

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

June 27, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
 FROM: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI *ZB*
 SUBJECT: NSC Weekly Report #146

Opinion

I attach some European press reactions to your European trip. They support my basic view that the trip represents an important vindication of the strategic concepts that you have been articulating since late December. The Europeans have now accepted the notion that we are faced with a southward Soviet strategic push, which has two prongs, and which requires a long-term and sustained response. How to respond will remain a source of contention but the overall strategic consensus is a new fact, and one largely due to your leadership.

In that context, the proposal for transitional arrangements served a useful function either of (1) giving the Soviets a way out, if their concerns in Afghanistan are genuinely limited and/or if in the meantime the Soviets learn that they cannot digest Afghanistan without paying an excessive price; or (2) exposing the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan as being related to a longer-term and more offensive strategic design.

I met informally today with Senators Biden, Pell and Glenn to discuss your trip. They were supportive and Glenn was particularly outspoken on the subject of the Soviet strategic threat. Biden questioned the need for a letter to Schmidt but was then turned around by my recounting of your discussion with Schmidt regarding the nonverifiability of SS-20 deployments without concomitant termination of site construction (which would then leave us at a disadvantage, in addition to creating political problems with the Belgians and others).

Fact

The Soviet Grain Embargo. At my request, David met with Lloyd Cutler, Stu Eizenstat and Bob Bergland on the future of the Soviet grain embargo. The issues that emerged are these.

SECRET/SENSITIVE

Review June 27, 2000

Classified & Extended by Z. Brzezinski

Reason: NSC 1.13(f)

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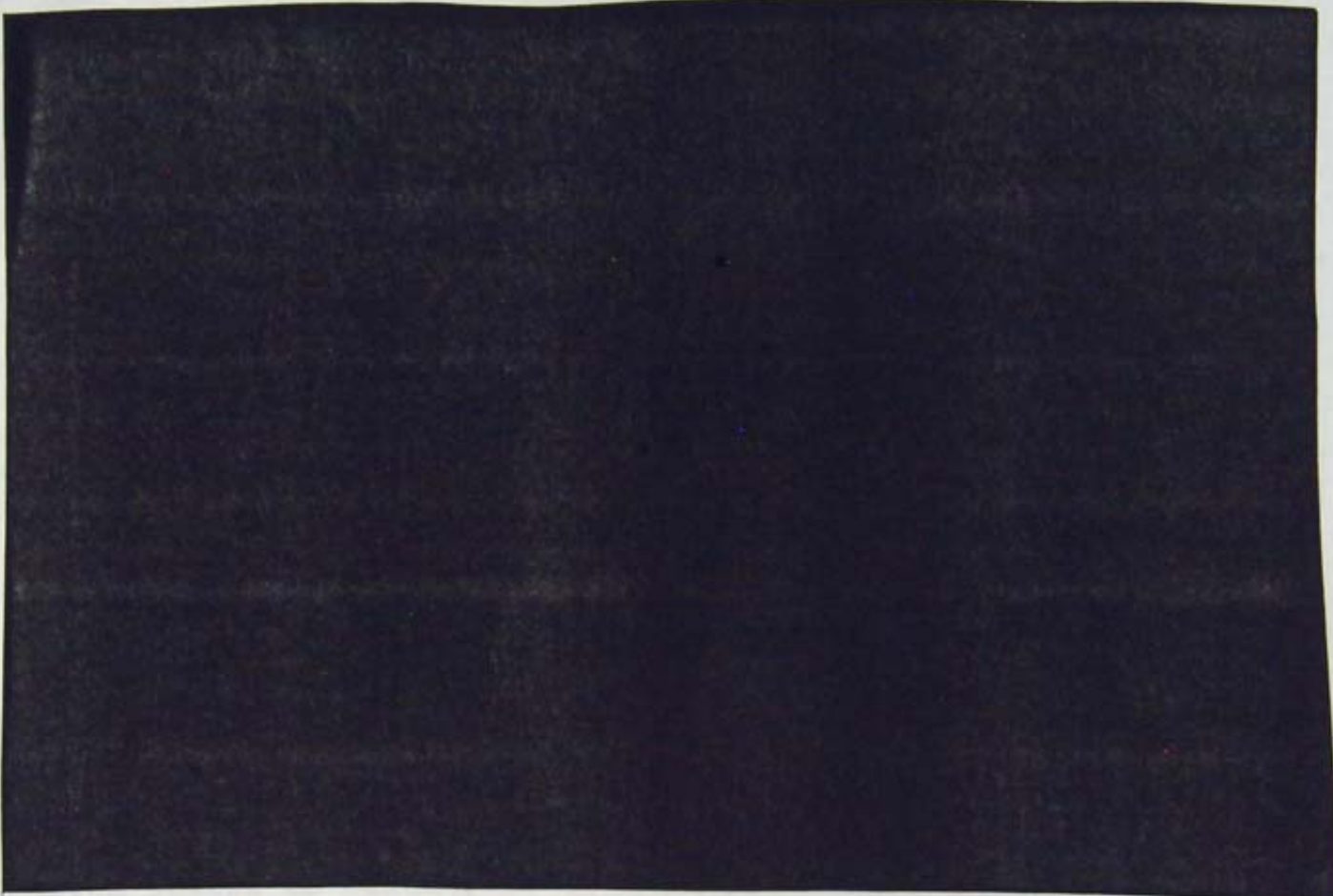
What is the likely impact on the Soviet Union of continuing or terminating the grain embargo? The grain embargo has hurt the Soviet Union but the effects will diminish next year. Other grain exporters will become more and more "leaky." The Soviets may have a bumper crop. Even so they will have to import thirty million tons of grain to replenish their stocks. Agriculture believes they want to buy more from the U.S., possibly up to 15 million tons. However, they also could do without.

