

~~SECRET~~/NODIS

President/HAK Meeting with Bipartisan Leadership
Monday, March 24, 1975; 8:00 a.m.

President: There have been better meetings. I start with the assumption we shouldn't assess the blame, but we have to be factual and forthright. Here's where we got where we are: From August the things we did were with a view to a new settlement. The things we did were with the full support and at the suggestions of the parties. I met with Rabin, Allon, Golda. Kissinger went over there expecting full cooperation and he didn't get it.

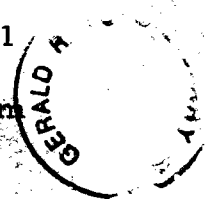
^{It is}
^ Inevitable now Geneva, united Arabs, Soviet Union, united Europeans -- it won't be a happy place. And of course the volatile PLO.

Now I would like Kissinger to give a play-by-play. I don't know how anyone could have that burden and with more patience. I am sure everyone is grateful even though ~~the~~ results didn't materialize.

Kissinger: Let me outline why we tried this route, what happened, and where we are.

After the October war it was the unanimous conclusion of the world community that Israel should return to the '67 borders. In the face of that we cooperate in a strategy with Israel to reduce Soviet Union influence in a step-by-step process. I must emphasize that every step was coordinated and usually at the instigation of Israel. We wanted to separate radical from moderate Arabs, isolate the Soviet Union, and move the area from war to peace.

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We avoided Geneva because it would join the Arabs, make the Soviet Union their lawyer and put them under the radicals. Therefore, we sought step-by-step to keep the radicals and moderates separate and to demonstrate that progress could come only through cooperation with the U.S. This was the basis of our strategy, put together over many months in close cooperation with Israel, indeed with both sides.

Last summer, when Allon and Rabin were here we urged a move Israel it with Jordan and with Egypt. ~~I~~ felt ~~we~~ couldn't move with Jordan because domestic considerations and not Egypt by the end of the year. We acquiesced. Then Rabat took Jordan out. Despite the clear damages, Egypt decided to proceed alone and to avoid Geneva. I urged this separate _____. At Vladivostok, the President resisted strong Soviet pressures for Geneva.

At the outset we made clear that necessities were the passes and the oil fields. In return, I asked for non-belligerency.

(Goes to map)

It has been understood all along the negotiations would be over the passes and the oil fields. Israel insisted on non-belligerency which legally means conditions inseparable from those of peace -- boycott, etc. Sadat said he couldn't so long as his territory was occupied. So the negotiation was whether Sadat could give elements of non-belligerency without the declaration.



Sadat offered: statement that issues between the two sides could be settled by peaceful means and dispute by negotiations; Egypt and Israel would renounce use of force; ~~this~~ agreement would last til the conclusion of a new agreement (suggested by Israel). Prepared for annual intrusion of UNEF -- agrees in writing to us to ask for renewal each year. He prepared factually but not politically to end belligerence - move to end boycott, Israeli cargoes and crews, movement of people, but not ~~x~~ Cairo-Tel Aviv in flights.

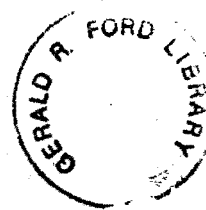
Israel said if it couldn't have non-belligerency they would put their line in the middle of the passes and enter on the airfield. oilfield (?)

They would give up the oil but not surrounding. Sadat would let Israel in the Egyptian end of the passes and Egypt in west end, or some slight forward movement of the Egyptian line and UN in the passes. He wouldn't let his forces have to pass through Israeli territory to reach oil but agreed to turn it all to the UN.

Egypt was under massive pressure from the other Arabs, so couldn't concede more.

We told Israel 24 times non-belligerency was unattainable. They still told us to go ahead. For Sadat to have given so much and he offered other things so embarrassing to him I can't mention it. We thought it do-able. But ~~k~~ had made such a domestic commitment it couldn't back off. Israel were

We ~~xxx~~ farther along when I left here than ever before. I thought the biggest problem was Asad. [Described Faisal change.] charge(?)



