The Carter Administration & The Soviet Union

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

April 11, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR:
The Vice President
The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence
The Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

SUBJECT: SALT and Other Arms Control Issues Addressed in Moscow

The following summarizes the outcome of the SALT meeting of April 7, 1977.

SALT

Our public posture will be to make clear that SALT is a long-term process requiring our patient efforts to try to achieve an agreement. We will not underestimate the potential difficulties, and we should avoid over-optimistic assessments. We should play down the significance of the May meeting between Gromyko and the Secretary of State. In this connection, it was decided to propose that the Geneva discussions be resumed as soon as practical under Paul Warnes' chairmanship.
Cold War Map: 1970

**Green** — Non-self-governing possessions of US allies.

**Blue** — US and US allies.

**Red** — Soviet Union and other communist allies.

**Orange** — Communist countries not aligned with the USSR.

**Pink** — Non-Communist allies of USSR.

**Light Blue** — Non-NATO members of EFTA and OECD.

**Gray** — Unknown or non-aligned.

(Image: Public Domain)
Notable Cold War Developments

• Israeli-Arab conflicts begin to magnify Cold War alliances in Middle East

• **1963**: Cuban Missile Crisis bolsters U.S., creates tension between China & Soviet Union over leadership of Communist World

• **1969**: Open fighting briefly breaks out along Soviet-Chinese border

• **1969-1979**: Détente brings easing of Cold War tension between U.S. & Soviet Union

• **1972**: Nixon welcomed to Beijing, China

*Top:* President Nixon eating with Premier Chou En-Lai, 2/21/1972 (Nixon Library)

*Bottom:* Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, President Nixon, Mrs. Nixon, and Mrs. Sadat at the Great Pyramids at Giza, 6/12/1974 (NARA Identifier: 194581)
Dear Mr. President:

On the occasion of the successful accomplishment of the first ever joint flight and docking of the Soviet Spaceship Soyuz and the U.S. Apollo, I am sending you and the people of the United States of America, sincere congratulations on behalf of the Soviet people and on my personal behalf. Please extend our congratulations and best wishes to courageous U.S. Astronauts Thomas Stafford, Vance Brand, Donald Slayton, and U.S. scientists, designers, specialists and workers who took part in the preparation for the fulfillment of the Soyuz-Apollo program.

As a result of the flight of the Soyuz and Apollo Spaceships, their docking in the Earth orbit and mutual crew transfers tested and practiced, have been the compatible systems of the Spaceships developed for increasing the safety of man’s flights into space, and also displays the possibility of joint work in space of representatives of different countries. Being an important milestone in cooperation between the USSR and the USA in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, the accomplished joint flight lays the foundation for the possible subsequent Soviet-U.S. projects in this field.

The success of this outstanding experiment was insured by the faultless fulfillment by the Soviet and U.S. crews of the complex flight program. It was the result of close and efficient cooperation of scientists and specialists of our countries at all the stages of its preparation and fulfillment. The experiment carried out, constitutes a major scientific technical achievement paving new ways for further space exploration for the good of all mankind.

The flight of the Soyuz and Apollo Spaceships is of historic significance as a symbol of the current process of easing of international tension and improvement of Soviet-U.S. relations on the basis of the principals of peaceful coexistence. At the same time it constitutes a practical contribution to the cause of further development of mutually beneficial cooperation between the USSR and USA in the interest of peoples of both countries in the interest of peace on Earth.

L. Brezhnev

Left: Message from Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev to Gerald Ford regarding the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project, 7/25/1975 (NARA Identifier: 7347327) Above: Richard Nixon meets Leonid Brezhnev during the Soviet Leader’s U.S. visit, 6/19/1973 (NARA Identifier: 194517)
1948: First Arab-Israeli War; Arab coalition attacks Israel upon its Declaration of Independence following end of British Mandate for Palestine

1956: Egyptian President Nasser nationalizes Suez Canal, sparking conflict with Israel, France and Britain

1967: Six-Day War results in decisive Israeli victory, occupation of Golan Heights (Syria), West Bank (Jordan), Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula (Egypt)

1970: War of Attrition brings Egypt, PLO and Soviets together to pressure Israel to return Sinai Peninsula to Egypt; Israel shoots down five Soviet aircraft

1973: Yom Kippur War pits Soviet-supported Egypt and Syria against U.S.-backed Israel; results in marginal Israeli victory, initiation of Arab oil embargo of U.S.

