

**June 18, 1974**

**Memorandum of Conversation, 'Indian Nuclear Explosion; World Food Conference; Pacific Coast Tankers; NATO Declaration; Middle East; Trade Bill'**

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**Summary:**

Canada's safeguards had failed to prevent India from converting spent fuel from the CANDU reactor into plutonium. Kissinger acknowledged to Canadian Foreign Minister Mitchell Sharp that U.S. safeguards had also proven to be "lousy," failing to prevent India from using U.S.-supplied heavy water for its nuclear activities. Sharp asked Kissinger how the proliferation of nuclear technology could be prevented and what should be said to the Argentines and the Egyptians, who were also seeking to use nuclear energy. But Kissinger evidently had no answer.

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**Contents:**

Original Scan

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTONSECRET/NODIS

## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Mitchell Sharp, Canadian Secretary of State  
for External Affairs  
A. E. Ritchie, Under Secretary of State for  
External Affairs  
Marcel Cadieux, Canadian Ambassador to  
the U. S.  
Jim S. Nutt, Director General, Bureau of  
Western Hemisphere Affairs  
John G. H. Halstead, Assistant Under Secretary  
Keith MacLellan, Director, Office of USA Affairs  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State &  
Assistant to the President for National  
Security Affairs  
William J. Porter, U. S. Ambassador to Canada  
Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor, Dept. of State  
Arthur A. Hartman, Assistant Secretary for  
European Affairs  
Carlyle Maw, Legal Adviser to the Department  
Peter W. Rodman, National Security Council Staff

CLASSIFIED BY FRANK WISNER  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO-  
YEAR INTERVALS AND DECLASSIFIED ON  
DECEMBER 31, -----.

DATE & TIME: Tuesday, June 18, 1974.  
8:15 - 9:15 a. m. (breakfast)

PLACE: Official Guest House  
7 Rideau Gate  
Ottawa, Canada

SUBJECTS: Indian Nuclear Explosion; World Food Conference;  
Pacific Coast Tankers; NATO Declaration;  
Middle East; Trade Bill

Mr. Sharp: At the airport you didn't mention my name; you only men-  
tioned my title. In an election campaign... [Laughter]

Dr. Kissinger: But I helped you yesterday. [Laughter] It shows Canada  
is on my mind. [Laughter]

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Indian Nuclear Explosion

Mr. Ritchie: The nuclear arrangements with Egypt caused a bit of a stir.

Dr. Kissinger: That's because we have such good safeguards. [Laughter]

I didn't even know the nuclear arrangements were being negotiated. The talks were going on at a technical level for weeks. I asked the bureaucracy to let us know whatever bilateral things were being negotiated so it could be disgorged at the Summit, the way these things are done at head-to-head meetings. It was due to be signed the end of June anyway. So it was not a major policy decision. Maybe it should have been.

I was going to say, "If we don't do it, the Canadians will." [Laughter]  
I should apologize for what I am saying tomorrow. [Laughter]

Mr. Sharp: On that subject, what you said was interpreted as critical of Canada, and it will be the subject of questioning.

Dr. Kissinger: What I said wasn't meant as critical of Canada. It was meant to say our safeguards are different from what was done then. It was at a much earlier period. What can I say to remedy it?

Mr. Sharp: That your safeguards then were the same as ours.

Dr. Kissinger: I am told we wrote you a letter that yours were not adequate. True?

Mr. Hartman: Shortly afterwards, we did.

Dr. Kissinger: The last thing I want to do is embarrass you in an election campaign. Second, I in no way mean to imply that Canada was remiss. e;

I will say there were no other safeguards then. That yours were lousy, but so were ours. [Laughter]

Mr. Sharp: Do you have a way now to prevent explosions?

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: We take the cores back. So we have physical control.

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Mr. Sharp: You don't provide any natural uranium reactors. What would you do if they wanted to conduct a peaceful explosion?

Dr. Kissinger: We would refuse it.

Mr. Sharp: On what ground?

Dr. Kissinger: On the ground that there is no operational distinction between peaceful and military. There is no question we would refuse it.

