MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

President Nixon
James R. Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense
William Clements, Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Joint Chiefs of Staff
Major General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME:
December 22, 1973

PLACE:
The Cabinet Room

The President: Carrero Blanco was a great man.

Moorer: The Spanish were very good during the Middle East war.

Zumwalt: So were the Arabs.

The President: With all the kicking around of the Europeans and Japanese, in their position, what would you do? The British are on a three-day week. Whose side would you be on? It is blackmail, but for over five years there has been no give in five years. We can't deliver, and the Israelis dig in. So they won't ship oil until there is movement. Their interests are realistic. If the Israelis dig in after their elections, all hell will break loose. The Arabs have learned to fight, not so well as the Israelis, but they did well. We normally side with Israel for many reasons, but we must realize this is the time for a settlement. I hope the hawks in Israel realize that.

The Europeans should have cooperated with us because of the Soviet Union, but the basis of their position is how can they live without oil.

Moorer: NATO cannot fight without Arab oil.
The President: I want to say a couple of things. It came out better than expected on our appropriations. I was afraid that after Vietnam, the peaceiks would cut $15 billion. Ironically, the Middle East war helped us come out well. The Israeli lobby helped defend against cuts in the defense budget. Southeast Asia is still dangerous and our hands are tied. But the GVN will fight well.

Our Soviet summits bear on these things. But the basic fact is that our strength has to be such that we can play a peacemaking role in the world. Many Americans don't want us to, but who else can? Japan and Germany could, but the world doesn't want them to. Who else is big? The Soviet Union, the Chinese, and possibly the Japanese. The Japanese-American alliance is essential if the Japanese are not to make a deal with the Soviet Union against China; they could possibly make a deal with China but that is dangerous without our help. The rest of the world matters in humanitarian and raw material terms, but not in power terms.

Critical to us playing our role in the world is our strength and a policy which will command respect.

That gets us to our Armed Forces -- and your problems. On the All-Volunteer force -- I hope it will work but I'm afraid the quality will decline. If you can keep up the quality of the officer corps. Good people go to the academies in war and depression. I talked with Jim. We will support a strong budget. Jim, have you told them about the increased numbers?

Schlesinger: I said you were considering it.

The President: We are helped right now by the Israeli crisis. That will help with the airlift; and energy, which will cause some slack in the economy. Not much, but we will get Congressional support to boosting the budget a bit. We need the money in defense -- particularly in hardware areas. But we won't get it unless there are good reasons. We won't get unlimited amounts but we want to look at some ideas.

My major concern is the power balance. But in order to sell it, we have to use the energy and airlift factors to get the money. That is where we stand.
I can't tell you where we stand in SALT and MBFR except it will be tough.

With all our talks with the Soviet Union and the Chinese, we must realize they are basically antagonistic toward us -- and with each other. The Chinese need us against the Soviet Union. We talk with them without illusions. We have to convince the American people that we are trying to have peaceful relations. But without adequate strength, our stance in the world wouldn't matter. The Prime Minister of Chad doesn't matter; we treat them nice, but none of them matter.

I have a bearish attitude about Europe. A united Europe is premature. The Europeans are essentially parochial. The chance they will form a third bloc is premature. We will stand with NATO, but the leadership won't come from the Europeans -- it must come from us.

If I had my way, I would add $20 billion to the budget but we can't do that. The Soviet Union doesn't care about that.

Admiral, you head off.

Admiral Moorer: This Christmas was better than last. Last year there was a major equipment push into Vietnam. This fall another push into Israel. We have reduced our staying power.

It was a good move, which had JCS support. Israel was not defeated and Arabs weren't either.

We now need to look at the worldwide posture and our base structure. We need bases. The Portuguese have bases clear around Africa.

We should renegotiate Diego Garcia and readjust our deployment patterns, perhaps focussing on the Indian Ocean. We need bases, and we will be making recommendations. Ethiopia, for example. Subic is 5,000 miles from the Indian Ocean.

We could discuss SALT and MBFR later if we have time.

The President: It's probably premature. We want a deal, but we will be tough.