The failure is inexplicable. We did most of what was done as concession to Israel and to spare them the united opposition of the Arabs. We could have gone to Geneva at any point. Hussein told us a week earlier not ~~go~~ to give up, for sake of the _____. Dont want to assess blame, but the sides couldn't do it. Israel couldn't see the process as more important than the details: looking back it will be inexplicable that what will happen comes from 10 kilometers in Mitla Pass.

is
The Arab League/now meeting -- they will pass some unifying resolution. The Europeans will accelerate their influence in the Middle East (all against Israel), the Soviet Union influence increased and radical Arabs strengthened. At Geneva now, we will be confronted with all the final issues all at once. All these we had hoped to avoid.

We have our immediate problem -- UNEF reversal. I don't know whether they will renew, but if so the problem is not for 6 months. This will trigger the Syrians who always must be more radical.

Albert: Don't the Israelis know the outside influences will multiply?

Kissinger: I think they decided they could not go step-by-step and they better face it in one lump. My meetings were very painful and a little unreal. Rabin said you will be back in two weeks and we can do more then. I said it is over. Fahmi cried when he announced it. We have invested an enormous amount in this route. Sadat put his prestige



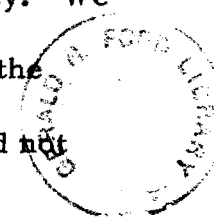
Israel
on the line. /k did have extensive fortifications, etc. and it is hard to
withdraw and not get peace; on the other hand it's hard for Egypt to
grant peace with territory in Israeli hands. Egypt did give all the
military attributes ~~attributes~~ of non-belligerency.

Israel did give some -- to the middle of the passes. But Sadat
faced tremendous pressure from the radical Arabs and he could not
leave the passes.

I feel we have to move urgently to prevent war this year.
Ascendency of radicals could drive the situation out of control. Therefore
we must open diplomatic forum, which is Geneva, when we will have to
put forth a comprehensive program. We face a situation of increasing
tension, Arab unity, Soviet influence, now very difficult for us.

One of the real shockers is how foreigners perceive the U. S.
No way to prevent crisis unless the Soviet perceives we still have power.

President: While Kissinger was gone, I in conversations with him
and directly to the parties. These direct conversations were on a confidential
basis and Rabin's letter has been leaked. It expressed our views
in ~~the different~~ a difficult & situation. Our strategy based on the need
for success in policy urged on us by Israel. I am not assessing the
blame, but we have to take a new look, assess the situation and any
relations with all the parties. Such an assessment will start today. We
undertook a massive effort, with the best intentions, support of the
people and Congress. For us not to reassess the situation would not
be responsible.



Albert? Could you be specific? Increase our forces? Change our relations.

President: Too early. I wouldn't rule out any of those. Congress will know when we come back.

Mansfield: You have no choice but to reassess. If ~~anything~~ anything could have succeeded it was Kissinger. Of all the issues, the Sinai is easiest. If they can't come to agreement with Egypt, how can they at Geneva? Are they expressing a death wish?

Kissinger: That is why we pressed in the Sinai -- because it is relatively the easiest.

Mansfield: I heard on the radio that the Knesset unanimously supported the Cabinet. I don't understand. They will confront a much more difficult situation in Geneva and with reduced U. S. support. I must express my grave concern at the rigidity of Israel.

Albert: I speak for the Democrats and ^{over} whelming ~~members(?)~~ numbers of Congress you have outdone yourself in your efforts. [Applause]

Mahon: As the parties have so chosen to think this one as they face Geneva, why can't they reconsider and go at it again.

Kissinger: As Mansfield said, the Knesset has unanimously supported the position. Hard to move. In addition, Sadat has been out on a brink. He wanted it last September, we held him off. He wanted it in December, we held him off. He wanted it in February and we -- all at Israel's urging -- pushed it to March and in two stages. I think it will now be impossible for Sadat to go a separate route again. We would of course try again if the parties wish.



Sparkman: I am greatly depressed. Do you feel Israel has shown reluctance to move on the basis she has the absolute support of the US? I say this because there is a large active Jewish population here.

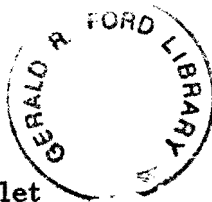
Kissinger: There are factors: Their domestic situation; their assessment of the military situation -- they are developing doubts about US assurances on oil and other offers of the US, and third/a measure of our domestic situation--that until we had an election, we couldn't do much. We don't want to conclude anything but I think the biggest one is the domestic situation--and the feeling they would rather face it when they were.

