

Scowcroft H.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET/NODIS/XGDS~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford  
Secretary James Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense  
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to  
the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Friday, March 14, 1975  
11:00 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office  
The White House

Schlesinger: I am having to see whether there isn't some other way to get some money. I looked at the 814 legislation--it looks tenuous and Nixon used it in Cambodia in 1970. The Hill wants to slither away from this. I say they won't give us the money.

President: The odds are against us. But I want them to stand up to be counted. We have to stand up and keep pushing -- make a public record that we meant what we said. The bad results are their responsibility--not ours.

Schlesinger: Another ameliorating factor is this: We have rechecked our records and we found two million. Using it will cause some flak--I didn't want to do so without checking with you.

President: How did it happen?

Schlesinger: It was straight forward. In 1973 we built in an inflation factor which didn't materialize.

President: Do you have a problem testifying to it?



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DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5  
NSC Memo, 11/24/98, State Dept. Guidelines  
By lt, NARA, Date 1/20/00

CLASSIFIED BY Henry A. Kissinger  
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5 B 3  
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp to Det.

Schlesinger: No. It's only the appearance.

President: But if you don't, word will get out that we had it and didn't use it.

Schlesinger: Yes. But we will be accused of Pentagon shenanigans. I have put a hold on it for now. I would hold it until the votes are out. If it is negative, maybe we shouldn't use it. I could go to Mahon, McClellan and tell them.

President: It never hurts to be honest, even in a tough spot like this. We want to make every effort. We ought to go ahead and use it and tell them what has happened.

Schlesinger: Khmer morale is deteriorating some. Tuol Reap is being attacked and there is some progress. Under these circumstances, if the morale cracks it could crack very rapidly.

You are trying to balance steadfast American support with the safety of American lives.

President: How many are there?

Schlesinger: About 500. We have pulled the dependents. Dean recommends that when the vote comes, he pull out another 225. I think we can wait until the vote on Wednesday, but it is getting dicey. The foreign community is shrinking.

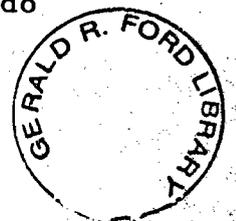
President: Supposing we ended up with 250 Americans there. What would happen?

Schlesinger: It's like Harbin in China. They were held for two or three years and some were killed.

President: Are these military?

Schlesinger: Some. We are on the edge of the law. It is the verge of a combat situation. They are unloading ammo. Congress hasn't complained yet, but it is risky.

President: I don't think Congress knows which way to go. What do you recommend?



Schlesinger: I would be inclined to approve pulling the 250 out and such foreigners as we have on our list. Right now we have no dependents.

We should tell Dean the chances are poor. He has the responsibility. Also tell him from the President that if it's a matter of stability of the American community, he should tell you immediately. You could also tell State to help surrender the city. Or you can tell the GKR that we are with them as long as they want to fight.

[Scowcroft notes: Get Patton quote, out amount--Americans hate a loser. Sending troops in. Did Truman make an address at the fall of Seoul at the beginning of the Korean War? ]

President: I am strongly inclined to the latter. I think we must stick to them. But make contingency plans to withdraw the 250.

Schlesinger: We could also move the Marines to Ubon to increase our readiness.

We also plan to use tear gas.

President: As I recall, our reservations on the treaty [Geneva Protocol] provide for that.

Schlesinger: That is true.

Scowcroft: Gradual attrition might be possible.

President: I like that if possible. And to hold Marines from Ubon, with your judgment if you have to move them.

[Much discussion of contingency planning. ]

Schlesinger: Could we have a drawdown of Marines from Okinawa and an F-4 squadron?

President: Can't the Marines find some other way to save money?

Schlesinger: I already ordered the rifle companies out. I didn't think that was a problem. I will recheck.



President: I don't like the visibility of that. I would prefer sending a supplemental up.

How about the F-4's?

Schlesinger: We would pull them back and rely on F-4's in Hawaii. The F-4-B is the oldest model. We don't have to do that now.

President: Let's defer that. And I think I'd much rather do the companies by asking for the \$15 million than pulling them out. It is psychologically the wrong time.

Schlesinger: I will go back and check.

The next problem is potentially embarrassing for you. Clements has wanted to go to Saudi Arabia. He wanted to go with Moorer. I agreed, which was probably wrong, but since then this discrimination had made it a disaster.

[Much discussion]

President: If there is a settlement, our relations with Saudi Arabia at that time could be extremely critical. And if we announce now he is not going and we don't get a settlement, we wonder, will that have affected it?

Schlesinger: We could send Jones. It is just that Brown is a red flag.

President: This is a matter of the highest importance. I want to think it over. The situation in Southeast Asia may change the whole thing. I want to think seriously about this. If Southeast Asia deteriorates, the Chairman should be here.

Schlesinger: Change the cable traffic to indicate "senior military man, hopefully General Brown."

President: Don't signal any warning.

Schlesinger: I have something about Dewey J. Bartlett.



President: You mean Joe Bartlett. What about him?

Schlesinger: The letter of recommendation for him to be Brigadier General in the reserves. A disgruntled Colonel has said politics will win and Bartlett will be promoted. General Anderson headed the board. This was unusual. Anderson took the Bartlett file and made a strong speech. There are many coincidences. The Board was properly constituted, but it will be vulnerable to charges of favoritism.

