O 012030Z APR 71
FM USINT CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9187
BT
SECRET SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO

1. I HAD NINETY MINUTE CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT SADAT ON
BARRAGES TONIGHT.

2. I OPENED CONVERSATION BY READING HIM TEXT OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S
MESSAGE (STATE 54323) AND THEN HANDED HIM COPIES.

3. I THEN RECALLED THAT IN MEDIEVAL TIMES, BOTH MOSLEM AND
CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS MADE THEIR FAME BY COMMENTING ON SACRED
TEXTS. I WISHED TO MAKE SOME PERSONAL COMMENTS ON POINTS COVERED
IN PRESIDENT NIXON'S LETTER:
A. PRESIDENT NIXON HAD REFERRED TO SADAT'S HAVING STRENGTHENED
EGYPT'S INTERNATIONAL POSITION. MY OWN VIEW WAS THAT SADAT HAD
PUT EGYPT IN THE BEST INTERNATIONAL POSITION SHE HAD ENJOYED SINCE
THE VERY EARLY DAYS OF THE 1952 REVOLUTION. THIS SHOULD NOT BE
LIGHTLY THROWN AWAY.
B. I STRESSED NEED FOR QUIET DIPLOMACY AND ITS WHOLESOME EFFECT
BOTH ON ISRAEL AND AMERICAN JEWS. BLATANT PUBLIC PRESSURE ON
ISRAEL WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, RECALLED EGYPT'S AND AMERICA'S
INSTINCTIVE REACTION TO ANGLO-FRENCH ULTIMATUM TO EGYPT IN 1956.
C. I NOTED PRESIDENT NIXON HAD REFERRED BOTH TO JARRING MISSION
AND TO SUEZ CANAL INITIATIVE.
D. I NOTED PRESIDENT NIXON'S RECOGNITION OF TIME FACTOR AND ITS
IMPORTANCE TO EGYPT. AT SAME TIME, I REITERATED THAT EGYPT WAS
MAKING GOOD USE OF TIME IN DIPLOMATIC FIELD. ALSO POINTED OUT
THERE HAD BEEN EVIDENCE IN LAST FEW WEEKS THAT UAR ARMED FORCES
HAD INCREASED THEIR DEFENSIVE STRENGTH. I HAD NOT FORGOTTEN
SADAT'S REFERENCE TO MACH-2 AND MACH-3 AIRCRAFT IN OUR LAST CON-
VERSATION. I WAS NOT MILITARY EXPERT BUT I DOUBTED THAT ISRAEL
COULD NOW RPT NOW IMPOSE ITS WILL ON UAR BY DECISIVE SURPRISE
ATTACK. IN SHORT, IT SEEMED THAT UAR MILITARY HAD MADE GOOD USE
OF TIME.
E. I WAS HEARTENED BY PRESIDENT NIXON'S EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION
FOR DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS CHANNEL WHICH HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. I
WAS ALSO IMPRESSED BY EXTREME CARE WHICH PRESIDENT NIXON TAKES IN
DRAFTING HIS MESSAGES TO SADAT. I RECALLED HECTIC DAYS OF MAY 1967
WHEN CAIRO WAS BEING BOMBARDED BY ALL KINDS OF HIGH-LEVEL MESSAGES
IN DIFFERENT CHANNELS FROM WASHINGTON. IT MAY WELL HAVE BEEN THAT
PRESIDENT NASSER WAS GIVEN AN ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION OF US INTENTIONS

SECRET

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AND CAPABILITIES. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT PRESIDENT NIXON DID NOT INTEND THAT EXPERIENCE WOULD BE REPEATED.

4. SADAT OPEND BY ASKING ME TO CONVEY HIS THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE. HE WAS MOST PLEASED BY ITS WARMTH. PRESIDENT NIXON HAD PUT HIS FINGER ON MAIN PROBLEM, THE PROBLEM OF TIME. IT WAS EXACTLY THE TIME FACTOR WHICH HAD IMPELLED SADAT TO PUT FORWARD HIS PROPOSAL OF FEBRUARY 5 ON THE SUEZ CANAL. THIS WAS TO GIVE A BREATHING SPACE FOR EGYPT, THE US, AND ISRAEL.

