P 231330Z JAN 71
FM USINT CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8846
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SECRET CAIRO 0145

SUBJ: MEETING WITH UAR PRESIDENT SADAT

1. I MET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AT ONE P.M. TODAY AT TAHRA PALACE. MEETING LASTED 40 MINUTES.

2. AFTER VERY FRIENDLY PERSONAL EXCHANGE, I PRESENTED PRESIDENT NIXON'S ORAL MESSAGE (STATE 10839). I LEFT WITH SADAT INFORMAL WRITTEN SUMMARY OF SUBSTANCE.

3. SADAT'S FIRST REACTION WAS TO SAY, "I BELIEVE PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE LEAVES US EXACTLY WHERE WE ARE." THE UNITED STATES, CONTINUED SADAT, IS THE ONLY POWER THAT CAN BRING ABOUT A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. IT IS UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT THE PARTIES TO COME TOGETHER IN A NEGOTIATION.

4. SADAT REITERATED THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT SIT ALONE AT THE SAME TABLE WITH ISRAEL AS LONG AS ISRAEL OCCUPATION CONTINUED. THE UAR WAS PREPARED TO SIT AND NEGOTIATE WITH ISRAEL EITHER IN THE PRESENCE OF THE BIG FOUR OR THE SECURITY COUNCIL, THEN THE WORLD COULD SEE WHO WAS FORTHCOMING AND WHO WAS NOT. THE BASIC FACT, SAID SADAT, WAS THAT HE HAD NO CONFIDENCE WHATSOEVER IN ISRAEL. HE WAS QUITE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE ISRAELIS FELT EXACTLY THE SAME ABOUT HIM.

5. AT THIS POINT I MENTIONED FACT THAT, IN THEIR FIRST DOCUMENT TO JARRING, ISRAEL HAD NOT RAISED PROCEDURAL MATTERS SUCH AS DIRECT NEGOTIATION, BUT HAD GONE STRAIGHT TO SUBSTANCE. THIS HAD ENCOURAGED USG. I ALSO POINTED OUT FACT THAT SECRETARY ROGERS, IN HIS LETTER TO FONMIN RIAD, HAD SPECIFICALLY REAFFIRMED OUR POSITION RE TERRITORIES AS SET FORTH IN 1969 DOCUMENTS. "BUT US POSITION STILL GIVES VETO RIGHT TO ISRAEL", SAID SADAT. "I WANT PEACE. I AM JUST AS INTERESTED IN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS THAT WILL MAKE IT LASTING PEACE AS MRS. MEIR. IF I HAVE ASSURANCE THAT MY TERRITORIES WILL BE RETURNED, I CAN BE VERY FORTHCOMING IN COMING TO AGREEMENT AS TO THE NATURE OF THOSE ARRANGEMENTS. BUT I WILL NOT PERMIT MRS. MEIR TO USE THE MORTGAGE WHICH THE USG HAS GIVEN HER OVER EGYPTIAN TERRITORIES TO FORCE ME INTO ACCEPTING HER DEMANDS".

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6. SADAT SAID HE HAD HOPED THAT I WOULD BRING SOME SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS AS TO WHAT THE UAR MIGHT SPECIFICALLY DO TO BRING REAL PROGRESS TOWARDS A PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE HAD HOPED THAT THE USG MIGHT BE PREPARED TO TAKE "A DARING STEP".

7. SADAT CONCLUDED BY SAYING THE USG SHOULD NOT TAKE THESE REMARKS OF HIS AS A FINAL ANSWER TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE. HE HOPED TO BEGIN A THREE-DAY HOLIDAY TOMORROW AND HE WISHED TO REFLECT UPON IT DURING THAT PERIOD. HE AFFIRMED THAT THIS DIRECT CHANNEL BETWEEN HIMSELF AND PRESIDENT NIXON COULD BE VERY USEFUL, BUT HE AGAIN ASKED ME TO INFORM PRESIDENT NIXON THAT HIS FIRST REACTION WAS THAT PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE LEFT MATTERS EXACTLY AS THEY WERE.

8. COMMENT: NEITHER SADAT NOR I MENTIONED APPROACH MADE BY GENERAL AMIN (CAIRO 60). IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT SADAT MAY HAVE EXPECTED SOME KIND OF A REACTION TO THIS. IT IS THIS TYPE OF "NEGOTIATION" WHICH SADAT, AND INDEED ALMOST ALL ARABS, CLEARLY PREFER. MY OVERALL REACTION TO MEETING WAS THAT SADAT WAS KEENLY DISAPPOINTED. I EXPECT TO BE MADE AWARE OF THIS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS BY FONMIN, HEYKAL AND OTHERS.

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