Admiral Moorer: Defense has closed ranks. The Soviet position is intolerable and we will be very tough.
Admiral Zumwalt: I applaud your decision to add to the budget. I would like to compare the Mediterranean fleet now with where we were after Jordan. We have now less cooperation in the Eastern Mediterranean than we had before. There are three elements: First is force levels. In '70, we already were starting down. The most worrisome is the drop to 13 carriers from the peak of 24.

The President: Jim told me about that.

Admiral Zumwalt: Vietnam pushed us back and the Middle East crisis has delayed the climb back up.

On the good side, we have used part of the money for laid-up ships to buy new ones. We are now buying at more than the replacement rates if Congress gives us our program.

We need to procure some low-cost ships in order to get numbers. The Soviet Union does this; they still buy diesel submarines. We in '75 will have a cruise missile submarine.

Congress doesn't like this -- they are giving us two DLGN, which will cost $7-8 million. Conventional ships. We have to have a mix.

The President: Brent, make a note on the bases and on the force mix.

All these Prime Ministers know the importance of the Indian Ocean. Bhutto -- who is basically a left-wing clown -- knows that India is important this way.

Why are the Thais shifting? Because they fear we may be leaving. There is a feeling in that part of the world that the U.S. is going home. What we have to do from a foreign policy standpoint -- the U.S. has to have bases and naval strength. Everyone has to play a role -- it must look apparent.

Take the British and the great role they played. It is the appearances of strength. We need that now in terms of bases, less expensive carriers. If the Air Force... You buy less expensive planes. We need the numbers. We need to have a presence, get the flag out. There will be bitching, but it is essential. We need to maintain a presence in Japan, Korea, irrespective of the real threat.
Admiral Zumwalt: You just took my conclusion out of my mouth, Mr. President. I wind up with 55 in our current capacity and 45 into modernisation in '70. Next year it is just the reverse. We will be able to keep up now with the Soviet rate.

The President: Abe?

General Abrams: I am trying to make the Army we have as combat-ready as we can. On manpower, we will make the combat level of the Army stronger and bigger. Even though the Army is smaller, the combat need is larger.

The President: What does that mean?

General Abrams: It means we reduce headquarters, consolidation, modify the training establishment. Maybe we'll do more than we should, but we've got to go that way.

President: I agree if that is right -- but not just because it is popular.

General Abrams: Materiel -- here we have been supplying our friends with what we need for ourselves. As we are able to replace these, combat readiness will improve. The third thing is the officer and NCO esprit. They have to have strength to take the brick bats.

The President: I remember talking to MacArthur. He was tough in practice. Your people are in the service because you believe. That is what we must have. The British again, they would pick the military because it was a way to serve. We want to be sure you all know we've got to have a strong officer and NCO Corps. The great earlier military leaders led rabble. The leadership is important. I know in an All-Volunteer force the blacks have gone up. Don't wring your hands about them. They can become fine men. The job of the military is not rehabilitation but it is a great service the military performs and they can turn into fine Americans. In sports, the blacks might not have the brains and education, but they have more drive and guts. Americans are snobs -- about color, education, etc. The blacks, with the training the service can give them, can contribute to this country.

General Abrams: We are snobs. When we decided to help the RF/PF, we made a rule that the only people who could work with them were those who had served in a rifle company. That was because a rifle company combat forces men to change their values. They come out of this experience with a better sense of values.
The President: They see who the men are.

General Abrams: I was addressing a group once and a black asked me about the number of blacks coming into the Army. I told him it was of no concern to me. The audience went wild with applause. The same thing with women. They are trying harder; they have a motivation the men don't have.

The President: Are our tanks inferior to Soviet tanks -- straight out?

General Abrams: No, they are not.

The President: Do we need more and better tanks and anti-tank weapons?

On supplying our allies, we have got to do it. That damned State Department. Take Peru -- some of the Latin Americans need tanks as a front. But they will buy them and we should sell them. If you get more money, what is the first thing you would do? Which would affect production?

General Abrams: Tanks.

The President: I want a hard look at getting more tanks.

Let's hear from the Air Force.

General Brown: In this supplemental, I think the dollars will count for a lot. These are not manpower dollars. The inspired airlift will help us greatly.

The President: We were better in the October airlift. Why?

General Brown: Because of the C-5's.

The President: Should we buy more?

General Brown: We are studying both the C-5 and 747.

