

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND

HENRY A. KISSINGER  
SECRETARY OF STATE

YITZHAK RABIN  
PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL  
AND

ANWAR SADAT  
PRESIDENT OF EGYPT

AND  
QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

CAMP DAVID, MARYLAND

12:00 NOON EDT

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Hello, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Henry, how are you?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I am fine. How nice to hear from you.

THE PRESIDENT: The same to you. I have just been warned by Ron -- I have to tell you, and later when I talk to the Prime Minister and the President -- that WHCA is recording this conversation.

You don't have any objections, I trust?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, I don't have any objection.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they wanted it for historical purposes.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Right.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me say very, very deeply how very grateful I am for the tremendous effort that you have made in this last round of negotiations, but I know how long and how hard and devotedly you have spent many, many hours, not only with me, but with Prime Minister Rabin and President Sadat.

I think this is a great achievement, one of the most historic, certainly of this decade and perhaps in this century, and I know that the American people will be most grateful for the successful efforts that you have made. I just want to express it very strongly and very deeply for myself.

MORE

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I appreciate this very much, Mr. President, and, of course, we have spent more time on the Middle East -- you and I -- than on almost any other problem.

THE PRESIDENT: I think if we added up the hours, it would be a good many days, and the fact that we finally made a successful conclusion I know gives you, as well as myself, and many others, a great deal of satisfaction. It is in the best interests of not only the two countries ourselves, but in my judgment, Henry, one of the great achievements for the world at this time.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I think it gives peace a chance in this area, and the consequences the U.S. pointed out repeatedly of stalemate are simply unacceptable.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sure there will be some critics, but I think in all honesty they have to understand what the alternatives would have been.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Exactly, Mr. President. That is the problem, that the continuation of the stalemate would have had both military and economic consequences for the world, that we had to do something about.

THE PRESIDENT: You are leaving very shortly, as I understand, for the actual initialing.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I am going to see Prime Minister Rabin now, and then we are going to initial the documents.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Then shortly after that, I will go to Egypt to meet with President Sadat and participate in the initialing of the documents there.

THE PRESIDENT: You will actually carry the documents with you to Alexandria, then?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Exactly, the documents and maps.

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to call the Prime Minister after talking with you, and I will express to him my appreciation, but if you will do it in person for me, I would also be very grateful.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I will do that, Mr. President, and I look forward very much to seeing you on Thursday.

MORE

THE PRESIDENT: You are getting in Wednesday night, as I understand?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That is right. I am getting in Wednesday night about nine or ten o'clock.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will be at the airport to meet you.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: It is arranged for us to have a bipartisan leadership meeting on Thursday morning at 8 a.m.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Good.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sure that their reaction will be the same as mine, that this is a great achievement for not only the parties involved, but for the world as a whole, and I just can't express deeply enough my appreciation for your own magnificent efforts in this area.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Mr. President, we have worked together on this, and your strong support and your leadership and your talks with Sadat and Rabin made this possible.

THE PRESIDENT: You go over there and participate with the Prime Minister, give him my best, and at the same time give Nancy my very best.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Thank you, and the best to Betty.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, and we will see you Wednesday night.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: See you Wednesday night.

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THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Prime Minister, how are you, sir?

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: I am fine, Mr. President. How are you?

THE PRESIDENT: I am excellent, thank you, and I just finished talking with Henry. I understand he is coming over to meet with you very shortly for the actual initialing, and let me congratulate you for the superb efforts you have made under most trying circumstances.

I think your role has been one of great statesmanship under terribly difficult circumstances, and I congratulate you and compliment you on the achievement of, I think, an outstanding negotiation that is culminated in a document that will lead to great progress in the Middle East for the benefit of the world as a whole.

MORE

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: Mr. President, thank you very much for your kind words. It was not an easy decision. They were complicated negotiations, but we have decided this time to take risks, and I stress to take risks, for an opening for peace.

I hope that what we have decided will set a new pattern in the area, and we all hope here that the agreement will really lead to both tranquility in the area and to bring closer the positions of at least Egypt and Israel.

I would like to thank you very much for the role that you personally -- the United States -- and your envoy, Dr. Kissinger, have served in the achievement of this agreement.

THE PRESIDENT: I thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister. Let me assure you that you can count on us to continue to stand with you. We have a close relationship, and it will continue as we move forward under the basis of this outstanding agreement.

You have laid a solid foundation with this agreement, in my judgment, on which we can build for real peace efforts in the future.

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: We all hope for it here, and we really hope that it will be the beginning of something which we have not yet experienced in this area, and we hope that the other side, the Egyptian side, feels the same.

THE PRESIDENT: You can rest assured that we will work with you to make certain that the agreement is carried out, not only in the spirit, but in the letter, and that we expect to continue the relationship that we have had over a good many years, your country and ours.

You have heroic people, and the American people are most sympathetic to those that you so ably represent, Mr. Prime Minister.

