

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/SENSITIVE/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and
Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs
Nelson Rockefeller, Vice President-Designate
Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to
the President for National Security Affairs

DATE: September 6, 1974

PLACE: Oval Office
The White House

SUBJECTS: Visits; 40 Committee; NSC Meeting on Israeli Requests;
Preparation for Rabin Visit

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Kissinger: On the Schmidt visit: He couldn't come in October and proposed September 25. I suspect French mischief. You shouldn't be pushed. I think you should go back to the original schedule.

President: We shouldn't interrupt Leone.

Kissinger: That would be very bad taste. If he can't come in October we will tell him we will try to find a day in December.

About a press conference: If you have one next week, I won't.

President: Next Friday, I think.

Kissinger: I think inviting the cosmonauts to a picnic would be overdoing it a bit. Dobrynin would make a big deal of it, and this is the sort of thing the French put in speeches.

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President: I'd kind of like to do it. It wouldn't be similar to the others.

Kissinger: The problem is not the cosmonauts, it's Dobrynin.

President: Let Dobrynin come if he wants.

Kissinger: Okay.

[Dr. Kissinger then described the projected attendance at the NSC meeting on the Middle East.]

President: No. No on Treasury and OMB. I'd like Hartmann and Haig there.

Kissinger: The New York Times has a copy of something on 40 Committee operations in Chile. We will brief the 40 Committee next week. What happened is this: Johnson put money in the '64 elections. We put [REDACTED] into the '70 elections and spread it out. We then put more in to influence the Congressional elections and that failed too. After the elections we put money into opposition parties and newspapers. It was designed to keep the democratic process going. This was not a regular covert activity. There was no attempt at a coup. Though there could have been in '70 if we hadn't failed.

There are two problems: The substance is embarrassing but we can ride it out. The other is the leaks. The 40 Committee has followed the same procedures since President Eisenhower.

Rockefeller: I was on it.

Kissinger: All these activities are approved by the Deputies in regular but secret process. If these things leak, we haven't a government.

President: Who did it?

Kissinger: I want to think about that. The Committees are briefed on these activities. The problem is this is the most secret activity we have. If there are minutes, we should be able to track it. We might have Ter Horst make a statement, not on the facts but on the principle.



President: Let me know Monday. If the committees were informed it shouldn't be a problem.

Kissinger: They were regularly informed.

President: Let's ride it out and we'll see.

Kissinger: We have to have these things. We'll need them more for Portugal, Spain, and so on.

At our meeting today I will go into the Israeli arms requests, then CIA will brief, then I will explain the strategy. The CIA will have charts showing the forces the Arabs can bring to bear.

What is it we are trying to do? What are the others trying to do? What are some of the problems?

We want to guarantee the security of Israel, but we want to prevent the coalescence of the Arab states -- that would create an unmanageable situation for us. We also want to prevent the resurgence of Soviet influence. We want to prevent an Israeli-Arab war and the consequent confrontation with the Soviet Union. If negotiations stall, or if there is a war, there will be an embargo. That would push Europe over the cliff. The Europeans' response to the Cyprus business shows their mood. There would be a massive anti-U.S. blow-up. The same will happen in Japan. The Soviet Union has suffered because they operated too cautiously in the past. They were too much in the middle. They won't be caught doing too little again. That makes an Israeli victory more dangerous than an Israeli defeat. Last time we had a massive airlift and a massive showdown, and we would have lost the ability to present ourselves to the Arabs as a means to a solution.

As for the Israelis, another war would result in world pressure for the '67 borders. It would be tough for the U.S. alone to resist, and the result would be demoralizing like what was done to Czechoslovakia in '38.

We have been giving the Arabs the feeling that each of them had something to gain--Egypt immediately; Jordan in the mid-term, and Syria somewhat later. The Syrians know that Israel doesn't want to move; they also know that the more the others are satisfied the more isolated they will be, so they will work to lump everything together. With

massive effort we can head it off. We can defuse the Soviet Union with your Brezhnev meeting.

We are operating at the edge of the margin with the Arabs. We have been stalling. The delivery dates on equipment for Egypt are so late that they are turning to the Soviet Union. The Syrians are restive because they got nothing. Geneva hasn't met for a year-- we held off, because it brings all the Arabs together and it lumps all the demands, and makes the Soviet Union the protector of the Arabs and us of Israel. But we can hold that off only with some Arab help.

