

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~SECRET/NODIS/XGDS~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Max Fisher
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME: Friday - July 2, 1976
2:00 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

President: That was a good meeting the other day.

Fisher: Look at this. One of the guys was so touched he stayed over-night to write this. [Hands a paper to the President.]

President: This is a helleva fine paper.

Fisher: I am leaving this afternoon. I allowed myself two extra days to get armed and meet with more groups. There is a feeling of the Jewish groups around the world that they want more input into the Israeli policy. This could be very helpful. They want me to set it up. There will be a couple launched from the U.S. and 100 or so from elsewhere.

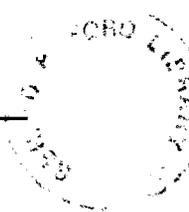
[There is some talk about the political organization and the campaign.]

What can I do to help in Jerusalem?

President: The most overriding thing is in Lebanon. The Israelis have done exactly the right thing by standing aside. As a result the Syrians are wearing down the PLO.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5
NSC MEMO, 11/2/80, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, State & Ins. 3/13/04
BY: [redacted], NARA. DATE 7/2/04

~~SECRET/NODIS/XGDS~~



CLASSIFIED BY Brent Scowcroft
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5 (B) (3)
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp to det.

Kissinger: And without any pressure from us. We came to parallel conclusions -- there was absolutely no hint of pressure from us. The Syrians are wearing down the PLO and the Syrians are stuck in Lebanon. They can't pull out without turning it over to the PLO and indicating a botched military operation.

The one thing I see that is dangerous is the possibility of Israeli attacks on Fatah camps as a result of this hijacking.

President: That could coalesce all the Arabs against Israel.

Kissinger: I tell you it is my personal belief that the French are making a mistake conceding to negotiations with the terrorists. But that is their business.

President: Retaliation would just spark the Arabs to unite.

Kissinger: The problem is these are Yemeni Jews -- Sephardic Jews. They are not so tough and they are over 50 percent of the Israeli population. That is the reason for the change.

Fisher: What about the role of the PLO in the Lebanon situation?

[The President and Secretary Kissinger described the thinking process and that there was no change in our policy.]

The TQ thing worked out fine. I want to thank you.

President: Javits was very pleased.

Scowcroft: Humphrey told me he thought it worked out fine.

Fisher: So I just wanted to know what was happening.

Kissinger: Not a Goddamn thing is happening. We have given the Arabs proposals and they haven't responded. We have no reason to press.

Fisher: It looks like the message for me to convey is to stay away from retaliation.

This settlement thing is another problem.



Scowcroft: They just authorized three more.

President: Really? Max, that is a very serious matter.

Kissinger: Israel shouldn't make the same mistake of hitting the refugee camps. The PLO is getting chewed up right now without any help.

Fisher: This George Brown thing is bad. I think something will have to be said. Lissy has drafted something innocuous.

President: I don't see how we can make a statement. What is the occasion?

Fisher: You will get a lot of mail. Maybe in response to this, you can get it out by answering the letters.

President: We will look at it.

~~SECRET~~ (GDS)

WASHINGTON

MEETING WITH MAX FISHER

Friday, July 2, 1976
2:00 p.m. (20 minutes)
The Oval Office

From: Brent Scowcroft *BS*

I. PURPOSE

To review matters of common concern with Max Fisher prior to his visit to Israel and convey, through him, to the Israeli leadership your continued strong support for Israel.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

A. Background: You saw Max Fisher last week with a group of Jewish leaders. He will be going to Israel again quite soon and wanted to see you privately. The principal developments since your last meeting are as follows:

--Approval of the Security Assistance Appropriations Bill for FY 76, the Transitional Quarter and FY 77, with a total of over \$4.2 billion for Israel.

--The Israeli concern that we may be moving toward a shift in our position of not recognizing the PLO.

--The terrorist hijacking to Uganda of the Air France plane and the Israeli decision to negotiate for the exchange of hostages held by the terrorists for prisoners (Palestinians) held by Israel.

--The continuing war in Lebanon with the escalation of Christian-Palestinian fighting and a more active Arab League role.

