MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Richard M. Nixon
Bipartisan Congressional Leadership
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Major General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Friday, May 31, 1974
10:30 a.m.

PLACE:

SUBJECT: Dr. Kissinger’s Middle East Briefing

President: Before the briefing, I would like to make one comment about the difficulty of these negotiations. I told Henry I thought that next to the Vietnamese negotiations, these were the toughest. He said that is a tough call.

He spent over 30 days out there. Several times it appeared to be about to break down. Through perseverance and some assurance, we finally made it. As Kissinger will say, the last point was cosmetic — an Israeli insistence against terrorist action across the zone and the Syrian refusal. As late as Monday it was 75-25 against agreement on that point.

As Henry will point out, the Egyptian-Israeli disengagement and Syrian-Israeli disengagement agreements are important diplomatic achievements but they only open the long road toward a permanent settlement. No one should have any illusion that that won't take a long, long time. We owe to Henry and his team for 30 days of excruciating negotiations — our Arab friends can talk well into the night, and Henry went to bed at 5:00 a.m. many times. Henry —

Kissinger: Let me first explain the setting and then the details. Then where do we go from here.
In October, all the Arabs were united against the United States, supported by Europe, with the Soviet Union as their principal spokesman. We were pushed into unilateral support of Israel and faced with an oil embargo. Had that continued, Europe and Japan would have been hostage to the Arabs and the radicals would have triumphed.

The first breakthrough was with Sadat in November. He decided to go piece by piece, in diplomatic rather than military moves, and to rely on the U. S. rather than the Soviet Union. This produced an Israeli-Egyptian disengagement. It was a diplomatic revolution. Egypt embraced the U.S. and reduced Soviet influence. It was a triumph for the moderates. But this brought Sadat under radical pressure. Since then, there has been a contest between the radicals and Sadat. The question was, would the situation move carefully? Or in one great move by the radicals supported by the Soviet Union, which would result in war?

Syria was the most radical of the Arab states. In November, I didn't even think of visiting Syria. The Syrian Ba'athists, the governing group, are somewhat left of Soviet Communism. Their hatred of Israel is proverbial. When I first went there their newspapers said "Kissinger arrived from occupied territory" -- meaning Israel. Now the headlines spoke of "Syrian-Israeli disengagement" -- which is the first mention of Israel's existence. They are the most militant of the Arab states. If there was no settlement, the war would have resumed. Egypt couldn't have stayed out, and the Soviets would have had to help. Sadat has been a great help in this process. In February, Syria first indicated it would talk.

There is a big difference between the situation on the Suez Canal and the Golan. The Suez is desert; the Golan is populated by Israeli villagers. It is a more constricted area, and there is the problem of Mount Hermon. There is a complex domestic situation in both countries. In Syria, there is division between the civilians and the military -- with the civilians more militant, with Soviet wings, Iraqi and Palestinian wings. They are not sophisticated in military planning. Egyptian military experts had to educate them.

In Israel, the Cabinet was changing. The old Cabinet didn't want to go out under a cloud and the new one didn't want to come in under a burden.

Much of my technique was a seminar explaining to each what the others thought. One of the most moving things at the end was to see some appreciation of each other's concerns.
In Syria, the government hadn't made a formulated decision to agree, and was not under firm control.

On Monday I had given up. Asad and I were alone and we were drawing up my farewell statement. He said it was a shame; couldn't we do something?

Then another hang up, as the President said, was on terrorism. There was great emotion coming from Maalot. We solved it by assuring Israel that we would regard terrorist attacks as violations of the ceasefire.

[Dr. Kissinger gets up to the map.]

In March the Israelis grabbed Mount Hermon which dominated the area. In Suez, Egypt had seized Israeli-held territory; here there is no Syrian-held territory, and Israeli settlements had been built near the line and Mount Hermon was crucial. The Syrians wouldn't discuss it because it was seized in March. The Syrians are obsessive about foreigners on their soil -- they won't even allow Russians in Damascus -- so to have a UN force there was to them an insult. They were hung up on issues of sovereignty and wouldn't accept limitations of police.

The initial positions were far apart. The Syrians originally wanted the whole Golan back, or two-thirds of it. The other Arabs said they would be satisfied with Kuneitra. But there are Israeli settlements right near it, and the Israelis were reluctant to move out of Kuneitra.

