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State Dept. review completed

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Ambassador Rabin
Henry A. Kissinger
Peter Rodman *PK*

MORI C03352107

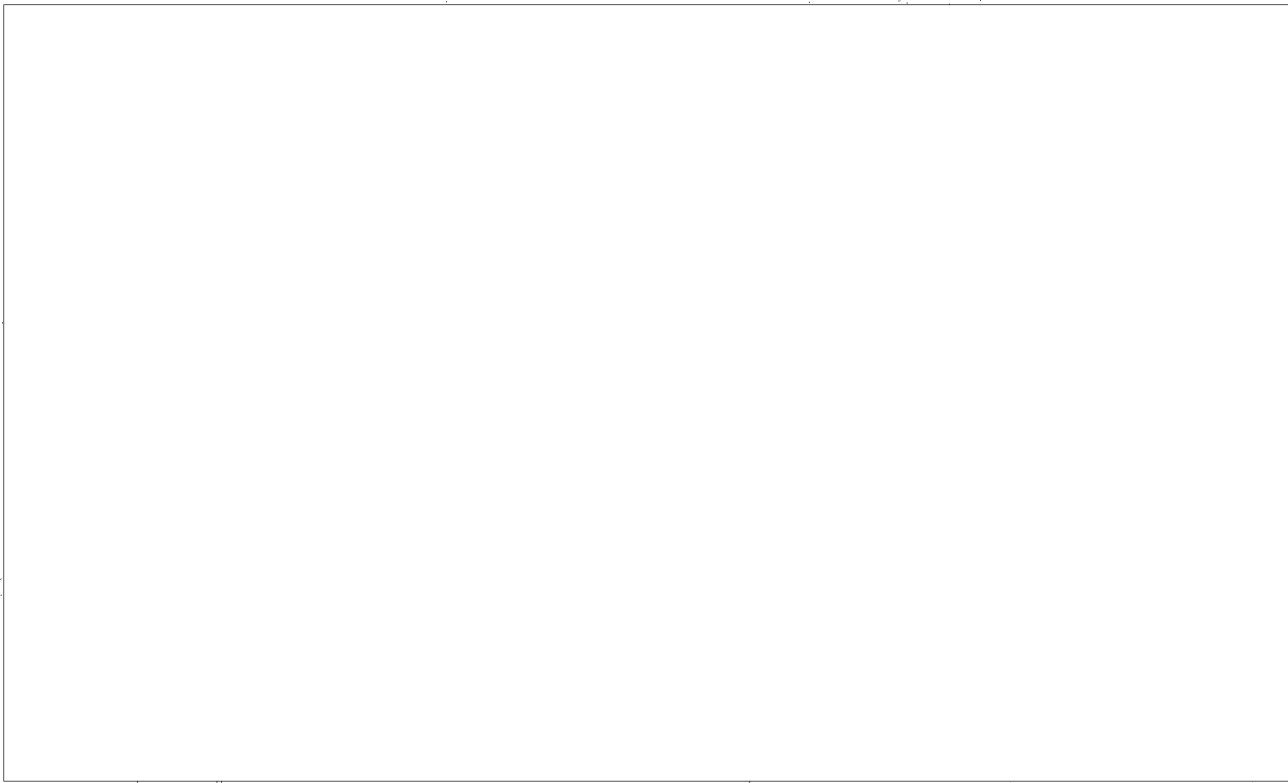
DATE AND TIME:

February 27, 1973
3:30-4:00 p. m.

PLACE:

The Map Room

Dr. Kissinger: What is the chief significance of that document you gave me?



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CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

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[REDACTED]

Dr. Kissinger: That's all there is. In our discussions there was something about staging and so forth, which I will give you orally.

Amb. Rabin: It's the toughest Egyptian position we have ever had.

Dr. Kissinger: Let me give you my impression. The factual situation. The position of Israel. There are not five Israelis who understand the American position, though three million think they do. You are one of the five.

[REDACTED] I asked questions, saying, "You want us to do something, therefore I have to know what you are talking about." So it was mostly cross examination by me. I did not express any view of the American position, except to say there has to be a new element. On a number of issues he said he would study it very carefully. This summary I sent you [Tab A] was done by Saunders.

I said there had to be some concreteness on security arrangements. So I did discuss whether special security zones could be discussed. He said, "What do you have in mind?" I summed up for him an article by the son of Rafael, which was in Orbis last year. He said he would study it.