President: The issue is, was the Board honest? Does Joe deserve this promotion -- in comparison with his contemporaries. Would another board come up with the same result.

Schlesinger: Yes, but because of the precedent.....

President: Look into it--see about having another board review it. Joe is a proud marine.



✓ P/S Schlesinger  
14 Mar 73

S Having to see whether things isn't some other way to get some money, he asked at 8:45 he looks tomorrow & I used it in Cambodia on 70.

Kill wanted to slash away from this. I say they would give me money.

P Odds are against us. But I want them to stand to be counted. We have to stand up & keep pushing - make a public record that we meant what we said. Bad results are their job, not ours.

S Another accelerating factor we have scheduled our records and found 21, but using it will cause some flak I'd didn't want to deal w/o checking w/ you.

P How did it happen?

S Straight forward. In 73 we built in <sup>inflation</sup> ~~our~~ factors which didn't materialize.

P Do you have a prob testifying to it?

S No. It only a conjecture.

A But if you don't, word will get out that we had it & didn't use it.

S Yes. But we will be accused of Pentagon shenanigans. I have put a ball on it for now. I would hold it till the votes are out. <sup>If my wife says</sup> ~~we should use it.~~ I should go to Anwar, MacCallister & tell them.

P Never hurts to be honest, even in a tough spot like this. We want to make every effort. We ought to go ahead & use it & tell them what has happened.

S Khmer morale is deteriorating some. Troop keep is being attacked & some progress. Under that



crisis, if morale cracks it could crack  
very rapidly.

You trying to balance steadfast US support  
w/ safety of US lives.

Q How many are there?

S About 500. We have pulled dependents  
from non-military areas. We can  
pull out another 225. I think we can  
wait until a vote is held, but it is  
getting clerical. The foreign community  
is shrinking.

Q Supposing we pulled w/ w/ 250 American  
troops. What would happen?

S Like Kandahar in China. They were held  
for 2-3 yrs, some killed.

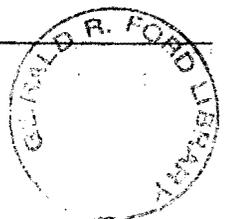
Q Are there military?

S Some. We are on a edge of a base. It is  
in a range of combat - they are not working  
around. They haven't complained yet, but  
it is risky.

Y I don't think they know which way to go. What  
do you recommend?

S I would be inclined to oppose pulling 250 &  
such foreigners as we have on our list. Report  
now we have no dependents.

We should tell Dave Chance one more. He has  
resp. Ask the brain from Poles that if stability  
of Russian community, he should tell your  
community. You could also tell State to help  
dismantle a city. Or you can tell SEC that  
we are w/ them ~~and~~ as long as they want to  
fight.



f → Art Poston guests visit - On visitors with a loser  
Sending traps in

→ Did Truman make an address at fall of Sept or Oct <sup>begin of Korean war.</sup>

P I strongly incline to let it, I think we must stick to China. But make contingency plans  
to withdraw, 250.

S We could also move Messies to China to increase  
our machines.

We also plan to use China gas.)

P As I recall, our reservations on treaty prohibit for  
that.

S That is true.

S. General attention might be possible

P I like that if possible. And to sell Messies from China  
w/ your judgment if you want to use them.

(Much discussion of contingency  
plans)

S asked for demolition of Messies from American  
+ F-4's to go.

P Could Messies find some other way to use money?

S I already ordered a like company and - I didn't think  
that was a prob. I will recheck.

P I don't like a possibility of that. I would prefer having  
a supplemental exp.  
Have about a F-4's

S We would pull them back + rely on F-4's in the area  
The F-4B is a older so model. We don't have  
do that now.

P Let's defer that. And I think I'd wish rather do  
a company by asking for a \$15 million than  
pulling them and. It is pay a very long time.

S I will go back + check.

Next prob is particularly embarrassing to you



Clayton has wanted to go to S.A. Wanted to go to  
of Moore. I agreed, which was <sup>not</sup> wrong, but since  
then this discrimination has made it a disaster.

(Much discussion)

P If there is a ~~set~~ settlement, an ~~relation~~ w/ SEA  
at that time could be extremely critical. And if we  
I ~~don't want to make~~ don't get settlement ~~anymore~~  
now he is not going & we don't get a settlement, will  
that have affected it?

S We could send press. It just that Brown is a  
red flag.

P This is a matter of highest importance, I want to  
think it over. Sit in SEA ~~my~~ <sup>change</sup> ~~board~~ whole  
thing. ~~and~~ I want to think seriously about  
this. If SEA deteriorates, Chairman should be  
there here.

S Change cable traffic to indicate "senior mil.  
man, hopefully Gene Brown".

P Don't signal any warning.

S Donny J. Bartlett.

P You mean Joe Bartlett. What about him?

S Letter of man for him to be B.G. reserves. A  
disgruntled Col has said politics will win &  
Bartlett will be promoted. Gen Anderson headed a  
board - unusual - Anderson took Bartlett job  
& made strong speech. Many circumstances. Board  
was properly constituted, but it will be vulnerable  
to charges of favoritism.

P The issue is, was board honest. Does Joe deserve  
this promotion - in comparison w/ his countryman

Would another bond come up w/c same?

S Yes, but because of a precedent-

P look into it - about having another bond ~~issued~~ if  
for is a good measure.