The President authorized me to make a U.S. proposal -- so that each side would accept a U.S. -- not an enemy -- proposal. The Israelis were allowed to keep the hills they needed outside of Kuneitra, but Israeli forces won't be visible to the Syrians in Kuneitra.

President: You may ask, why couldn't we start with a U.S. proposal? Because each would have said we were favoring the other and they would snipe at us. We had to move slowly.

Kissinger: Here is the final red line. The squiggles are to keep some Syrian villages under Syrian control. On Hermon, two-thirds went to the Syrians and one-third to the UN. The Syrians wanted 80 UN observers and Israel a force of 3,000. We came out with an "observer force" -- so each got its name in -- and with the same charter as the force on Suez.
Then we got into a wrangle on limitation of forces. Again the President authorized a U.S. proposal. There are two zones of 10 kilometers. The first zone is limitation of personnel and the second is limitation of equipment. There is a limit of 6,000 troops, 75 tanks and 36 artillery. In the second zone there can be 162 artillery pieces with a range of 20 kilometers and no SAMs. (This is all classified, by the way.)

The result is that it is harder for them to go to war. A surprise attack now is impossible.

President: There may be incidents. The leaders will have to understand that. But it will be less than in Vietnam.

Kissinger: I think there will be few incidents. The Syrians haven't let the terrorists loose. They have come mostly from Lebanon.

This is an important first step, but we have monumental problems ahead of us -- Jerusalem, Palestine. If there is no movement, this front could erupt again, because the Syrians are unstable. However, failure would have meant immediate hostilities, Syrian pressure for a new oil embargo, and international pressures against us. Now the Arabs know that only the U.S. can bring a solution. It was very important to Sadat, because it meant a radical regime did the same as he did, and it ratified U.S. participation in the process. One reason Sadat wants the President to visit is to symbolize the American presence and participation and to begin movement to peace.

It could blow up in six-to-nine months. But we now have maneuvering room. We have completed the military phase and can move into a phase of political advance. And we did it with Israeli blessing.

President: And the U.S. commitment to Israeli security.

Kissinger: But that is in the U.S. interest, because only a strong Israel makes the Arabs turn to us.

President: Our relationship with the Soviet Union in the Middle East is a pragmatic one. We don't want a confrontation with the Soviet Union like we had last October. The only thing the Soviet Union can promise is...
arms and war. As for us, we are not imposing a settlement on Israel, but the Arabs now see that a settlement without war can only come through the U.S. Soviet help could work only through war.

Kissinger: That is right. The only way to achieve objectives through the Soviet Union was conflict. We are moving the Soviet Union out of the Middle East but pragmatically cooperating. It is detente...

President: Expand that -- the Soviet Union could prevent a settlement, but at cost of other fish they fry with us. We shouldn't knock the Soviet Union.

Kissinger: What has happened is a major defeat for the Soviet Union. Take what happened to Gromyko in Damascus on Monday. He was to come in the morning. They delayed him 'til two, then kept him circling until he ran out of gas, and then he was met by their Deputy Foreign Minister. Then on Tuesday, Asad wouldn't meet with Gromyko because he was waiting for Sisco. Then when I came instead, Asad cancelled the dinner he had prepared for Gromyko and served it to me!

President: It is not the purpose and intent of U.S. policy. The Soviet presence hangs over the Middle East, and they can prevent progress if they have no other fish to fry. So don't characterize this as a Soviet defeat.

Kissinger: To carry this off requires detente. Why were they restrained? Because of their commitment to detente. We need MFN and credits to give them something to show. We could do this precisely because of detente.

A word about commitments. It's the same as on the Suez agreement. It doesn't imply a continuing military commitment on limitation because it's part of the agreement. There is also an Israeli commitment about stationing arms on the hills. The only U.S. commitment is to continue two-week reconnaissance flights over the area.

Every U.S. assurance -- I have given them orally and they will be given to the Foreign Affairs Committees to look at. They are U.S. proposals which they signed with us which will be appended to the agreement.

Scott: What nations are in the UN force?
Kissinger: Permanent members are excluded. Probably it will be Nepal, Austria and Peru -- because of the mountains there.

O'Neill: Do you now have to move to the Palestinian issue?

Kissinger: There are three issues: frontiers, the Palestinians, and Jerusalem. We would like to stay with the frontiers a bit more. The Palestinian issue is related to the Jerusalem issue - if Jordan could represent the Palestinians, that would help. But somewhere we must face the Palestinian issue.

