

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MR 01-106, #24, at-ct, 9/24/01
By del NARA, Date 10/16/01

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
 Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State, and Assistant to the President for NSC.
 Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to the President for NSC

DATE AND TIME: Monday, April 28, 1975
 11:25 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

President: Did the A-37's do major damage?

Kissinger: No. They hit the Vietnamese Air Force side.

President: How many are out now?

Kissinger: 35-40,000. It's remarkable.

President: It really has been magnificently done.

Kissinger: The PRG asked to meet us in Paris, then they stalled, then they demanded we go to their office. We have little capability left and they seemed to be toughening up. Congress hasn't acted.

President: What does Martin think?

Kissinger: He thinks it will take a long time to have a transition and he wants to turn it into relief and rehabilitation for Minh. But I think they will dominate Mihn soon and then we will be hostage. Also the JGS control over the forces will decline. Later this week we may be faced with the need to evacuate. When Smith decides Tan Son Nhut can't be used, we pull out the people doing the processing. Then the helicopter operation would be only at one site. But they keep changing the numbers which can be lifted.



President: Are the G-2's protected?

Kissinger: One is the MACV compound, the other . . . Graham would keep the DAO there after the refugees stop so Minh can trade for them I sympathize, but the way the Pentagon has operated, I don't think we can defend domestically leaving them.

President: I think when their function is gone, I don't think you can defend domestically leaving them.

Kissinger: Their function is advising ARVN, so their leaving would further deteriorate the situation and depress the GVN. You don't need to decide now, but the situation will keep unravelling -- our friends will be leaving. I think we should watch the Minh Government very rapidly and when it changes composition we may want to cut back very quickly or pull out. We have an obligation to make the transition as humane as possible, but I don't agree with Martin that we have a large embassy there for relief; we should negotiate it separately.

President: Keep a close watch on it. How many are left?

Kissinger: There are 150 or so unofficial Americans. There have all been warned, and I am not so worried about that. The official Americans are our problem.

On Hussein, you must be careful because Rifai reports everything. You can give him the basic options. He is very depressed and thinks war is probable.

President: If he talks to Congress, he should say that.

Kissinger: The Jews are spreading the word that they are turning to the Soviets for military equipment. That is nonsense but you should be forthcoming.

Sadat has accepted Austria. We should announce it and tell Israel. Then we have to invite Rabin. How about the week of 9 June?

I think you have to tell both sides you won't tolerate a war before 1976.

President: Those dates are okay. Will we have a meeting and a working dinner?

Kissinger: Yes. To keep the Syrians in line, I would tell Asad and see what he wants. If he wants to send someone here, that's okay or you would meet with Asad somewhere in connection with CSCE. I have the uneasy feeling Israel may be looking for an excuse to pre-empt. Their behavior is too provocative.



President: If they think they can sell the Congress today like they did in 1973, they can't.

Kissinger: And I think Americans are tired of being pushed around. A rabble-rousing speech would do it.

President: I agree.

Kissinger: But I hope we don't have to. The main thing is to prevent a war. So far the Arabs and the Soviets are keeping their heads down.

President: I am tilting more and more to a comprehensive settlement. I get the impression there is increased polarization, and to start all over again I don't think it is worth it. And if there is another war and Israel won, we would be blamed for it.

Kissinger: I have said that under those circumstances, we would have to force them to the '67 borders. I think an over-all proposal is the best way to avoid a war. But the Israelis will really raise hell.

[Discussion of New Haven trip]

Panama -- there are substantive and political aspects. You will have trouble with the right here if you go through with it; if you don't you will have massive problems in Latin America. There is a third option: Sign a treaty but don't push it. I am inclined that way.

Commodities -- All the Europeans are looking to see how they can relate commodities to energy. On this point, the producers are not too far wrong. How can we protest against their high prices and not give them protection against low prices? You may want to have an interagency meeting on this and adjudicate the issue. I doubt we can continue to rely on market forces.

I may give a food follow-on speech.

President: I told Hormats you should.

Kissinger: If I did, there are three things I would cover: (1) An international food reserve system. Domestically your friends oppose it; your opponents are for it. Your opponents fear you will be forced to use reserves to keep prices low. It will be a political problem.



President: I will veto the farm bill.

Kissinger: That will make it worse. (2) Our people think it would be good to pledge four million tons a year over the next several years.

President: That the farmers would like.

Kissinger: That would take some of the curse off the food reserves.

President: Hannah proposed committing \$200 million of economic aid of food production resources. We are doing it now and thought you should mention it.

I would not put the reserves we hold totally under government control.

Kissinger: If you are not against the idea of a speech, we will cooperate with other agencies on a draft.

President: I think you should give one.

Kissinger: If you have a reserve system, those who don't join would have to be penalized somehow, like being put on the bottom of the list if we draw on reserves.

President: I was at Clark MacGregor's last night and the British Ambassador hit me on the Queen's visit. And where the Middle East reassessment was going. He kept pressing me.

Kissinger: You should discuss it with Wilson. It is one of his sentimental points.

President: He took a beating on the EC.

Kissinger: The unions there are controlled by the Communists. The leadership of the Labour party so far has kept things more moderate, but the pressures are there. They may go the way of the Portuguese. The portuguese election was interesting, but the Constituent Assembly has no authority, and will do only the outlines of a constitution.



