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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger
 Ambassador Arthur W. Hummel, Jr.
 Acting Assistant Secretary for East
 Asian and Pacific Affairs
 Winston Lord, NSC Staff
 Charles W. Freeman, Jr. (interpreter, notetaker)

Ch'iao Kuan-hua, Vice Foreign Minister
 of the PRC

Ambassador Huang Hua, Permanent Repre-
 sentative of the PRC to the United Nations

Chang Han-chih, Alternate Representative
 to the United Nations General Assembly
 (interpreter)

Kuo Chia-ting, Second Secretary, PRC Mission
 to the United Nations (notetaker)

TIME AND DATE:

Wednesday, October 3, 1973
 8:30 p. m. - 11:30 p. m.

PLACE:

Waldorf Towers, 35-A
 New York City

[The Chinese arrived at 8:30 p. m. After the press had left,
 the conversation turned to substance.]

The Secretary: I want to congratulate the Vice Minister on his election
 to the Central Committee. Ambassador Huang was also elected and that
 makes three members of the Committee here in this country.

The Vice Minister: What are you thinking of?

The Secretary: I was thinking that you could hold a Party Congress here.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: First let me convey the regards of Foreign Minister Chi P'eng-fei to you and also those of Premier Chou En-lai.

[There was then a brief discussion of the origin of Ambassador Hummel's name in Chinese.]

The second thing is I would like to say that we very much welcome you to Peking on your next trip to China.

The Secretary: I look forward to it very much.

The Vice Foreign Minister: One personal matter -- before I had to call you Mr. Doctor and you called me Mr. X. Now I will be calling you Mr. Excellency, or we will at least use the abbreviation Mr. Ex.

You have been very busy, I imagine.

The Secretary: Yes, I have been busy running back and forth between the White House and the State Department.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I can imagine this. I saw Mr. Bruce just before I left. He came back to the United States for a very short time and then he went back to Peking. We were very happy that he was here for just a short time.

The Secretary: I saw him to get his advice on how to organize the State Department. He is one of our most respected diplomats and a very good friend of mine.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I also saw Ambassador Bruce when your Philadelphia Orchestra was in Peking, when Chiang Ch'ing, Madame Mao, viewed the orchestra.

The Secretary: We greatly appreciate the reception the Philadelphia Orchestra received.

The Vice Foreign Minister: This is an expression of the friendly relations between the peoples of our two countries.

The Secretary: I am looking forward to my visit. One reason we had problems so often was that we were negotiating to get Mr. Lord back on

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the staff. I made a deal with your people not to give either Mr. Lord or his wife a visa for China until he returned to the staff.

The Vice Foreign Minister: He is not a free man. [looking toward Mr. Freeman:] You are not either.

Mr. Lord: The blackmail worked, for I am now back on the staff.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I read with great care your speech at the UN and I saw that in your speech you quoted from Kant.

The Secretary: You are a Hegelian scholar.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I was going to tell you that I was a Hegelian scholar.

The Secretary: Did you read Hegel in German, or Chinese? I didn't understand him in German and I have read him in English.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I read it in German. It's a bit clearer. When one is young it's a bit easier to read such things.

The Secretary: I find him almost incomprehensible in German.

The Vice Foreign Minister: When one is young one has a kind of thirst for knowledge and a deep desire to understand philosophy, and even if one doesn't completely understand, one keeps on reading.

The Secretary: Whether or not one agrees with the details of his position, I think Hegel is one of the most profound philosophers.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Your speech was relatively easy to understand.

The Secretary: And not Hegelian.

The Vice Foreign Minister: It was Kantian.

The Secretary: He is not so easy to understand either.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Kant is easier to understand than Hegel.

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The Secretary: I read your speech, Mr. Foreign Minister. Many things I agree with. There were some things on which there was some disagreement.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Perhaps Mr. Lord omitted some things from the version he gave you.

The Secretary: That must be it. There was nothing on Cambodia or Korea in what he gave me.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Whether you agree or not, I am sure you could understand what I was saying.

The Secretary: I understood.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I have a suspicion that perhaps some of your colleagues did not completely understand.

The Secretary: Not all my colleagues have read the transcripts of my conversations with you and the Prime Minister.

It is a pity you spoke today. We could have quoted you during the Senate debates. You said that "The U.S. would not take [the Soviet military buildup] lying down". You were quite right.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I am sure you have some colleagues who do not understand why I wrote that way.

The Secretary: That is true. The complexity and subtlety of the Chinese intellect isn't always understood. On the other hand, I think under the new organization of our government there will be a greater unity of conception and execution than before. We consider the normalization of relations with the People's Republic one of the absolutely key elements of our policy.

[The party then moved from the sitting room to the dining room for dinner. As they were sitting down there was further discussion between the Vice Minister and the Secretary concerning Hegel and philosophy.]