Secondly, if I understand their proposal, they and we and you--but obviously they mean we deliver you--

Ambassador Rabin: This is how they discuss with the Russians.

Dr. Kissinger: --on general principles. Like, for example, what Dean Rusk said in 1967, it doesn't have to be more specific than that. Then after that they claim they would be willing to have more direct negotiations with Israel about the content of the principles and simultaneously begin the negotiations on Syria and Jordan. Unlike the Soviets. They said they would settle Egypt first and the others could come along close behind.

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Amb. Rabin: That is nothing new.

Dr. Kissinger: I am just telling you. It's new to me but that doesn't make it new.

On the first day he took a hard line on the Palestinian issue. On the second day he retreated and said that the Jordanians could settle it, but he left it open that Egypt could raise the Palestinian issue within Jordan.

My impression is that in the context of total withdrawal they would agree to

Amb. Rabin: To whatever stages of implementation.

Dr. Kissinger: They would not insist on demilitarized zones on the Israeli side, I think.

Amb. Rabin: Symbolic zones, it said.

Dr. Kissinger: But I think they would accept. On Sharm el-Sheik, he tried to indicated some flexibility on that. In the context of total withdrawal. Israeli international observers.

Amb. Rabin: He said that to Sisco two years ago.

Dr. Kissinger: You look at the transcript when we get it done. The major point we have to come to some understanding on before you meet with the President is not to get into your Prime Minister's head that this is a triumphal tour of the United States. This is not how he is approaching the problem. Long speeches about how the status quo is the best will not help you. You do what you want, but I am telling you the facts.

Amb. Rabin: In the long run, I think she will say that we should try the lines we have tried. Of course, she will raise maintenance of the balance.

Dr. Kissinger: Continuation of the deliveries of planes?

Amb. Rabin: Yes, for 1974 and 1975. And the question of production.

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Dr. Kissinger: What did Richardson say?

Amb. Rabin: We are meeting you first, before we see him.

Dr. Kissinger: How did it go?

Amb. Rabin: I think he is not committed to anything.

Dr. Kissinger: The practical question the Prime Minister should focus on now is whether we can develop again a concrete strategy as we did in January.

Amb. Rabin: I asked myself, why do we need a new strategy?

Dr. Kissinger: Because there will be the Brezhnev meeting. One is the Egyptian strand; he will be back in touch with us.

Amb. Rabin: It is interesting in here: Brezhnev mentioned his talks with the United States--he did not say at what level-- and wondered if the Soviets could continue contacts with the United States. He said he got the President to agree to 242 last year, in the communique.

Dr. Kissinger: The Egyptians told me they had or would tell the Russians that they did not want the Russians to get into detailed negotiations with us, only give general support.

What you have to think about tomorrow morning is this: I can see some advantages in being in touch with the Egyptians and keeping the Russians out until summer. This is separate from what we talk about to the Egyptians.

Amb. Rabin: Did they say that as long as we are in touch you should not supply arms to Israel?

Dr. Kissinger: They didn't put it that crudely. He said it would be a big contribution.

[At this point Dr. Kissinger and the Ambassador conferred alone for the last five minutes.]



SUMMARY OF CONVERSATION

This memo describes (1) Ismail's position as it evolved over two days of talks and (2) the process he envisages over the coming months.

Ismail's Position

A. Urgency of An Overall Settlement

First day: He emphasized the importance of a settlement in 1973. The Middle East cannot stand waiting for 15 years while new relationships evolve, as some Israeli leaders recommend.

Second day: He outlined procedures which if followed through to their logical conclusion could take well beyond the end of 1973 to complete, although by his timetable fundamental principles of an agreement would have been agreed by this September (see description of procedures below).

He said he had absolutely rejected an "interim settlement" on the Suez Canal, but he readily agreed that the ideas represented in that approach could be used as the opening phase of a broader process.

B. Long-term Objective

First day: He spoke in terms of wanting to see develop a Middle East of strong, healthy, cooperative, independent states. He implied Israel could be among them if Israel recognized itself as a Middle Eastern state. A peace settlement could be a basis for normalization of relations, but that would take a long time. Normalization of relations will depend on, among other things, a refugee settlement.

Second day: In informal conversation, he felt that even talking about the prospect of normalization of relations with Israel is a new element in the Egyptian position.