Mr. Sharp: They didn't use our uranium, only our reactor.

Mr. Ritchie: They could use a reactor with uranium from a source other than the USA.

Mr. Hartman: They can't use any other uranium and enrich it in this reactor without our agreement. These are the IAEA safeguards. If it is a safeguarded reactor, they can't use it for any other purpose.

Mr. Sharp: You can't take anyone else's fuel.

Dr. Kissinger: The problem is if other fuel is used.

Mr. Sharp: That is what they did. They used better rods than we had. ff

Mr. Ritchie: There is no way to ban peaceful explosions.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: We wouldn't allow it.

Mr. Sharp: Why was the reaction of the United States and the Soviet Union so muted?

Dr. Kissinger: I don't know about the Soviet Union; I know what they have done but I don't know what their motives were. Our motives were that we didn't see much purpose in making a big issue out of an accomplished fact. ace;

Mr. Sharp: Our reaction wasn't from guilt, but we are giving economic aid and we had to consider whether we wanted to if they were using it for this. da

Dr. Kissinger: Frankly, I wasn't surprised that they did it.

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Mr. Sharp: We had written a note to them in 1971 warning them against it. Mrs. Gandhi had said, "It's all hypothetical."

Mr. Ritchie: The question is also about protecting the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Not India, but the others.

Mr. Sharp: How would I justify it to Canadians to send them hundreds of millions in economic benefit if they are putting hundreds of millions into peaceful nuclear explosions?

Dr. Kissinger: They are also spending billions on defense.

Mr. Sharp: They say it is for industrial development.

Dr. Kissinger: That is total nonsense.

Mr. Sharp: You and the Soviet Union get along without it!

Dr. Kissinger: I asked the Indian Ambassador about what projects they had in mind. We hadn't been able to find any. He mumbled something about canals.

Mr. Ritchie: Earth moving.

Mr. Halstead: Developing techniques to find a way to use it!

Mr. Sharp: A way has to be found to prevent this. What do you say to the Argentinians, or the Egyptians, for that matter?

Mr. Ritchie: And the Pakistanis.

Dr. Kissinger: Actually, I think, politically and strategically, nuclear weapons do them less good than the tanks they are making themselves.

Mr. Ritchie: The Indians yesterday pointed to the Chinese blast of one megaton, compared to theirs of a few kilotons.

#### World Food Conference

Mr. Sharp: The second subject was the World Food Conference. The reports we have are that things are in a chaotic state. No one is clear about the purpose of it. This may be the most serious problem we face.

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Dr. Kissinger: I completely agree with you.

Mr. Sharp: A short crop somewhere and people can starve. Our view is to encourage development of cereal stocks somewhere where the transport distances are short. For example, India again. The problem is how to create buffer stocks out of nonexistent cereals.

Dr. Kissinger: I have a task force working on it with a deadline of, in effect, when I get back from the Soviet Union. We have to create buffer stocks. For us it's a domestic issue because our farmers prefer to sell their stocks, rather than give them to the PL 480 program.

Would you like to send someone down to Washington when our studies are ready? Or coordinate in some other way.

Mr. Sharp: It would be a tragedy if this is an exercise in futility.

Dr. Kissinger: I agree totally. What do you think could be done?

Mr. Sharp: Will the FAO do it?

Mr. Hartman: Initially.

Dr. Kissinger: About mid-July, we will have our own ideas ready. Do you want to send somebody down to coordinate our positions?

Mr. Sharp: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: Or we could send Ambassador Martin up here. He is handling it for us.

Mr. Sharp: We have no problem with sending somebody down there.

Dr. Kissinger: I proposed it in my opening speech [at the UNGA].

Mr. Sharp: I remember.

Pacific Coast Tankers

Mr. Sharp (Continuing) I want to thank you for your reply.

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Dr. Kissinger: On the Pacific Coast.

Mr. Sharp: Yes. It was constructive. We published our note. I am wondering whether to publish your reply.

Dr. Kissinger: I have no objection.