The Secretary: How long do you expect to stay in New York?

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The Vice Foreign Minister: About two or three more weeks. It has not yet been decided.

The Secretary: So you will be back in Peking when I am there.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I believe so.

The Secretary: It would not be a trip to Peking without you to oppose me. The Prime Minister is tough enough by himself. And with you, the two of you together are really too much for me. I am very happy that you will be there. We are already very good friends. I always enjoy talking with you.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Yes, we have had many good meetings.

[Ms. Chang took over as interpreter for Mr. Freeman.]

The Secretary: When I came to China the first time, who would have thought that our relations would have developed so fast? Maybe you on the Chinese side knew. I tell you quite candidly that I did not foresee all the developments that have taken place.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Chairman Mao foresaw them. Among the Chinese people he stands the highest and sees the farthest. Already in 1969 we wanted to make a big change in our relations. But afterwards things happened in not quite the way we had expected, so the change in our relations was postponed. Now the things that ought to have happened have indeed come to pass.

The Secretary: I always wondered. We sent a message to you in 1969 through the Dutch Ambassador to Peking. Did you take our message seriously? Did it get to you?

The Vice Foreign Minister: We did give serious consideration to it but our circumstances were not right.

The Secretary: I don't think he was a good channel of communication to you.

The Vice Foreign Minister: No, it was not that. But our objective situation at the time was not suitable.

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The Secretary: But in the end we chose the most reliable channel of all.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Yes, we must express our gratitude to the President of Pakistan.

The Secretary: I tell you frankly. What he did for us still affects our policy toward Pakistan and toward the region.

The Vice Foreign Minister: How did your talks go this time with the [Pakistani] President? I have not met Mr. Bhutto since he saw you.

The Secretary: Has he left, or is he still here? I'm not sure.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I believe he has left. One point which I wish to raise with you, among two friends who really know each other very well, and that is, could you not be a bit faster in giving aid to the Pakistanis?

The Secretary: We have difficulties with Congress on this, as you know. But we are doing two things. The first is a massive aid and debt rescheduling program. And the second is the supply of military aid.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Did you notice the part of my speech in which I spoke of the question of our friends to the north?

The Secretary: I noticed it.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Yes.

The Secretary: We will be making some arrangements through Iran to help Pakistan with the military aid. I will talk more about this on my trip to Peking. In a week or two we will be sending our Ambassador to Iran to Pakistan in this connection.

The Vice Foreign Minister: What is the situation in Afghanistan?

The Secretary: We think the Prime Minister is a neutralist, pro-Soviet in some respects. But the younger officers are completely pro-Soviet. We told your friends to the north that any outward movement by Afghanistan would be considered inconsistent with the detente between our two countries. We also told the Indian Foreign Minister the same thing in Washington today.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: As we all know, open talk in an open forum by a country is one thing. But the actual policy of a particular country is not necessarily the same. For example, today the Afghanistan Foreign Minister made a policy speech in the UN General Assembly. The speech was in many respects quite a naked one.

The Secretary: About Pakistan?

The Vice Foreign Minister: About Pakistan, with particular reference to the Baluchistan and Pashtunistan problems, I should also tell you that this Afghan Foreign Minister is one of my old friends. We have been acquainted for a very long time. And, actually when Daud was Prime Minister before, he was very friendly to China. But even at that time his focal point in his policy was on our northern friends. Nevertheless, at that time, that is when he was in power before, he was not too radical in that respect. His speech today caused me some worries.

The Secretary: Speaking frankly, I can assure you that if the Afghans put pressure on Pakistan, we will see to it that Iran puts pressure on Afghanistan.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Speaking of the Middle East, I believe you understand the steps which we are taking and see them in the context of the whole situation. But some of our Arab friends have misunderstood.

The Secretary: I regard the steps which you are taking in the Persian Gulf as in the long-term interests of the Arabs.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We do not blame our Arab friends. We understand that they have some misgivings among themselves and contradictions among themselves. And the Soviet Union has attempted to deepen these contradictions.

The Secretary: Yes, in fact, Iraq particularly is a very large recipient of Soviet arms aid.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Among old friends I would like to ask you what is your estimate of the abortive coup which took place in Iraq in June or July of this year?

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The Secretary: We really don't have very good information. We have some reason to suspect that perhaps Iran was involved.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We also are not very clear on what happened there but we suspect involvement by our northern friends.

The Secretary: You're speaking of the coup? We just are not sure about this question.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I just thought you might have more and better information on this subject.

The Secretary: I will try to get more information for you tomorrow. [To Mr. Lord:] Would you see that we get some information on this tomorrow for our Chinese friends?

The Vice Foreign Minister: What I have said is only a suspicion. There is perhaps no sound basis for this suspicion, but the reason I mention this is because Iraq is in fact under a large degree of influence from our northern friends.

