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Soviets Greet Nixon Warmly

By Robert G. Kaiser and Peter Osnos
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MOSCOW, June 27—President Nixon arrived in Moscow this afternoon under the bright clouds of a fine June day to begin the third Soviet-U.S. summit meeting in three years.

The Soviet Union matched the weather with a warm greeting for Mr. Nixon—substantially warmer than he received in 1972, on his first visit. The President responded with a toast at a banquet tonight emphasizing the importance of the “personal relationship” existing between him and Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader, played in improving Soviet-U.S. relations.

Speaking warmly of the agreements reached at past summits, the President

said, “It is also . . . very worthwhile to note how these agreements were negotiated.

“They were possible because of a personal relationship that was established between the General Secretary (of the Soviet Communist Party, Brezhnev) and the President of the United States. And that personal relationship extends to the top officials in both of our governments.

“It has been said that any agreement is only as good as the will of the parties to keep it. Because of our personal relationship, there is no question about our will to keep these agreements and to make more where they are in our mutual interest.”

Mr. Nixon’s remarks on his personal

relations with Brezhnev seemed pointed directly at his critics at home.

The Soviets—fully aware of the complications caused by the Watergate affair—appeared anxious not only to show their personal appreciation for Mr. Nixon’s past contributions to détente, but also to emphasize the continuity of state relationships in these uncertain times.

They flattered Mr. Nixon at Moscow’s Vnukovo airport by having all three Soviet leaders—Brezhnev, President Nikolai Podgorny and Premier Alexei Kosygin—present. Brezhnev greeted him first, though as leader of the Communist Party (and not, tech-

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President Nixon and Soviet Communist Party chief Brezhnev begin first discussion of summit meeting in Moscow.

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nically, chief of state), this was a violation of protocol.

In 1972, Brezhnev waited in Moscow to greet the President, leaving the airport ceremony to President Podgorny.

Mr. Nixon and the three Soviet leaders rode together into Moscow in the same Zil limousine, affording them their first opportunity to talk. Then Brezhnev and the President spent 70 minutes together in the Kremlin this evening before dinner, discussing their agenda for the coming five-and-a-half days of talks.

But Brezhnev avoided talk of personal relationships in his toast at tonight's banquet, which was optimistic but vague. The Soviet leader expressed confidence that he and Mr. Nixon could "consolidate the successes already achieved and advance further along the main road that we have jointly chosen to follow."

He did not say where that road might lead, and he avoided specifics in expressing hopes for the success of the summit.

Brezhnev did not refer specifically to scheduled discussions on further agreement limiting nuclear weapons in his toast, but said, "the biggest contribution" that "Soviet and American statesmen of the '70s" could make would be "to reduce, and subsequently to completely remove, the possibility of war between our two states."

Brezhnev also noted that "the relaxation of tension in Soviet-American relations, as in international relations generally, comes up against rather active resistance. There is no need for me to dwell on this subject, since our American guests know better and in more detail than we about those who oppose international detente."

In his response, Mr. Nixon

said: "We both can say that this new relationship between our two nations is overwhelmingly supported by the people of the Soviet union, and overwhelmingly supported by the people of the United States."

Conceding that the United States and the Soviet Union have "different viewpoints on several matters," Brezhnev said: "We shall seek, and I feel, not unsuccessfully, agreed ways toward the further consolidations of peace and mutually advantageous cooperation. I believe it can definitely be said that our talks will proceed in a businesslike and constructive spirit."

Mr. Nixon replied: "While, as the General Secretary has correctly pointed out, we have many problems yet to negotiate on, the success of our negotiations to date gives a good indication of the progress we can and will make in this third summit meeting."

"To see the extent of the progress that has been made, we can point to the fact that over the past two years more agreements have been negotiated and signed between our two countries in those years than in the entire history of the relations of our two countries up to that period."

Tonight's talk between Brezhnev and Mr. Nixon was apparently not devoted to substantive issues. They met alone together, accompanied only by Viktor Sukhadrev, the Soviet interpreter who is a fixture in their meetings.

After their session, the senior officials of both countries met in a reception in St. George Hall in the Kremlin. Brezhnev made a special point of introducing the President to Marshal Andrei Grechko, the Soviet minister of defense. Brezhnev, Mr. Nixon, Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and others exchanged goodnatured banter.

Gen. Alexander Haig, Mr. Nixon's chief of staff in the White House, told reporters at the reception that the President's phlebitis "is all under control," though the swelling in his leg which troubled him on his Middle East trip has still not disappeared.