Mr. Sharp: If this note is published -- and it may have to be if it becomes known we received a reply.

Dr. Kissinger: Just let us know when you're doing it, so if there are any questions we can be ready to answer them.

Mr. Sharp: There are two questions -- whether there are alternative routes that can be used, and how to set up machinery because there is tanker traffic there. But the public is interested in the first one, because people are wondering if there has to be such an increase in tanker traffic. Environmentalists are concerned.

Dr. Kissinger: Their inventiveness doesn't match their concern. I'm talking about in the United States, not Canada. I make tactless remarks about Canada only in Israel. [Laughter]

#### NATO Declaration

Mr. Sharp: At this meeting do you anticipate difficulties with the French on this consultation declaration?

Dr. Kissinger: I'm inferior to my staff; I have great difficulty understanding the difference between the two versions. But we'll oppose the French!

Mr. Halstead: As long as they're labeled!

Dr. Kissinger: Since we cannot yield to the French and they cannot yield to the Belgians, we'll come up with something abstruse, I'm sure.

No, I am approaching my talk with the French with an attitude of reaching a solution.

Mr. Sharp: On Brussels, I am not sure which way he's [Trudeau] going to decide. He can't make up his mind how it would be interpreted -- whether it would seem to be prompted by the election. So, if he decided not to go, we hope you wouldn't misunderstand.

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Dr. Kissinger: No. But we want you to go.

Mr. Sharp: There would be a Cabinet member there in any case.

Middle East

Mr. Sharp (Continuing) What are the prospects for peace in the Middle East?

May I say -- I have said publicly a number of times -- I am so full of admiration for what you have done. Your patience and skill are beyond compare. But also, we would like to know what's going on!

Dr. Kissinger: The problem of the Middle East is that every problem you solve is only an admissions price to a harder one. It doesn't get easier. The issues you know: borders, the Palestinians and Jerusalem. On borders, in order of increasing difficulty: Egypt, Jordan, Syria. The situation is complicated by the fact that the Israeli Government has a two-vote majority, in a totally undisciplined party. It wasn't easy to deal with when it had a ten-vote majority.

Mr. Ritchie: Isn't Rabin easier to deal with than Mrs. Meir?

Dr. Kissinger: Speaking in this room, I would rather deal with Mrs. Meir. She was impossible at the beginning -- she's a Russian peasant, unwilling to give up an inch of territory. But once she made up her mind she was tough enough to do it. She held them together with great style. She and Dayan made the two disengagement agreements go.

The negotiation procedure with the Israelis -- in case you ever have to do it -- is they put nuts on the table and when they sit down they descend on the nuts like the survival of Israel depended on it. [Laughter] We gave them awards -- for the most consumed before the meeting began, in the first 10 minutes of the meeting, etc. [Laughter] Only one got an honorable mention for passing the plate to an American. [Laughter]

Rabin is much, much more intelligent than Mrs. Meir. Like some French intellectuals, he can give you brilliant constructions, but when you ask what concretely we do, like how we get to Geneva, which is my current problem.... He has a theory -- which might even be true --

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that Sadat and Asad are basically the same, though Sadat is doing it with soft methods. The problem is how we keep the Arabs from coming together and creating another explosion and drawing the Russians back in. That is the strategic problem. The other questions are tactical.

If they act quickly they might work out something with Jordan, so they can say the Palestinian issue is between the Palestinians and Jordan and not between them and the Palestinians. They have the option of dealing with Hussein or dealing with Arafat, but not the option of doing neither. They have a nightmare -- which I understand -- of a Palestinian state with a long border from which terrorism is easy. But the Religious Party, which they want in the coalition, believes all of it was given by God to the Jews.

Then the Golan Heights. I didn't realize -- I should have -- that the Israelis have settlements on Golan within three kilometers of the line. So any further withdrawal means abandoning settlements -- which they have never done, ever. They had to give up three apple orchards in the last agreement and it took two days of emotional negotiation.

Mr. Sharp: I had breakfast with Dayan the other day. He was in Toronto and I invited him here. I was struck by what he said: He said there was hope.