The Secretary: That is true. Also, your northern friends bring quite a lot of pressure to bear on the Kurds to unite with the Iraqi Government.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Quite true. This is also a factor which is often used by our northern friends in that case.

The Secretary: Right now I should say that Soviet military influence in Iraq is the greatest in the entire Arab world.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You are right. We agree.

The Secretary: We are selling Iran our two most modern aircraft.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I hope you will be able to give them this military equipment very soon.

The Secretary: The Phantom aircraft will be delivered almost immediately. And F-14 and F-15 aircraft will be delivered in 1974 and 1975 when they are in production. The F-14 and F-15 are aircraft for which the Soviets have no equivalent.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: The Chinese side gives this area, that is the Persian Gulf to the Bay of Bengal, very great notice and attention. In our last talk in Peking in February we talked a lot about this.

The Secretary: I have noticed a certain parallelism in our policies. It is a great pleasure to talk to serious people.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Let me propose a toast to Chinese-American friendship.

[All toast.]

About the [Afghan] Foreign Minister's speech this morning in the UN General Assembly, it has crossed my mind that perhaps he was deliberately speaking for our northern friends to hear. I was engaged in talks with other friends at the time, so I wasn't present and didn't hear his speech. But I certainly did not expect so naked a speech.

The Secretary: I must read the speech. [to Mr. Lord:] Would you get it for me? [to the Vice Foreign Minister:] But if my impression is the same as yours, we will certainly make our views known. We will definitely resist any attempt to dismember Pakistan.

The Vice Foreign Minister: That is fine! The situation in Pakistan is not only worth our attention, but I believe it is worth yours as well.

The Secretary: I agree. We have problems with Congress, and under these circumstances we favor an indirect and somewhat gradual approach.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I wish to ask, between two friends, to what extent you have managed to improve your relations with Congress, since President Nixon's nomination of you as Secretary of State.

The Secretary: I'm working hard on this. I intend to improve them to the point where Congressmen will ask me to leave them alone. In fact, they will invoke the separation of powers against me. Seriously, we are on the way to a substantial improvement in our relations with the Congress. For example, I am taking Congressmen to the UN whenever I come up here, and whenever I meet with foreign visitors I include them as a matter of course.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: I have noticed what you are doing about Congressmen and I think that what you are doing is correct. And there is one other thing which I also appreciate, and that is the information which you told us through our channels -- that you would stop in Japan coming and going on your way to Peking.

The Secretary: You remember Chairman Mao suggested this to me very strongly. He scolded me for not spending enough time in Japan.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I don't know how you look on the situation in Japan. I think it is a good thing for both of us to do things to support Prime Minister Tanaka. Give him capital with which to work. You may have noticed that in the policy report that Mr. Chou En-lai delivered to the Chinese Communist Party Congress, he mentioned the return of the four northern islands to Japan. And in my UN speech I also supported this because Prime Minister Tanaka is soon to go to the Soviet Union.

The Secretary: We also support return of the four northern islands to Japan. I had a good talk with Tanaka during his visit to the U.S. I understand that this helped him at home. However, I noticed that some of our Chinese friends appeared concerned that we have included Japan and Europe together in one general approach. This is, of course, done for symbolic reasons.

The Vice Foreign Minister: As a friend, I may be permitted, I hope, to make some very frank comments and suggestions.

The Secretary: I would appreciate hearing them.

The Vice Foreign Minister: In your [April] speech you mentioned that the Europeans were concerned only with their own region and not with the interests of the entire world. This hurt them. The way that you put it hurt them greatly. I tell you this as one person who has studied Hegel to one who has studied Kant.

The Secretary: I hope I get some points for studying Spengler! Although what I said about the Europeans being primarily concerned with their own region and not with the world is true, it may not have been the best way to put it. I would like to say, however, that the leaders whom you have seen recently in Peking from Western Europe are not the most farsighted

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statesmen in the world. When the world changes they are terrified and paralyzed. But I believe that they are beginning to understand what we are after. There has been some progress in recent weeks. You know that we are trying to stop the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe from having a bad influence in Europe. And we are trying to stop our European friends from harboring the illusion that there is no longer a distinction to be drawn between friends and adversaries. We are forcing the Europeans, despite themselves, to think in this direction.

The Vice Foreign Minister: This morning I had a talk with the Foreign Minister of Ireland. The Irish Foreign Minister told me that, in his view, as far as Europe is concerned, the defense of the area cannot be separated from the United States. I told him that I agreed with this statement.

The Secretary: Very realistic.

The Vice Foreign Minister: But some of our European friends are not too clear about this matter which we are discussing.

The Secretary: The French are quite good, although they have quite a few differences with us on specific matters. Their overall orientation on this issue is all right. We are also trying to help them in some of their military programs without any publicity.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We have noticed some changes in their public statements. We also note some changes in French-American relations and especially in the defense sphere. I think you will believe me when I tell you we have urged them in this direction.

