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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: President's Lunch with Soviet Foreign
Minister Shevardnadze

PARTICIPANTS: United States
The President
Vice President
Secretary Shultz
Secretary Weinberger
Secretary Baker
Donald T. Regan
Robert C. McFarlane, NSC
Assistant Secretary Rozanne Ridgway
Ambassador Arthur Hartman
Ambassador Paul H. Nitze
Jack F. Matlock, NSC
Colonel Robert E. Linhard, NSC
Charles Z. Wick, USIA
Mrs. Eugenia Arensbarger, Interpreter

USSR
Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze
Deputy Foreign Minister Korniyenko
Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin
Ambassador and Assistant to the Foreign
Minister Albert S. Chernyshov
Counselor to the Foreign Minister
Sergei P. Tarasenko
Head of Public Affairs at the Foreign
Ministry Viktor B. Lomeiko
Minister Counselor Oleg Sokolov
Minister Counselor Viktor Isakov
Mr. Pavel R. Palazhchenko, Interpreter

DATE, TIME Friday, September 27, 1985; 12:15 - 1:15 P.M.
AND PLACE: State Dining Room, The White House (U)

Following some initial exchanges devoted to Hurricane Gloria and its effects on the travel of the participants, The Vice President mentioned that he was making a trip to China soon and solicited Shevardnadze's view of the situation there. (C)

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BY CW NARA DATE 10/30/07

Shevardnadze mentioned that he had met with the Chinese Foreign Minister yesterday, who had described the changes that were going on in China. He characterized them as a generational change, and said that they were for the better. They extended mutual invitations to visit. In general, he would characterize Soviet-Chinese relations as undergoing gradual improvement, step-by-step. The Soviets, he said, want an improvement. He asked if the Vice President would be making a long trip. (S/ST)

The Vice President said he would be staying four to five days. (C)

Shevardnadze asked when the Vice President was in China as Ambassador. (U)

The Vice President replied that he was there in 1974 and 1975. At that time our relations were better with the Soviet Union than they were with China. (U)

Secretary Shultz observed that, in developing their economy, the Chinese want to create more stability around their borders. They want modernization. (U)

Shevardnadze said that the Chinese Foreign Minister had told him that China is still a developing country. It is good that the U.S. and China are developing normal relations. (U)

The Vice President replied that an improvement of Soviet-Chinese relations is also to be welcomed. (U)

Shevardnadze remarked that in relations with some countries there is an accumulation of distrust. It takes some time to remove this. (S)

Secretary Shultz observed that the idea of economic development is not well understood. But in the last few years, the U.S. economy has developed more rapidly than most in the world. It has happened for the same reason that applies when poorer countries like China have developed rapidly: the presence of incentives. (C)

The President then spoke of his visit to a Chinese farmer on a state farm. He had described how his life had improved since he had gained the right to farm a private plot. (U)

Secretary Shultz asked whether Shevardnadze thought the President and Gorbachev could reach agreement in November on things like expanded student exchanges and greater cooperation in medical research, such as cancer research, as the President had suggested. (S)

Shevardnadze replied that some of the matters were under discussion and that we should keep working on such ideas. (S)

The President called attention to Lincoln's portrait in the room, and exchanges followed with references to the American Civil War and the Civil War in the Soviet Union. (U)

Shevardnadze remarked that in Lincoln's time, U.S.-Russian relations had been good, and in fact had usually been good in our history. (U)

The President said this reminded him of the story of a wife who recalled to her husband how, when they were first married, they sat very close in the car, often with her head resting on his shoulder. The husband answered, "Well, dear, I haven't moved." (U)

The remainder of the conversation was devoted to stories and anecdotes reflecting the various ethnic groups which are present in the two countries. (U)

The lunch concluded with Shevardnadze thanking the President for his hospitality and toasting his health, and the President toasting the health of his Soviet guests. (U)