MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:
PRESIDENT FORD
Bipartisan Leadership
Secretary Kissinger
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft

DATE AND TIME:
Tuesday, September 9, 1975
Cabinet Room

SUBJECT:
Middle East -- Sinal Agreement

Kissinger: The events of 1973 show us that the Middle East conflict produces a danger of great power conflict, and also enormous economic dislocation. Also, our commitment to Israel produces our involvement in any conflict.

A comprehensive approach would have been easy to devise but it tends to put the radicals in the driver's seat; it gives the Soviet Union a strong role, and it forces Israel to make many decisions all at once which it is not equipped to do. So we chose an interim approach.

Egypt is the largest Arab state and the leader of the Arab world. The problem has been to reconcile Egypt's concrete territorial needs as against the intangible political needs of Israel. The March negotiations failed when the gap between the these could not be bridged. Both Egypt and Israel preferred that we continue the interim approach.

This is the first agreement between Israel and Egypt except in the aftermath of a war. It makes far-reaching moves toward peace and a new relationship between the two countries.

[He describes the map, the zones of limited armaments, and the surveillance stations].

The Israelis insisted that unless there were purely Americans in the passes, they wouldn't withdraw. Egypt said she couldn't accept unless Israel withdrew, so we reluctantly agreed. The American technicians are in the UN zone. Their function is to reassure the two sides in time of peace. If conflict breaks out, their function is over, so we would have no problem withdrawing them in case of conflict—or on a joint resolution of congress to do this. Those people shouldn't be compared to Vietnam but to the UN forces in the neutral zone.
Bellmon: How about the danger of attack by terrorists?

Kissinger: It would be about impossible for them to get at them in the zone. It is within the UN zone and is uninhabited. There is more of a danger at their bases in Egypt than on duty, but any American anywhere in the Middle East is a target. It is almost impossible to guard completely against terrorism.

Sadat, himself, is in great jeopardy. He has taken risks for peace. But he is the only one who has thrown over the Soviet Union and the only one who has gained anything from this settlement. If we can make this work, it will be a good object lesson on cooperating with the U.S.

The aid package should not be looked at as payment for the agreement. Israel asked for $2.6 billion before the agreement. The increment resulting from the agreement is slight, even though we will provide less than $2.6 billion. We haven't arrived at a figure for Egypt, but it is important to show the benefits for cooperation with the U.S. It is essential that we show our interest in Egypt's economic development.
Current changes of US conduct. Also agree in continuing intelligence.

A comprehensive approach would have been necessary, but it seems to put undue emphasis on

E build an approach that is focused on creating a comprehensive strategy.

I think the US should be more active in

US should take a more active role in

Their function is to enhance the overall level of

In case of conflict, even joint staff of

The US should be more active in

US forces in a neutral zone.
It would be almost impossible for them to get along with the UN if any effort is made to change them at least in the next 6 months, but any change anywhere would be a good move against tension.

Salat should be restored for the time being. He has taken steps for peace, but these may not be shared. They may even suspect us of just trying to gain something from the settlement. If we can make this work, it will be a good object lesson on any other case.

The aid package should not be labeled as a condition for agreement. I would like to have a more specific agreement.

The agreement currently is still in the works and we will provide both 7.6. We haven't decided on figures for 7, but it is important to consider the benefits of any agreement. It is essential that we have clear interests and a clear plan.