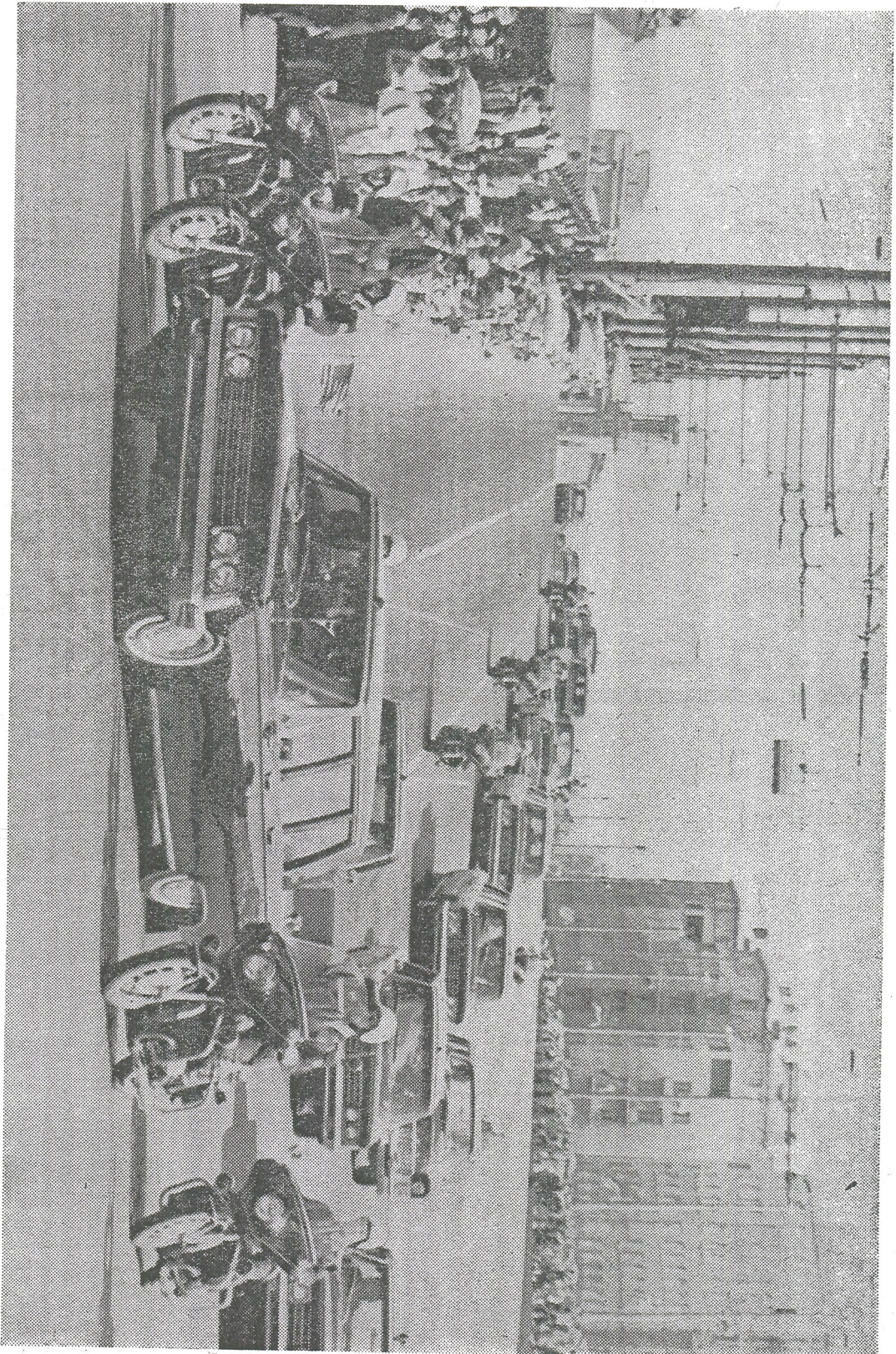
U.S. officials gave scanty details of the substantive agenda of the summit. Though the preliminary schedule leaves much time for negotiations, it also provides many ceremonial opportunities for avoiding talks.

The Soviet newspaper Pravda, official organ of the Communist Party, prepared its readers for Mr. Nixon's visit with two unusual items this morning.

The first was a front-page biography of the President. Two years ago, a similar article consisted of a crisp, factual biography of the President. This time the article included flattering descriptions of Mr. Nixon's policies.

On an inside page, Pravda analyzed U.S. public opinion on the eve of the summit, taking pains to note that the President's policy toward the Soviet Union is supported by numerous senators from both parties, newspapers like The Washington Post, and a broad spectrum of opinion.

Though the word Watergate wasn't mentioned, this un-



Associated Press

Limousine carrying President Nixon, with motorcycle escort, sweeps into downtown Moscow after drive from airport.

sual article seemed a form of prearranged at intervals along the route into Moscow from the Communist Party cadre that the Soviet leaders were not negotiating with a crippled victim of American politics, but with a President whose diplomacy enjoyed wide public support.

The Soviets left nothing about Mr. Nixon's arrival to day to chance. Crowds were

the route into Moscow from the airport and elsewhere the public was kept largely out of sight of the official caravan.

Leningrad into the city was be- decked with crossed Soviet and American flags, but the sidewalks had been cleared of people and the shops were

As the limousines sped by, they were watched only by thousands of soldiers, police and civilian militia. At a few points people craned their necks to see through cracks in walls and fences.

Beginning 90 minutes before Mr. Nixon's arrival, the public was prevented from even crossing the street.

For the most part, the pub- lic was less interested in Mr. Nixon than in the inconvenience caused by being unable to get around in the downtown area. In two hours of mingling with people in the area of the arrival route, a reporter did not hear a single political comment with the exception of a few sarcastic remarks

about "nothing and nobody," a description of what the people were able to do and see.

The biggest organized group was on the Bolshoi Kamenny Bridge near the entrance to the Kremlin Wall. For all the groups the pattern was the same: Little cheering, but much waving of small Soviet and American flags.