The Secretary: Yes, I believe completely in what you say. I often think that the French policy is to make it appear that they are obtaining by blackmail that which we are already willing to give them. It has not been announced, but today the French put up a strong paper on NATO defense in Brussels. The French are quite good; the British are good; West Germany is not so certain.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Your friend, Ambassador Pauls, the West German Ambassador to Peking, had just got back from a holiday in West Germany before I came to New York. He wanted to meet with me but I did not have time.

The Secretary: His feelings are easily wounded, you know.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: I wanted to tell him that West Germany's attitude was the most dangerous to Western Europe.

The Secretary: Ambassador Pauls is really very sensitive. When he was in Washington I offended him at least once every week. But I think if you speak with him frankly, he will agree with you privately, despite whatever instructions he has.

The Vice Foreign Minister: My relations with him are about the best that I have with any of the European diplomats in Peking. He and I often invite each other to go out to eat together. When we eat alone we can speak freely without restrictions.

The Secretary: That is very good.

Vice Foreign Minister: When there are no others around we can have a really free exchange of views. But I have not noticed that he is as sensitive as you say.

The Secretary: But I did not invite him to dinner.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You are too miserly by far.

The Secretary: No, it is that I get bored too easily.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You do not have enough patience. It is not easy to talk to others who have different views and do not accept what you have to say. And I should say that I am a man who is known as very rude and quite blunt. I have made quite a lot of criticism of your agreement with the Soviets on the prevention of nuclear war. But although I hit you hard on this point, I always leave the door open for you to get out.

The Secretary: That is very intelligent. But, of course, you know how we plan to use that agreement.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You know, I quoted two sentences from your speech in my own speech to the UN General Assembly. That is, I quoted from Mr. Excellency, but not from Mr. X.

The Secretary: I understand that if you did not speak the way you did there would be others who would not understand. In fact, I rode up on the

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plane today with Senator Mansfield. He had read your speech and he said you definitely must be very angry with me.

The Vice Foreign Minister: No, no.

The Secretary: You know that we will not violate the basic interests of China. If the Soviets plan some sort of military action against you, we will demand urgent consultations. But, of course, we will first talk to you about this.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We have this understanding. But we told you before that we must make some comment about this agreement.

The Secretary: We know. If you had not made such a comment it would have been considered strange.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You know, after I delivered my speech to the UN General Assembly, I thought to myself that you might be one of the few of our American friends who understood my speech. In fact, in my speech I rendered you quite a bit of help.

The Secretary: Not everywhere.

The Vice Foreign Minister: If I rendered you help everywhere then I could not do it anywhere. That's Hegelian.

The Secretary: It would be useful to have you talk to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The Vice Foreign Minister: What do you think about the Korean problem?

The Secretary: As I read your speech I wondered if perhaps you were not hinting at some compromise. I know that in principle your stand is very strong. But in practice you may be somewhat flexible. We seem to be agreed on the dissolution of UNCURK. But you disagree that the two Koreas should be admitted simultaneously to the UN. It seems to me that it should be possible to envisage some sort of compromise. We could refer the question of the UN Command to the Security Council at this session, but not push the question of the two Koreas coming into the UN at this General Assembly. We should seek to avoid confrontation on this issue. You recognize, Mr. Minister, that we have in fact moved Korea in the direction that I had agreed we would with the Prime Minister.

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Perhaps the movement has not been as rapid as he might have hoped, but developments are proceeding along the direction we had agreed. If we attempt to push this issue too fast, we may run into difficulties.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You understand our style, I am sure. In principle we must take a very clear stand. But with regard to the realization of the principle we may take certain steps.

The Secretary: I quite understand. And I saw evidence of this in your speech. How do you think we should proceed?

The Vice Foreign Minister: Concerning this problem I am not nearly so qualified to speak as Ambassador Huang Hua.

The Secretary: We talked about it at our meeting last Wednesday. When he doesn't have clear instructions, he can be very tough.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I feel that we have agreed on the process, which we should now carry out quickly by agreed steps.

The Secretary: I also think so.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Can you take some measures to do something about the Kim Dae-jung case? I assume that you did not agree with the way in which this case occurred.

The Secretary: We certainly did not agree. We are talking to our South Korean friends in an attempt to prevent a reoccurrence of similar cases in the future.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Isn't there something which you can tell your South Korean friends which would move them a little farther on this issue? Couldn't they have done something to avoid what has happened and to prevent it from happening again?

The Secretary: Do you have any concrete suggestions?

The Vice Foreign Minister: This is just my feeling. It is hard to be more concrete on this matter.

The Secretary: We have spoken very strictly to the South Koreans on this matter. If Kim Dae-jung is alive today I believe it is in large measure

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due to us. This was a very stupid matter indeed. About the Korean UN resolution, should Ambassador Scali get in touch with Ambassador Huang Hua to talk about this? I could also send Ambassador Hummel up here to talk about it. He knows my thinking on this subject. And then we can go in the direction that I told you we would.