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: Mr. President, as you are fully aware, we appreciate very much you, we appreciate very much the special relations that have been so significant in the past and the present between our two countries, and I am sure that what we have done there today will add a new dimension to the relations between our two countries.

THE PRESIDENT: Will you give my very best to Mrs. Rabin, and I hope that in the near future you can come back and see us again, sir.

MORE

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: Thank you, very much, Mr. President, and please convey our best wishes to Mrs. Ford.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, and we will see you, I hope, soon.

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: I hope so, too.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Goodbye.

PRIME MINISTER RABIN: Goodbye.

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THE PRESIDENT: Hello, President Sadat.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Hello. This is President Sadat.

THE PRESIDENT: How are you this morning?

President Sadat, I wanted to call you and congratulate you on the great role that you played in the negotiations that have culminated in this agreement.

PRESIDENT SADAT: (President Sadat's remarks are incomplete due to the poor telephone transmission from Egypt.)

Hello?

THE PRESIDENT: Unfortunately, I don't hear you too well, Mr. President. I hope that my conversation is coming through more clearly.

Let me express most emphatically on behalf of my Government the appreciation for your statesmanship, despite adversity, and some criticism, and the spirit with which you have approached the need for an agreement.

I am most grateful for the leadership that you have given, and I look forward to continuing to work with you in --

PRESIDENT: Hello?

THE PRESIDENT: Hello. Can you hear me, Mr. President?

MORE

PRESIDENT SADAT: No, I can't hear you very well.

THE PRESIDENT: I know that you and I recognize that stagnation and stalemate in the Middle East would have been potentially disastrous, and your leadership in working with Secretary Kissinger and with the Israelis, all of us are most grateful for.

As we continue to work together, personally, as well as Government to Government --

PRESIDENT SADAT: Hello?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I can hear you, Mr. President. I hope you can hear me, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT SADAT: President Ford, hello.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't hear too well, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT SADAT: President Ford, are you speaking?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, this is President Ford.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Go ahead, please.

THE PRESIDENT: The connection, unfortunately, is not too good for me to hear your comments, Mr. President.

Let me say, if I might, despite the difficulties that Mrs. Ford and I hope that Mrs. Sadat and you and your children will visit the United States sometime this fall.

Secretary Kissinger has told me of the very warm hospitality that you have extended to him and Mrs. Kissinger, and we look forward to reciprocating when you come to the United States in the fall of 1975.

I regret that I can't hear. The connection is very bad. I hope that you can hear me and my comments from the United States.

Mr. President, I understand that Secretary Kissinger is coming to Alexandria to personally deliver the document for your initialing, and I have asked Henry to extend to you on that occasion the gratitude and appreciation of the American people for your patience, your leadership and your understanding of the need and necessity for a forward step, an important step in the ultimate aim of total peace in the Middle East.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Hello, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, Mr. President.

I can hear you better now, sir.

MORE

PRESIDENT SADAT: Mr. President, I hope you and your family are well.

THE PRESIDENT: I am feeling very well, Mr. President, and I hope you are, too.

PRESIDENT SADAT: I want to thank you for your personal message.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, I couldn't hear every word distinctly, but I got the thrust of your kind comments, and your encouraging words, and I can assure you that we will work with Egypt, not only in seeing that the agreement is implemented with the spirit, as well as the letter, that we will continue to develop the good relations between Egypt and the United States, working to make sure that we expand trade, tourism and our help to the maximum degree possible and that this is the way the United States can continue to play a constructive role in the most important area -- the Middle East.

You have my personal assurance, and I am sure the Congress will cooperate because it is recognized in the United States that the Middle East is in a vitally important area of the world and that our participation in a constructive way is an important element in the tremendous success that has been achieved in the negotiations between your country and Israel. I wish to thank you very, very much.

I said a few moments ago that Mrs. Ford and I look forward to having Mrs. Sadat, your family and yourself here in the United States early this fall.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Mr. President, I am looking forward to this visit with you and Mrs. Ford and your family, as a further step towards a successful and peaceful conclusion.

I again thank you, but it is essential, Mr. President, that we must keep the momentum of the peace going and continue it.

THE PRESIDENT: I can assure you, Mr. President, we are going to keep the momentum going in the peace process. We will not tolerate stagnation or stalemate. The momentum is on the way for a peaceful solution on a permanent and equitable basis, and you have my pledge that we will make sure that that momentum keeps going.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I look forward to seeing you after that wonderful visit we had in Salzburg, and give my very best to Mrs. Sadat, if you will, please.

MORE

PRESIDENT SADAT: Thank you very much, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, sir.

PRESIDENT SADAT: I should like to add another point, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

PRESIDENT SADAT: I think I would like to --

THE PRESIDENT: I, unfortunately, cannot hear as well as I would like the last comments you made. The connection from here is not, apparently, as good as I hope you have there, but --

PRESIDENT SADAT: I hear you quite well.