C. Recognition of Israel

First day: He said an Egypt-Israel agreement would establish a state of peace. This would end the state of war "but would not be "full peace."

- This agreement would produce a situation different from the Egypt-Israel relationship before 1967 in that it would:
 - allow Israel free passage through the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal;
 - end the boycott on third-party goods;
 - commit Egypt to prevent guerrilla operations from Egyptian soil and elsewhere to the extent possible;
 - end Egypt's practice of adding a reservation clause when it signs multilateral agreements, saying that they do not apply to Israel;
 - commit each side to non-intervention in each other's internal affairs, e.g. by radio.
- This agreement would not include exchanging ambassadors, trade agreements, borders open for routine travel. Those steps would be characteristics of later normalization.

Second day: He volunteered that in the transitional period between the ending of the state of war and the achievement of full peace that there could be the beginning of some practical normal contacts between Egyptians and Israelis developing out of day-to-day situations.

He was uncertain about the timing of recognition, whether it should be tied to signing of the Syrian and Jordanian agreements. He rather thought so.

D. Main Aspects of a Settlement

First day: He said there are two main aspects of a settlement:

- First is the question of restoring Egyptian sovereignty over Egyptian territory. This requires Israeli withdrawal to pre-war borders.
- Second is the issue of Palestinian rights. This problem should be reduced to the size of Arab and Jewish communities within the area of mandated Palestine deciding how to divide that territory and live together. He said:

- Egypt would pose no objection if Hussein negotiated with Israel to get the West Bank back and then gave the West Bank Palestinians a chance to determine their own future. This would then become an internal Jordanian problem. He was reluctant at first to commit himself that Egypt would regard Jordan's solution as a solution of the Palestine problem for all Arabs.
- Gaza must have self-determination. Egypt will handle the negotiation on this in the first instance.
- A refugee settlement is necessary.

Second day:

- He spoke of the problem of regaining Egyptian sovereignty over the Sinai in terms of reconciling Egypt's sovereignty with legitimate Israeli security concerns.
- Egypt is prepared to let Hussein negotiate his own agreement with Israel, including border changes (even a security corridor down the Jordan River) but probably not major concessions in Jerusalem. Egypt would consider whatever Hussein works out with the West Bank Palestinians as an internal Jordanian matter, not an Arab-Israeli matter.
- Gaza's self-determination should be worked out under UN auspices. An Egypt-Israel agreement should contain these principles: (1) Israel should agree to withdraw in principle so that (2) Gazans could freely exercise their right of self-determination (3) under UN auspices. This would also have to be related to a Jordan settlement. Gaza could become part of Jordan if the Gazans wished.
- A refugee settlement would have to be in accordance with UN resolutions. This agreement might be worked out by the UN.
- The question of a Syria-Israel settlement is more serious to Egypt than a Jordan-Israel settlement because Syria is a member of the Egypt-Syria-Libya confederation. A Syrian settlement must be based on the same principles as Egypt's.

E. Meeting Israel's Security Concerns

First day: Egypt would be willing to meet Israel's "legitimate" security concerns, which include international guarantees and Egyptian peace commitments (spelled out in C above).

Second day: In a fairly detailed discussion, he indicated the following position:

- Demilitarized zones can vary in size on the two sides. Israeli zone can be symbolic. International observers would inspect these zones.
- An international force could be stationed in areas of special importance like Sharm al-Shaikh.
- There could be big-power guarantees.
- There might be interim security arrangements at some points during a transitional period, but he had not really considered this. For instance, he would consider whether there might be transitional security arrangements during the period between the end of the state of war and the advent of full peace. As he began to understand this proposition he said: "If the issues of territory and sovereignty could be put aside, we could be open-minded."

F. Settlement by Stages and Sectors

First day: The Arab-Israeli problem can be settled by stages and sectors, but they must be linked so as to lead to an overall settlement. There must be a full settlement; Egypt cannot accept a partial withdrawal "left hanging". He did not commit himself on whether a Jordan-Israel or Egypt-Israel settlement should come first.

Second day: He felt that agreement first on the principles of an Egypt-Israel settlement would help later to "start the motors in other places". He saw the Syrian and Jordanian negotiations running one step behind the Egyptian negotiations. Egypt could sign a separate agreement with Israel provided Syrian and Jordanian negotiations were then in train.