The Vice Foreign Minister: All right.

It is very wrong, this whole matter of Kim Dae-jung.

The Secretary: This is, of course, a working dinner, and we will not have a formal toast, but I should like to raise my glass in a toast to the friendship between the American and Chinese peoples, to our relationship with the People's Republic of China which we, I assure you, consider very central to our whole foreign policy. I would especially like to refer, in this context, having worked with you on the Shanghai Communique language on this point, to our joint commitment to oppose hegemony in the Asian-Pacific region. Finally, I would like to drink to your health and to the health of Chairman Mao and Premier Chou En-lai.

[After the toast the party moved to the sitting room. The Secretary expressed a hope that the Vice Foreign Minister would visit Washington and also that he would see that Ambassador Huang Hua came down to Washington. He remarked that he had had a meeting with Ambassador Huang Chen on Saturday morning and that he would be eating lunch with him on Thursday, at the State Department.]

[The party was then seated in the sitting room.]

The Secretary: I think that the two Liaison Offices are working quite well.

The Vice Foreign Minister: There are some issues, but I don't think they are major.

The Secretary: I agree. We very much appreciate the manner in which the Government of the People's Republic has helped us to get our Liaison Office in Peking established and working.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: Speaking of this issue, I have some complaints. As you know, our Liaison Office in Washington is still in the Hotel. Can't you think of some way to help them?

The Secretary: We are trying to help them on the purchase of the hotel. As you know, they have bought two houses in Washington. We are trying to get the price on the hotel down. But, of course, we have little leverage on this subject. Perhaps you have a comment on this, Ambassador Hummel. You have been working on it.

Ambassador Hummel: I don't want to make any promises, but we are working hard on it and we hope that we will resolve it. The owners are re-considering the price.

The Secretary: Is the price the only problem?

Mr. Freeman: There is another problem involving title insurance for the hotel.

Ambassador Hummel: I think we can work these things out.

The Vice Foreign Minister: The reason I mention this is that Ambassador Huang Chen has spoken to me several times when he was back in Peking about the inconvenience of living in the Hotel.

The Secretary: We are also very greatly embarrassed. But the U.S. Government has no direct control over private property in Washington. We did help out in getting a zoning change for the hotel. We hope that the owners of the hotel will reconsider the price which they have asked. I'm afraid that you did much better for us in Peking than we have been able to do for you in Washington.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Our two social systems are not the same, and there are different problems in the two cases. Nevertheless, we hope that given the present circumstances you can help us to solve these problems.

The Secretary: You can be sure that we will do our best. We want the Liaison Office of the People's Republic to be established and working smoothly in Washington.

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The Vice Foreign Minister: When I talked to David Rockefeller in Peking, I mentioned this problem and he offered to help. But I did not go into the details of the problem.

The Secretary: We approached Mr. Rockefeller, but, of course, he controls more land in New York than in Washington. I must say, when it comes to New York, your Ambassador Huang Hua used David Rockefeller as a very effective kind of smokescreen to buy the property up here.

Ambassador Huang Hua: Actually an Italian student found the property for us.

The Secretary: But your dealings with David Rockefeller helped quite a bit. The Rockefeller lawyer told us this, and that you were interested in this property and that property and, but actually all the time you were dealing with a completely different piece of property.

The Vice Foreign Minister: But I hope you will see what you can do about the Liaison Office.

The Secretary: I will look into the matter again.

[There was then a discussion of Ambassador Hummel's probable participation in the Secretary's trip to Peking.]

The Secretary: Speaking of my trip to Peking, we have again received several communications from Prince Sihanouk suggesting that we hold conversations in Peking. Among these communications are those through Senator Mansfield. With regard to Senator Mansfield, I would like to say that while we favor Senator Mansfield going to China, we do not favor him negotiating with the Prince. If he wishes to talk to the Prince, that is all right, but if Sihanouk wishes to make serious proposals, he must talk to a member of the Executive Branch. I have also told Senator Mansfield this. We take Sihanouk seriously. We would seriously examine any proposal which he might make. You are, of course, familiar with the various proposals which we have made to him.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We are very clear about Senator Mansfield's and Prince Sihanouk's personal relationship. We are also very clear on the US Government position on this point.

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The Secretary: It would not be good for either of us to encourage the Legislative Branch to impose foreign policy decisions on the Executive. The Legislative Branch might come up with some positions which would not accord with our common concepts of the way we should proceed.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We have talked a lot about the Cambodian problem before. We do not need to go into details tonight but I think I might express my opinions on this as a philosopher.

The Secretary: You must understand that I don't understand anything about philosophy after the beginning of the 19th century.

