

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Yigal Allon, Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel
Simcha Dinitz, Ambassador of Israel
Mordechai Shalev, Minister, Embassy of Israel

President Gerald R. Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
and Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs
Amb. Kenneth Keating, U.S. Ambassador
to Israel

DATE AND TIME:

Monday, December 9, 1974
12:57 - 2:15 p. m.

PLACE:

The Oval Office
The White House

[The press was admitted for photographs. The President and Minister Allon chatted about the redecoration of the Oval Office.]

Kissinger: Johnson had three tickers in here.

President: Also three telephones. He also had four TV sets in the bedroom.

Kissinger: He had some fascinating habits.

President: He was quite a guy. He would get mad and he said a lot of unkind things about me, but when he left office we had a very good rapport.

Kissinger: If he had forgotten the intellectuals and stuck with middle America, he could have won again.

Allon: Even over Bobby Kennedy.

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BY lala, NARA, DATE 5/7/04



Kissinger: Yes. Nixon beat down the demonstrators.

President: I agree. It would have been tough, but he could have won with the party regulars.

Keating: I think he felt he didn't have the party with him.

Allon: It was the same with Golda. She had been very unpopular at times, but now she is a national hero. You can't be concerned with the ups and downs.

President: Panic in public life loses more than anything. Calm and consistency are what counts.

Let me welcome you. I'm glad to have you here. I remember our conversation when I was Vice President [August 1, 1974]. I am glad to talk with you now because we are faced with some tough decisions.

Secretary Kissinger has just described your conversation with him. He told me that your proposals were unattainable. I don't know the details, but I agree. I will take time going over them because of their importance and because the commitment to Israel's security is of utmost importance to me. I have spent a great deal of time on this since I came into office. We have worked hard to keep things moving, because momentum is vital. I have talked to no one who doesn't think the prospects of war are high if something is not done -- and most of these are people who are friendly to Israel.

I think it is wise to look at what happens if we don't have results. We always used to do this on the Hill. "Think of the worst. The best will take care of itself." A potential confrontation in the Middle East -- I don't know where that would go with the Soviet Union. We made headway at Vladivostok, but we had a potential confrontation last October. If there is a war, there will be another oil embargo. Last year we were in fairly good economic shape -- today, it could have dire consequences. Israel and the U. S. would be pretty well isolated as far as Europe and the rest of the world are concerned. No one helped us in '73. And Japan also would be the same. I'm just pointing to alternatives which could happen.

We want Israel to be strong, and we have done a good economic and military job on that. Supposing the worst happens -- a war -- and Israel is successful. The odds are you would be. Suppose the Soviet Union goes



further and doesn't back down as they did under President Nixon. It would be a tough decision for the President to go to the people for military action in the Middle East. Attitudes are different than, for example, in 1950. I don't like it. I want Americans to think they have a role and a strong role. But look at the last years of Vietnam. The aftermath of that doesn't indicate that a President would get public support. I want to say as a friend -- and my record supports I am a friend -- that the consequences of the worst lead me to the hope that we can change things somehow so we can say it is attainable. That is the way it is.

Kissinger: We have the problem of what is realistic and the problem of what do we tell Egypt. We haven't discussed it yet, and we will this afternoon. I am grateful to Allon for getting me out of the House hearing meeting.

Allon: Thank you for the way you introduced your views. First I want to convey the greetings of Yitzhak Rabin.

President: Please reciprocate for me.

Allon: He is making a good Prime Minister. We are a highly political people. There is no doubt the United States and Israel have common interests in the Middle East. We may appear to disagree tactically, but basically we agree. I am glad of that. We come to you frequently for military and economic support, but in the last analysis I think we are an asset, not a liability. It would be different if we were weak. Looking at a wider prospective -- at the soft underbelly of Europe -- we can be useful if we coordinate together more.

The last thing we want is another war -- although we would win it quickly, because we are better prepared. And we won't get caught again. We learned bitter lessons and the morale is high.

We would have preferred an overall settlement which would have brought peace to the area. Secretary Kissinger said that it is not possible and we accepted the necessity of interim agreements, over serious domestic opposition. We are determined to overcome the opposition and to sign an interim agreement. We understand that Egypt is the only chance, that Jordan is out for now, but we hope not forever. Syria wants an overall agreement, and if we do that we don't need interim measures.



