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Est. DA NARA Date 1/15/99

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file Pickering

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(1st draft)
MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT:

DATE: October 29, 1973

PARTICIPANTS:

EGYPT

H. E. Ismail Fahmi, Acting Egyptian Foreign Minister
H.E. Abdallah El Erian, Egyptian Ambassador to France
Mr. Umar Sirri, Minister, Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo

UNITED STATES

The Secretary of State
Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco

REVIEW

- Cat. A - Caption removed; transferred to O/FADRC
- Cat. B - Transferred to O/FADRC with additional access controlled by S/S
- Cat. C - Caption and custody retained by S/S

Reviewed by: DA SK 9/16
Date: 9/21 19 77

KISSINGER: I welcome you. I hope that this will be the start of useful and important discussions which I hope to continue in Cairo.

FAHMI: ~~I have been sent by the President. He sends greetings to you and President Nixon. He sent me here for two reasons: so that we could get to know each other and secondly, to tell you the framework of my mission. We have enjoyed your quick response to our communications.~~

KISSINGER: We remain in contact.

FAHMI: We are at the crossroads. We will make every effort to change the situation which has persisted for the last 25 years.

KISSINGER: I agree completely. The great achievement in the

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present crisis is that it has changed the situation.

FAHMI: This has been due to Sadat's sincerity.

KISSINGER: And courage.

FAHMI: He needs it.

You have a small thing like Watergate here; in our country the whole situation is a crisis. President Sadat is in a position to make decisions. He can rally with opponents or those who are reluctant to follow. Sadat is now in a position to make decision with Arab Governments. This has been proven in the recent war. He has great stature. The African countries have _____ and have supported us and likewise _____ . We are at the crossroads. We are about to begin a new chapter. Moreover, this goes even beyond our bilateral relationships. This is an opportunity neither of us should miss. Despite misunderstands, lack of confidence, misinterpretations of past positions, Sadat took the lead with us.

KISSINGER: We have exchanged more message with Egypt than with any other countries.

FAHMI: Confidence is the key. We have no problem with the United States; the problem is with Israel, and it is Israel being negative on everything. Israel and Egypt must establish confidence otherwise we can't go ahead.

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KISSINGER: I totally agree. I have agreed to go to Cairo.

FAHMI: These talks are a preparation for your trip to Cairo. That is why I am here. Security Council has adopted about three resolutions. You took the initiative jointly with the USSR. Israel accepted the resolutions. Resolution 338 has three parts. The main element is the ceasefire; it is important that the ceasefire be restored so that there will be no problems which will remain affecting the more substantial elements, the more substantial talks later. The ceasefire said that everybody stayed as they were on October 22. The second Security Council Resolution said everybody back to October 22. It also called for a reaffirmation of 242 and negotiations for a peaceful settlement. We cannot started negotiations or preparations unless the ceasefire resolutions are carried out. Everybody has to be in position when the ceasefire came into effect; the October 22 positions. If the ceasefire established on October 22 does not respect its ^{own} preparation, a conference cannot go on. It is practically impossible to think of negotiations and a conference if the ceasefire is fragile, and there is confusion as to the ceasefire existence and at the time the ceasefire went into effect. Israel, in three message, proposed it was ready for a meeting. We

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said we were ready to meet with the Minister of Defense or Chief of Staff.

FAHMI: I recall that in Sadat's message to Israel, Secretary had passed on the Israeli proposal for the military representatives to meet "as an intermediary, not as a recommendation." If you had stopped there, we would have rejected the Israeli proposal outright. You went further to say the United States would do its utmost to solve this problem. You reaffirmed your position that that you would do your best. We, therefore, responded positively and agreed to make contact with the Israeli representative. Fahmi also recalled that in our reply we had informed the Egyptians that the Israelis had accepted the Israeli conditions in totality. Fahmi said that these talks are a good basis for the ceasefire, the process of contacts and negotiations. In effect, President Sadat is sure that this could not have taken place without U.S. influence.

KISSINGER: Your message came in at 2:00 AM, and we worked hard on the matter.

FAHMI: We will be the last to contribute to your headaches. We will not threaten you; we are not in a position to threaten you.

KISSINGER: I have been impressed with your military activity as well as your skill in diplomacy; at no time did Egypt lose sight of its ultimate objective.

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FAHMI: We started implementing what was in your message. The UN force would not want to interfere in it. Fahmi convinced the UNTSO General to participate since it was essential to implement Security Council Resolutions 338 and 339 but the other side was not there.

KISSINGER: I made a direct demand to the Israeli Prime Minister.

FAHMI: The Israeli representative then came without instructions saying he had no instructions. He did not come there to talk about the three above points. He came there to talk about other things and continued to delay. They were not letting the UN people do their work. The UN's job is disengagement between the armies even before implementing the principle of return to the October 22 position. The UN General met Dayan on the West side. The UN contingent was not able to enter Suez City at all. The UN General is now going to meet Dayan in Jerusalem. Dayan stressed that it is important for the UN to be present on both sides of the Canal.