Subject to GDS of E. O. 11652
Automatically Downgraded at Two
Year Intervals and Declassified on
December 31, 1984.

~~SECRET~~ (GDS)

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5

NSC MEMO, 11/24/08, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES *State Review 3/13/04*

RY *WJ* NARA DATE *7/27/04*

On economic and military assistance for Israel, Max Fisher understands just how the positions of the Administration and Congress have evolved and he fully appreciates how hard you have tried to balance the competing demands of an austerity budget, a balanced package for the Middle East and meeting Israel's real needs. (You will recall Max thought that a sum between \$250 and \$275 million for the TQ would be adequate.) He can tell the Israeli leadership of your pleasure at having been able to find a formula whereby Israel will receive \$4.2 billion in assistance for FY 76, the TQ and FY 77, compared to a total of just over \$6 billion for the entire preceding 27-year period. Our support for Israel's security and survival will not weaken. We will continue to provide support within Israel's realistic needs and our practical limitations.

Regarding the PLO issue, Foreign Minister Allon has told the Knesset of the "amazement and reservations" expressed officially by the Israeli Government to the United States Government over the latter's "having found fit to express its thanks to the murderers" of Ambassador Meloy and Mr. Waring, i. e., the PLO. Allon also criticized the permission given by the State Department to PLO Representative al-Hut to visit Washington, where he lunched with several Senators and Members of Congress (e. g., Senators Ribicoff, Nelson, Morgan, Haskell, Abourezk). At the same time, Allon noted that Administration officials have reassured Israel that there is no change in United States policy or attitude vis-a-vis the PLO. The Israeli Government and press have blown the expression of appreciation to the PLO over the Beirut evacuation and the al-Hut visit to Washington out of all proportion, reflecting both the genuine sensitivity of top Israeli officials to every move we make on this subject and the volatility of the issue in domestic Israeli politics.

Max Fisher could help to reassure the Israelis that there is no change contemplated in our basic policy. He could also suggest that by making major issues out of minor incidents, the Israelis tend to hurt their own image in this country where there is considerable public and even Congressional sentiment for trying to find a means of dealing with the Palestinians without in any way compromising Israel's security. This has

led members of Congress and others to talk directly to PLO representatives despite the unwillingness of the USG to do so. The USG cannot ignore the practical fact that only the PLO can provide any protection whatsoever to our diplomats and other citizens in West Beirut.

Regarding the terrorist hijacking, you could have Max Fisher convey to the Israelis from you personally what they have been told officially, namely, that we have been making every effort to help obtain the release of the hostages (e. g. , we have approached the UN Secretary General, the Egyptians and others to intercede with Idi Amin and with the Palestinians) and that we share Israel's anguish over this situation. Max could also assure the Israelis of our determination to redouble efforts to find a more effective international means of dealing with terrorism.

Regarding Lebanon, the Israelis are not unduly concerned over the present situation since the combination of Syrian and Lebanese Christian fighting with the PLO has seriously damaged the latter's military capabilities and could also lead to a long-term political weakening of the PLO. As yet the Arab League decision to intervene has had no appreciable effect, easing Israeli fears that it could produce a long-term radical Arab orientation. However, should the Christians and Syrians continue their attacks on the PLO and Lebanese left despite strong Arab League opposition, it could produce great bitterness and violence inside Lebanon and open the US and Israel to Arab criticism as being behind it. Israeli restraint has been appreciated and we hope that it will continue. We also hope the Israelis will join us in encouraging the Lebanese Christians to seek a compromise solution, not involving partition, rather than persisting in the kind of military action which would inevitably lead to retribution, continued violence and a collapse of prospects for any political agreement.

- B. Participants: Max Fisher, Brent Scowcroft.
- C. Press Arrangements: White House photo only.



