MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:
The President
Golda Meir
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Simcha Dinitz, Ambassador of Israel
Eytan Bentsur, Counselor, Embassy of Israel

DATE AND TIME:
Friday, December 19, 1975
10:30 a.m.

PLACE:
The Oval Office

[The press enters for photographs. There is small talk about the Congress rush, airline strike, the Golda portrait, etc. The press then leaves.]

The President: It is very nice to see you. A lot has happened since I last saw you. It was exactly a year ago. I know Henry has met with you.

Kissinger: I got scolded last time.

President: We do think progress has been made in the Middle East. We and Israel have gotten along well. We have had some sharp words, but as friends, not as opponents. I want to reaffirm we are dedicated to the safety and survival of Israel. We may have tactical differences, but this Administration is going to continue our long history of standing with Israel. There is no backing off that firm commitment.

Meir: I don't think the Government ever doubted that. We are democracies and must put up with our presses. I agree with you on some things but not every one.
For example, the PLO sitting in on the UN Security Council. We think it is dangerous, because the more the Security Council tries to deal with the problem and thinks it can solve it... I don't think you think so, and we can't accept it. There is a solution to PLO through Jordan, but not through a third state. There is nothing we can talk to the PLO about.

President: We have said that so long as the PLO doesn't recognize Israeli existence we believe nothing is possible.

Meir: With our neighbors we can negotiate. So as soon as they want to, we can agree instantly. But we can't negotiate with terrorists who just want us out. The danger is that if the Security Council thinks it can decide and enforce a settlement, they just make peace more distant.

President: We will not be a party to an imposed settlement of any kind.

Kissinger: Your Prime Minister is the only one who doesn't believe that. We have insisted that only 242 and 336 are relevant issues for the Security Council.

President: I would like your assessment. We are disturbed about Lebanon. It seems a confused mess.

Meir: May I smoke? [The lights up.]

Sincerely, my heart aches over Lebanon. They don't have democracy as you know it, but it is relatively democratic. It is a delicate situation but they have managed for over 20 years. There is no doubt Syria is interested in this upheaval. We are baffled by it.

The shocking thing is the attitude of the world toward it. It doesn't come up in the Security Council or the General Assembly while all this killing is going on.

President: It is primarily in Beirut.

Meir: Not exclusively. But the PLO has more power than the Government. I can't understand the world standing by. I am surprised the Pope doesn't say something. After all, these are Christians being killed.

[ A note on the Senate vote in Angola is sent in.]
President: We thought we had it worked out. But they are all so timid and gun shy.

Meir: You weren't asking to send personnel.

President: No, and it is a pitiful scene for a world power.

Meir: What does it mean for small countries? How can you ask them to take risks? We take risks in the passes and for peace.

President: I am very worried about the attitude of the Congress. The attitude of the Congress is worse than that of the American people.

Kissinger: In a way this is worse than Vietnam. That had gone on for years and we inherited it. What does this do for us in the world? We had our friends in Africa with us. We were getting support from NATO for a policy outside Europe, for the first time.

[Discussion of the Angola compromise]

President: I have just been informed they won't give us the money. This is a disaster for the country.

We felt the Sinai agreement was constructive in helping us move toward peace. If we don't hold out the prospect of progress I think it would lead to serious consequences.

Meir: They can't have it both ways.
Dear [Name],

It was very nice to see you last weekend. It's been a long time since we spoke. I know it has been a tough time.

I didn't realize how busy you've been.

I was thinking about how things have been moving up in the [NC]. We have gotten along well — we have had discussions, but as you can see, it's not as apparent. I want to remain in the [NC], and I believe it's a matter of principle. We can't have a situation where the administration is not in control. I want to maintain our key historical standing.

I have a meeting with that tomorrow.

I don't think you're decided that we can continue to maintain the current process. Some things don't interest you. For example, the NCSA setting in the [NSC]. We think it's important because it means we can deal with it. I don't think you think so, or we can't accept it. I think our relations with the [NSC] are important, not their 3rd status. They are not what we can take to an object.

We have had so many 160 chats.

Why I think we need a meeting is because we don't have an agreement. We are one step ahead of one step. So soon as they want to, we can agree immediately. But I can't wait on it. I need to act fast. But I want no out.

I'm still working on it. I think we can decide on something.

Best,

[Your Name]
general: make plans more distant
P, e. g. in the past to on major
settlement for land
K: your plan is completely doesn't behind
We have missed that early 24/25/3 there
settlement visits by SC
P: EPP is less responsible, the
document about history. It seems a
confused issue
M: (They discuss) Similarly, one does acts
with history. They don't have always as you
know it, but it is relatively as. It is
delicate too but they have argued for
are ages. There is no doubt again is
manifested in this hypothesis. We are confident
in it.

The shocking they see which for could
toward it. It doesn't came up this SE
or CA, while all the detailing is going on.

P: It primarily in Britain.
M: Not specifically. But he has some power
then, e.g. 20th, I can't understand. I could
understanding, I suggested. Yes almost
reaching after all, stone and Christian
being handed.

(Author names aren't seen)
P: We think we should it work with. But they
are all to finish & go on.
M: You won't think it personal
P: No, and it is a helpful forum to a world
power.
M: What does it mean for small countries?
How can your action change this?
We have little work to do - progress - for now.

I don't know what - all that we can. The
Greek for 'long' is worse than that of a "longer"

If we are not going to agree on that.

That

We can progress - we shouldn't do it.

What does this do for us in a world?

We had an - plan for it. And we

were getting support from Nato at all, I'm

for that one.

(Discussion of - Anglo-American)

They just been confirmed we cannot join

one - wrong. This is a decision for the

country.

We felt if some agreement was not

achieved it that it was critical in helping

to avoid a plan. If we don't hold out

a prospect of progress. I think it would be hard

to sustain an argument.

On. They can't have it both ways.