Dr. Kissinger always used to stress on principle -- never negotiate while under a threat. If the Arabs realize -- and the Soviet Union -- that they can get what they want by threat of war on an oil embargo, there is no limit to what they will go after. If they know there is a logical limit that is different. If they know you can be backed into a corner.....

Kissinger: The President has said, with the Arabs he has talked to, that if there is a new embargo we would not accept it. He is talking to you about.....

Allon: But any war would be over in days, and most of the West has enough oil for months, so this threat doesn't hold. The West can get through the winter. So we shouldn't overestimate the immediate effect of an oil embargo.

We are prepared to take substantial territorial steps in return for an end to acts of belligerency. It can be an end to acts of belligerency, not to the state of belligerency.

The next question is, what should be the duration of an agreement? In 1949 it was unlimited. It didn't work. We had another war. If there is a time limit it must be longer than what they need to get ready for another war. If only a few years, that is just what they need to prepare for war. The Arabs are good on defense, bad on offense. They are not rushing into war, but the situation could be created where they would have to -- even against their wishes. If it could be a longer-term agreement, and a longer-term for UNEF, we could give more. Egypt says everything must be kept secret. But we have our problems, too.

I think Secretary Kissinger can tell Egypt we are prepared for a considerable withdrawal, to negotiate after -- not before -- the Brezhnev visit to Egypt. If we do it before, it will look like we did it because of Brezhnev's visit.

So the matter is how deep the withdrawal, how solid the observers, and how long the agreement.

I am thinking of a decade -- Kissinger thinks it is too long. We could give more for that. At a minimum it should be five years, plus one year for the redeployment of our line. Then we can go to the Knesset with something.



Dinitz: We have spent a billion and a half dollars fortifying this line.

Allon: Kissinger can say to Sadat that we are well disposed.

Kissinger: I have done that too much. I have to show him some specifics -- at least orders of magnitude of kilometers, and so on.

Allon: Can't you say I am thinking of a 30-to-50 kilometer withdrawal? In certain areas 30, in others, 50.

Kissinger: There are some principal points -- the passes and the oil fields. He doesn't care about lines in the sand.

Allon: What is his alternative? To stay where he is?

President: One is the resumption of Soviet supplies to Egypt. That is not good for either.

Allon: I agree, but he will do it any way.

Kissinger: He hasn't yet.

Allon: It is not possible to reach a point where he will cut off relations with the Soviet Union.

Kissinger: One alternative is heating up the international situation to bring pressure on us. If he needs two or three years, he can use that to escalate an anti-American crusade.

Allon: We are offering something substantial.

President: Dr. Kissinger says it is unattainable. I haven't looked at the details. But if that is true it means we are therefore risking disaster.

Maybe Europe is fixed for an oil embargo, but here, while we have plans for belt-tightening, the impact would be serious. Also, on the PLO resolution you saw the United States and four others were the only ones against it. We were glad to stand on that, but that ought to be a signal that it is not the most wholesome situation in the UN. Every head of state I talked to I told that we were pursuing a step-by-step process. I think it is therefore essential that we move and get something of substance. You and Dr. Kissinger are experts, and I give it my personal attention. But I have said frankly what we might face if there is no movement.



Allon: It we give up the passes and the oil field -- which give us half of all our oil -- we will take away all the Egyptian incentive to take another step and will encourage them to begin agitating. It could prove to be a mistake, and then it would be too late. They could agitate with the Soviet Union, get the UNEF withdrawal, and then we will be in the same war situation.

I don't think Egypt wants subjugation by the Soviet Union. Why not give my proposal a chance? Why not? Henry can find the right words to make it sound good. Why give up beforehand? If we have to fight, we are better off on this line. Why do you want it today? Why not talk the oil field and passes after Brezhnev has departed? If we give him everything at first, they will ask for more.

The last thing we want is a misunderstanding between Israel and the United States. Let's be patient.

Dinitz: Egypt will have to think carefully about going back to the Soviet Union, because only the United States can help them.

Allon: They know only the United States can give them territory.

Kissinger: They can get 90% of their economic needs from Europe, and from Europe with the Soviet Union on the character of peace. We are holding Europe off by saying "Give your efforts a chance." If we visibly fail, there will be no holding them back. The Europeans can give economic help and can add political pressure to the Arabs.

