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By [Signature] ARRA, Dec 11/1999

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Reviewed by: Elliot Kelly *OK 9/18/6*

9/21/77

MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

- Ismail Fahmi, Acting Egyptian Foreign Minister
- Abdallah El-Erian, Egyptian Ambassador to France
- Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
- Joseph J. Sisco, Asst. Secretary of State

DATE AND TIME:

Tuesday - October 30, 1973 - 3:08 p.m.

PLACE:

SECRETARY'S OFFICE

After conferring privately, Secretary Kissinger and Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi called in Ambassador Erian and Sisco and in their presence reviewed the situation along the following lines:

Kissinger: It is conceivable that we could put something along the following lines to the Israelis: That they would return to the positions of October 22; that there would be provision for only non-military cargos on the roads; that supervision would be accomplished by the UN; and that after withdrawal to the October 22 positions there would be an exchange of POWs and lifting of the blockade of the Red Sea. There is just a chance; it is conceivable.

Fahmi: I am talking about what we agreed on yesterday. Anything we agree between us has to have the weight of the United States to guarantee its implementation, otherwise it is meaningless. What I need from you is a guarantee that there will be a permanent flow of provisions of non-military cargo to the Third Army and that there will be a 20-kilometer zone on the Suez road supervised by the UN. After that, Israel must go back to the October 22 positions in a short period. Once this is done, I guarantee that I will have authorization for the immediate exchange of all of the prisoners of war. As to Bab Al-Mandab, while we have some military units there, others are involved. The Russians have relations with the South Yemen and

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they are there. I could ask President Sadat to instruct our units to behave, as long as our forces are not provoked from the other side. If we can agree on this, then you should try to get the Israelis to agree.

Kissinger: This has to be checked out with the Israelis. With some screaming, it is conceivable we could get something like what we have been talking about.

Fahmi: I am prepared to convince President Sadat to agree to this proposal, because we have faith in you, Dr. Kissinger. We have confidence in you. There will be another military meeting in a few days. We have given a list of POWs to the Red Cross, and we have given the Red Cross an opportunity to visit the wounded. We agree to exchange of wounded, especially those from the Third Army.

Kissinger: What do you mean by permanent resupply of non-military cargos? You mean after the Israelis go back to the October 22 positions? It is inconceivable that we could get the Israelis to agree to a prohibition on mutual reinforcements. What is attainable, what is conceivable, is perhaps something along the lines we have talked about.

I want you to tell President Sadat that I will do my best to get something like this for you. I take no position. I would like his reaction to the exchange of POWs.

Fahmi: The question [of Bab Al-Mandab] is completely a military problem.

Kissinger: It is inconceivable that the ceasefire can only apply to the West Bank and not on sea. You cannot say that the ceasefire does not apply to the sea.

Fahmi: I have told you what I am ready to convey to President Sadat on this point.

Kissinger: We believe it is important that both the exchange of POWs and the blockade be included in the proposal. It is not conceivable that a military blockade can be maintained on the sea while the ceasefire applies on land to the other side. We have two choices before us: We can consider a specific proposition, or alternatively leave it to the parties to work out.

Fahmi: I can guarantee that under my proposal I can deliver the POWs.

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Kissinger: What do you mean by permanent non-military cargos? Do you mean even after Israel has withdrawn to the October 22 lines?

Fahmi: Frankly, even if President Sadat was willing to accept this point, I do not believe it is in your interest to put us into an inferior position. The Israelis can resupply their forces in the West Bank whereas we cannot do the same for the Egyptian Third Army.

Kissinger: Our pressure will move Israel. Nothing else.

Fahmi: I want your guarantee.

Kissinger: I can give you no blank check. I have a strong conviction that we can bring about an agreement. I can make a strong recommendation to the President along the lines I have indicated.

Fahmi: But how about the point of putting us in a militarily inferior position?

Kissinger: My proposition calls for the UN supervising on a permanent basis non-military cargos from West to East.

Fahmi: What about the other side? It leaves Israel free to improve its position in weaponry. They are near Cairo. Also you want to unblock the Red Sea. Oil goes to Israel through the Red Sea and this gives Israel a military advantage. They will never listen to us.

Kissinger: They will listen to us. Israel needs us. It needs American supplies.

Fahmi: You are not free. You are under pressure at home. Any agreement should have to be sanctioned by the President. I recall that in 1971 Rogers had a proposal. Israel then went to the Senate and Rogers had to drop his plan.

Kissinger: I can assure you that a proposal I am talking about will be greeted by screams from the Israelis. As to the POWs, the Russians assured us that they would press for an immediate release.

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Fahmi: Even if President Sadat hypothetically accepted, it would be to your disadvantage. The Israelis won't move.

Kissinger: We are not proposing any military advantage. You know that if there is no settlement you will probably start another war.

Fahmi: I can get authorization to the exchange of POWs provided the Israelis return to the October 22 position and provided they agree to the permanent supply of non-military cargos to the Third Army. I can guarantee delivery on the part of President Sadat. He wants it done. Moreover, if we succeed in doing this we will resume relations with the US at the conclusion of your mission. President Sadat wants a first class ambassador to Cairo.

Kissinger: We will send an outstanding man to Cairo. I have to talk it over with the Israelis and the President. We will meet again.

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