezhnev without any formalities for the fact that he, perhaps, is the only one among the leaders of all the other countries, including countries allied with the United States, who has found simple human words to encourage him in connection with the difficulties that he, the President, now has to overcome in his own country.

"I ask you to convey to the General Secretary that this will not soon be forgotten and that I am fully determined - despite some of our recent disagreements and stubborn opposition from internal and external forces - to follow the path of the development and strengthening of Soviet-American relations. This applies to the area of Middle Eastern affairs, because ultimately, without certain mutual cooperation between the USSR and the USA, a durable peace in the Middle East is impossible. "I have firmly come to this conclusion and will proceed from this in the future," Nixon said further.

I expressed satisfaction with this statement of the President and told him that all his statements would be reported to L. I. Brezhnev.

I then briefly touched on Middle East affairs, emphasizing the main point that it was our impression that the White House and he himself, the President, were not yet putting enough pressure on Israel, allowing it to challenge the Security Council and the Soviet-American understanding reached in Moscow. It's high time to put an end to this.

In this connection, I asked, what I could report to the General Secretary and other Soviet leaders about the President's further intentions on this matter?

Nixon said the following in reply: "Tell Mr. Brezhnev that I am determined to force Israel to finally agree to a final peace settlement. Immediately after the December elections in Israel, I am [going to] use all the levers available to me to put pressure on the Israeli government, even to the point of brutal pressure, to achieve the above goal. In 1974, peace should be established in the Middle East. That's the goal. And I do not intend to allow Israel to torpedo this goal. But our joint efforts are necessary for a final and lasting success of a settlement because the situation in the Arab world remains complex and contradictory."

Nixon asked if Kissinger's wishes had been conveyed to me to meet with me to discuss some issues immediately after his return to Washington.

I replied that such a meeting was tentatively scheduled for Saturday morning, unless there were any changes.

In conclusion, Nixon asked that his best wishes be conveyed to L. I. Brezhnev, noting in a half-joking manner that he, the President, still hopes for a personal meeting with him and the other Soviet leaders next year in Moscow, and let the General Secretary not really believe the rumors about his, the President's, resignation.

In general, the President was in a fairly good mood, but he still looked noticeably tired: the ongoing fuss here about the "Watergate case" is making itself felt.

SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN THE US
(A. DOBRYNIN)