Fulbright: Where, in Amman?

President: That is what you should say publicly. But nothing will be done in a public forum. The Soviet Union is pushing for a Palestinian state. There must be much quiet discussion.

Kissinger: The Soviets and Romanians want a Palestinian state -- each is playing its own game. We will try to handle it so it doesn't blow up the negotiations yet still gives them some hope.

President: Our relations with the others were of great help -- Boumediene, Sadat, Faisal each sent emissaries to Asad.

Kissinger: Boumediene, being a radical himself, was a big help.

O'Neill: How many terrorists?

Kissinger: The numbers aren't the issue. And there has been little activity across the Syrian borders since 1967. It was a symbolic issue in Israel.

President: Tell them about the Economic Commissions.

Kissinger: Sadat thought it was important to move our relations away from technical military affairs. He wanted the President to visit and not only due to the disengagement. Also there will be an Oil Ministers meeting coming up and we want to give them some incentive for moderation. This cooperation is for a commission to explore maximum cooperation in the economic, scientific and cultural areas. The purpose is plan long-range cooperation between Egypt and the United States. It is part of Sadat's attempt to reorient away from the Soviet Union and to establish the U.S. as a force in the Middle East for progress and moderation. We wanted to wait, but he wanted the President to visit there to symbolize the line in terms of U.S.-Egyptian relations rather than Israeli-Egyptian relations.
President: We will have to furnish Israel with items they feel essential to their security, or else they will think the territory essential. We can't move if Israel feels insecure. The other side of the coin is more difficult. I have heard grumbles from some of your Israeli supporters. If we can exercise a leavening influence, we can't do it just by talk, but by economic and other means which gives them a stake in relations with the U.S.

If your goal is peace in the Middle East and the survival of Israel, we have to have some stake with Israeli neighbors.

Kissinger: For Sadat to move to the U.S. as he has took enormous courage, in the face of the Soviets and the radicals. If we attach too many conditions, Sadat will be undercut. We have an enormous opportunity now. It is better not to break the fabric through onerous conditions. For example, Israeli flags through the Canal -- he can't quite do it yet but he'll let cargoes through if we shut up about it.

Albert: Some of our Jewish friends will have to stop the publicity on this.

Frelinghuysen: I will do everything I can for a balanced program.

Kissinger: You know there is this $100 million fund in the budget. If Syria behaves, if we could commit something for the reconstruction of Kuneitra, it would have great symbolism. They get plenty of Soviet money, but if we don't do this, we could force them to turn only to the Soviets.

Stennis: Was there a manpower commitment?

Kissinger: No manpower commitment. Only that we would view their long-term military needs sympathetically.

Frelinghuysen: How about M-60's from NATO?

Kissinger: The Soviet Union has poured equipment in. Israel has to be so strong that the Arabs can't defeat it. The M-60's were a previous commitment.

President: We must maintain the balance. Weapons for Israel and PL 480 for Egypt are an investment for peace.

Hebert: We have manpower there for the Canal now. What if one gets killed?

Kissinger: That is not for military purposes.
President: It is in the U.S. interest to have influences in the area.

Hebert: I'd like to get our boys out of there.

Mahon: This is an impressive picture. How can we convey this to our colleagues to get their support and votes?

Zablocki: We hope the President will go to the public and explain.

Hebert: The only way to get votes is to ring the bell and knock heads.

President: Sadat has recommended my trip. There is nothing to announce today. We have to examine what activities there will be, when and where to go. I'll make a decision early next week. We are also announcing my 27 June arrival in Moscow.

Aiken: From the discussion, one might think the Suez clearing only benefited Egypt. I thought it benefited the world, and shouldn't we say so?

Kissinger: The Suez is an investment in peace. It is a physical barrier to conflict and an economic help to Egypt. It does help Soviet ships, but we can follow them. And our work has so influenced the moderates that the Soviet Union may not have any ports.

Tower: Say a word about Diego Garcia.

Kissinger: We need a presence in the Indian Ocean and a better means of operating there.

President: The Soviet Union is all over the area.

Question: It is cost-effective if we have ships there.

President: Thank you for coming. Both the disengagement agreements are interim settlements. They are essential to working out a permanent settlement over a long time.

