

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Mrs. Clare Boothe Luce, Member of PFIAB
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, February 25, 1976
11:32 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

Luce: You must be happy [at the results of Tuesday's New Hampshire primary].

The President: I am very happy. We did especially well in the Keene area where I campaigned.

Luce: It was very good from a psychological viewpoint.

The President: Yes. Reagan campaigned hard and hoped to win. How are you?

Luce: Just fine.

The President: As you know, we have just announced an intelligence reorganization. [Discusses some of the details.]

I think Pike has hurt himself and I am interested to see the House is investigating Daniel Schorr.

Luce: That is music to my ears. The press has arrogated to itself the right of secrecy but no one else can have it.

The President: I think it is good, though, that the House is doing it.

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Luce: I think it [PFIAB] is a very good board and I am please to be reappointed. I think the new additions will be helpful. I regret George Anderson going. But Leo Cherne will be a great Chairman.

There is one part of intelligence to which no attention is being paid -- counterintelligence. It has been struck a real blow by these investigations. Colby reorganized it a year ago which further confused it. I think you should look into counterintelligence within the CIA. The men who have been let go have vast memories which have been lost.

The President: George Bush is trying to get read into the Agency. He is spending full time getting up on things.

Luce: May I suggest that George talk to Angleton to hear his side of the story. I have great respect for Colby but I think George should hear both sides.

The President: What was the problem between them?

Luce: I only know second hand. Colby thought Angleton was so secretive that Colby couldn't even find out what went on. Angleton thinks Colby leaked the story to the press to get him. But the result is we lost the top people in counterintelligence, who left with Angleton.

The Board wants to serve you. It can best do that if you maintain contact and give them tasks.

The President: As you know, I met with the Board both as Vice President and President. We will be making the announcement of the new board in a week or so.

Luce: I am profoundly concerned about the condition of our foreign policy. In 1972 there was a feeling that detente had a consensus -- perhaps because it was defined the way each one wished it to. Now that has eroded and there is a growing consensus against it. You said recently, "peace through strength." That is good, and the word "detente" should be scrapped. I think the word is a disaster and should be dropped -- it is subject to chides like "one-way street," etc.

The President: It probably isn't the best word and maybe it isn't good for me in the campaign. But it makes me mad that they say because I am

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for detente I am soft on the Soviets. When the chips are down, they bug out. Where were they on Angola?

There are two groups -- one which says be nice to them and they'll be nice to you. That doesn't work. The others say be tough to the Soviets but cave when it comes to standing up to them. We are going to continue being tough -- on Angola and anywhere else the Soviets move. I am going to keep Congress on the spot.

Luce: Should we tell the people the Congress has slipped back into the mood of the 30's? Then there was Roosevelt who understood power politics and the threat. He couldn't change an isolationist Congress. I think we are headed back that way. Maybe plain talk over the heads of Congress of the dangers of isolationism which for us is always accompanied by pacifism. Say we are going to negotiate but it is going to be balanced or you will have no part of it. Don't use "detente."

The President: I think we have to show historically that we may be going through the 30's again. If Britain and France had kept Italy out of Ethiopia in 1935, there might have been no World War II. Angola might be a latter day Ethiopia.

Luce: If the Soviets start to radicalize Rhodesia and South Africa, it would be very tricky.

Henry is in grave trouble. He is being picked on by both camps you describe. How can he get detente off his back? He is accused of giving everything away, but also accused of being a hawk.

The President: I am curious about your comment on Henry's popularity. The polls continuously reaffirm his popularity.

Luce: Henry is a celebrity as far as the public goes. Americans love celebrities. Most of them don't know what foreign policy is about. Where he is unpopular is, on one extreme, with the Zumwalts who see him as an appeaser. At the other extreme are the liberals who think he hasn't tried hard enough with the Soviets and hasn't been hard enough on Israel. Henry isn't popular with people who think about foreign policy. The key is getting rid of "detente."

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