KISSINGER: I believe we should speak generally here tonight. I will be seeing you again tomorrow, and we will take energetic steps to get in touch at the highest levels. Kissinger said I face two problems: (1) The establishment of an effective ceasefire, and (2) to get to real negotiations. We and you must have a certain amount of confidence in each other. If neither of us can trust one another, then relations will disappear. We need confidence because it will

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take time to achieve a settlement, an indefinite amount of time, but some time. The _____ that has come about is not as a result of threats but rather as a result of our influence on Israel. If we get threatening moves from your fronts, it will also strengthen the anti-Communist moves in this country. If we have to ration our oil then we will have to devote much energy to this problem, rather than on the settlement. For as you know, ^{no} ~~any~~ settlement ~~that~~ will be satisfactory to the Israelis. They will not want to give up territory. I know that you ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ were not pleased with the way which took place during the war (massive airlift) but it considerably less than we were being pressured to do. The question is what where do we go to use our pressure on. If I spend my capital on every point of the ceasefire, there will not be any capital left to spend on the peace negotiations. If peace negotiations do not succeed, we can take the present line or the October 22 line -- it does not mean anything for there will be another war. The question is how we get ceasefire arrangements that are good enough to get us through peace negotiations over the next three to six months. We are convinced that another war cannot happen and that lines now in existence would become a permanent feature of the international scene. Such a ceasefire

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would not last. We must move from here to peace.

FAHMI: We are in a more difficult position than you are because our public opinion feels strongly. There is no feeling against American citizens. Fahmi recalled that he advised our head of the Interests Section that there was no need for U.S. citizens to leave Cairo even though other citizens of other countries had left. Our misunderstanding concerns Israel. It is now a 100 times more important for a solution to be found. Fahmi said let me explain about public opinion. For the first 13 days, we felt that Egypt was in full control of the war. Then Israel came in with your new supplies, new sophisticated weapons, military equipment which came from the United States and your depots in West Germany. For 13 days, we made our point. We have no interest in putting Israel into the sea or invading Israel, irrespective of the Palestinian situation. After 13 days, your equipment helped Israel -- after your reconnaissance planes took pictures of the positions. _____ public opinion^K new we were winning the war for 13 days and the basic change came about as a result of new U.S. weapons. In spite of all of this, President Sadat showed great courage. We got broad support in the Arab world:

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KISSINGER: We did not send any military equipment for seven days. You will recall that we tried a ceasefire in-place on Saturday, October 13. The Soviets have told us that you would agree. At that time, you held the entire East Bank of the Canal. At great cost, we convinced the Israelis to accept that ceasefire. The British reported to us that you rejected the plan. The British therefore refused to introduce the Security Council Resolution to this effect, and it was only after you refused to accept this plan and the Soviet airlift was in existence for four days we started our resupply effort -- we had no other choice.

FAHMI: The British Ambassador Adams told us just the opposite. He said the United States was ~~in constant touch with the Russians~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and for this reason, they decided not to go ahead.

KISSINGER: We were told by the Russians that you would accept the ceasefire in-place. We then went to the Israelis. After 36 hours, we convinced the Israelis. This was the first time we went to the British to introduce the resolution on the assumption that the United States and USSR would abstain; that Egypt had accepted the ceasefire in-place; and therefore there would be a majority in the Council. At midnight the UK said to us that they understood the Egyptians would accept this. I told the British to go back to Egypt again because the Russians said the Egyptians would accept the ceasefire in-place. The British said

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Sadat said he would not agree to a ceasefire in-place but only a ceasefire to the 67 lines. Obviously we couldn't get this. The UK then refused to introduce a resolution. This is the reason we are so angry and furious with the UK. They created the whole.

FAHMI: Why didn't you contact the Egyptians directly?

KISSINGER: We were told by the Russians that Sadat would only accept it after the Security Council had voted on it and we had abstained with the Russians. If Ismail had not called for a ceasefire in-place, we would have done it ourselves. We tried to get the UK to do it. Why didn't you accept it?

FAHMI: I believe you, I believe you. UK heads told me differently. The Russians told Sadat that the Syrians wanted a ceasefire; Sadat contacted Asad; Asad said no, I didn't tell that to the Russians. Sadat could not accept the ceasefire while the Syrians were refusing. This is what happened. Okay, let us prepare together, a real basis for some achievement before you arrive in Cairo.

KISSINGER: There is one problem however. You Arabs say to me -- look at what I have been able to do in negotiations. Do it for us. You do not look at the four years it took me to prepare for the Vietnam peace settlement and the 2-1/2 years for the China talks. My method is to make detailed preparation; get everything ready and in place, and then start to move. Let us

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now schedule how we can proceed from here. I am prepared to do it.