Secretary Clements: We need to study this.

The President: All our talk of bases may come to naught because of Fulbright and the others. The airlift is an impressive thing that people see. Won't the C-5 and 747 produce jobs quickly?
Secretary Clements: Yes, but it will take time for Lockheed.

The President: Don't discuss jobs outside this room, but unemployment could go to 6-7% and still we'd get nothing. Congress will go to public service jobs -- that means nothing to the country. To goose the economy, the private sector is the best place. In government the best place is the military, because it helps the country. Don't write any memos on this. We are doing it for the right reasons -- the recession just gives us the excuse.

General Brown: I have two other points, in addition to the need for bases. We will get programs to increase your options in strategic forces and to apply the lessons of the Middle East. We are working on stand-off systems -- and we will use the supplemental to keep this going -- for us and for the Israelis if war comes again.

Our manpower quality has never been higher.

The President: I read every day about the improved Soviet strategic capability. Aren't we falling behind?

General Brown: The Soviet Union is doing development rather than prototypes; we used to, but we try to do it now on paper. That is where they have it over us.

The President: Let's do more of that.

For MAP, let's try to have not just the most sophisticated systems, but something we can sell that they can use.

General Brown: We will increase the yield of the Minuteman. We are looking at a bigger missile.

The President: Do we need it?

General Brown: Yes. Depending on SALT.

The President: Yes. The fact that we are ahead of the Soviets in Navy helped us in SALT I. We are ahead in submarines and navy missiles, aren't we?
General Cushman: We need to modernize. We get tanks and anti-tank from the Army and ships from the Navy, so whatever helps them there, helps us. People are our secret weapon. I agree with Abe, but my only concern with the blacks is they tend to concentrate in units where the fighting would be, leaving us open -- wrongly -- to racial charges.

The President: This add-on idea is mine and it will be a job selling it. In your speeches, don't put it into anti-Soviet tones, but say that we must be second to none; if SALT fails we have to be able to take care of our needs. Stress being number one -- not anti-Soviet stridency. We can't afford to be number two. We need a sense of direction and the right perspectives.

You were magnificent today. I think people should be proud of the uniform. Wear your uniforms when you are out -- tell your people to.

The great sadness in America today -- and we are part of the elite -- is the state of the elite class. The ministers, professors, the media, -- with many exceptions in all of them -- these groups who mold the youth are wrong-headed. Much of this comes from businessmen also.

The character flaw in the elite is they are ashamed of our country. They are unilateral disarmers. They don't believe we should play a role in the world. They won't face the question: if we don't play the role, who will?

I have met with all of them. You are part of the elite. You must confront them, try to show them what should be our real values. Look at the leaders of our opponents -- they come from the soil. They are simple and tough -- they're peasants. If it weren't for their terrible Communist system, we would be in terrible trouble. Our system is better. America has a crisis in its elite class. Will we go the way of the British, French, Italians, and maybe even the Germans? Their problem is they are afraid of the left. Their idea is: no role in the world, just take care of ourselves. It would be easy for you to pander to these elite attitudes, but unless some of the elite start to speak up, we will be finished in 5-10 years. The day we look down on the threats and we blink, we are finished.

Let me say in conclusion, we must be proud of the United States and every war we have fought in this country. We are nonaggressive; we have no designs on anyone. We have never had a greater chance for dealing with
the Soviet Union and the Chinese and in the Middle East. The key to it all is in this room. We won't get all we want, but what we need is the spirit of our military and with the elite.

I know you are sick of the speeches to Kiwanis and all that, and the badgering you take, but stick with it. We have to carry the burden.

Thank you.
P: Carmen Belong was a good man.
M: Spanish was very good. Having McNamara
2 - He was a leader.

P: We all dying around if I can't stop in their position. What would you do?
M: Once I say access:

I was sick and you know? It is a moment, but even I say that he
in the point in a way. We can't

1 - We never think until there is

M: A little different.

3 - I thought in after their election, old

I said the middle 100. None have
died & fought. We're not killing
I, but they all will.

We are not going to I for any

I wish for them. They are in

Fisher.

Europe should have ingenuity. We have
done it, but I think

10 - They live the

W. NATO cannot forget or a decision.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

UNPROCESS

SUB

Figure 1: A handwritten note discussing UN processes and potentially sensitive information.