The second issue is political. The consistency of this Administration is an issue both in domestic politics and foreign policy. A change now could signal that we were going back to business as usual with the Soviets. If such a decision were taken before the Olympics, it could undermine the boycott. It could weaken the determination of those who are helping the Afghan rebels, in particular the Pakistanis who are assuming the greatest security risks.

At home, the embargo is doing serious political damage to the Administration among the farmers. All their economic woes are blamed on the embargo. Ending the embargo, however, will be widely seen as confirming the perception that the embargo has been a failure and was an unwise move from the start.

Lloyd believes that we can say that we punished the USSR, but the prospect of a good Soviet crop makes the embargo ineffective for next year. On the other hand, the American farmers may feel that we are lifting the embargo just at the time when the Soviets no longer need (or refuse) to buy from us. Alternatively, if the Soviet Union does buy 15 million tons as Agriculture predicts, our rationale would be undermined and we will be charged with having given in to the Soviets for narrow domestic political reasons.

For this reason, Stu and Bob believe that a change in policy must be pegged to some movement on the part of the Soviet Union on Afghanistan. This would have to be part of a wider accommodation with the Soviet Union. The recent Soviet withdrawal might have been such a point of departure, but it has been too discredited. David's principal conclusion is that if we are determined to hang tough, to be unyielding, to keep the pressure on the Soviets, then we should not consider dropping the grain embargo. To do so in this context would prove more damaging politically, even with the farmers, than any conceivable political gain. I concur.



National Security Affairs Calendar (Attached)

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"Carter Welcomed Everywhere"

TV Two's Washington correspondent Edmund Gruber said that "Carter's visit in Europe has been more successful than he had expected. He was respectfully welcomed everywhere in a time when it is regarded as chic to criticize the United States. The Yugoslavs were thankful, since only the United States can guarantee their independence. The Spanish have great hopes since they want to join the EEC and NATO."

Carter Success in Yugoslavia

West Berlin's independent Tagesspiegel declared today that "Carter in Belgrade made an absolutely sovereign impression. There was nothing to be seen of his alleged embarrassment or feeling of guilt because of his absence from Tito's funeral.... The gains for the United States and Jimmy Carter himself are undeniable.... To Carter, the nonaligned states remain a political bridge between West and East and a bridge from Washington to Moscow which he tried to rebuild from nonaligned Belgrade."

A correspondent in Belgrade for Italian television said "Carter received more support from the Yugoslavs than he found among his allies."

"Cuts the Ground From Under Brezhnev and Schmidt"

New York correspondent Ugo Stille wrote in center left Corriere della Sera of Milan that Washington observers consider "Carter's proposals on Afghanistan a very able move which allows the United States to resume the initiative..." He said they would "attract the Islamic countries toward the American position" and "cut the ground from under Brezhnev and Schmidt on the eve of their meeting" while "a negative Soviet reply...will destroy the credibility of possible Soviet counteroffers."

Conservative Il Tempo of Rome reported from Belgrade that the President "had every reason to be satisfied by his Belgrade visit" because "less than two months after Tito's death, the new leadership had the courage to take a stand against Moscow with statements that Carter could hardly have expected in any Western European country."

Media in Madrid gave saturation coverage to the President's visit.

A columnist for conservative ABC found that "things have changed since 1966" and "we can now discuss NATO in a different way, without subservience..."

(I gave to Jody
to use with the press corps)