Right: Press release announcing United States de facto recognition of the State of Israel 5/14/1948 (National Archives Identifier: 200612).
The Energy Crisis

United States 1940-1980

- Population increases 71%
- Real Gross Domestic Product increases 508%
- U.S. imported 25% of OPEC’s oil to support expanding population & economy
- Arab Oil Embargo drives oil prices up 350%

Left: An empty gasoline pump during the gas shortage, 6/1973 (National Archives Identifier: 548175)
How can higher energy costs lead to higher inflation and unemployment?
1971: Egypt host to 15,000 Soviet military advisors/personnel, receives arms assistance

1972: President Nixon & Soviet Premiere Brezhnev sign Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty; Soviet Union unable to deliver on arms promises to Egypt; Egyptian President Sadat expels all Soviet military personnel, moves economy towards free market system

1974: President Ford continues to court Sadat; Arab oil embargo against U.S. lifted
1975: Fall of Saigon

- **1973**: U.S. withdrawal of military forces from Vietnam effected by Paris Peace Accords
- **1975**: Capture of Saigon by North Vietnamese forces effectively ends Vietnam War
- **1977**: Carter issues pardon of Vietnam-era military draft evaders with Presidential Proclamation (4433) and Executive Order (11967)

1976: Different Appeals to Different Voters

Left: Campaign Button with President Ford as Fonzie, 1976 (National Archives Identifier: 28360684)

Right: The Allman Brothers Band Concert Poster, 11/25/1975 (Carter Library)
The Tools of Diplomacy

- **Congressional Legislation** *(Article I, Section 1)*
  - Subject to approval or veto by the President

- **Executive Action** *(Article II, Section 1)*
  - Powers not relegated to other branches, nor explicitly denied to the Executive

- **Appointments, Diplomacy** *(Article II, Section 2)*
  - The President appoints approximately 5,000 public officers including Ambassadors, Cabinet Secretaries, Advisors
  - Negotiate international treaties with 2/3 Senate approval

- **Carter’s Previous Experience**
  - Submarine Commander, Entrepreneur, Civic Leader, State Senator, Governor, Human Rights Advocate

*Right: The Preamble and Article I of the United States Constitution (National Archives Identifier: 1667751)*
### Senate Confirmation of Nominees

- **All executive and judicial nominations by President must be approved by the Senate**

- **Current Senate rules require a simple majority for confirmation (51 votes)**

- **Most are routinely confirmed while some higher visibility nominees may receive no action or are rejected by the Senate**

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<td>Edmund Muskie</td>
<td>Apr 29, 1980</td>
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<td>W. Michael Blumenthal</td>
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How can legislation be used to impact diplomatic relations between the U.S. and other nations?
National Security Act of 1947

- Major reorganization of U.S. foreign policy and military establishments
- Creates National Security Council (NSC)
  - President
  - Vice-President
  - Secretary of State
  - Secretary of Defense
  - Others at discretion of Council e.g., CIA
- NSC used at discretion of Presidents as outlet of foreign policy and diplomacy

President Nixon speaks with Henry Kissinger during a National Security Council meeting, ca. 1968-1972 (Nixon Foundation)
Defense Spending

- Nixon & Ford administrations cut defense spending with drawdown of Vietnam War
- Carter administration seeks nuclear non-proliferation with Soviet Union with completion of SALT II negotiations
- Increased investment in traditional and new non-nuclear weaponry = 3% increase
- Medium-range missiles positioned in Europe against Soviet Union

Any other accomplishments listed here that may strengthen the military position of the U.S. against the Soviet Union?

Right: Excerpt from The Record of Jimmy Carter, ca. 1/20/1977 – 1/20/1981 (NAID: 143373)
Gender Equality in the Soviet Constitution

“Women in the USSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, and political life.”

Right: Cover of The Soviet Woman publication, ca. 1948 (Soviet Woman Digital Archives)
Joint Resolution

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission by the Congress:

“Article —

“Section 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

“Sec. 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

“Sec. 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.”
Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978

- Women previously subject to termination from employment because of pregnancy
- Amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Prohibits discrimination based upon pregnancy

Left: A baby care class for new and expectant mothers at Loretto Hospital in New Ulm, Minnesota, 10/1974 (National Archives Identifier: 558172)
Intentional or not, Carter addresses communist charges of gender inequality in West.

Carter creates the Task Force on Women Business Owners.

Carter appoints prominent women in business to administration (e.g., Juanita Kreps).

Number of businesses owned by women rises from 1.9 million in 1977 to 2.5 million in 1980 (33.4% gain).