We don't have to have your final concessions today, and I am not saying we can't turn these into something. We need to discuss how to approach the Egyptians. We need a strategy which includes a concept including the oil fields and the passes.

There are two problems -- to see where this can go, and how should it be presented to the Egyptians. How to give Sadat enough to support him for the Brezhnev visit. To give him courage.

Allon: How about the length?

Kissinger: There is only one issue on duration. The disengagement has no time limit. Why not assume it is unlimited?

Allon: Is it true that Fahmy said one more disengagement would take Egypt out of the war?

Kissinger: Fahmy said it. Sadat maybe said it. We will check. *
Fahmy said the next step had to be in the context of taking Egypt out of the war.

Allon: Can U. S. troops be in the UNEF? I don't trust these small countries. That, I guess, would permit Soviet forces.

Kissinger: Never do you want to legitimize Soviet presence.

Allon: You can't rely on these little countries.

President: What about Canada?

Allon: Canada is fine.

Kissinger: We could examine the question of Soviet forces. They would jump at the chance, but I don't think Sadat would like it and I doubt the Congress would.

Allon: But we need to find some stability for the UNEF forces.

Kissinger: All the Egyptians now tell me of the error Nassar made in 1967. The Egyptian appetite is not as great as the Syrian appetite.

Allon: If we have no time limit for the agreement, except for the UNEF.....

President: Let me say I appreciate the opportunity to meet again. We have the same objective. We want Israel secure and its integrity maintained. That is what we both want.

Allon: Thank you very much, Mr. President. May I raise one other thing?

President: Sure.

Allon: We raised the question last summer of a long-term authorization. We mentioned \$4.5 billion for an unspecified period. You said maybe the most important complication would be with the Congress. But the Congressional people I speak to are ready to consider it if the Administration proposes it.

* Fahmy said it to President Ford on October 5, 1974.



President: When your Prime Minister was here, we discussed the immediate and the long-range military programs. I went farther than my advisers wanted on the short-range program. We now are in the throes of a bitter fight in the Congress on foreign aid. We barely won in the Senate on a crucial vote, by 46-45. Even that bill is not all good. The House debate starts tomorrow. Rosenthal has been very difficult. He has collaborated with the Greeks.

Allon: I thought he had changed. He promised.

President: He hasn't gotten the word. The House vote seems to have gone down about 20 votes -- from a combination of right-wing Republicans and liberal Democrats. This is the background. I can't go for long-term authorization for Israel if we don't get support for our foreign policy as a whole. That is asking too much.

Allon: If you don't get a majority for the aid in the Congress, maybe you can get a Middle East package.

President: We need a world program.

Dinitz: In the Senate, we were as helpful as possible. We got some votes changed -- as Dr. Kissinger knows. We believe in the foreign aid program and we will continue. What we have in mind with long-range economic aid -- we may need a specific bill, because the amounts are out of proportion to the rest of the aid.

President: I don't rule that out, but I have to take one step at a time. I can't look down the road if we don't get the tools we need now. There are several -- Rosenthal, Dupont, Fraser -- who have to get the word. It doesn't do any good to get the Middle East package if we lose our whole foreign policy.

[After warm farewells the conversation concluded. Minister Allon, Secretary Kissinger, Ambassadors Dinitz and Keating, General Scowcroft and Minister Shalev proceeded to the State Department for the luncheon hosted by the Secretary.]



P/ Allen (Dimitz) Shalvo

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K/ Keating

7 Dec 1974

Transcribed

Pass in

(What sent to our office decorative)

Pass out.

K Johnson had 3 writers in house

P Does 3 phones. He also had 4 TV sets in bedroom.

K He had some fascinating habits.

P He was quite a guy. He would get mad & he said a lot of unkind things about me but when he left office we had very good rapport

K If he had forgotten intellectuals & stuck w/ middle America, he could have won again

A Even over Bobby Kennedy.

K Yes. Nixon beat down a demagogue

P Lopez. It would have been tough, but he could have won w/c party regulars.

Keating I think he felt he didn't have a party w/ him

Q Same w/ Golda. She had been very important at times, but now a wall here. You can't be concerned w/c ops & domus.

P Some in public life like Golda more than anything. Colm & emulating in what units.

Glad to have you here. Remember our conversation when I was UK.

