MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Gerald R. Ford
Golda Meir
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Simcha Dinitz, Ambassador of Israel

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, May 19, 1976
2:05 - 3:04 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

[The press came in. There was small talk about Golda's travels, etc. The
press then left.]

The President: The press has been good to me even though they don't always
agree. That psychological attitude is important.

Dinitz: The press really likes you, Mr. President.

Meir: On my first trip to the United States as Prime Minister, I really felt
like I had come home. The press remembered and I had a warm feeling.

The President: A lot has happened since we met. Our working relations
with your Government have improved. The Sinai Agreement has gone well,
as far as I know.

Meir: The Egyptians aren't behaving well on the West Bank, but that is
different. The Prime Minister asked me to send his regards.

The President: There are, of course, some issues ahead -- UNDOF, for
example. We hope the momentum can be continued. I spoke to the Prime
Minister about some ways to move things forward. There has as yet been
no action. Lebanon is a dreadful situation, with one ceasefire after another.
Meir: Isn't it awful. Over 20,000 killed.

The President: Your Government has acted with great restraint. We think the only answer is to solve it internally rather than through Syrian intervention. We would understand your attitude toward that. But Frangi is or isn't resigning, etc.

Meir: I don't know if that will really do it. It is all so mixed up and senseless.

The President: It is very confusing, especially as to who is supporting whom.

What is your evaluation of West Bank developments?

Meir: Maybe we made a mistake. I didn't want elections, but they said Jordanian law required it and we shouldn't be breaking that law. The elections were held and went off flawlessly. But I think some elements -- the Communists -- decided to take advantage of the situation.

Despite what is happening in the West Bank, the majority is going about its business. The press doesn't report that. When our soldiers find themselves in a position where stones are thrown and their hair burned, something has to happen. These are large groups and they let the children out of school. Our soldiers just can't let people throw stones at them. It is deplorable, but what can we do about it? And the UN, which complains here, says not a word about Lebanon. There are PLO and Communists working there, but I think it will calm down.

The President: The Arabs have their own police and security forces?

Meir: We changed nothing. Our troops are never in evidence. We want to have industrial development there, but what would happen if we advocated sending Israeli business men in there. So we are trying to get them to do it themselves with our investment support.

It is discouraging, but I read your American Jewish Committee speech. It gives us strength and we really appreciate your words.

What is the reaction of the Arabs to the non-belligerency.

The President: I would say, while I haven't talked with them directly, that Hussein might be interested but he won't move ahead of the others.
Scowcroft: We have had no official response, but each is sort of waiting for the other. There is no enthusiasm evident.

Meir: We are disappointed. We had hoped there would be progress. We were happy with your speech saying the parties themselves to negotiate peace. That is the important element. What is the good of this continued conflict?

The President: I noted in my speech some hope on Soviet emigration, but we have had no response. Has Scoop Jackson said anything?

Scowcroft: Not a word, or from anyone else.

The President: How many would leave under free emigration?

Meir: We estimate about 140-150,000. They are fine people and the things done to them are really dreadful.

The President: How long does it take for their readjustment in Israel?

Meir: First they get assimilated into our society. It is not a difficult problem.

May I say a couple of things the Prime Minister asked? I needn't dwell on what you have done for us - - we appreciate that. We are in bad domestic straits. We want to stand on our own feet and we will add more taxes but it is a problem.

The President: I have spoken to several people about it. The veto of the Security Assistance Authorization bill had no connection with aid to you.

Meir: We understand that.

The President: I had major problems with that bill. Right now we are looking at figures for the Transition Quarter. It is not finalized yet so I have no figures. The door is not closed and we will try to work things out. We may need help from your Ambassador.

Meir: The last time we sat here was during Angola.

The President: The Congress didn't understand the implications.
Meir: The Russians did.

The President: They certainly did. Tell the Prime Minister we will work something out on the Transition Quarter. It may not be everything, but it should help.

Meir: We hope you will come see us.

The President: I would like to. It looks better after yesterday.