The Vice Foreign Minister: But I would like to speak to you as a Hegelian rather than as a Kantian.

The Secretary: Please. As a philosopher.

The Vice Foreign Minister: It is clear that the best thing for both of us would have been that neither of us got involved in this situation but, of course, the actual situation is not so. I believe that the best way to handle this is to leave the matter to the Cambodians themselves. Let them work it out. I believe that when we discussed this last year, when we met, probably you did not accept the viewpoint which I put forward. As I said last year, the present international situation is so complicated that it is not worthwhile for either of us to get involved in a basically minor question like Cambodia. And the situation in general in the area has progressed. For example, the Vietnam problem is basically solved, on your side. And Laos, likewise. Of course, the questions have not ceased to exist, but the fighting has stopped. I cannot understand why you spend so much of your energy and so much of your attention on this Cambodian question, and by doing so, divert your attention from more important problems.

The Secretary: Our domestic opponents on foreign policy have used this Cambodian question to paralyze our other policies. So that is why, Mr. Minister.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I see your point.

In fact, one might compare your current Cambodian problem to the problem you faced with regard to the Indo-Pakistani conflict in 1971. Actually, I should say that you were in much greater difficulty in regard to that problem than in Cambodia. Is that right?

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The Secretary: No. In 1971 we faced problems which were tactically more difficult, but strategically not as difficult as this one. We were involved in that situation for only a few weeks, and it was a containable problem. But the Cambodian issue is used to attack our whole foreign policy. I think that it is of the utmost importance that we maintain our credibility on this issue, since I believe that we must, in the future, make decisions that will perhaps be very surprising to our public opinion.

The Vice Foreign Minister: The Cambodian question is a very long story.

The Secretary: I don't want to argue about Cambodia. If we could do it all over again, in 1964 we would certainly not have tied the entire U.S. foreign policy to a country of 15 million people so far away from our shores. It is not important to our overall strategic position. Therefore, we can afford to be very flexible in the solution of the problem. As long as there is a real solution.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I should like to tell you something very ridiculous. As you know, China and Vietnam have a relationship which goes back 2,000 years. I'll tell you a joke. It wasn't until as late as 1954 that we were told by Ho Chi Minh about Cambodia. But our whole concept of Cambodia dates only from then -- that is, from 1954. And yet, China is so close to Cambodia. Isn't that ridiculous?

So perhaps from a long-term view we shouldn't take such a minor issue so very seriously and turn it into a major issue. We didn't even know there was a Cambodia until after 1954.

The Secretary: When I discussed Vietnam with the Prime Minister, it was in fact, a major foreign policy issue for us. Cambodia is not. It is a domestic problem. We can live with Sihanouk. That is not important. We can be flexible and live with any reasonable result.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I didn't want to talk in very detailed fashion about Cambodia.

The Secretary: We've not asked for your help in the Cambodia question.

The Vice Foreign Minister: The Cambodian problem is in some respects the same to both of us. You have not asked for our help, and we have not asked for yours. What I wish to emphasize is that, considering the overall situation, the Cambodian issue is very definitely only a side issue.

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The Secretary: From the U.S. point of view it is indeed a side issue. You are not involved there and I am sure that you will not become involved.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Yes, but there is a question as to how you interpret our degree of non-involvement. For example, we are not involved to the extent that we do not ask how the Cambodians will solve the problem. But both of us are in fact involved to some extent.

The Secretary: This is an example of your Hegelian dialectic. Once we agree that both of us are not involved, you explain how in fact we are involved.

The Vice Foreign Minister: If both sides seriously agree that neither is involved then perhaps we could genuinely not be involved in any issue. That would be very good. For example, you should stop giving any aid to Phnom Penh.

The Secretary: You can always give aid to Hanoi, and Hanoi will give it to the Cambodians.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Your interpretation is not correct on this point.

The Secretary: I'll tell you very frankly, Mr. Vice Foreign Minister, that as I see it, your interests and the interests of Hanoi are not the same in this issue.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I would not say that it is a question of our interests being different, but rather that our circumstances are not the same. I could tell you a good many stories. You do a good many things, but as you look back the objective result does not conform to your subjective motivation. I think that one of your best contributions is that you can connect your policies to your philosophy.

The Secretary: Only you Chinese understand this.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Going back to Cambodia for a minute. I understand that you face domestic difficulties on this issue. But looking at it from the point of the overall situation, it is simply not worth it to either you or to us.

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The Secretary: I do not plan to talk about this with the Prime Minister unless he raises the issue. Of course, if he raises it, I will talk about it. I am not going to Peking to talk about this.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Our attitude, as I have explained it, is that we should let the flames burning in Cambodia extinguish themselves, by themselves.

The Secretary: As long as the flames are in fact extinguished, we can live with the situation.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I advise you to read Hegel.

The Secretary: Which one of Hegel's many books?