The momentum must continue -- whether clearing the Suez, economic measures, my visit, etc. If we don't the hatred and the radical forces will come slipping back. It is an enormous accomplishment by Kissinger, but this is only the first step. We have done about ten percent.
Before judging would like to make a comment about Krushchev's historical judgment. Krushchev is a man of great character and has a strong disposition. His views and actions are often influenced by his personal beliefs and experiences.

He is a strong leader who has stood against great odds. His persistence and determination have overcome many obstacles. He has shown his wisdom in various situations.

The current situation in Europe is complex. The balance of power is shifting, and the Cold War is not yet over. The West and the East are still divided by ideological differences.

As the situation stands, there is a strong argument against Suez. Let us consider the following:

1. The Suez Canal is of great strategic importance to the West.
2. The U.S. and U.K. have significant investments in Suez.
3. The Soviet Union has shown interest in supporting Egypt.
4. The situation in the region is volatile.

In view of these factors, it is crucial to consider the implications of Suez.

Khrushchev has expressed interest in Suez. His stance has been firm and consistent.

In conclusion, it is important to carefully consider the strategic implications of Suez. The West and the East must work together to maintain peace and stability.

DECLASSIFIED
E.D. 1666, SEC. 3.5
NSC MENT, 11/24/64, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, 5/3/64
DIRECTOR. 5/3/64
brought Salot under medical presence.
Squat, time, has been a contrast. But without
Squat - something more carefully as in
the past - going by values suggested by
Salot, which would result in war. Squat
was not really stable. In war didn't
mean think of war. Squat, Squat, South
joining very, somewhat lift of Squat amount.
The transfer of X is perilous. Thus, it would
convincing from something the war. Squat's real
S-E being a 2nd mention of E, amount.
They are most militant of each other. E
Squat, and Squat, would have learned.
E couldn't have stayed out. X would have
needed help. Salot has been just before the war.
For X then, Squat indicated it would talk.
Big expression lost. Squat is Coloum. Squat, Coloum
Coloum populated (1 village), a restricted country,
Not German part; complex demotic set
in both countries. In Squat civilian but
not in a mid - W/imm. more humble, W/
Cem camp, drugs & collection. They are
not reconstructed in mid planning - E said Squat
hailed from them.
For E, a structure was changing. Old combat
Squat and Squat & good water. Squat - new didn't
want to come in under a banner.
Most of my citizens was in the
movement & what was often wrong. One
placed Squat thing of and was exposed
in Coloum Coloum.
Squat, a train took make an option to eject,
was just under from outside.
On Monday, I had my first case, Cato v. Jones. I was trying to present my defense, but the judge interrupted me. I had to explain my case again. After that, I had another case, Smith v. Smith. I had to go over some legal points with the judge. The case was not resolved.

I have been working on a project for the last few weeks. It's a new book about human rights. So far, I have written about 50 pages. The book will be published next year. I am looking forward to it.

I visited the market today. The fruit was fresh and the prices were reasonable. I bought a few items, but I didn't spend much.

I had a meeting with the settlement. They are working on a new project. It's a big deal for the settlement.

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Then we get stuck on geopolitics. The French, again, strengthened US pressure. 2 zones of 10 km. 1st zone, limiting personnel & defense, 2nd zone, limiting support. Good trigger for Kaki & TIA, no SAMs, no SAM. Cloudless.

Result is it is hard to predict a surprise attack. Impossible.

I think in mid-1987, Syria hadn't launched a surprise attack in terms of losses. They have never really been

This is an important step and set in stone.

I think in late 1987, this presented

Egyptian cause, and Syria can understand. However, I think the main obstacle

Egyptian pressure to call in the American peacekeeping, etc.

This army is not ready yet. It's in a solution. We had to start the Salat - meant to stop the fighting, stop the

Saudi war. I think it's to symbolize US presence & participation to begin movement

toward.

Can't move up in 6-9 months. But now

We have been training since. We have

completed a training phase, some more work

for that and more. And we didn't ask for help.

P. Saudi is US interest & I sense.

K. Can't win. US interest - only a more.

Assistance to us.
Our relations with the ME are pragmatic only.
We don't want complications. If we lose one
only thing we can promise is a cease-fire.

So far, we are not making settlement and just
and we must see that a settlement is the concern
only come from the US, SI help could work only
then with.

K: Right. Only way to achieve objectives them [ ]
were complicated. The matter as a result of ME but
pragmatically, it is difficult.