THE PRESIDENT: The efforts of Secretary Kissinger and myself we feel were completely worth what we have done, but our efforts could not have been successful without the leadership and the statesmanship by you and the equally fine actions by the Israeli Government and Prime Minister Rabin.

As I said a moment ago, President Sadat, the momentum is moving in the right direction, and you have my personal assurance that we will continue that movement because it is vital, not only in the Middle East, but elsewhere for the benefit of all peoples.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Thank you, Mr. President, very much.

THE PRESIDENT: We will see you soon, I hope.

PRESIDENT SADAT: We are looking forward to coming, with pleasure, and convey my good wishes to your family.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, and the best to yours, sir.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Have a good day, and Henry will be there shortly, I understand.

PRESIDENT SADAT: I will wait for him.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay. Goodbye.

PRESIDENT SADAT: Bye.

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THE PRESIDENT: I understand there is a statement to be released from the White House that points out the strong feelings that I have that this negotiation culminating in the agreement is a great success in not only preventing stagnation and stalemate in the Middle East but, more importantly, getting the momentum going for what all of us hope will be a continued effort to expand the permanent peace that all hope for that would conform, of course, to the resolutions in the United Nations, 242 and 338.

I suspect there can be anticipated some criticism, but I respectfully suggest that, if we had not achieved this historic settlement, the alternative would have been turmoil, increased tension, obviously greater dangers in the Middle East for a renewal of the kind of tragic conflict that took place in 1973.

By the agreement between Israel and Egypt, the momentum has been continued, and I am convinced that when the Congress and the American people see what has been achieved and objectively look at the alternative of no success, that the Congress and the American people will support our role.

QUESTION: What sort of criticism do you anticipate, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not sure there will be too much criticism, but there will be some legitimate questions asked, such as what is the anticipated role of the limited number of American technicians, civilian experts.

I can assure the Congress and the American people that the number will be in the range of 100 to 150. They will be civilians; they will be technicians; they will have no military role; they will be in the United Nations zone.

So, this contribution by the United States I think is a constructive one and not one that has great peril or danger. The United States will, of course, contribute assistance to Israel, and we will continue our aid to Egypt.

This, I believe, is another constructive effort by the United States to this peace agreement, this effort to, in the long run, provide a permanent, fair and equitable settlement of the many differences in the Middle East.

QUESTION: If Congress should not approve the stationing of technicians there, will the agreement fall apart?

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THE PRESIDENT: It would have a very serious impact because the contribution of the United States is important and those technicians are a vital ingredient in assuring both Egypt and Israel that the agreement will be upheld.

So, a turndown by the Congress would have serious repercussions.

QUESTION: What will be their role, Mr. President? They are not acting as policemen to enforce the agreement, are they?

THE PRESIDENT: They are not. They are going to be stationed in what you can call warning stations, and their role will simply be that of a technician and have no other responsibilities.

QUESTION: Mr. President, has there been any Russian comment on the presence of technicians themselves as distinguished from criticism of having the early warning teams outside of the U.N. zone?

THE PRESIDENT: I have read of some questions being raised. I have not seen any -- and I don't believe there is any -- direct objection.

QUESTION: Mr. President, why is it necessary to have Americans to do that? Can't other people be trained to do that, or is it more than just the technical skills they will bring to that that makes it important?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a very highly, very sophisticated, technical knowledge, and we have Americans who are trained and who can carry on that responsibility. I believe that both Egypt and Israel have faith that ours will perform that function in a responsible and fair way.

QUESTION: I suppose the criticism that is going to be leveled against that, is that by putting those people there you increase the danger that they could become hostages and the United States could be drawn in in a direct way into a new conflict.

Is that part of the reason they are there?

THE PRESIDENT: They are not there for the potentiality of being held hostage. They are there to perform a technical responsibility, and I have no fear that they can or will be held hostage under any circumstances.

QUESTION: Mr. President, there has been some talk about the figure of \$3.1 billion in aid to Israel. Is that accurate?

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THE PRESIDENT: That is not an accurate figure. Our aid will be significant, but I would not at this point wish to comment on the precise dollar total.

QUESTION: What is the next step in the Middle East? Are you going to try to negotiate a Syrian-Israeli agreement now?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only say that this is a step in the overall settlement. The precise next step has not yet been discussed.

I will, of course, talk to Secretary Kissinger on his return but, having achieved this, I can only say our overall objective fits in with the two U.N. resolutions, 242 and 338.

QUESTION: Is there any change in the picture on your dealings with Congress on the oil veto? It is still expected it will lead to a veto.

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't want to go beyond what we said -- when was it, Friday morning? I am encouraged. I am always optimistic, but until Congress returns and until we hear from the Democratic leaders, I don't believe I should comment further.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Mr. President.

END (AT 12:31 P.M. EDT)