The Vice Foreign Minister: Hegel's "Philosophy of History." There are many points which are absurd in Hegel but there are also great insights. I'm sure that we can discuss these problems effectively but we have very different backgrounds. In China we look more to long-term problems. I think you have come to understand this after the meetings you have had with Chairman Mao. Now that you are Secretary of State, perhaps it is more difficult for you.

The Secretary: One thing is easier, and that is that I don't have to go through planning two separate meetings with you in Peking. I thank you for your patience with that arrangement in the past.

The Vice Foreign Minister: In ten years we can look back to see whether what we have said tonight is true or not.

The Secretary: As a philosopher, I would agree. But I believe that the result in ten years will be the same regardless of what we talk about here. I even have some good idea of the way things will turn out. Perhaps we should write our predictions on a piece of paper, seal the paper and then open it up in ten years. I think we would come out fairly close to the actualities. As far as we are concerned, we see the road ahead but there is a big obstacle on the road, and the question is how we can get around this obstacle. Of course, Cambodia is not the problem. We understand your views on Cambodia.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I think it is remarkable that in the past in this country you were so afraid of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union. Perhaps fear is not the right word.

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The Secretary: I thought all members of the Communist Party were FBI agents!

The Vice Foreign Minister: What I mean is fear in the sense of fear of an ideology. But now you do not appear to be so afraid of either [Communism or the USSR]. The Soviet Union is a country of what? -- over 200 million people; China is a country of, I suppose, well over 700 million people. Together they are at least 900 million people. But you are not afraid of us; this I know.

Now, about the Cambodian issue. Whether Cambodia turns red, pink, black, white or what, what difference will this make in the end for world history? The best way out is for neither of us to get involved in Cambodia. You have some difficulties which we do not have, I know. Your difficulties with Congress and with the press. I wonder whether there is not a spy for the press in our midst today!

Ambassador Hummel: I used to be a newspaperman you know.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I was also a newspaperman. Anyway, I notice that you have been improving your relation with Congress and improving your relations with the press. What is your own assessment of the situation?

The Secretary: My own personal relations with the press are very good. But, you know, talking of the press, the Prime Minister really betrayed me on this issue.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You have some sense of retaliation or revenge, I suppose. First you spoke in a joking way and then the Prime Minister talked with someone about what you had said about the press.

The Secretary: The Prime Minister told visiting pressmen that he was not as gifted as I, that he could not talk for half an hour without saying anything.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You must understand that we had been talking about the Shanghai Communique. I had been chatting with the Doctor about how we would handle this with the press, and he said there was no problem, he could talk to the press for half an hour without saying anything at all of substance. We were very happy at that time, having finished our negotiation of the Communique, and the Doctor said this to me purely as a joke. Afterwards I told the Prime Minister the joke and then, of course, he repeated this joke to the press.

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But I am pleased that you are improving your relations with the Congress and the press.

The Secretary: What you say is right. Our relations with both Congress and the press are quite good.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I know that it is very difficult to deal with them in a country like yours.

Now I would like to ask you about the Middle East. What idea do you have about the Middle East situation?

The Secretary: The newspapers say that I have a plan. I assure you that I do not have a plan. It would be childish indeed to put forward a plan without a strategy. We must have a strategy first. Speaking very candidly, Mr Vice Foreign Minister, I should like to say that in my opinion the Israelis want to stay where they are because they see no solution more advantageous than their present situation. And, of course, the Arabs want the Israelis to leave. But the Arabs are not looking for a policy, but rather for a miracle!

The Vice Foreign Minister: You are very sarcastic

The Secretary: Let me speak candidly to you as a friend. The Arabs make speeches; they make tremendous speeches. It is easy to see why so many prophets have come out of the desert! But they lack all realism. The Arabs are in a most curious position. They lost the war, but as a condition for negotiations -- indeed as a precondition for talks, not for a settlement -- they demand that the victorious army withdraw from the territory it has occupied. Now, if we and you and perhaps someone else could agree on something we could do now about this Middle East situation, something that Israel could do about this, then we would be prepared to put pressure on Israel to do it.

Just look at our own relations: Suppose that on my first visit to Peking when I was speaking to the Prime Minister I had demanded that we establish Liaison Offices in eighteen months and that we achieve all the other progress that we have made in these past eighteen months. What would have been the result? That was not the way we did it. We agreed on the general direction in which we would proceed. We have been moving in that direction.

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We would like to do the same thing with the Arabs, but the Arabs want to reach a settlement before the basic direction in which we are going has even been fixed. This is impossible. I do not intend to produce a plan on the Middle East. If I were to put up a plan it would only unite both the Arabs and Israelis in opposition to my plan, and they would start shooting at me and my plan. We would like to arrive at the same sort of understandings with the Arabs which we have with you. And we always keep our word.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Speaking very candidly, I must tell you that we worry that you may suffer losses in the Middle East if you continue along the same policy lines that you now are. You are giving the Soviets a big chance by your present policy.