Notes:
1. The note mentions the UN process, possibly related to China, and the need to avoid certain topics.
2. It refers to a specific fragment or document with the term "SUB."
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

[Handwritten text with several lines of text discussing policy and its implementation, with a signature at the bottom.]
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

but we need a money in different
particularly in hundred areas. And
we wish but it unless there are good
reason.
but unlimited amounts but we
want to look at some time.
My major concern is expensive
traveller. But in order to sell it,
and show to lead a different
accept future to give money,
and that is where we stand. Can't
we open when we deal in
SPA + NPA + R ex vzt until we
truly,
2/12 and can take 5/55 R C,
and we must we why they are
truly not expensive it is 20-5
with Washington. (Dwight need
on against 59-3)
We talk with them u o u whatever we
shall to examine Americans that we
see, try to have peaceful situation.
But if we have of significant strength, we
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Since my wife wouldn't write, P.M. of U.S. Aid Chairman's matter, we tell
Tom mid, but they then write.
I have a brother, Attorney about
Evan. Until Evan is practical,
I were one essentially practical.
Ormon they will pain & I've
be practical, but will found
as/NGO, but realising who's
and then Evan must come
from her.

If I had my way I would pull
I'd like to find it but have write
do that, I do definitely care
about that.

Adm. your loyal to,
M. This Years with them first, last
year mayor long push into U.N.
This fall another 2 funds into
Israel. We have it now now
staying power.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Mr - let me remind you, which I suppose. (not elected + Arabs aren't)

We must back off. Look at world with patience + our best efforts. We need

basis. Background here loses their normal office.

We should negotiate, keep Basra + readjust our deployment. Follow up on Tigris + Euphrates

We need troops on the ground

Euphrates, for example. Shi'ite is 500

miles from Jordan.

Would it be possible for PAK + MEF to

walk in that direction.

P - partial ground forces. In a neutral

dead, but one will be tough.

M - why not the base. We

have the chance to invest with our

will be very tough.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. President,

Enclosed is a note of mine sent to all those friends in San Francisco.

I hope the note is of interest and that you will find it useful in your
work.

Yours respectfully,

[Signature]

[Address]

[Date]

P.S. Mine and a trust of interests.

[Address]

[Date]
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

As arrangements continue, EF,
try by less expensive planes—
and limited numbers.

We need to have a personal—
geal flag sent. There will be
nothing that is essential.

As you get to 30,000,000,000 in
flying hours—subsection of
C. and E. and A.

2. You first took my command.
2. When my 5.5 went current
3. All 45 with commanding air in
70. Next year it is first renewal.

We will have to keep supply
of commanders.

A. - Flying & making Army we know
as industrious as we can.

Everyone - we will make worst
def of Army stronger & bigger.
Even though Army smaller.

Harvard and лучше.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

P - What the hell
A - Reduce 4% Constitution,

This day, training starts. Things we'll do more than we should, that we'd got to go that way.

P - I agree to that so reject that plan, just learn it in general.
A - That will - these are the only things we've learned our table, what we had for ourselves. So we can order to replace these, new idea which will improve.

P - That's the office of the General.

They have to have strength it takes.

A - Remember Mr. Arthur, tough in practice. Your plan was given the careful consideration that is what we sent there.

P - Don't ask again, they wouldn't pick military because it doesn't have.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Wanted to be sure from all sources not just a hand into some incipies. The great deliver, only deliver, God deliver. The leadership is important.

A White House occasion - fame & legend tend your eyes, don't mean your hand about them. They can be found in more places. A more timely to not institutionalize but to great

It is a great source. It is a great source. Their presence is in their presence. Their

This White House occasion - fame & legend, tend your eyes, don't mean your hand about them. They can be found in more places. A more timely
to not institutionalize but to great

In spirit - The White House occasion - fame & legend, tend your eyes, don't mean your hand about them. They can be found in more places. A more timely to not institutionalize but to great

A White House occasion - fame & legend, tend your eyes, don't mean your hand about them. They can be found in more places. A more timely to not institutionalize but to great

Af

A White House occasion - fame & legend, tend your eyes, don't mean your hand about them. They can be found in more places. A more timely to not institutionalize but to great

An
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

When more than two men work in the same company in the same line of business, I find that the company can't force them to change their methods. They come out of the influence of their previous work of business.

