

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: February 23, 1970 -- 6:30 p.m.

PLACE: Mr. Kissinger's Office *RK*

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin

Rabin came in to see me at his request to make the following points:

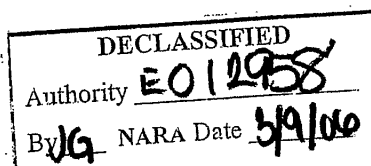
(1) He had just been called in by Under Secretary Richardson about Israel's joining the NPT. He wanted the President to know in the light of the conversation between the President and Golda Meir that Israel has no intention to sign the NPT. The reply to the State Department had been along strictly formal lines, but the Prime Minister wanted to make sure there was no misapprehension at the White House about Israel's current intention.

(2) He wanted to make sure that in dealing with the arms request, the United States would not establish a linkage between signature of the NPT and any arms sale we were going to make. Such a linkage would be extremely unfortunate.

Rabin then went on to make a number of general points. He said that Israel had not asked for the President's giving himself a deadline on the arms request, and could have lived with a longer time period. But now that a 30-day time limit had been established at the press conference, any failure to meet it would have profound consequences in the Middle East; specifically, it might be interpreted by the Soviet Union as a success for Kosygin's letter and would certainly be so represented to the Arabs. It would prove that blackmail does succeed. I asked whether Israel wanted a decision on the arms sale or an announcement. He said that, originally, a decision would have been enough but, in the light of recent developments, some sort of public announcement was important.

Rabin then went on to say that he hoped no concessions would be made to President Pompidou during his visit here. He did not agree with the proposition that France could be an influence in the Middle East which would counteract the Soviets. France did not have the strength to be a great power in the Middle East. France's role has always

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been to replace some Western country rather than to replace Soviet influence, and the Western country it replaced was always more anti-Soviet than France. In short, France was not playing a helpful role in the Middle East.

Rabin then went on to say that Israel was very concerned about the situation in Jordan. It felt that the King was rapidly losing control. The offer to engage in direct negotiations with Jordan on a peace settlement under U. S. auspices did not seem too fruitful, but Israel would be prepared to consider direct talks on a cease-fire under U. S. auspices, adopting part of the Sisco formula. I was non-committal and told him that his message would be transmitted to the President.

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