MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State, and Assistant to the President for NSC.
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for NSC.

DATE AND TIME: Monday, April 28, 1975
11:25 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

President: Did the A-37's do major damage?
Kissinger: No. They hit the Vietnamese Air Force side.

President: How many are out now?
Kissinger: 35-40,000. It's remarkable.

President: It really has been magnificently done.
Kissinger: The PRG asked to meet us in Paris, then they stalled, then they demanded we go to their office. We have little capability left and they seemed to be toughening up. Congress hasn't acted.

President: What does Martin think?
Kissinger: He thinks it will take a long time to have a transition and he wants to turn it into relief and rehabilitation for Minh. But I think they will dominate Minh soon and then we will be hostage. Also the JGS control over the forces will decline. Later this week we may be faced with the need to evacuate. When Smith decides Tan Son Nhut can't be used, we pull out the people doing the processing. Then the helicopter operation would be only at one site. But they keep changing the numbers which can be lifted.
President: Are the G-2's protected?

Kissinger: One is the MACV compound, the other... Graham would keep the DAO there after the refugees stop so Minh can trade for them. I sympathize, but the way the Pentagon has operated, I don't think we can defend domestically leaving them.

President: I think when their function is gone, I don't think you can defend domestically leaving them.

Kissinger: Their function is advising ARVN, so their leaving would further deteriorate the situation and depress the GVN. You don't need to decide now, but the situation will keep unraveling -- our friends will be leaving. I think we should watch the Minh Government very rapidly and when it changes composition we may want to cut back very quickly or pull out. We have an obligation to make the transition as humane as possible, but I don't agree with Martin that we have a large embassy there for relief; we should negotiate it separately.

President: Keep a close watch on it. How many are left?

Kissinger: There are 150 or so unofficial Americans. There have all been warned, and I am not so worried about that. The official Americans are our problem.

On Hussein, you must be careful because Rifai reports everything. You can give him the basic options. He is very depressed and thinks war is probable.

President: If he talks to Congress, he should say that.

Kissinger: The Jews are spreading the word that they are turning to the Soviets for military equipment. That is nonsense but you should be forthcoming.

Sadat has accepted Austria. We should announce it and tell Israel. Then we have to invite Rabin. How about the week of 9 June?

I think you have to tell both sides you won't tolerate a war before 1976.

President: Those dates are okay. Will we have a meeting and a working dinner?

Kissinger: Yes. To keep the Syrians in line, I would tell Asad and see what he wants. If he wants to send someone here, that's okay or you would meet with Asad somewhere in connection with CSCE. I have the uneasy feeling Israel may be looking for an excuse to pre-empt. Their behavior is too provocative.
President: If they think they can sell the Congress today like they did in 1973, they can't.

Kissinger: And I think Americans are tired of being pushed around. A rabble-rousing speech would do it.

President: I agree.

Kissinger: But I hope we don't have to. The main thing is to prevent a war. So far the Arabs and the Soviets are keeping their heads down.

President: I am tilting more and more to a comprehensive settlement. I get the impression there is increased polarization, and to start all over again I don't think it is worth it. And if there is another war and Israel won, we would be blamed for it.

Kissinger: I have said that under those circumstances, we would have to force them to the '67 borders. I think an over-all proposal is the best way to avoid a war. But the Israelis will really raise hell.

[Discussion of New Haven trip]

Panama -- there are substantive and political aspects. You will have trouble with the right here if you go through with it; if you don't you will have massive problems in Latin America. There is a third option: Sign a treaty but don't push it. I am inclined that way.

Commodities -- All the Europeans are looking to see how they can relate commodities to energy. On this point, the producers are not too far wrong. How can we protest against their high prices and not give them protection against low prices? You may want to have an interagency meeting on this and adjudicate the issue. I doubt we can continue to rely on market forces.

I may give a food follow-on speech.

President: I told Hormats you should.

Kissinger: If I did, there are three things I would cover: (1) An international food reserve system. Domestically your friends oppose it; your opponents are for it. Your opponents fear you will be forced to use reserves to keep prices low. It will be a political problem.
President: I will veto the farm bill.

Kissinger: That will make it worse. (2) Our people think it would be good to pledge four million tons a year over the next several years.

President: That the farmers would like.