P: Except that SI could protect settlements,
but at least within first time for ICRC.
The should have an

K: What has happened in major defeat for SI;
the Guwahati Dominos basically deluged him
with them. Then could the go on. Then meet
by Jaffer. Then [ ] and went out.

K: Suggest we should send [ ]

P: It is not just to content of US, SI situation
since we are ME and they can present purposes if
they have no. The fact [ ] we don't understand
their SUG or due

K: For many this is very much delicate. Take note

K: We need ME to some to even

K: This is very much delicate.

K: We need ME to even

K: Any request of our

K: The major fault in the

K: SI's

K: SI's
Every US assurance – it has given or already will be given to FA Centre’s look at. They are PS projects which they signed/scratch will be approved & agreement.

Scott, What notice on FN fail.

K. Dear Readers, especially, Fariborz, Reza, and other licensed/asked

O’Hall & one more for ten to talk issues.

K. At our dinner. Fariba, Fariba, Jean, we would like to stay another time a little more. Falls apart is what I forecast issue – if Julian could represent Falls, that would help – but somehow, we must face Falls.

Full where, in summer.

P. That what you think, I will try. But nothing will be done in public for four.

SO going for Falls state, this must be much quiet & quiet discussion.

K. SO, Romans is want Falls state – each is playing our game. We will try to handle it doesn’t blow up negotiations yet given time & hope.

P. Our solution needs great help. Brandon, Samat, Friends felt good conscious to ask.

K. Brandon, being natural, were big help.

O’Hall friends arounds.

K. #2, Samat Saed, and others, once & twice.

And 1961. Synonyme W/T

P. Talk later soon.

K. Saedat thought you want to move our

Waiting away from this vital affairs. Wanted & the rest, not only hope due to changes, but also Synonyme MT (punish in Kebde)
This eng to be a man to place the cap on our ship for the captain. I
ought to know how to get there. But it's a little difficult.

I had to wait to come up from 50 to 100
I saw him NE for the first time. Here.

I wanted to wait, but he wanted to go up.

It was in turn: E. E. did not know
I was waiting.

I was still here in France. I knew they all
were waiting in this country, I thought it was
very essential. And now I feel easier.

Other still it was more difficult. I have heard
from some of you I suppose.

If not, I can still do the same thing.

I can't do it just by talk, but I can

I can't make money which gives them a job

In addition to this.

If you go in a place EM, I don't know if I

For God to send to the S, I might as

For God to send to the S, I had to talk

I was never brave in fear of 50 to 100

I don't like emations, I doubt until the

We have enough money from the money exchange conditions. For example,

I keep them cool.

If you have a German friend, won't you go on
Allright, I will do anything I can be a helpful

As you know, I don't think I can help.

If you could convince

I want to do something it would have
great symphony. They got plenty of
money, but if we don't do this, we
will not

Samo: What was the...the...major...contract?
K: It was...major...contract. That we could

work very...very...and make sympathy...ing,

North. That we had...for...NATO

N: So he found...going...I...had to

make...And so...I said. It's...a...major...contract.

V: We cannot...now...balance...let...just...and...so

for...are...in...contract for...peace

Subnet: We have...major...for...email...what is
one...the...filled

K: That not for...military...purpose,

I: Et we in...or...because...in...means

in...one...is...hard...jut

V: What I'd...get...you...in...place.

And...This is...essential...future...how can we...very

firm...one...call...one...to get...there...support...vote.

E: From...we...shout...should get...be...foreign...system

But...Only way to get...who is...bring...the...tell...knock

jot

P: Subnet...made...called...my...telling...witting

to...announce...today. We have...major...guarantee,

what...what...we...include...early...member...

We...this...anniversary...3...and...arrive...in...March

When...From...discussion...and...my...think...due...clearing,

only...benefit...E...I thought it...hurtful...would

a...should...get...so

K: Say is...in...major...in...peace. It a...physical


can be...to...with...and...cease...economic...E.

It...help...50...ship...but...we can...follow

them. And...work has...so...influence...
Imagine a world without war.

K. We need a break in the cycle. A little more flexibility, opening time.

There is a need for a new mindset. It is not effective if we have objections.

P. Thanks. So we must change our thinking and re-frame the message. They essential to maintaining peace, without our help.

The momentum must continue. Without action, the cycle will repeat. If we want to be different, we must work together.

This is a problem we must solve, and soon. Thinking back.

Every accomplishment is hard, but this is only a step. We have almost 50% of the way.