Glad to talk w/ you because we've become w/ faced w/ some tough choices.

K described your conversation. He told me your proposals were unattainable. Don't know charts, but I agree. I will take time going over them because of their importance & contrast to I that security is of utmost importance to us. I spent much time on this since came into this - we have never heard to keep



Things moving course movement is vital.
 I have talked to no one who doesn't think war
 proper to high if something not done - & most
 of them are people friendly to I.
 I think it wise to look at what happens if we don't
 have results - always use I to do this one I will.
 "Think of worst - but will take care of itself."
 Potential cooperation in ME - Don't know where
 that would go w/ S.C. - Enrichment of oil,
 but pet. corp lost it. If war, will be
 another oil embargo. Last year we were
 in a fairly good shape - today it could
 have been emergency. F.O.S. would be pretty
 well isolated as far as E in concerned. Iran
delivered in 73 + Japan also could be + more.
 To get pretty to alternatives which could happen.
 We want I to be strong & have some good lines
 & will get in that. Supposing worst happens -
 war & I is successful - odds are you would
 do. Suppose S.C. goes further & doesn't back
 down as number 11. It would be tough decision
 for those to people for with action in ME.
 Attitude dif. than, for example, in 1950. I don't
 like it - I want America think they have role &
 strong role. But look at last years of VN. Aftermath
 of that I don't anticipate I would get public support.
 I want to say as friend - & my record supports
 I am a friend. The consequences of worst kind
use it - hope that we can change somehow
 to us - say it is attainable. That is
 * a way it is.

K we have part of what no restriction what

As was told E. We haven't discussed it.
Analogous to a for getting me out of a House
having history.

Q Thank you for every you introduced your
views. I want to convey greeting from Robin
P please appreciate.

Q He's making good PM. We're highly political people.
I don't think US & I have common interests in ME.
We may appear to disagree tactically, but
basically we agree. I'm glad of that. We even
to you frequently for trial & our support, but
in last many analysis I think we are on road
not a liability. Would be tip if we were weaker.
Looking at world perspective - soft subsidies
of E are - we can be useful if we cooperate
together more.

last thing we want is another war - this we
would win it quickly, even we better
prepared - want get caught again - we learned
both the lessons & make it high.

We would have proposed an overall settlement
which would have brought peace to us, (I
said that not possible & we accepted a
necessity for further agreements on serious
domestic position. We determined to reverse
a position & sign interim agreement.

We understood E only chance, judgement
for war, but we hope not peace. Spain
wants overall agreement, & if we do that
we don't need interim measures.

R used to stress our principle - more negotiable
under a threat. & Arabs realize - & so. That

they can get what they want by threat of war or oil embargo, there no limit to what they would go after. If they know there is a layover limit, that diff. If they know ~~we~~ you can be backed into a corner.

- K Pw/all drafts have said if oil embargo, we would not accept it. He is talking to you about
- A But any war would be over in days + most of West has come out for restraints, so this threat doesn't hold. The West accept them restraints so ~~we~~ we shouldn't restraints ^{impose} restraints ~~of~~ oil embargo.

START

we are prepared to take ^{terminal} steps in return for end to acts of belligerency. Must be an end to acts of belligerency - not to state of belligerency. What should be duration of an agreement? In '49 it was unlimited. It ~~is~~ ^{was} ~~not~~ ^{was} - we had another war. If there is a time limit it must be longer than what they need to get ready for another war. If only a few years, that is just what they need to prepare for war. Arms are good defense, but defense. They not rushing into war, but sit could be used where they would have to - even against their wishes. If longer term agreement, + longer term for UNCF, we could give more. E top level - thing must be kept secret - we have our own problems.

I think K can tell E we are prepared for negotiations w/ channel to negotiate after war before they do it before, it will look like we did it because of Bay visit.

So a matter is how deep a channel, how solid the channels, & how a adjustment.

I thinking for a decade - R think it too long. Also could give more for that. At minimum 5 yrs plus for employment. Then we can go to Kressat and something.

D We have spent 1 1/2 bil \$'s putting this kind

A K can say we will adjust.

K I have done that too much. I have to show specifics - orders of magnitude of kilometers, etc.

A Can't you say I thinking of 30-50 km of channel. In certain areas 30, in others 50.

K There are some principal points - passes & oil fields. He doesn't care about lines in a sand.

