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04. Memcon	Re: Meeting with President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine (6 pp.)	5/6/92	(b)(1)	C

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RESTRICTION CODES

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- P-1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P-2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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- P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

- (b)(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- (b)(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- (b)(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
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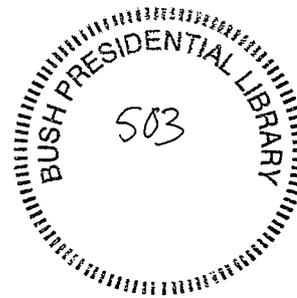
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Vice President
James A. Baker III, Secretary of State
Nicholas F. Brady, Secretary of the Treasury
Samuel K. Skinner, Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Roman Popadiuk, Admbassador-Designate to Ukraine
Dennis Ross, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State
Thomas Niles, Assistant Secretary for European and Canadian Affairs, Department of State
Ed A. Hewett, Senior Director for Russian and Eurasian Affairs, NSC Staff
George Sajewych, Interpreter

Leonid Kravchuk, President of Ukraine
Oleh Slepichev, Deputy Prime Minister
Oleksandr Yemelyanov, Economic Advisor, Head of State Duma for Economic Questions
Anatoliy Zlenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Vasil Tkachuk, Minister of Agriculture
Yuriy Shcherbak, Minister of Environment
Oleksandr Maselskiy, President's Representative for Kharkov Oblast
Boris Sobolev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Economic Relations
Anton Buteyko, President's Adviser for Foreign Affairs
Oleh Bilorus, Ambassador to the United States

DATE, TIME May 6, 1992, 12:00 - 12:45pm
AND PLACE: Old Family Dining Room

The President: Where were we? Where do you stand on the Crimea? Is that driven by Russia itself? (Ø)

President Kravchuk: The problem with Crimea is artificial. There are 1.6 million Russians; a little more than 600 thousand Ukrainians; and 200 thousand Tartars (a number that is growing). (Ø)

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The opportunities for Russians living in Crimea is greater than for Ukrainians living there. Ukrainians in Crimea have no schools since the Russians don't like special Ukrainian schools. The kindergartens are all Russian. Russians living in Ukraine for several generations do not speak Ukrainian, and don't want to. (C)

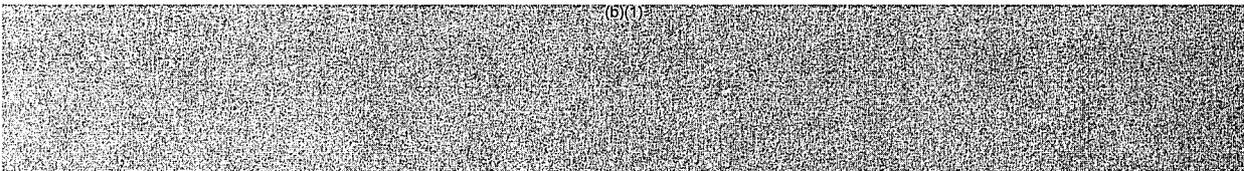
Some Russians made official statements at the (Russian) Congress (of People's Deputies) that it was necessary to protect Russian-speaking populations in other states. This simply instigates Russians to act, which is what happened in Crimea. (C)

Russian members of parliament were visiting the area. Rutskoi came to Crimea and made aggressive statements there. The Russian official structure has allocated funds to follow Ukrainian politics in Crimea. (C)

The deputies from the Supreme Soviet of Crimea are mostly from party structures of the former Soviet Union. They were not elected as deputies of the Supreme Soviet. (C)

The President: Are there divisions inside the Russian government? Are some more active in stirring up the Crimea than others. Or is this universal? (C)

President Kravchuk: The majority of the forces speaking for the separation of Crimea from Ukraine are in the conservative factions of the Russian Parliament. (C)



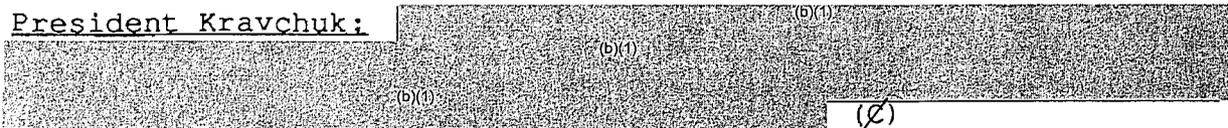
We see developments moving according to that scenario. Some western countries are included in the scenario. (C)

Dr. Hewett: President Kravchuk, are these papers authored by conservatives, or are they official government documents? (C)

President Kravchuk: These are government papers -- official analysis provided for Parliament. The papers are being used as part of a long-term policy for Russia. (C)

The President: Doesn't Russia face problems of other republics taking steps in Russia? (C)

President Kravchuk:



I agree that Russia has internal problems -- problems of dissolution. But they're not dealing with them. Rather they are active in Trans-Dniester and Ukraine. (C)

They have set up a para-military organization -- the Cossacks. They claim the government has nothing to do with it. But those Cossacks were involved in fighting in Dniester. Now they have representatives in Ukraine. (C)

The Russian Government does not even make an effort to stop this activity. (C)

The President: What is their mission? (C)

President Kravchuk: They fought in Dniester. They're soldiers of fortune -- mercenaries. In fact they are not governed by anyone. (C)

