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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Geneva, Switzerland)

For Immediate Release

November 17, 1985

INTERVIEW OF
SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE P. SHULTZ
ON
ABC "THIS WEEK WITH DAVID BRINKLEY"

Geneva, Switzerland

4:54 P.M. (L)

Q Mr. Secretary, welcome. Thanks for coming in today. We're glad to have you with us.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Thank you.

Q Mr. Reagan will meet Mr. Gorbachev during the coming days. You have already met him. You've already spent some hours with him, talking and, I gather, doing a little arguing. Tell us about it, will you? About him and about your meeting.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, our meeting was a strong conversation and I thought he was very direct about what he wanted to say, and so was I. It went on a long time. There were -- the kind of conversation where you interrupt back and forth. And I thought it was a worthwhile exchange. I was glad to have had it.

Q Did anything he say surprise you?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, not really, although it's always surprising, I suppose, to hear your country described in a way that you don't think conforms to the reality.

Q On the subject of SALT II, on June 10th, the President said we would continue the "no undercut" policy, but we're looking for improved compliance from the Soviet Union. That's five months ago now, plus some. Has there been any improved compliance?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: There have been some things take place by way of Soviet activities; however, the President's position remains exactly as it was then. His policy is that he will maintain interim restraint under the SALT II agreements, observing Soviet behavior, including what progress there may or may not be in the negotiations on arms control.

Q Since June 10th, the federal government has made a pronounced statement about the deployment of mobile missiles. That would seem to imply that their compliance is worse now than it was in June.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The deployment of a second missile is a violation of SALT II in our opinion. And I think it's a pretty open-and-shut case, myself. It's not a modernization of an existing missile.

There isn't a prohibition on mobile missiles, although we think that mobile missiles should be prohibited because they give you a very tough verification problem, particularly if they can roam around throughout the vast regions of the Soviet Union.

Q Are you looking for some satisfaction here in Geneva on compliance such as on the SS-25?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: It's certainly going to come up. The

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subject of compliance and verification will be one of the things the President will want to talk about.

Q And what if he says: nonsense, it's not a violation, you say it's clear-cut -- then what? Do you turn around to the President and say it's time to abandon the "no undercut" policy?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The President will have an exchange here. He is observing -- he got a report from the Secretary of Defense that will be discussed -- and after the President takes into consideration all of the things that come to him, he'll make up his mind.

Q Well, Mr. Secretary, Secretary Weinberger's letter to the President, as we all know now -- it was leaked to the press -- urged the President to hang tough, not make a deal here in Geneva on extending the provisions of SALT II. One, are you saying he won't make such a deal here? And, two, you've just heard a Soviet official say that he thought you were offended that that letter was leaked, it was not helpful. Is that correct?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I have no sense of offense. I think so much leaks in Washington these days that what does offend me is the lack of discipline in the government in that so much

and many damaging things do leak. And this is just a relatively minor example.

Q All right. Now, are you then ruling out the possibility that Mr. Gorbachev says, "Let's make a deal and extend SALT II," Mr. Reagan won't say, "All right"?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, the President will decide what he's going to decide, and I'm not going to try to prejudge what he will do.

Q Well, if I may just be clear on this, then you are not foreclosing the possibility that we could come out of this Geneva summit with both sides having agreed to extend for another year at the end of this year the provisions of SALT II?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I'm not foreclosing it, but I think it is not very likely. At any rate, the President's position I described. And when he decides to change it one way or another, you'll know about it.

Q Let me ask another question about the possibility of guidelines to help the arms negotiators in the coming rounds.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Right.

Q You said the other day it was possible but not probable. Have you raised that estimate a little bit now?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Not particularly. I don't have any information I didn't have the other day. But there are some things that their proposals and our proposals have at least in a rough way in common. And it may be possible that something can be drawn up that's useful. But, as I said before, it's possible but not probable.

Q One of the many leaks in Washington recently is that some people in the government want the United States to make a pledge that in the next five years it will not exercise its option to give a one-year notice for withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. Is that part of your agenda?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I haven't heard that particular -- I haven't run across that particular leak, but then there's so many I can't keep up with them.

Q Could we ask which Gorbachev is the one that you think is controlling on basic research on SDI? We've just heard a top Soviet scientist say that the policy is as described in the Time Magazine interview. And there Mr. Gorbachev seemed to say research is all right. But it was my understanding that he told you directly in Moscow that research was not all right. How do you see it?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, he basically expresses himself against strategic defense. And in our conversation in Moscow, we didn't try to define in a very precise way what that might mean. The fact of the matter is that the Soviet Union is doing a great deal of research on this subject. And it isn't all just what somebody might write down on a blackboard because you can see large buildings, and you can notice that lots of people are working there, and things like that. So, it isn't just purely laboratory.

Q Well, do you sense that perhaps at this summit if Gorbachev gives a little and the President is able to accommodate a little bit, you might be able to remove this obstacle of SDI from an ability to go forward on arms reduction?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The President is determined to find the answer to the question: Is it possible to construct a shield that will protect us in some measure against ballistic missiles?

And we have a program that is designed and in operation and so far as I can tell we believe that program will give us an answer to that question. And there is no way the President can be persuaded not to continue seeking that answer.

And I might say further, there is no one in the group of people that are advising the President who believes that he should do anything except continue to find that answer.