A What is his alternative? Stay where he is?

P One is assumption of S as surplus to E. That not good for either.

A I agree, but he will anyway.

K Haven't yet.

A Not possible much point where he could exit off relations of SD >

K One alternative is beating up until not to bring possession us. If he needs 2-3 yrs, he can use that to calculate anti-US course.

A We are offering something substantial

P K says it unattainable - I haven't looked Band we don't wish disaster.

Maybe E are fixed for oil exchange, but us, while we have belt tightening plans, a request would be serious. Also, our PLO resolution - US & we were only ones against UK & had to stand on that, but think any belt

to be a reigned that not most who have sit in U.N. Every kind of state & talk & I talk out present step-by-step process. I think it is essential that we move & get something of substance. Yant Kaul & party, + I give it my personal attention. But I have said frankly what we might face if no movement.

Q If we give up passes & oil fields - which give us 1/2 our oil - we will take away all E incentive to take another step & encourage them to begin agitating. It could prove to be a mistake & then it would be too late. They could agitate w/ SU, get a UN/E.F.W. drawn, & then we be in some war etc.

I don't think E wants subjugation by SU. Why not give my proposal a chance? Why not? K can find a right words to make it sound good. Why give up before hand? If we have to fight, we better off ~~than~~ on this line. Why wait today, why not take oil field & passes after they has departed. If we give every thing at 1st, they will ask for more. Best thing we want is ~~to be~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~middle~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~road~~ ~~between~~ ~~the~~ ~~US~~ ~~and~~ ~~SU~~, but I + US, let's be patient.

D. E will have to think carefully about going back to SU, because only US can help them.

Q They know only US can give them transition.

K. They can get 90% of our needs from Iran & Iran w/ SU on character of place. We holding E off saying give our efforts a chance. If we really fight, there will be no holding

them back. The E needs to give even help, add pol pressure to Arabs. We don't have to have your final emissions today & I'm not saying we can't turn those into something. We need to design how to approach E - need a strategy which is clear a concept including oil fields & gas.

2 problems - ~~see~~ where this can go - How to present to E. How give Sadat support to support him for 10 years - give him courage >

Q How about length?

K Only 1 issue on domestic. Drafting has no time limit. Why not assume unlimited.

Q Is it true Fahy & someone were chasing would take E out of war?

* K Fahy said it, Sadat maybe & said it - we would check. Fahy said next step had to be in context of taking E out of war.

Q Can US troops be in UNEF? I don't trust these small countries. That I guess would permit Ssr forces

K How do you want to legitimize Ssr presence

Q You can't rely on these little countries

P Canada

Q Canada is fine

K We could examine question of Ssr forces. They would pay etc chance, but I don't think Sadat would like it & I doubt Egypt would.

Q But we need to find some stability for UNEF forces.

K Can E tell me of clear basis we made in ()

- Q The E appetite is not as great as Syria
- Q If we have a hint for agreement, report for UNCF
- P I appreciate opportunity to meet again. We have some objectives. We want to restore + its integrity entirely
- Q To make you very much. They'd come on this?
- P Sure
- Q We raised last summer a long term arrangement. Authorized \$1.5 bil for suspended period. You said maybe most cooperation would be w/ Cong. Cong I speak to are ready to consider if Admin progress.
- P When Bill has, we discussed revised + LR bill prop. I went further than my advisers on a short range prog. We now in throes of bitter fight on foreign aid. We won in Senate 46-45. E thought bill not all good. House debate starts tomorrow. Result has been very difficult. He has collaborated w/ Greeks.
- Q I think he had changed. He promised
- P Hasn't gotten a word. House vote seems down about 20 votes - combination of R W Reports + liberal Demo. This background - I can't go for long term arrangement for I if we don't get support from P as a whole. ~~is~~ That asking too much.
- Q If you don't get a majority for aid in this Cong, maybe you can get a H E package
- P We need a world bank.



D In the Senate, we were as helpful as possible. We got some votes changed - as K knows. We believe in a forward prog & we will continue. What we have in mind is long range & we may need spec bill, because counts are out of proportion to rest of world.

I I lost vote that out, but I have to take one step at a time. I can't look down & how if we don't get a tools we need now. There are several - Rosen, Deyant, Frosch, who have to get a word. Don't do any good to get