Meir: I hope you know of our sincere desire for peace. Our dedication is complete and we want to work with you to that end.
MEETING WITH GOLDA MEIR

Wednesday, May 19, 1976
2:00 p.m. (30 minutes)
The Oval Office

From: Brent Scowcroft

I. PURPOSE

To exchange views on the Middle East situation.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS & PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

A. Background: Mrs. Meir is making this private visit to receive a major award from the AFL-CIO at a dinner May 20 and to receive an honorary degree from Wellesley College. Her full itinerary is at Tab A.

Since you last met with her on December 19, she has joined a newly formed Labor Party Steering Forum, thus formalizing her role as a senior advisor. The Steering Forum was created as a prop to the Government in the face of Rabin's declining popularity and disarray with the leadership. This meeting is an opportunity for you to express concern over the direction of Israeli policy and the growing public Impairment in this country with some aspects of it. US press comment on Israeli policy on settlements in the occupied areas has been almost unanimously critical.

Other additional topics which have come up since you last met Mrs. Meir include US aid to Israel, Lebanon, and UNDOF.

B. Participants: Mrs. Meir; Ambassador Dinitz; Brent Scowcroft.

C. Press Coverage: Meeting to be announced; press photo session.
III. TALKING POINTS

General Policy

-- The character and tone of communication between our two governments has improved since I last saw you. At that time I was very concerned about the adversary note that had crept into the discourse between us. Prime Minister Rabin's visit helped a good deal in this respect.

-- I am still very concerned, however, about Israeli policy, both in the short term and over the longer run. We agree entirely on fundamentals, and I sympathize deeply with Israel's problems. Nevertheless, I continue to have no clear picture at all of the direction in which Israel wants to move in the coming years.

-- Israeli policy still seems to be essentially a policy of hanging on and hoping for the best. Not only is this not a policy with which we can effectively cooperate, it is also not one that is likely to produce peace in the Middle East.

-- Not only is there no credible agreed strategy, but the day-to-day actions of the Israeli Government are in important ways more conducive to stalemate than to political progress. We welcome constructive moves such as the February 22 Cabinet decision for negotiation of an end to the state of war. This forthcoming position is then contradicted, however, by concrete actions like the continued establishment of settlements in occupied territory, which create a widespread impression that Israel does not genuinely desire peace.

-- I have been struck with the almost universal reaction in this country against the Israeli settlements policy in recent weeks. I understand the political situation with which Prime Minister Rabin has to work, but we must regard the issues of peace and war as overriding.

-- For the first time, there are Arab leaders who say they are prepared for peace, but this situation may not last indefinitely. We know Israel is skeptical about their real intentions, and we can understand that. But Arab statements about peace should be tested in negotiations, and that cannot happen so long as Israel takes positions--such as establishing settlements and saying it must retain some Arab territory even in a peace settlement--which inhibit the negotiating process.
-- I would like to hear your thoughts on the points I have raised, particularly on the question of where the Israeli Government sees itself as heading. What policy will the Labor Party go to the country with in the next election?

U.S. Assistance for Israel

-- I have asked the Congress for over 4 billion dollars for FY 1976 and 1977, much more than any previous two-year period. I am determined to see that Israel continues to obtain the support it needs in arms and money to meet its essential security requirements.

-- My veto of the Foreign Assistance Bill was directed at restrictive amendments which tie my hands in foreign policy. I hope we can achieve a compromise on the Transition Quarter funding.

UNDOF

-- We have no clear reading of how Syria intends to handle the problem of renewal, although we have several reports that President Asad does wish to renew.

-- We have made clear to the Syrians that we are not prepared to pay any political price for renewal.

Lebanon

-- We appreciate the restraint showed by Israel in the face of Syrian military movements in Lebanon.