Mr. Pavlychko: Mister President, 28 members of parliament of Crimea voted against the declaration of independence, despite the pressure, and terrorism against them. The Steppe areas of Crimea said they do not support the statement. The Crimean Tartars are strongly against the referendum. (C)

The situation is dangerous. There might be a strong conflict in Crimea. (C)

We have some friends in Russia -- Yelena Bonner and Yuri Afanasev, for example -- who speak for true democracy in Russia, and who believe Ukraine should be independent. (C)

There are also people who share their thinking in the Russian Parliament. During voting on Crimea and the 1954 Act, those people spoke out. (C)

Secretary Baker: Will the referendum go forward? What will happen? (C)

President Kravchuk: The decision on the referendum is non-constitutional. The Supreme Soviet of Crimea was not elected. It was appointed by the Parliament of Ukraine for a period of time. Its mandate was to prepare elections. (C)

The deputies did not want elections. They adopted a decision which goes beyond their competence. In fact their decision is a violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine. It is against the constitution. That's why we say that it is not acceptable. They were not elected. (C)

The President: Is the resolution of the fleet tied up in Crimean question? (C)

President Kravchuk: Yes those questions are linked. (C)



The President: Is some of Russia's game-plan in Crimea related to the Fleet in the Black Sea? (Ø)

President Kravchuk:

(b)(1)
(b)(1)
(Ø)

The President: Are you talking with Yeltsin regarding the Fleet question? (Ø)

President Kravchuk: Yeltsin and I issued decrees for the delegations to the negotiations. But the Russian delegation got the instructions that the Black Sea Fleet belongs to Russia, and that Ukraine should get very little. (Ø)

Russia already has three large fleets: the Baltic, the Northern, and the Pacific Fleets. Nearly 70 percent of all surface ships [in the CIS fleet] were produced in Ukraine. Ukraine owns part of the fleet. (Ø)

We would like to make the Black Sea a sea of peace, and security. We don't need so many ships; I would like to reduce the number of ships. But Russia and the military are against that. (Ø)

(b)(1)

The President: What is the make up of the crews of the Black Sea Fleet? Are the crews primarily Russian and Ukrainian? (Ø)

President Kravchuk: Mostly Russian and Ukrainian. There are a few others. (Ø)

You know, Mister President, there are many Russians in prominent positions in Ukraine. My Prime Minister, Fokin, is Russian. Emelianov, my economic advisor, is Russian. One-half of all children in Ukraine studied in Russian schools. That shows Russians are not at a disadvantage in Ukraine. (Ø)

On a per capita basis, the Russians have more people than Ukrainians in education, more newspapers, more theaters. That's why the Russian population in Ukraine voted for the independence of Ukraine in December. Fifty-four percent of the Russian population in Crimea voted for the independence of Ukraine. I am absolutely positive that there would be no problems if the Russians were not stirring them up. (Ø)

The President: The reason I asked on the ethnic make-up is that I was wondering if the dispute could step up animosity on the ships themselves? (C)

President Kravchuk: There are different positions. People serving on ships would like to end the speculation. (C)

Secretary Baker: What are the differences, Mister President, between the positions of Russia and Ukraine on the Black Sea Fleet? Have you agreed to divide it? Does Russia believe it owns all of it? Or, does Ukraine believe it owns all of it? (C)

President Kravchuk: Ukraine never wanted the entire Black Sea Fleet. Russia has made statements of that sort. There have been, for example, statements by Yeltsin that Russia owns the entire fleet. (C)

Why should Russia have authority over the fleet stationed in Ukraine? We are guided by the agreement signed in Minsk by Yeltsin. It is written there that states which have strategic forces on their soil decide which part should be provided for common defense. That is the wording. (C)

Since the Black Sea Fleet is in Ukraine, Ukraine should decide which portion goes to the common defense. Russia says no. We must be independent in deciding which part remains with us. (C)

The President: What flag flies over the fleet? (C)

President Kravchuk: We have ships with no flag. Ships in the Baltic, Northern, and Pacific fleets fly the Russian flags. Russia has said the Black Sea Fleet should also fly the Russian flag. Apparently they haven't finished making those flags. (C)

There are lots of interesting people in Russia. One person from Sevastopol said he was in Ruskoi's office and he noticed that a map on his wall shows Alaska in Russia. (C)

The President: Now you're getting my attention! (C)

President Kravchuk: Understand me. We have no claims against Russia. (b)(1)

(b)(1) (C)

Another dangerous sign. I was with Russians at a conference in Bonn. They didn't want to even hear of an independent Ukraine. (C)

Ukraine will never be on its knees. (C)

Mr. Pavlychko: One basic argument in negotiations on the Black Sea Fleet: Russia says it needs the fleet to counter the U.S. fleet in the Mediterranean. (C)

We are trying to act to avoid confrontation; we have a common interest with the U.S. Russia says so, but uses the fleet to counterbalance the U.S. (C)

President Kravchuk: It is also important that the economy in Russia is in total ruin. They claim to be the second military power in the world! (C)

The President: But you would agree, I hope, that it is very important we stay involved with Russia, trying to work with Russia to be sure that they stay with democratic reform. If we isolate Russia, that would make it even more imperialistic, which would be bad for other countries in the area. (C)

President Kravchuk: Yes, we agree to that. I want to emphasize that you and we should have relations with Russia, but equal relations. Any assistance by the U.S. to Russia should not go to support imperialism. (C)

The President: Mister President, we have the press in two minutes, so we should break. (U)

-- End of Conversation --