Kissinger: That would take some of the curse off the food reserves.

President: Hannah proposed committing $200 million of economic aid of food production resources. We are doing it now and thought you should mention it.

I would not put the reserves we hold totally under government control.

Kissinger: If you are not against the idea of a speech, we will cooperate with other agencies on a draft.

President: I think you should give one.

Kissinger: If you have a reserve system, those who don't join would have to be penalized somehow, like being put on the bottom of the list if we draw on reserves.

President: I was at Clark MacGregor's last night and the British Ambassador hit me on the Queen's visit. And where the Middle East reassessment was going. He kept pressing me.

Kissinger: You should discuss it with Wilson. It is one of his sentimental points.

President: He took a beating on the EC.

Kissinger: The unions there are controlled by the Communists. The leadership of the Labour party so far has kept things more moderate, but the pressures are there. They may go the way of the Portuguese. The Portuguese election was interesting, but the Constituent Assembly has no authority, and will do only the outlines of a constitution.
P: Did the A-37s do any damage?
K: No, they didn't even fire.

P: How many sorties now?
K: 25-30 a day; it's remarkable.

P: Really, how can you maintain this now?
K: The plan is to sorties in pairs, then to do them.

P: What do you think?
K: The tricks will take a long time to train troops and

P: What sorties are in progress now? We have

P: What will be the result?
K: The A-37s are going to be stuck, especially on

K: What do you think?
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K: We're not sure which route to take.

K: The A-37s will be stuck, especially on

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K: What do you think?
The situation is very complex. The President has declared a state of emergency. The situation is rapidly changing. It is important to react quickly and decisively. We must act now, but we will keep essential services running. We need to make decisions, but we should also listen to others. If we act quickly, we can solve the problem. We need to work together. We need to act quickly and decisively.

P. Keep cool, watch the clock. How many are left?
K. There are 150 and some injured. They have all been warned, and I think we should act.

P. We need a plan. Can we act quickly?
K. We need to act quickly and decisively. We can act now. Libya is a priority. The situation is very complex. We need to act quickly and decisively.

P. If we talk to the President, he should say that.
K. We need to speak to the President. We need to speak to the President. We need to speak to the President.

P. What do the allies think? Are they with us?
K. Yes. The situation is complex. We need to act quickly and decisively. We need to act quickly and decisively. We need to act quickly and decisively.
I would meet us. Good afternoon in connection w/ case.
I have uneasy feeling I may be looking for solved
the problem. This is not to proceed.

P: If any of these can sell Camp today like 15, they
could.

K: And I think once we're told if being purchased, a
waffle machine speech would be OK.

P: Turner,
K: But I hope we don't have to. The main thing is
prevent a war. So far, Arabs & SU are keeping their
mouths shut.

P: I'm trying to move to comprehension. I get
impression there is insufficient justification in the
army again. I don't think is worth it. If one
army or I say, we would be blamed for it.
K: I know it needs to remain, we must have to
say China be 67 leaders. I think overall present is
not very impressive was, but I will really take that

(Discussion of how Hanoi tried)

(Discussion of Iranian novel)

Panneman: There are substantial job cuts.
You will have trouble w/ inputs if you
got there, if you don't you will have serious
problems.
There is a P.I. test a treaty, but don't
prefer. I understand that way.
Consulate: All 3 nations are lacking. From that,
consulate, consult, is wrong. On this
point, a problem is not the foreign...
how can we protect against long price and not just protection against low price. you may want to have instability in this and dynamic
words, i don't see an equation in which market
forces.

First, follow the graph.
P. I think time going outside.

If I did, there is a thing around this. I am very
fearful, sometimes laminate your point again.
It's one of the few to be in opposition for it. Opposites fear you will
be fair to more stable to buy price some. It will
be a point... path.
P. I will write from Bill

That would make it sure.

That would make it sure. (2) Don't forget that
it would be good to pledge 4 million tons a year over
next several years.
P. That's something we would like.

That would take doing the current food security
program. Physical security, 250 million tons and to
food, and assistance. We don't know that you
should mention it.

I should put a measure under totally correct
good control.

If you not against it idea for much, we will
work of other agencies in a draft.
P. I think you should give one.

If you have more system, there is a deal gain.
Would there be something? like being
just a bottom of me think on measure.