

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz
Minister Avner Idan
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Peter Rodman, NSC Staff *JMR*

DATE AND TIME: Friday, March 30, 1973
12:00 -12:40 p. m.

PLACE: Military Aide's Office
East Wing, White House

Amb. Dinitz: I appreciate very much that you can see me so soon. I just arrived last night.

Dr. Kissinger: We are going to California this afternoon.

Amb. Dinitz: Mrs. Meir sends her regards to you. I saw her last night before I left.

Dr. Kissinger: You can be sure we will work with you with the same openness that we had with your predecessor.

Amb. Dinitz: I appreciate that, I will do as little as possible to disturb you.

Dr. Kissinger: No, you should do whatever is necessary.

Amb. Dinitz: I have a few items to raise with you. First, about the meetings with Primakov. This was the third time we met him. He was in Israel three years ago, when he met with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense and also myself. He said nothing of substance at that time. He just said that it was good for us to have an exchange of views. Then there was a more elaborate meeting that he had in Europe with Gazit in 1971. We told you about that. This time he asked for a meeting on his own initiative, not on ours. I should be more correct. Four months ago we wrote a letter responding to their letter after the 1971 meeting. They had said that it was a good meeting and they raised the possibility of other meetings. So we said we would be prepared if they were interested.

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2

Two weeks ago, they replied.

The meeting took place in Vienna. It lasted eight hours, over three different sessions. The instructions that the Prime Minister issued to Gazit were that it was important to keep the pace of these meetings such as not to disturb the efforts of Dr. Kissinger.

Dr. Kissinger: She is so eager that I succeed!

Amb. Dinitz: We didn't value so much the contact but we couldn't say no.

Dr. Kissinger: No, you did the right thing.

Amb. Dinitz: He came with Kotov, who had been Second Secretary in their Embassy in Israel. The main point of the conversation was that they were trying to tell our representative that we had to enter detailed negotiations with them. "The time is past for general remarks. We put forth proposals in 1969 and you didn't negotiate." They wanted a mandate from us for the Soviets to play a role in the Middle East. "Don't assume that things can move without us." They were particularly disturbed that we were working only with the Americans. "Don't overestimate the events of July, 1972. It is not so important; we are still there, with friends and arms."

Throughout this discussion there was this veil of threats.

They said, "Frankly our position is in support of the Arab case, but we are different in that we support the survival and existence of Israel. Therefore, we don't support the elements in the Middle East that want your destruction."

They wanted our positions and they wanted negotiations. They said they were prepared to talk without prior conditions. They were so anxious for talks that they said--in the unofficial conversation--that they were prepared to send an official to Israel in a secret manner. We asked about the idea of sending an Israeli representative to Moscow. They were not particularly anxious for this. They said that an Israeli presence in Moscow would be an attraction to Soviet Jews.

On the question of Soviet Jews, he said that they were letting people out and no ransom was being collected. He did not think the number of Jews leaving would increase. He was quite reluctant to discuss the whole subject.

This covers the discussions. You may remember that they asked Ismail when he was in Moscow how the Arabs would look on it if the Soviets opened a

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dialogue with Israel. The Soviets explained it to him as something that would be good for the Arabs, as a form of pressure on Israel. That is how we see it--to embarrass the efforts we are taking with the United States.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think they know where they are going either. We have no objection to your talking, as long as we keep each other informed.

We are following the strategy I explained to your Prime Minister. We are pushing nothing, we are wasting time. We are using the Egyptians to kill off talks with the Russians. The Egyptians also told them to stay out, so we are not under great pressure from them at the moment.

Here was a message I received from Ismail. [Tab A] I sent him a message about the Khartoum incident and this was his reply. I told you we might meet again with them around April 10. This is now impossible. If they behave stupidly, we can put it off until May.

Amb. Dinitz: Is there a new date?

Dr. Kissinger: No, I am waiting for their proposal. It is now impossible before early May, just as a matter of logistics. They may get in touch with us by next week, say April 5 or 6. I think it will take two or three weeks. Then I have to reply. Then, if I know them, they will make some conditions.

This is their dilemma. I told them I won't talk to them unless they have something new and different from the public position. You saw that even in the Sadat speech. If they give me something new that doesn't lead anywhere--That they have to resolve first.

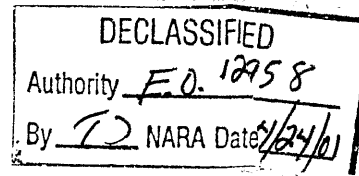
Amb. Dinitz: Did the Russians raise it?

Dr. Kissinger: They raised it, but I told them what I told you. I told Ismail that he had to press the Russians not to press us on details but only on principles. Apparently he did it, because the Russians have not been pressing us since then. So with the Russians there is practically nothing going on.