President: We have met with the Jewish leaders and they supported us. One called us yesterday -- _____ and crestfallen. There was support and the ones we have heard from were unbelievably disappointed. Mansfield(?) If they think our support is insecure, where else can they turn?

Kissinger: Their big decision was to rely on their present military possessions or to move to a process. They have no other support, but as they consider it declining it contributed to the resolve to stand here. Golda said Israel is frightened, and when you are frightened, you dig in.

Vice President: In hindsight, it doesn't look like _____ was playing their _____ and buying time.

President: We felt that agreement would buy time but it would also let us go to Geneva with _____ results.



Vice President: That is our position. But were the Israelis getting us to do this just to buy time.

President: I wouldn't say they did it deliberately.

Kissinger: I think they started in good faith.

Vice President: I think the reassessment is essential--not only internationally, but domestically. We need to increase oil capacity to sustain us six months--one year boycott.

President: That will be part of _____

Scott: There seems to be a strong understanding and support for Kissinger and the belief as ever there was a need for bipartisan foreign policy. There will be criticism and talk of failure, but I would hope our colleagues would all act outside this room as we are here, because we must be united.

Stennis: I think the bipartisan leadership should open Congress with a statement of support so I/would know where we stand. I think they think they can rely on floor amendments for \$2-3 billion.

Mansfield: I am very depressed. This one area when we all have been united, I hope Kissinger would call in Israeli Ambassador and tell him our reaction so the Israelis know how we feel.

President: This bipartisan support has helped immeasurably in our efforts here in the past. Let's stay _____ while we reassess, we will keep you informed.



Kissinger: Mike is right. We have had total support for their efforts.

O'Neill: What is so magic about the passes.

Kissinger: They give good defensive position and international monitoring for early warning. It is expensive to move. But a fight would be in the north.

President: Everyone else is pushing for the 67 borders. This would have averted moves for two years.

Rhodes: I hope we won't overact. Maybe someone else should try for a while. Israel might act as before and pull the trigger. I hope we would tell them they get no support if they do--and tell the Arabs we don't think it is in the world interest for them to start anything. Maybe we should take a back seat for a while. I don't think anyone else can do it.

Albert: What should we say.

President: We support Kissinger's efforts, don't assess the blame, we are keeping our efforts for peace going.

Kissinger: A bipartisan meeting is important, to restrain the parties and not give the Soviet Union the idea it can maneuver.

Vice President: Would you announce the reassessment?

President: But not directed at anyone.



May months in close w/ I, indeed w/ both
ntes.

Last summer, when Allou & Rabin here we urged
a new w/ Jordan w/ E. I felt could not make
w/ Jordan because domestic considerations + not
E by end of year - we agreed. Then Rabin
took Jordan out. Despite our warnings, E decided
to proceed alone and to avoid Geneva. I urged this
separate cont. At Vlad, P resisted strong
for pressure for Geneva.

At contact we made clear the necessities were
a pass & oil fields. In return, I asked for
non-belligerency.

(Gaza map)

It has been understood all along a w/ot would
be over a pass & oil fields. I insisted on non-belligerency
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from those of peace - boycott, etc. Sadat said
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Sadat offered: statement that issues bet 2 sides
could be settled by peaceful means + disputes by
negot; E + I would renounce use of force;
This agreement would last till conclusion
of new agreement (say by 5). Regard for original
intention of UNEF - agreed in writing & not to
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but not politically to end belligerency - wave to end
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not Cairo - Tel Aviv air flights.

I said if could not have non-belligerency they would put



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& directly to parties. Those draft even, was on
conf basis & Knesset letter has been typed. It
expressed our views in light of. Our strategy
based on effort need for success in policy, charged
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efforts (applause)

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you frightened, you dig in.

VP In hindsight doesn't look like o by s was playing their game & buying time.

P We felt that agreement would buy time but it would also let us go to Geneva w/ beneficial results.

VP That's a positive. But wasn't getting us to do this first to buy time.

P I would not say they did it deliberately.

K I think they started in good faith.

VP I think the agreement is essential - not only morally but demonstrably. We need to increase our capacity to sustain 6-12-18c buy call.

P That will be part of renewal.

Scott That seems to be strong understanding & support for K & belief if ever a need for buy part EP. There will be exit & talk of factors, but I would hope our colleagues would all act outside the room as we are here, because we must be united.

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201
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