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NEA



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ACTION MEMORANDUM

FOR YOUR 12:30 MTC

S/S
4/8

APR 18 1975

4/23

Per S staff Sec'y approval
Atherton recommendation,
wants Atherton himself
to be contact point
Sheehan, will see
Sheehan thereafter.

Copies to:

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NEA

RF:njs

TO: The Secretary

THRU: P - Mr. Sisco

FROM: NEA - Alfred L. Atherton, Jr.

Book Project on "Kissinger and the Arabs"

Edward R. F. Sheehan, a fellow at the Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, has been commissioned to do a long article for Foreign Policy, which he intends to expand into a book, on "Kissinger and the Arabs." (His memo to me attached). The article, or articles, will not appear until the autumn, after his research here and a summer of interviews in the Middle East.

I, as well as others in the Department, have spoken to him about the project. He wants to interview you and Under Secretary Sisco, among others. So far as I know, his idea of exploring in depth your relations with the Arab world since October 1973 is not being pursued by any other writer. Sheehan is basically sympathetic to your personal role in the Middle East and is of the view that you are the only Secretary of State who has had a viable "Arab policy". His previous writing, mainly in the New York Times, shows good quality and his assessments of substance are fair. Furthermore, his having lived and worked in the area give Sheehan good credentials for the task.

Recommendation:

I recommend that you consider the project favorably. First, you ought to meet Sheehan and make your own judgment. If you concur then, and wish to cooperate, someone will have to be designated to give Sheehan a fairly full -- but sanitized -- chronology of your negotiations from the first meeting with President Sadat to the March shuttle.

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One way to proceed might be to ask someone familiar with the negotiations, such as Peter Rodman, to be the point of contact. To maintain control and consume as little time as possible, Sheehan should be asked to submit a detailed list of events and items about which he needs more information. This list could be researched and then checked with me, or Under Secretary Sisco, or whoever is designated, before Rodman meets with Sheehan on the answers.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____ Other _____

Attachment:

Copy of Memo from E. R. F. Sheehan
to Assistant Secretary Atherton
dated April 3, 1975

Drafted: NEA/P:GFSherman:mo G fJ
4/18/75 x20448

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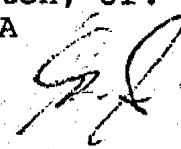
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

6 DIVINITY AVENUE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

3 April 1975

M E M O R A N D U M

To: The Hon. Alfred L. Atherton, Jr.
Assistant Secretary / NEA

From: Edward R.F. Sheehan 

Subject: My proposed article and book on Secretary
Kissinger's relations with the Arab heads
of state.

Professor Samuel P. Huntington, the Editor of Foreign Policy, has asked me to write a major interpretative article (or articles) on Secretary Kissinger's relations with the Arab heads of state within the framework of his negotiations with them since the war of October, 1973.

You know from my previous writings of my sympathy for the Secretary's undertakings with the Arab leaders. He is the first Secretary of State who has given the country a coherent Arab policy. His relations and negotiations with the Arabs constitute an unprecedented historical phenomenon, not only from a political but from a cultural and psychological point of view. How is it, I shall want to ask, that a Secretary of State with his background, who had never known the Arab nations before, could establish such a remarkable rapport with the Arab leaders? How am I to explain this apparent alchemy of personal chemistry and political skill? His first encounter with President Sadat may rival in historical consequences Napoleon's first meeting with Metternich. The story has been told in fragments, but no one has gathered all of the fragments together; it must be told not only to illumine our crucial interests in the Middle East but to rectify the distorted perception of those interests so prevalent in this nation.

The articles will not be written before next September, and afterwards I intend to extend them into an important book tentatively entitled Kissinger and the Arabs. In addition to publication in Foreign Policy, the articles will probably be excerpted in my usual forum, The New York Times, and elsewhere in the nation and abroad; the book will inevitably arouse similar interest in this country, in Europe, and in the Middle East. I shall spend much of the summer in the Middle East interviewing the Arab leaders and their aides (most of whom I know) supplementing from their perspective the information I have already collected on the subject.

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As to my qualifications for the task -- I have known the Middle East intimately since 1956, both as a journalist and as an official of the U.S. embassies in Cairo and Beirut. I have also written a novel set in the area, and numerous analytical articles about the Middle East in The New York Times Magazine and editorial section. I hope you will agree that my past endeavors demonstrate the quality essential for this new undertaking.

To come as close as an outsider can in interpreting properly the Secretary's relations with Arab leaders, obviously I need his cooperation. I should like to have access to information from within the Department which only he can authorize, and I should like to confer with him personally when I have completed my research in Washington and the Middle East. I cannot, of course, promise to be uncritical, but I begin on the premise that the phenomenon is positive and that telling it will cast credit on the principals.

" I shall write the work at Harvard's Center for International Affairs, where I conduct a seminar on the Middle East. Not without humor, Professor Huntington remarked to me that he "would welcome the opportunity to publish something favorable about the Secretary."