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24 }

✓ P/K 28 Apr 75

Holiday
11:25 - ?
Check w/ Nell
for time

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P Did the A-37's do major damage

K Yes. They hit the VNA's

P How many ant road?

K 35-40,000. It is remarkable.

P Really has been ~~a~~ majorly done.

K PRC asked to meet us in Paris, then stalled, then demanded we go to their office. We have little capability left & they seem to be coming up. Com hasn't acted, etc.

P What does Martin think

K He thinks will take a long time to transition & he wants to turn into relief & rehab for VNA's. But I think they will dominate VNA soon & then we will be hostage. Also @ JCS control over a force will decline. Later this week we may be faced w/ need to evac. When Smith decides TSN can't be used, we pull out a people doing a processing. Then a helo gun would be only at 1 site. But they keep changing #s which can be lifted.

P Are L2's protected.

K One is - MAC V compound, & other. Graham would keep a DAO after upgrs flip to VNA can track for them. I sympathize, but a way a Pentagon has operated I don't think we can defend domestically leaving them.

P I think when their function is gone I don't think you can defend leaving them

K Their function is advising ARVN, so their leaving

DECLASSIFIED

AUTHORITY ml 01-106 #24; 5th 10/24/01

BY lba NLF, DATE 5/26/04



- Tell Martin we will pull DAD out when
TSN clears.

- Cabinet on Seymour - get to President -

- Air defense details - get to President -
would further deteriorate - out + depress Gen. You don't
need a decision now, but a sit will keep unraveling -
our friends will be leaving. I think we should
watch + think Great very rapidly + when it changes
composition we may want to cut back very quickly
or pull out. We have an obligation to make a
transition as humane as possible, but I don't
agree w/ Martin we have large embassy there
for relief. If they can't relief, we should reposition
it separately.

P Keep close watch on it. How many are left

K There are 150 + 200 unoffical arms. They have all
been covered + I not so worried about that. The
official arms are our prob. (See top of page)

On Garrison, you must be careful because Repair
reports everything. You can give him a basic option.
He is very depressed + thinks war probable.

P If he talks to Congress, he should say that.

K Jews are squabbling that they are trying to save for
civil equip. That unwise but you should
be forthcoming.

^{Sargent}
~~Abraham~~ have accepted Austria. We should
announce + tell it. Then we have to invite Rubin.
How about work of 9 Jews.

I think you have to tell both sides you won't
tolerate a war before 26.

P Three letters OK. A mtg + working dinner?

K Yes. To keep Seymour in line, I would tell Assad +
see if he wants to send someone here OK or you



would meet w/ Assad somewhere in connection w/ CSCE
I have uneasy feeling I may be looking for excuse
to preempt. Their behavior is too provocative.

P If they think they can sell. Every body like 73, they
can't.

K And I think Arabs are tired of being pushed around. A
rabble-rousing speech would do it.

P I agree.

K But I hope we don't have to. The main thing is
to prevent a war. So far c Arabs + SD are keeping their
heads down.)

P I tilting more + more to comprehensive. I get
impression there is increased polarization + to start
all over again I don't think is worth it. If another
war + I win, we would be blamed for it.

* K I have said under those circumstances, we would have to
force them to let borders. I think overall proposal is
best way to avoid a war. But c I will really raise talk
(Discussion of how Harker trip)
(Discussion of P receiving [unsubscribed out])

Panama - There are substantial + pol aspects -
you will have trouble w/c report here if you
go there; if you don't you will have massive
problems in LA. There is a ^{trip} ~~part~~ a treaty but don't
preempt. I outlined that way.

Credit - All E news are looking how they
correlate credits to energy. On this
point, c producers are not too far away -



How can one protect against high prices & not
give protection against low prices. You may
want to have intragroup entry on this & a dynamic
issue. I doubt one can create to where market
forces.

Food follow-up on speech

P I talk Harman to you should.

K If I did, there are 3 things I should cover. (1) One well
paid reserve system. Domestically your friends oppose
it; your opponents are for it. Opponents fear you will
be forced to use reserves to keep prices low. It will
be a point. prob. >

P I will veto a farm bill

K That will make it worse. (2) I see people think
it would be good to pledge 4 mil tons / year over
next several years.

P That's farmers could like.

K That would take some of the excessive food reserves.

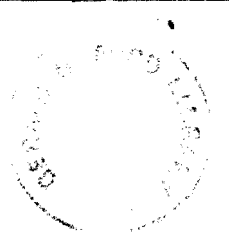
P Harman proposed committing 200 mil of loan aid to
food prod reserves. We doing it now & that you
should mention it.

I would not put a reserves can hold totally under
govt control.

K If you not against a idea of a speech, we will
wrap w/ other agencies on a draft.

P I think you should give one.

K If you have reserve system, then who don't join
would have to be penalized somehow - like being
put on bottom of list if we draw on reserves.



P I was at Clark MacGregor's last night & Bert
asked me:

(1) Quesada's visit

(2) When mass movement was going. He kept pressing
me

K You should discuss it w/ Wilson. It is one of his
fundamental points.

P He took a beating on EC.

K The unions are controlled by a caste. The leadership
of Labor party so far has kept things more moderate,
but the pressures are there. They may go the way
of Portuguese

Post. election was interesting, but a central essay has
no authority & continues of control.