FAHMI: Agreed.

KISSINGER: If you want me to be helpful, what good would it do if it goes the way it went in 1971? There is a great deal of pressure to overcome in this country and we must find a method.

FAHMI: There are problems for Sadat too. The Syrians will have no difficulty at the Presidential level. We accept the ceasefire. Referring to the fact that Dr. Kissinger had indicated that we had invited the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister for a talk, if he will come _____, Fahmi recalled that lower levels in the Syrian Government had rebuked the ceasefire and attacked everybody. It was only after Sadat had contacted Asad that the Syrians had accepted the ceasefire. Fahmi obviously reflected reservations about our seeing the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister since he was convinced that he would be negative. Fahmi went on to say that you have a secure basis in the Security Council Resolutions. Israel has to accept the Security Council decisions. These things cannot become a matter of bargaining. When the Israeli military representative met with the Egyptians, he told us he had no authority to negotiate on the military parts of the ceasefire and

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on the return to the position of October 22. Instead, he proposed some new peace plan.

KISSINGER: I do not want to advise you on this.

FAHMI: The Israeli representative was not authorized to talk about a ceasefire. If Sadat is to help the U.S., this Israeli basis has to be rejected. If Egypt implements fully the Security Council Resolution, then the Israelis cannot bargain. They cannot in a bargaining process for the total settlement. Sadat cannot move. How can he moves if they won't even exchange the wounded prisoners? You recalled how the Israelis bombed Suez City and there were at least 2,000 killed and wounded.

KISSINGER: How shall we continue our talks?

FAHMI: But can we accept the ceasefire? Respect fully the ceasefire. Allow the UN forces to take their positions. There can be an exchange of the wounded. We are ready to exchange POWs. We are ready to exchange the wounded.

KISSINGER: Ismail sent me a letter to this effect.

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Kissinger: I will tell you frankly what the Israelis say. We have told them we will not tolerate the destruction of the Third Army. This _____

The Israelis say that if the road is open Egypt will move in heavy equipment and threaten the Israeli army in position.

Fahmi: I give you assurances of President Sadat that there will be no military equipment moved in there by Egypt.

Kissinger: You agree not to send military equipment.

Fahmi: Agreed. They are resorting to delaying tacts. Our people won't surrender. All that we need is food and some water.

Kissinger: It is against the U.S. policy that Egypt should surrender.

Fahmi: They will not surrender. They can exist. They can fast for three or four days.

Kissinger: Nobody has intended that they surrender. Let me talk this situation over with President Nixon tomorrow. We cannot do anything on this tonight but maybe we can do something over the next couple of days. But there must not be any threats from other countries, your friends, while we are trying to do something.

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Fahmi: Take the Egyptian position from me, not from others. I assure you that we agree that there will be more non-military equipment sent in on a permanent basis, I say this, on a permanent basis. The UN can supervise this.

Kissinger: This is a constructive proposal. You have told me something important.

Fahmi: We need 40 tons of food and only two tons have gone in after 40 hours. We can cut water from Israel too. We need another convoy.

Kissinger: I have to talk to the President. I will see if we can get one more convoy through. Tomorrow I hope to be in a position to talk more concretely.

Fahmi: I am not threatening you. I can't threaten you, but if Israel continues to take military measures than we must fight. I have been told this by our military commander. Get one more convoy through. We are ready to give A) the list of wounded to the Israelis in the next military meeting, B) to give the same list to the Red Cross, C) we are ready to negotiate regarding the exchange of wounded POW's, D) We are ready to give the list of POW's to the Red Cross, E) We have already permitted the Red Cross to visit the wounded POW's.

Kissinger: If we are going to get a solid cease-fire then there must be an immediate exchange of POW's. Soviets told us that they would do everything possible to

Fahmi: Scali expressed this in his speech in general terms.

Kissinger: I know, we didn't want to put it more explicitly and have a public quarrel with the Russians.

Fahmi: We have a big headache in Cairo. The Russians brought in 50 personnel plus 20 interpreters. We have told the russians we can't do anything about this. Ask Malik to talk to Waldheim about it. The Russians told us that the Americans were going to send observers and, therefore, the Russians were to participate.

Kissinger: This is not the case. Let us talk to each other. We received a Brezhnev message that they were sending 70 Soviets to Cairo and they said to us, now join us. We never agreed to it. Our position is clear and we have told this to Waldheim. First, it is in nobody's interest for there to be representatives of the big powers. Secondly, there should be no group that is larger than the group that has the most in UNTSO now, namely the Swedes, - 32 is this figure. We prefer less. In any case, personnel would have to be under UNTSO, not special. We will not go beyond 32. We never agreed to join with the soviets.

Fahmi: In concluding, he stressed the importance of getting another convoy through.

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now that Fahmi
promised to send
June 38 of the
Russians, why
32 - JRP

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