The Secretary: That is partly true. But the Soviets want that big chance so badly that they do nothing. They are waiting.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I don't think that you should take the rigidity of their positions so much for granted.

The Secretary: What should we do about the Middle East? We want to do something.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Well, if I may speak personally for a moment, and give my personal views -- and let me say at the outset that I do not represent my government when I speak to this question -- it would be much the best course for you quietly to seek to improve your relations with the Arab states, even including Iraq. I do not think that the Iraqis are so much under Soviet influence that this could not be accomplished.

The Secretary: I agree, and any suggestions you have to put forward we will listen to most carefully. I have told the Prime Minister that I have already met secretly several times with Mr. Ismail, who is Adviser to President Sadat of Egypt.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I really have no concrete suggestion to put forward, but we really are concerned. We don't want the situation to slide in the direction of the Soviet Union.

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The Secretary: I can tell you that we will not accept a Soviet attempt to carve out a sphere of influence in the Middle East.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I should like to say to you that you should not take the accusations made against your government and against you by Egypt, Iraq and Syria and the other Arab states too seriously.

The Secretary: I appreciate that.

The Vice Foreign Minister: Meanwhile, I think it would be highly desirable for you quietly to improve your relations with these states. You Americans have a major drawback. Whenever you set about doing something you always make propoganda about it and announce it to the world. Of course, I except present company.

The Secretary: I often think that the State Department is like an African tribe -- a piece of news gets out and pretty soon it's on the drums and the drums are beating and carrying the news all over the building. We will organize the Department to improve this situation. If I did not trust those who are here tonight they would not be here.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I hope you will understand that the Arab nations, the Arab people, have special characteristics. I hope that you understand these characteristics. If you don't, you will find it impossible to work with them. Perhaps I am being too frank.

The Secretary: No, we are friends.

The Vice Foreign Minister: My personal view is that if the present situation is allowed to continue it may develop in a way which is favorable to the Soviets and not to you. We Chinese are always candid, but I must say that we have no specific suggestions for you in this arena. When Shafi visited China what could we tell him? We just advised him that he should not look on the Soviets as absolute friends and the Americans as absolute enemies.

The Secretary: That is very good.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We also talked about you personally. They have their views on you. There is, as you know, a big hue and cry in the Arab press, a big clamor in the Arab world about you and your appointment. I told them that Marx was Jewish also, and that we believe

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in Marx. You see, we look at the whole problem. We are not utopians. We are realists.

The Secretary: We are anxious to improve our relations with Egypt, Syria, Iraq and the other Arab states. Tomorrow in fact I will be seeing the Egyptian Foreign Minister, and I hope that I can speak very frankly to him.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We are not looking for a miracle. But as Hegel said so well, "repetition produces nothing." We must make progress on this issue but what comes out cannot be too surprising.

The Secretary: We will do our best. If the Arabs were willing to do something concrete, we would put pressure on Israel to respond.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You have two hands, why do you not follow a two-handed policy toward the region? You could support Israel with one hand and deal with the Arabs with the other.

The Secretary: That is in fact our policy. We wish to talk to the Arabs.

The Vice Foreign Minister: You must understand the Arab character; otherwise it is useless to talk. And I have to say that what I said about the Middle East is my own opinion and not that of my government. Anyway we have been friends now for quite a number of years; we can talk frankly.

The Secretary: It is very helpful. I can tell you that very few statesmen that I have met are capable of taking a global view. Most talk only in terms of trivialities. The one exception is our Chinese friends.

The Vice Foreign Minister: I should like to say that I don't disagree with the open speech which you made in the UN General Assembly. I very much appreciate what you said. It is in fact true that the Arabs and the Europeans lack a global view, as you said. You must not be angry with me. I also must offer some criticism of your position in public.

The Secretary: I hope you don't mean that you will criticize me by name.

The Vice Foreign Minister: No, we have a personal non-aggression pact. I will accuse you by name, perhaps, in private, but not in public. And on the Taiwan question I understood what you said.

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The Secretary: I know what you understand. We are proceeding along the direction which has been agreed with the Prime Minister. We are now carrying out our military withdrawals as I discussed with the Prime Minister.

The Vice Foreign Minister: We understand, but of course we wish that this could be accomplished faster. You know there is a question in their mind of the world's people -- if Japan and China can establish diplomatic relations, why not China and the U.S.? The world's people wonder about this.

The Secretary: You seem to be thinking of diplomatic relations with us in terms of the same modalities as with Japan.

[The Secretary then took the Vice Foreign Minister aside for a ten minute conversation with him alone with Ms. Chang as interpreter. After this conversation, the meeting concluded at approximately 11:30. The Secretary escorted the Vice Foreign Minister to the elevator to see him off.]

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