As for the summit, a date has not yet been set, but it will probably be this summer.

It looks like a real dilemma for them.

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4

Amb. Dinitz: Yes, and part of this dilemma is shared by the Russians.

Dr. Kissinger: I will take no initiatives. I will react in a slow-moving way to their proposals. If it moves slowly and drags through the summit, that is their problem. I am not aiming at a Nobel Prize on the Middle East.

Amb. Dinitz: Those who aim for it don't get it!

Dr. Kissinger: But I still think you should be intellectually prepared... As your predecessor and Mr. Idan can tell you, you have been saved by an accidental combination of circumstances. But at any moment it could...

Amb. Dinitz: Explode.

Dr. Kissinger: The Russians and now the Egyptians have been behaving stupidly, and our domestic situation has not crystalized. But you have to be prepared for a sudden purposeful and intelligent push. When your Prime Minister was here I thought it would crestalize before the summit. I was wrong then; I may be wrong now.

I will wait for them. I will make a non-substantive reply. I am not going to propose a meeting. They will have to propose a date. We won't accept the date they propose. And Brezhnev is going to Germany. That will take his time.

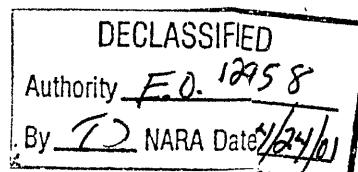
I must repeat what I told your Prime Minister and your Ambassador. You should think about eventual negotiations.

One other matter, the Most Favored Nation business. You will really lose the President if the Jewish community continues its behavior here on the MFN. I know your influence is not complete. We are talking to the Russians about the exit tax, and I hope that before I return from San Clemente I can get authorization to tell you the assured they have given, but have not authorized me to tell you. We can't get a formal written commitment.

But I talked to teh President this morning and he is really determined on this. He will not let one segment of the American public hold up American foreign policy.

Amb. Dinitz: You are right that we do not have great influence. Especially on an issue as emotional as this. Israel cannot go to American Jews and tell them not to be concerned.

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5

Dr. Kissinger: I talked with Dobrynin today and that is when he gave me these assurances. There is no dispute over the merits; I am totally out of sympathy with them. The issue for American Jews is whether a major American foreign policy can be wrecked. What if the President went on television and spoke against Jewish pressure?

There is a second problem. I read in the paper today that some of these groups are planning demonstrations against Brezhnev when he comes here. When Pompidou was here and this happened, it produced an outburst by the President.

But this is all in the future.

Amb. Dinitz: Maybe by the time Brezhnev comes it will have changed. They are anxious too.

Dr. Kissinger: Believe me, we are pressing them. But if we did it in a formal note they would have to reject it. But we are raising it in my channel. I raise it on every occasion.

Amb. Dinitz: Yes, we appreciate it, and the President raised it too.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes.

Amb. Dinitz: May I remind you about Houphouet-Boigny. It would be good if he could come here.

Dr. Kissinger: He will definitely be invited certainly this year, in the second half of the year. He is on the list.

Amb. Dinitz: My people say that there has been no advance on the aircraft.

Dr. Kissinger: On production?

Amb. Dinitz: On production it is fine.

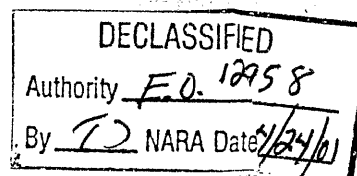
Minister Idan: Its all O. K.

Amb. Dinitz: But on the purchase there has been no movement.

Minister Idan: I inquired several times and our Military Attache has inquired several times.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't know why our military think that you will make only a hundred planes!

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6

Minister Idan: Your people tell us they are working on a long-range plan for 4 years.

Dr. Kissinger: The instruction I gave was for a substantial number. I couldn't give a number. You are better off with a four-year program, aren't you?

Minister Idan: Yes, but I think they are thinking of stretching the same number over a longer period.

Dr. Kissinger: I will check it.

Amb. Dinitz: I have one last point. Foreign Minister Eban is coming to the United States on the 9th or 10th of May. He has a meeting with the Secretary of State on May 9. Last time he came he missed you. He had a cold.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, he lost his voice, and for Eban to lose his voice is an affliction of God, not a disease!

Amb. Dinitz: He asked me to see if you would be able to see him.

Dr. Kissinger: Sure. Call my office and arrange it.

Amb. Dinitz: How about breakfast on the 9th?

Dr. Kissinger: Fine. The Shoreham is slightly more convenient.

Have you presented your credentials yet?

Amb. Dinitz: No, and I was not sure if it was proper for me to come here.

Dr. Kissinger: It makes no difference at all to our relationship.

Amb. Dinitz: We appreciate it. We will have for you the protocols of the meetings with the Russian.

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