Israel has an unbelievable domestic structure and a vicious group of politicians. They have a Jewish community here which vicariously tries all the time to prove its manhood. The same people who were doves on Vietnam are hawks on Israel.

President: I know. I saw it in the House votes.

Kissinger: Israel has to give up some territory. What they get in return is the process, not a specific quid pro quo. Strictly militarily it is unequal; but in the bigger context it is Israel's salvation.

The Israelis also have to prove it is being raped by us before they can yield. They have developed the strategy to state something for peace which looks very reasonable to Americans. In '67 they wanted an Arab signature on a piece of paper. They they wanted a direct negotiation. The only one who dealt directly was Jordan-- who has done worse than any others. Now they are talking about wanting a comprehensive settlement. That is unattainable now. But we have gotten the Arabs off our back on the '67 borders. That is in their interest .

The Israelis figure they can play the President and Vice President against me. It didn't work before because of Nixon, and they couldn't get to him. Also we supported them in order to frustrate the Arabs.

President: They think I am closer to the Jewish community.

Kissinger: Yes, and Nelson also. They also count on me basically.

But we can't risk everything for a suicidal policy -- one which would bankrupt them. And no President can easily order another airlift. And while the leadership approved the alert, it was only as long as no American troops were involved.

President : That was made clear.

Kissinger: We were afraid the Soviet Union was going to put its troops in, and we were thinking of paratroopers in the Sinai. We were playing high stakes poker.

President: I don't think the American people will ever stand for another Vietnam.

Rockefeller: The oil would be impossible in another confrontation.

Kissinger: We might have to take the oil.

Rockefeller: They couldn't ship it if the Soviet Union didn't want to.

Kissinger: We could do it in a consumer confrontation -- that would be if we were doing it for all of us, but not for Israel.

This isn't an anti-Israeli presentation. I have great sympathy for them, and I don't think they can go back to the '67 borders everywhere. If they [the Arabs] say they want a peace, they are saying '67 and that means they want nothing.

We have to push them [the Israelis] to give up half of what they have in Egypt. That would take Egypt out of the game for five years. If they moved in Jordan, that would start an inter-Arab fight over the guerrillas. Then only Syria would be left. They probably would have to give up half of the Golan Heights. That would mean moving Israeli settlements. The Israelis are mounting a campaign against me, with DOD -- about what happened last October. They complain we mentioned disengagement in the Jordanian communique with President Nixon, but we gave them the substance (the plan) and Arabs get words.

You won't want to approve the whole list because they want to stock-pile so they wouldn't be dependent on us if another war starts. Also it would demonstrate pro-Israeli support. It would also polarize the Arabs--which Israel wants.

We have nine options and you have to give him something. We can dole out the other parts of the Urgent List as they move. On the big package I advise making no commitment now.

President: No, I can be factual about the Congressional situation. Two billion dollars a year will not be bought in Congress.

Kissinger: Rabin can't leave here without a commitment to a clear-cut strategy--to move with Egypt probably first and a flat commitment to move with Jordan. They proposed to Jordan a federation. Hussein thinks they are crazy. He had already accepted Allon's plan in principle. If we don't tie Jordan down, they will go with the Syrians. Israel is acquiescent or maybe eager for a war. They have been very provocative in their actions. The Syrians have a tough problem extending the UN. They will probably do it, but probably just hours before the deadline. Egypt will extend the deadline in October, and we can get one more in Syria -- but not next May. By then you can either force the Israelis or face the Syrians down. You can't do it now. The oil will be in shape by then.

President: I agree with you. Let's have another review before Rabin comes to concert on what we say. I want to say exactly the right things and be as tough as necessary.

Kissinger: The big talk is on Thursday. It would be good for Nelson to talk to them, too, after you. Then they know we are all together. Golda was a warm human being. She fought hard, but it was in the family, and she always kept us informed. Rabin is an intellectual general -- he wants to repeat the strategy of '71. He doesn't realize that we supported that then to frustrate the Arabs.

President: I think the Jewish community is not so hot for Rabin.



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