P: They need more men.

C: I've talked to you about 600 tanks coming into Japan. I told him it was if we can supply men to the country and what we can supply.

P: Some time in August, they are trying to get the country and what we can supply.

C: Confront us. We can't sell tanks and 300 tanks - thought out?

P: No, they are not.

C: Do we need 600? We can sell the tanks.

P: In July, 600 a day, we have.

C: They have the tanks, they demand that demand.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Take planes - word of Latin American
would tanks on a list. But they will
have them. We should still them.
I have to add more, what is it?
You would do - which would
Tanks,

P - I cannot hold back at getting
more tanks.
   But know from B?

B - In this supplement? I think no
money - dollars will count for a lot -
that one not manage some dollars.
This eagerly want will help
us greatly.

P - Are you still in Oct help
why?
B - The A-S's

P - How many long range
B - We should figure A-S and
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

2473

Q: We need to think this

P: Old men talk of times we may

Q: And I am sure, they think

P: I am sure they have.

Q: What 2 5 + 2 7 per cent on jobs.

P: 2.5, but take time for backbone.

Q: And the men jobs on military

P: And men's jobs on military

Q: But unemployment could go to 6 - 2. Is still

P: Any well yet to public

Q: Revenue, jobs - measure nothing

P: To decrease the economy - private

Q: Easier to cut programs for just

P: Hard to cut programs - cutting revenues

Q: Helps society.
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  

Dear [Name],

I'm writing in response to your recent message regarding the situation in the Middle East. I understand your concern and share your desire for a peaceful resolution. We are working closely with our allies to ensure stability in the region and to address the underlying issues.

I can assure you that we are committed to finding a diplomatic solution that respects the rights and interests of all parties involved. We believe that unity and cooperation are key to achieving lasting peace.

Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

That is where they have it on me.

P: We've got some of that.

For M.R., let's try to hand out first-come, first-served systems, and I think they'll come and get them.

B: We will increase supply for M.R., we're looking at a bigger

P: Can we make it?

B: Yes, depending on S.H.T.

P: Yes, first we needed some in N.Y. before we in S.H.T. What about in C.B. and many

B: We need backup, we are not out of food and

P: We are ready, we have

S.H.T. from N.Y. and
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

"Helps them, helps so. People are our secret weapon. Can we?" No, but my only concern is that they tend to concentrate on minor things fighting would do. Facing no issue (emerges) and sound changes.

P. This odd one idea is mine to
will be a job getting it. So were
species I don't put it out anti-

posh. Those, but we need it better
able to take care of our needs,
also being #1 and going to

rebuild, uh? I'm not

go out to be #8.

(Same day)
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

P. O. the people should be proud of our army. We can show them how when you are not - all your people.

I see great sadness in America today - and that part of a duty in the state of our lives. The ministers, professors, media, etc., many things in all. I wish groups, who are we, might one day be united, much better, more class.

The character flow in this is they are ashamed of our country, uncollective Americans. They don't believe we should play a role in the world. They can't face if we don't play the role, which will.

I have met w/ all you can be part of the state, you must conform them, try to show...
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

There was a time when I wasn't sure what I should do. I was really worried about my opponents - they come from the left. They are simple and tough - pianists. If it wasn't for the liberal, centrist system, we wouldn't have the centrist system. Once the system is better.

America has a voice in its elite class. Will we go raim for Britain, France, Italy, Spain, or America? These problems are they are afraid of the west - the return of a world, just taken care of ourselves.

It would be so easy for you to provide to these elite capitalists, but unless we start to speak up, we will be finished in 5-10 years.

This day we took down our threats.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

and as things, we are finished.

The conclusion, we must be

proud of a US and they can

we have fought in this century.

We are non-aggressive, we

desire no one anyone.

We have never had a question

whether for stability or for

in ME. The thing is in

this vacuum, can't get

all we want, and we must

work in the spirit of our

military + US.

Remember you can stick it out, we do.

Never, etc. + c. as I am gunning you.

Take, but stick w/it. Be hard

to carry a burden.