III. TALKING POINTS

Security Assistance

1. Please tell our Israeli friends how pleased I am to have been able to work out with Congress a formula for security assistance for FY 76, the TQ and FY 77, which will provide more than \$4.2 billion for Israel, yet be within the budget ceiling imposed by the austerity situation in this country, and also maintain the balance which I consider essential for the Middle East as a whole. This amount is over 60% of the total provided Israel by the USG between 1949 and 1975 and indicates in a concrete manner my dedication to Israel's security and well-being.

PLO

2. I am aware of the Israeli concern about the PLO. You can reassure them that there is no change in our position of no recognition and no negotiations with the PLO as long as they do not recognize Israel's right to exist and accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.
3. While I recognize the sensitivity and importance of this issue for Israel, they may wish to consider whether such strong reactions to minor events do not harm their image in this country. Despite the position of the USG, there is public and even Congressional sentiment for a dialogue with the PLO, resulting in occasional meetings between Members of Congress and PLO officials. The Administration does not encourage this but we cannot prevent it. We cannot ignore the practical fact that only the PLO can provide any protection for our diplomats and other citizens in West Beirut.

Terrorist Hijacking

4. We share Israel's anguish over the terrorist hijacking to Uganda and the situation of the Israeli and other hostages. We have done our best to try to save the lives of the hostages without suggesting that the terms of the terrorists be met.
5. The Israelis can be certain that we intend to redouble our efforts to put an end to such terrorist actions. We will be interested in whatever ideas they may have.

6. We are watching the situation in Lebanon very closely, as Israel knows. We have appreciated Israel's restraint thus far and we hope it will continue. We also hope that Israel will join us in using whatever influence it has with the Lebanese Christians to urge them to work for a political compromise while it is still possible and not to push their military successes so far as to invite another cycle of retribution and even greater violence which could kill all hopes for an eventual agreement.

P/ Max Fisher / K

2 July 75

P That was a good meeting - other day
F Look at this. One of a group was so touched
he stayed overnight to write this
(Hands paper to P)

P This is a helluva fine paper.

F I am leaving this afternoon. I allowed myself
2 extra days to get around & meet w/ some groups.
There is a feeling of ^{frustration} ~~groups~~ around world
that they want more input with a I policy. This
could be very helpful. They want to set it up.
There will be a couple hundred from US &
a 1000 or so from elsewhere.

(Some talk about political system - Carvajal)
What can I do to help in Jerusalem

P The most overriding thing is in Lebanon. I
I have done exactly a right thing by standing
aside. As a result a Syrian are wearing down a
PLO

K Could also any pressure from us. We came to
a conclusion - absolutely no hint of pressure
from us. The Syrians are wearing down a PLO &
a Syrians are stuck in Lebanon - they can't
pull out w/ out turning it over to PLO & indicating a
bilateral mtg.

The one thing I see dangerous is a possibility
of I attacks on PLO camps as a result of this
injuring.

P That could involve all the shots against I.

K I tell you it my personal belief that F making
a mistake concerning ^{interest of} ~~the~~ terrorists. ~~But~~
~~drop~~ that their business

P Retaliation would just make a Arabs to

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5

NSC MEMO, 11/24/98, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINE: state Review 3/13/04

BY: WA NARA DATE 7/27/04

with.

K The job is these are Yemini Jews (Safardic?)
They are not so tough & they are over 50% of a
I population - that is a reason for a change.

F What about the PLO in this between it
(R&P described the thinking process & that
was change in policy)

The TQ thing worked out fine. I want to thank
you.

P Jim's was very pleased

S Humphrey told me he that it worked out fine

F So I just wanted to know what was happening

K Not a good thing is happening. We have given
a draft proposal & they haven't responded. We
have no reason to pass

P looks like the way for me to ensure is to stay
away from retail.

This settlement thing is another path.

S They just authorized 3 ways

R Really? Max, that is an very serious matter.

K I shouldn't make a serious mistake of hitting
a refugee camp. The PLO is getting showed
my right now by w/o any help.

F This George Brown thing is bad. I think
something will have to be said. Henry has
drafted something innocuous

P I don't see how we can make a statement.
What is a occasion.

F You will get a lot of mail. Any you in response
to this, you can get it out ~~the way~~ by
answering a letters.

P We will look at it.