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[meeting of 8/30/76]

MEMORANDUM

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford Senator Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.) Senator Clifford Case (R-N.J.) Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: September, 1976

PLACE:

The Oval Office

<u>President</u>: (Discussion of New York, New Jersey at the convention and the New York senatorial race.)

Javits: (New York politics.)

<u>President</u>: I appreciate your coming down to talk. I understand Henry was up to meet with you. The Saudis originally asked for 4468 Sidewinder That was reduced by the Air Force to 2400. Then we cut it to 1000. Thet want 650 just for training. On the Maverick, they ordered 1000 and want 1500 more. Are we agreed on the facts?

Case and Javits: There is no disagreement on those numbers.

President: I think we have to put it on a broader base than just these missiles. The Saudis have been very helpful in keeping oil prices under some kind of control. I don't think we should kick them in the teeth on this order in the light of their importance.

Javits: I think we have to look at this from your point of view. Henry said coming in that he had my necessities in mind. The Saudis depend on us. No one can ever break them off because of our backing. This is a matter of importance to you, on an issue which means a lot in the country. All they really need now is the training weapons. I am speaking frankly. You can use the Congress as your Son of a Bitch for reducing this. There are even better cases for reducing the Maverick -- they kill people.

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<u>Case:</u> I think Jack made a good case. I don't know how deeply the Saudis will feel about it. If they can be made to feel themselves partners in your election -- which is what Jack is talking about. A defense estimate did indicate that with the number of missiles the Arabs had, the Israelis only had a margin of superiority rather than the wide superiority we had thought. We might wake up one day to find there is no margin at all.

My point is we are arguing all the time with things which are making the situation more difficult. Maybe Israel has no future...

President: I think Israel is incomparably better off than it was in '73.

Kissinger: Egypt is running down.

<u>Case:</u> That is true, but I am looking down the road. With the arms that Arab money can buy over the next decade, the future looks dark to me.

<u>President:</u> Let me review the situation. We have given Israel over \$4 billion over two years. The Egyptian military machine is running down, as Henry says. Syria is occupied in Lebanon and Israel as a result has far fewer problems there. Israel's two greatest adversaires are not in a position at all like they were in '73. So Israel is much better off and I am glad. Is that right, Henry?

<u>Kissinger</u>: Yes, it is. One other factor is the PLO which has been greatly weakened. They were a wild card in the whole picture. The Saudis could turn to Europe for arms and still force us to protect them because we have to protect the oil from falling into hostile hands.

<u>Case:</u> I don't disagree with your assessment. The weapons won't come in for three or four years anyway. Henty has done a fantic job in this area, as he has elsewhere, and now that the damned convention is over we can him some more.

President: I agree with that.

<u>Case:</u> We are not stiff necked. The Mavericks are the worst weapon. We would like to see a big change in Maverick and a small one in the Sidewinder.

President: Like what?

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<u>Kissinger</u>: I want you to read this cable from Porter. [He presents a cable anticipating the Saudi reaction.]

<u>Javits</u>: I think 800 Sidewinders and 750 Mavericks is in the ballpark. I would put it to the Saudis that this is the season and the President needs help. I don't agree with the idea that the Saudis can turn elsewhere. The Saudi establishment is tied closely to us -- and I am glad of it. The OPEC thing can't go on. If you keep paying this oil price we will have a depression which will make Hoover look sick.

<u>President</u>: I agree. That is why I don't understand this GAO study of synthetic fuels. They couldn't have the interest of the country at heart.

<u>Javits:</u> But, understandably, you haven't gone to the people on it. They are your constituency.

President: Well, these figures for Sidewinder bother me very much.

<u>Kissinger</u>: Maybe we could dealy the Mavericks until the next session. They won't go away.

<u>Javits</u>: Ithink it is better to have a reduction in both --a slight one -maybe 850 -- in the Sidewinder and a big cut in the Mavericks.

<u>Kissinger</u>: But we already, in response to Humphrey, et al, cut it down to 1,000. Maybe we should have reduced only to 1500 and then let ourselves be talked down from there.

<u>Javits:</u> You are probably right. I can't argue that. It is only perception. But let me check the 1,000 Sidewinders and defer the Maverick. I will let you know early tomorrow.



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