MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:  
President Ford  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State and  
Assistant to the President for National  
Security Affairs  
Dr. James Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense  
Rep. Otto E. Passman  
John O. Marsh, Counselor to the President  
Max Friedersdorf, Assistant to the President  
for Legislative Affairs

DATE AND TIME:  
Thursday, February 20, 1975  
9:45 a.m.

PLACE:  
The Oval Office  
The White House

[General Scowcroft entered late.]  

Passman: Conte is the key to it. In a matter of days, there will be  
nothing left for Cambodia. If you could just get Conte down here  
and twist his arm. I can get you three more votes if you will  
come in with this assured.

President: What about the 300 for Vietnam?

Passman: That's Mahon. But Conte is the key to it. I think I have  
the votes to move it to the full Committee. Morgan said if I got  
Cambodia in the bill, he would support a vote.

President: [went through the items on the amendment] Schools and  
a hospital.
Passman: This is my pet project. They really need this.

President: If Cambodia gets knocked out of the bill, I can't support this bill.

Passman: You don't have to support me because it is in the authorization. You are not doing me a favor. Your people have said we have to have it. They are just waiting for Kissinger to get back.

President: But between us, if it comes down without Cambodia, I won't accept it.

Passman: There is no connection between the appropriation and the supplemental. This is my advice to get it down. You could never get just Cambodia alone. But with Israel and Portugal (for Conte), I have a chance.

President: But these people must know if they want their pound of flesh on Israel, I must insist on what we want.

Passman: I wouldn't kid you. There is only one chance in 10 of getting it -- and I think I will have to cut it maybe to 150. My friends say they will kill me. But unless you can get Conte backed off.

President: I will call him. Get him down here. How soon can you do it?

Passman: I am frightened. There is only 1 in 10 chance but I'll go down fighting. Several people say they won't support less than 3 billion. There is no way to get that now.

President: Will you get Egypt 250?

Passman: I will have 300 for Israel, Egypt for 225, Syria 50...

Kissinger: You can't cut Egypt. The loss of face would kill Sadat.

Passman: What if I build it up somewhere else?
President: If we build up Israel, and cut Egypt, the perception is terrible.

Kissinger: Sadat is hanging on by his nails.

Passman: I hear you. But if you give Egypt 250, you have to have 325 for Israel.

Kissinger: We reluctantly agree.

Passman: I will carry the ball, but I have to cut it enough to get the votes. Your witnesses Parker and Murphy made a strong case for the extra money. If you take out Israel, you wouldn’t get 150 votes for the Hill.

President: How much for Syria?

Passman: I can’t get more than 50.

Kissinger: It will cost us in Syria because of this jealousy of Egypt. Not so much that they need the money; it’s the perception.

Passman: This is the most important meeting of my career. If you need it, I will put it in.

President: Henry is going over there for serious negotiations. If you pull the rug out of Syria, we are in trouble.

Passman: I’ll do it. But you better give me a letter. And I will have to make adjustments elsewhere.

President: Your markup will come within a week.

Passman: Probably next Tuesday. I will have a closed markup but it will be public by the end of next week.

President: Let’s assume this goes through the House. If we can get the Senate to make adjustments in other projects, will you cooperate?
Passman: The Senate doesn't do its homework. I've got to fight for my bill. I will support the House.

President: You will cooperate with us too.

Passman: I will consent to everything in the Middle East, but I will cut the hell out of it elsewhere.
I cannot sign a note if you will come on my third annual.

What don't need for it,

Don't make, just come in here & sit. Ask for

I have a note on account for a study. I'm just

I got a note on sale, he would forget a single

(That's been it since our meeting)

Student loan,

Copy my first project. They really need this.

If they get knocked out of bill, don't pay this bill.

You don't have to support me cause it's nine o'clock. You

You have said we have to have this. They just want to pay 2 get

But let us, if it comes down up. I believe I don't need

There is no connection of that writing. I explained

This is my advice to get it done. You called me

Get your ordinance down. But if I do that, you

I think these people must know if they want this

And I must wait on what

I decided did you. Only have 1 & 1/2 time

CURRENT &  I can't. I will have to

I'm sorry that they will tell you. If it matters, you can put

I will add to this

Get in down here.
How soon can you get it?

I ruptured a vein in 14 weeks but I hope
to get better fast. Someone says they won't say just how soon.

Will you get 250?

If I sent 250, I paid 225. So, 250.

You can't cut it just like you would with salt.

What if I should cut it up somehow else?

I found they will cut 250 at a premium.

What happens with this sand?

I have agreed that if you paid 250 you would

D25 for 25.

I will reluctantly agree.

I will carry a bill but I have to cut it just to get

You can't lose. I thought we made a stronger

Your best money.

If you take out 250, you wouldn't pay 150 votes for

How much for 250?

I can't get more than 250.

It will cost me a lot more because of this going up.

I'm not sure that they need any, they might;

This is very important to my cause. If you

need it, I will put it on.

If you can get a chance to get 250, you can

I'll do it. But your letter gives me no

letter and I don't have to make adjoining

You often will come as join a unit

I do want. They should have tried something

be called by and except vote.

How's your case going then? More. I can

got done to make adjustments in other things.
will you buy.
The check doesn't come back, for $42.50, paid
for my bill. I will report to them.
I will report it very thing on me, but we
will talk of it elsewhere.