Left: Jimmy Carter addresses the Task Force on Women Business Owners, 6/28/1978 (National Archives Identifier: 180131)
Building on Ford’s Work

- Carter expands membership of National Commission on the Observance of International Women’s Year from 35 to 45 (Executive Order 11980, 3/29/1977)

- Upon expiration of its congressional statute, Carter creates the Advisory Committee of the International Women’s Year (Executive Order 12050, 4/4/1978)

Left: Jimmy Carter meet with the Advisory Committee of the International Women’s Year, 1/12/1979 (National Archives Identifier: 182989)
Carter’s Diversity Legacy

Equal Rights and Protections

- Extension for 3 years of ERA Ratification Deadline
- D.C. Voting Rights Amendment
- Anti-Boycott Law
- Issuance of 504 Regulations to ensure rights of handicapped
- Mandatory Retirement - raised from 65 to 70 in private sector and eliminated from civil service
- Wiretap Protection Act - first controls on foreign intelligence wiretapping
- Appointments
  - Senior Management - appointment of more blacks, Hispanics and women to Cabinet, sub-Cabinet, White House and other senior management positions than any other President
  - Judgeships - appointment of more blacks, Hispanics and women than all previous 38 President combined
- Minority Business - tripling of federal purchases from minority-owned businesses
How do you define “diplomacy?”

Right: Deng Xiaoping and Jimmy Carter sign diplomatic agreements between the United States and China, 1/31/1979 (NARA Identifier: 183277)
Diplomacy Defined

• The management of a nation’s relationships with foreign governments, international organizations, and people of other countries

• A President’s foreign policy is carried out by the Department of State

Left: Photograph of President Truman with Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes and others, standing inside the Jefferson Memorial looking up at a statue of Thomas Jefferson, 1/14/1946 (National Archives Identifier: 199303)
Main Goals

• Protect the United States and Americans
• Advance democracy, human rights, and other global interests
• Promote international understanding of American values and policies
• Support U.S. diplomats, government officials, and all other personnel at home and abroad

Left: Jimmy Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, 3/7/1977 (National Archives Identifier: 173936)
Two distinct diplomatic camps emerge in Carter administration

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance advocates strategy of increasing cooperation with Soviet Union, not linking Third World crises with SALT to sustain détente

National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski believes Soviets seek to overtake U.S. spheres of interests abroad, connects SALT with human rights, and advocates for countering aggressive Soviet actions

Left: Cyrus Vance and Zbigniew Brzezinski work on the peace accords at Camp David, 9/14/1978 (NARA Identifier: 181300)
Human Rights as U.S. Policy

- Carter breaks with previous administrations in not overlooking human rights abuses of allies including:
  - South Korea
  - Iran
  - Argentina
  - South Africa
  - Rhodesia
- Carter ends 30 years of U.S. support for oppressive Nicaraguan President Somoza
- Carter’s efforts lead to Congressional requirement of Dept. of State to submit “full and complete” report on human practices around the world
Panama Canal Treaties Signed

• **1960s-70s**: Political and civil unrest in Panama, U.S. fears a Communist insurgency

• **1979**: Treaties are signed that will eventually turn over control of canal to Panama

• U.S. reserves right to military intervention if control of canal is threatened

• **1999**: Official transfer fully implemented

Right: Jimmy Carter and Omar Torrijos at the signing of the Panama Canal Treaties, 6/16/1978 (National Archives Identifier: 179906)
Camp David Accords

Right: Sculpture by Paolo Corvino commemorating the famous handshake between Anwar Sadat, Menachem Begin, and Jimmy Carter after they signed the Camp David Accords (Carter Library)
Checks & Balances

• The Constitution mandates 2/3 Senate approval of treaties or agreements with foreign nations

• “…the United States does not intend to present the nations involved with a plan or a timetable or a map.”

Left: This letter from nine United States Senators represented the support that President Carter was to have in his quest for Middle East peace. (Carter Library)
“Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;”

Begin does not believe U.N. Resolution 242 mandates withdrawal of Israeli forces from ALL territories occupied, just one or more

Right: United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, considered basic instruments in all subsequent discussions of a Middle East peace settlement (United Nations)
13 Days of Deadlock

- All sides become deadlocked over withdrawal of Israel’s armed forces and settlements from occupied territories

- Frustrated Sadat makes preparations to exit talks; Carter makes successful appeal to stay

Right: Anwar Sadat and Jimmy Carter speak on a lodge porch at Camp David, 9/17/1978 (National Archives Identifier: 181329)
Day 13: A Race to the Finish

- **Diary entry for 09/17/1978** twice as long as typical day; 4 pages instead of 2
- **Written documents, photographs do not account for Carter gaining support for U.S. peace plan from Begin at the end of the summit**

