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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS (XGDS)MEETING WITH ISMAIL FAHMI
SPECIAL EGYPTIAN EMISSARY

Wednesday, October 31, 1973

3:00 p. m. (45 minutes)

The Oval Office

From: Henry A. Kissinger

I. PURPOSE

To summarize our effort to consolidate the Middle East ceasefire and to persuade Egypt to have confidence in US determination to engage actively in Mid-East peace negotiations and to enter those negotiations without preconditions.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS, PRESS PLAN

- A. Background: President Sadat sent Fahmi to Washington for an exchange of views on consolidating the Egyptian-Israeli ceasefire and on peace negotiations in order to prepare the way for my talks in Cairo November 6. Fahmi is normally Minister of Tourism but has been Acting Foreign Minister while Foreign Minister Zayyat was at the UN during the war.

Most of my talks with Fahmi have concentrated on a package to consolidate the ceasefire. It would be useful for you to summarize this, and it is detailed in your talking points below. We put this proposal to the Israelis so that Mrs. Meir would have it before her departure.

Beyond summarizing the ceasefire package, I would suggest that you focus on what the US can and cannot do in the peace negotiations.

The problem we face with the Egyptians is the familiar one of persuading them to negotiate seriously on the terms of a peace agreement without insisting that we deliver in advance of negotiations the total Egyptian package.

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On the other side, a principal Israeli request is to give them a chance to negotiate some of the terms themselves. When you talk with Mrs. Meir, you will want to be in a position to say that we have done nothing to foreclose that opportunity even though we cannot be optimistic that peace can be achieved if they maintain that position.

Given these two positions, it is likely that the peace negotiations will deadlock very quickly. Our strategy will be to try to segment the negotiations so attention can be focussed in the early stages on a first step that--difficult as it may be--might realistically be taken in the next few weeks while terms of a final settlement are still being negotiated.

If we are to succeed in this course, we will have to develop Egyptian confidence without going into too much detail.

One other issue is our desire to have Sadat, once the ceasefire is consolidated, urge Faisal to relax the oil boycott when negotiations begin.

- B. Participants: Egyptian Emissary Ismail Fahmi accompanied perhaps by Ambassador Abdallah El Erian (Egyptian ambassador to Paris) and Ahmed Khalil, head of the Egyptian Interests Section in Washington. I will sit in on the US side.
- C. Press Plan: Press photo opportunity at the beginning. Press Secretary to brief in very general terms.

III. TALKING POINTS

- A. I understand you (Fahmi) and Secretary Kissinger are working on a proposal for consolidating the ceasefire. As I understand it the main points are:

--The UN would assure that only non-military shipments reach the Egyptian Third Army when Israeli troops pull back.

--Israeli troops would move back to the October 22 ceasefire line. Prisoners of war would be released immediately.

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-- The Egyptian naval blockade at the mouth of the Red Sea would be raised.

B. It is important to consolidate the ceasefire, but it will be even more important to establish momentum in the peace negotiations.

C. The US will support those negotiations actively. I want you to understand what we can and cannot do.

-- We can help devise a negotiating process that has at least a reasonable chance of succeeding. This may require that the negotiations be broken down into manageable units and steps. Patience will be required.

-- We will use our influence with Israel. The convening of a peace conference will provide a framework. But we will need realistic proposals that have some chance of being agreed.

-- In short, we have promised to engage in a process with good faith. We want the closest possible cooperation with Egypt.

D. Egypt has an interest in urging the oil producers to relax their boycott. The US will find it difficult to sustain the kind of role that will be required under threat of prolonged boycott.

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Most of my talks with Fahmi have concentrated on a package to consolidate the ceasefire. It would be useful for you to summarize this, and it is detailed in your talking points below. We put this proposal to the Israelis so that Mrs. Meir would have it before her departure.

Beyond summarizing the ceasefire package, I would suggest that you focus on what the US can and cannot do in the peace negotiations.

The problem we face with the Egyptians is the familiar one of persuading them to negotiate seriously on the terms of a peace agreement before they are assured that they will get all their territory back. They have talked of having a US-Soviet guarantee of total Israeli withdrawal. I told them immediately after my visit to Moscow that all we guaranteed was to engage actively in an effort to achieve a durable peace.

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On the other side, the main Israeli request is to give them a chance to negotiate border changes. When you talk with Mrs. Meir, you will want to be in a position to say that we have done nothing to foreclose that opportunity even though we cannot be optimistic that peace can be achieved if they maintain that position.

Given these two positions, it is likely that the peace negotiations will deadlock very quickly. Our strategy will be to try to segment the negotiations so attention can be focussed in the early stages on a first step that--difficult as it may be--might realistically be taken in the next few months while terms of a final settlement are still being negotiated.

If we are to succeed in this course, we will have to develop Egyptian confidence without promising anything specific now on the final borders.

One other issue is our desire to have Sadat, once the ceasefire is consolidated, urge Faisal to relax the oil boycott when negotiations begin.

- B. Participants: Egyptian Emissary Ismail Fahmi accompanied perhaps by Ambassador Abdallah El Erian (Egyptian ambassador to Paris) and Ahmed Khalil, head of the Egyptian Interests Section in Washington. I will sit in on the US side.
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--The Egyptian naval blockade at the mouth of the Red Sea would be raised.

- B. It is important to consolidate the ceasefire, but it will be even more important to establish momentum in the peace negotiations.
- C. The US will support those negotiations actively. I want you to understand what we can and cannot do.

--We cannot deliver a final settlement in advance of negotiations. We understand Egypt's need to regain control over its territory. But we will not promise at any stage of the negotiations what we cannot deliver.

--We can help devise a negotiating process that has at least a reasonable chance of succeeding. This may require that the negotiations be broken down into manageable units and steps. Patience will be required.

--We will use our influence with Israel. The convening of a peace conference will provide a framework. But we will need realistic proposals that have some chance of being agreed.

--In short, we have promised to engage in a process, not to produce a specific result. We want the closest possible cooperation with Egypt.

- D. Egypt has an interest in urging the oil producers to relax their boycott. The US will find it difficult to sustain the kind of role that will be required under threat of prolonged boycott.

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