Dr. Kissinger: There would be if Dayan were the Prime Minister. It is often thought that the Israelis are intelligent. But there is almost no understanding of the world constellation which creates the imperatives for them. Dayan understands this. The only hope they have is to make a rapid movement to secure their Egyptian flank.

Mr. Sharp: I was also struck by another thing he said. I mentioned Jerusalem; he said, "Jerusalem is no problem." To say this!

Dr. Kissinger: In 1971 we should have forced a settlement with Jordan. I blame myself; of course, I wasn't in the position to do it, and we had Vietnam on our hands. But Hussein made a very reasonable proposal and we should have acted.

Dayan is the only one there with vision, literally the only one. Maybe Peres, the new Defense Minister, but he isn't strong enough.

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My worry is another war, with the Russians in, after which the '67 borders will be imposed. I don't believe the world will stand for another war there.

Mr. Ritchie: What is the Russian role in all this?

Dr. Kissinger: I can understand why a loss of this big investment they made is painful, but this tawdriness of theirs is unworthy of a serious country. The pettiness of their behavior. My meetings with Gromyko in Geneva and Cyprus dealt with Summit matters and practically nothing on the Middle East. This is humiliating to them.

When I was in Syria, when he found I was leaving at noon, he [Gromyko] announced himself for one o'clock. [Laughter] When it became clear I couldn't get done by noon, Asad agreed, and told Gromyko not to come til 10:00 p.m. Then we were still talking at 9:00. I said I didn't want my plane photographed next to his so they towed his way over to the other end. [Laughter]

We were going to send Sisco up, on the assumption we only had to bring minor modifications. They kept moving Gromyko's appointment back. So they scheduled dinner for him. Then we had major complications with the Israelis, so I went up instead. We were through about 9:00 and I wanted to get back to Israel. But Asad said, "We have to eat Gromyko's dinner." [Laughter] And I got there to see him at 11:45. He had kept 50 press waiting.

I don't say this gloatingly.

Mr. Sharp: No.

Dr. Kissinger: It is not in our interest to humiliate them.

But the next day, Gromyko was with Asad and wanted to change the timing of the signature. Asad wrote to us, "You understand the circumstances of this, and it will be solved tomorrow." Sure enough, as soon as Gromyko left, the Syrians went back to the original position.

This isn't in our interest. The way he torments the Soviets he could easily do with us. Even though Sadat calls me his brother.

The Soviets are spending more time and energy on the appearance of participation than on the substance of participation. For their domestic

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reasons. Second, their bureaucratic style isn't suited to the Middle East. The Arabs can't be put in a position of saying yes or no to a long list of questions. They have to be moved step by step, as long as they can still make their mock-heroic speeches and gradually move. If you put it in a rational framework, that is a guarantee of stalemate. You have to keep it vague. Gromyko always has ten points and 25 questions and a checklist: "Are you in favor of the '67 frontiers?" If we answer that yes or no, it is sure to break up the negotiation. But if we get it down to 10 kilometers, 5 kilometers might not look so impossible to the Arabs, or to Israel. So Gromyko's negotiating style is a blight on the negotiation.

Trade Bill

Mr. Sharp: On your Trade Bill, what will happen?

Dr. Kissinger: Our domestic situation is now complicated. I had worked out something with Gromyko which I thought met all reasonable points of Jackson. I was going to write a letter to Jackson, which Dobrynin had approved, answering his demands on harrassment and on numbers at a level much higher than last year. I thought it was the maximum we could ask of a sovereign country. Now he has come back with a proposal that the Soviets have to submit their administrative regulations to us as a formal document, with a number twice as high as we can get, and for that he will pass his Jackson-Vanik Amendment but suspend it for a year.

Mr. Ritchie: He can't believe this.

Mr. Sonnenfeldt: Maybe it's all or nothing for him.

Dr. Kissinger: So, I'm afraid we will veto the bill in its present form, or let it die in committee.

Mr. Sharp: Really.

[The conversation then ended so that Foreign Minister Sharp could depart early for the opening ceremony of the NATO meeting.]

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