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**Left:** The Daily Diary of President Jimmy Carter, 09/17/1978 ([Carter Library](https://www.jimmycarterlibrary.org))  
**Right:** Jimmy Carter with members of the Israeli delegation at Camp David, 9/12/1978 (National Archives Identifier: [181212](https://id.nara.gov/item/181212))
President Carter speaks on the subject of Menachem Begin at the LBJ Foundation Civil Rights Summit, 04/09/2014 (LBJ Foundation)
Impact of Camp David Accords

- **13 days** from September 5-17, 1978
- Normalized relations between Egypt and Israel
- Return of Sinai Peninsula to Egypt
- Withdrawal of Israeli forces from Egyptian lands
- Opening of Suez Canal to Israeli ships
- Provided framework for Israeli-Palestinian Peace
- **Bolsters U.S. Position in Cold War**

*Right: Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin greet each other for their first meeting at the Camp David Summit as President and Mrs. Carter watch (National Archives identifier: 181104)*
Diplomatic Relations with China

Right: Jimmy Carter, Richard Nixon and Deng Xiaoping during the state dinner for the Vice Premier of China, 1/29/1979 (National Archives Identifier: 183214)
What is the significance of diplomatic relations between nations?
• U.S. & China (and Soviet Union) are allies in WWII in fight against Japan & Axis Powers

• 1955: Communist revolution (PRC) led by Mao defeats Republic of China (ROC) who withdraws to Taiwan

• U.S. & China fight proxy wars in Korea, Vietnam

• U.S. recognizes ROC as sole Chinese government for 30 years

China–Soviet Relationship

- Birth of People’s Republic of China (PRC) begins power struggle with Soviet Union for symbolic leader of Communist world
- Bi-polar Cold War becomes tri-polar
- **1962**: PRC breaks off relations with Soviet Union over outcome of Cuban Missile Crisis and De-Stalinization efforts
- PRC sees nuclear disarmament efforts by U.S. and Soviets as threat to its own fledgling nuclear program
- Sino-Soviet relations worsen over competition to court India
- Carter attempts balancing normalizing diplomatic relations with China with maintaining détente with Soviet Union while also addressing human rights

*Right:* Map of Northern America showing the full range of the nuclear missiles under construction in Cuba, used during the secret meetings on the Cuban crisis, 10/16/1962 (JFK Library).
Shanghai Communique

• Relations thaw during Nixon administration

• 1973: Liaison offices opened in respective capitals, functioning as “de-facto” embassies

• Taiwan maintains embassy in Washington, D.C.

• U.S. begins removing military personnel from Taiwan & scales back official contact with ROC

• Ford continues to build relations following Watergate, but efforts complicated by collapse of South Vietnam

Right: President Nixon meets with China’s Communist Party Leader, Mao Tse-Tung, 2/29/1972 (National Archives Identifier: 194759).
Carter’s Cold War Balancing Act

- Carter administration balances relations with China, Soviet Union and Taiwan
- “There is but one China and Taiwan is part of China”
- Taiwan Relations Act to “maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.”
- 1/1/1979: Diplomatic relations with China quietly normalized
- Hailed by Carter as “most significant accomplishment of his administration”

Right: Deng Xiaoping and Jimmy Carter meeting in Washington following the normalization of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China, 1/29/1979 (National Archives Identifier: 183165)
Impact on U.S. Soviet Relations

- Increases tension with Soviets
- **Dec. 1979:** Soviet Union invades Afghanistan
- U.S. begins support of mujahideen fighting Soviets
- Carter declares any Soviet incursion into Persian Gulf region will be an assault on the interest of U.S.
- Tensions play out in 1980 Winter Olympics
- Carter leads boycott of 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, supported by China

*Left:* Painting of the Men’s U.S. Hockey Team defeating the Soviet Union at the 1980 Winter Olympic Games (Carter Library)
• **1972**: Seeking to replace interim SALT agreement with long-term comprehensive treaty

• **1974**: Basic outline agreed to by Ford, Brezhnev

• **1979**: SALT II Treaty signed

• **1980**: Treaty left unratified by U.S. Senate after invasion of Afghanistan, but informally implemented by U.S. & Soviets

*Left: President Carter and General Secretary Brezhnev participated in a signing ceremony for the SALT II treaty between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (National Archives Identifier: 185475)*
How did Carter’s actions impact U.S.–Soviet relations? Did they hasten the end of the Cold War or prolong it?
DocsTeach Resources for Teaching The Cold War

Elementary

- **Cold War Propaganda Analysis**
- **Was Francis Gary Powers an American Hero or did he Betray the U.S. Government?**

Middle: **Introduction to the Domino Theory and Containment Policy in Vietnam**

High: **How did the Cold War Impact American Foreign and Domestic Policies?**

*Left: Between the Hammer and the Sickle propaganda poster, 9/12/1951 (NARA Identifier: 6948939)*