Q Let me fix upon three words, "in some measure." You said it's possible to have a successful SDI in some measure. Most people, I think, would concede already that there is some form of strategic defense for knocking down some incoming missiles or warheads. So you have the answer already, don't you?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, it depends. I think some judge it by whether or not an impenetrable shield can be constructed. That's --

Q But you were saying --

SECRETARY SHULTZ: -- way-out test.

Q -- in some measure much --

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I qualified that deliberately because I think that if, with a layered defense, with each layer only very moderately successful -- that is, say only 20 percent successful -- by the time you go through four layers you take out enough incoming missiles to make a large difference about cutting down your opponent's first-strike capability, and that is very worthwhile.

Q Let me interrupt here briefly, gentlemen. We'll be back with more questions for the Secretary of State in a moment.

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Q We are back. Secretary of State George Shultz here.

Mr. Secretary, almost every point of discussion between us and the Soviet Union in our preliminary meetings, including yours in Moscow, has been resisted. So tell me, what --

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Has been what?

Q Resisted. Everyone's position has been pretty much frozen.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Oh, that's not the case at all.

Q Well, that's what has seemed to us. Who has thawed?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: There has been discussion of a lot of things that probably you would classify of a lesser nature. But -- which have had a lot of back-and-forth, give-and-take and considerable progress made. And it may be that the discussions will be completed by the time our leaders meet.

Q Well, those are discussions we haven't heard about yet, so we look forward to them.

In the meantime, I wanted to ask you what do you think might reasonably be expected to happen here that would justify calling it a successful summit?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: These two men are going to meet and I think to a certain extent it's going to be a very personal thing, although they are certainly going to be supported by plenty of advisers on both sides. And if, out of this meeting, can come a clearer understanding of what is troubling each side, with some way

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And if some progress can be made on that in any manner I think it will be a success.

Q One point. You mention their aggression. This is a rumor, as far as I know. Have you heard that they are looking around for some convenient way to get out of Afghanistan?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I read that all the time.

Q So do I.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: People say that, and I try to probe into it whenever I have the opportunity, and I have had quite a few opportunities in the last four or five months. And I don't get any sense that it's there. But we're certainly prepared to try to be helpful in that, and there are negotiations going on conducted by the United Nations and we would like nothing better than to see them succeed.

Q Well, what do you make of this news conference they held here in Geneva yesterday in which a Soviet official said that their losses had been mounting and they really wanted to try to find some way to negotiate a settlement there. Was that just propaganda to try to make them look more peace-loving than they are?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I think that if they want some way, it's easy to find it. There has been negotiation in Geneva under the auspices of the United Nations, and some things have been worked out. The big thing that has not been worked out is really to come to grips with Soviet troop withdrawal. Until you have a commitment for Soviet troop withdrawal over a relatively short span of time, none of the other things necessary for settlement can come into effect.

Q You don't put much stock in what they said yesterday?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I didn't say that. I think if they -- if they're looking for a means, the means is there. And insofar as the attitude of the United States is concerned, if there are some aspect of this that we can contribute to, we'll be glad to do it.

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SECRETARY SHULTZ: And the President set out a kind of program, or process, in his speech to the United Nations that the Afghanistan situation could fit into as well as others.

Q About 6 weeks ago on this show, Bud McFarlane said human rights would be the lead item on the agenda at the summit of the United States. I'd like to ask you about the mechanics of how this gets raised. The United States position is that the Soviet Union is comprehensively violating its obligations under the Helsinki Agreement. But it seems that to comply with those terms of that agreement it would have to dismantle its entire domestic structure of repression. You go into a meeting and you say, why don't you cut this out? And they say, it's none of your business -- it's an internal affair and we're complying with the obligations. What's the next question? How do you continue the discussion?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Actually there has been some shift, at least it seems to me, in responses on this question over the period of time that I've been discussing it with Soviet officials. From a posture of this is not anything we're willing to discuss to a posture of saying there are certain categories of cases that are legitimate. And we're willing to discuss them and we're willing to do something about them if our security problems are not violated. There are others they're not willing to discuss and now there is the added element of accusations about our human rights problems. Now if what comes out of it is sort of a joint investigation about human rights problems we'll welcome that.

But what the President, I am sure, intends to do is to try to talk in a way to Mr. Gorbachev that will lead him to understand why it is that we're so concerned about these problems.

Q One of the possible agreements that's talked about is one in which the two sides agreed to work against the spread of chemical weapons. Since the Soviet Union is using chemical weapons according to the U.S. position, wouldn't that be the thing to go after and not some rather innocuous measure on the spread?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I think there are many things that should be gone after. We have tabled a comprehensive chemical weapons ban on production and use in Geneva and we think that ought to be pursued. Obviously use of chemical weapons is deplorable. It's also true that chemical weapons are spreading, and I think the proliferation of them represents one of the biggest problems we face. And I think they see that, too.

Q Will there be a joint communique at the end of the summit?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: It remains to be seen what will be the way of reporting the meeting.

Q If I can just ask, how do you have a joint communique with both sides talking, for example, about terrorism -- which we say they fund and finance and organize -- and both sides talking about chemical warfare, which we say they are committing. How do you have a joint statement on these subjects without us sort of papering over differences and relinquishing principles?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: You -- well, you'll have to wait and see how the meeting is reported, and I don't think Ronald Reagan is likely to paper over principles.

Q Mr. Secretary, we understand that earlier today you met with the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon.

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Q Mr. Secretary -- I'm sorry, Sam. Thanks very much, Mr. Secretary. Thank you for coming in. Pleasure to have you with us tonight.

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