-- We are doing what we can to encourage a lasting ceasefire and a political settlement but the present prospects are not good. We hope that Israel will use its influence with the Lebanese Christians to promote a political compromise and an end to the fighting.
ITINERARY OF GOLDA MEIR

May 18
Arrive Washington

May 19
Washington -- Meeting with the President
Washington -- Dinner hosted by Ambassador Dinitz

May 20
Washington -- Meeting with Mr. George Meany, AFL-CIO
Washington -- Dinner Honoring Mrs. Meir, AFL-CIO

May 21
Washington -- Israeli Bonds dinner
Depart for New York City

May 22
Connecticut -- Dinner by United Jewish Appeal
Depart for New York City

May 23
New York City

May 24
Philadelphia -- Israeli Bonds Dinner

May 25
Chicago -- Israeli Bonds Dinner

May 26
Chicago -- United Jewish Appeal Luncheon
Depart for New York City

May 27
Boston -- Dinner hosted by the President of Wellesley College

May 28
Boston -- Honorary Degree from Wellesley College
Depart for New York City

May 29-31
New York City

June 1
Boston -- Israeli Bonds Reception

June 2
New York -- United Jewish Appeal event
P/Colba Nine √
17 May 76

Dear sir,

Small talk and a few personal greetings.

I. The peace breakers may soon be on their way, but they are not always correct. I have been told by those who have been there that the peace negotiators have been effective.

II. Let us hope that we can count on our own resources. Our role is not to quarrel with each other. We must stand firm in our, shall we say, our own situation.

III. The Fawalibrary will be closed, but that is not our fault. It is said that we need to yield this regard.

IV. I am not sure what you mean by "a few weeks ahead." We are far from the true situation. The true situation is that we are in a critical juncture where we must make a decision.

V. Is there a checklist for what to do after we make a decision?

W. I am not sure. We must be careful.

P. Your statement is well received. We think that the only way to solve it is to provide it with more resources than those offered elsewhere. We would understand your attitude towards this, but I am not sure what you mean by "a few weeks ahead." I don't know if that will really do it. It is already much too late to ask why.

I. It is very concerning, especially when it comes to:

What is your view on W Bank alleged attacks?

M. Maybe we should investigate. Shouldn't we investigate?

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12333, Sec. 3.5
By: , NARA, Date: 7/19/94
But they think Judaism has required it — on this —
the learning that love. This devotion was held to
untied from love. But I think some deserve
more than others. To the advantage of...,
Despite what we may think of a party,
 its power about its own kind. The first doesn't
get that. When one believes good themselves
in a position where they see no harm... The
may keep their eyes off things. They are
large gaps and stay late a children's argument.
Our schedule, I must say, did bring them some
at times. It is applicable, but what am I to
do about it? And the UK, which explains
very well not a word about them.
There are few + create nothing there, but I think
it will come through.

There were some serious questions about
security forces.

We changed nothing. Our times are worse in
evidence.

We can't do much about it... but
what would happen if we avoided sending a
I叙述 some views. I am trying to
get them to do it themselves (form mutation)
suggest.

At this time, I need your D.C. support. It gives me strength and we really
appreciate your work.

What is a fun topic to share with others?
I would say that while I haven't talked about truth
That I remain might be another but not
more about.
We have had no official response, but such is the nature of political life. There is some uncertainty.

We are disappointed. We had hoped. We were happy to hear your speech saying that we are important elements.

What is proved is the continued support.

I invited him to my speech because I was impressed, and we have the same interests. We are working on something.

And anyone.

Your words on your own site.

How many would have ended supporting the amendment.

In the past. They agreed to.

And some ethnic things aside. It seems really dreadful.

How long does it take the malfunctions.

First they get accustomed to the new.

Then they get accustomed to the new.

And they get used to the new.

What I say as a statement of things.

And that's what we have.

And how do you think that.

I am not sure about the whole thing.

And how are we going to do this?

And we have the ammunition

If we understand.

I had some questions for you. We're going to look at the options. We are the different options. We will be looking at them.

And the Jewish.
We tried this out, and we may need help from Mr. Smith.

We think that we are doing the right thing.

The key didn't understand implications.

The purpose of this is to help people.

We hope you will come see us.

I would like to make better use of this.

We hope for your continued support.

So far, the decision is complete and won't change despite that.