5. SADAT THEN DIGRESSED TO SAY HOW SHOCKED HE AND HIS PEOPLE HAD BEEN AT SPECTACLE OF EBAN PUTTING PRESSURE ON USG THROUGH US SENATE AND NEED FOR SECRETARY ROGERS TO REDRESS THE SITUATION. I SAID I HAD COME TO EXACTLY OPPOSITE CONCLUSION FROM THESE EVENTS. SADAT SHOULD RECONSIDER SITUATION IN LIGHT HIS OWN CLOSE VIEW OF AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES IN 1966. USG HAD GIVEN EBAN ALL THE ROPE HE FELT HE REQUIRED IN WASHINGTON. SECRETARY HAD THEN SET RECORD STRAIGHT WITHOUT CHANGING ONE IOTA OF SUBSTANCE OF US POSITION ON NEAR EAST. RESULT HAD BEEN STRENGTHENING OF CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR US POLICY.

6. SADAT THEN RETURNED TO HIS INITIATIVE AND SAID HE REALIZED USG NEEDED TIME TO BRING THE ISRAELIS AROUND, BUT THIS TIME HAD TO BE GIVEN IN "AN HONORABLE WAY." THAT WAS WHY HE FELT HIS INITIATIVE BOUGHT TIME FOR BOTH USG AND ISRAEL. HE HAD BEEN ATTACKED FOR HIS INITIATIVE BOTH OUTSIDE EGYPT AND WITHIN HIS OWN POLITBURO (SIC). EVEN FOMIN RIAD WAS PRESENTLY MAKING RATHER FRIGID PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT SADAT INITIATIVE IN PARIS. BUT SADAT HAD LAUNCHED HIS INITIATIVE AFTER COLDEST AND MOST HARD-BOILED REFLECTION. HE KNEW USG NEEDED TIME TO WORK ON ISRAELIS. USG ALSO NEEDED TIME TO CHANGE ANTI-Egyptian TRENDS IN US PUBLIC OPINION WHICH HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO FLOURISH SINCE 1965. SADAT NEEDED TIME TO CHANGE MENTAL ATTITUDES IN EGYPT AND IN ARAB WORLD.

7. SADAT THEN TALKED ABOUT ISRAELI PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL. ISRAELIS SAID THEY WOULD BE IN BAD STRATEGIC SITUATION IF THEY LEFT BAR LEV LINE. IF ISRAELIS WANTED PEACE, AS SADAT DID, THEY SHOULD DROP ALL THIS TRASH ABOUT STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS. ISRAELIS HAD HELD THE BAR LEV LINE FOR FOUR YEARS SINCE THEIR TOTAL DEFEAT OF EGYPT IN 1967 BUT THEY HAD BEEN UNABLE TO IMPOSE THEIR WILL.

8. SADAT SAID HE HAD COME TO CONCLUSION THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PROGRESS ALONG LINES HIS INITIATIVE WITHOUT REAL PRESSURE ON ISRAELIS FROM US. HE HAD PUT IT FORWARD AS A TEST OF USG INTENTIONS. IT MEANT WAR OR PEACE. IF ISRAELIS DIDN'T GO ALONG WITH HIS INITIATIVE, IT MEANT THEY WANTED WAR. HE NOTED THAT ISRAELIS HAD NOT REPLIED TO JARRING'S FEBRUARY MEMORANDUM AND HAD THUS PASSED BY SERIOUS OPPORTUNITY TO REGISTER THEIR PEACEFUL INTENTIONS.

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NODIS/CEDAR PLUS

9. SADAT THEN SAID HIS WHOLE PROPOSAL ON CANAL STILL STOOD. HE RECAPITULATED MAIN POINTS:
A. ONCE AGREEMENT REACHED ON PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL, SADAT WOULD IMMEDIATELY START WORK TO REOPEN CANAL;
B. SADAT WOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY PROCLAIM A SIX-MONTHS CEASEFIRE;
C. HE WOULD IMMEDIATELY RESTORE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE US. HE WOULD TAKE THIS STEP BECAUSE HE WAS AWARE THAT ONLY RPT ONLY THE US COULD ASSIST PARTIES REACH JUST AND LASTING SETTLEMENT. IN CONTEXT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS HE ENVISAGED USG SUPPORTING JARRING EFFORT WITH INTENSIVE, CONSTANT, AND INTIMATE CONTACTS WITH BOTH EGYPT AND ISRAEL;
D. UAR FORCES WOULD CROSS THE CANAL BUT THEY WOULD RESPECT A NO MAN'S LAND BETWEEN THE TWO FORCES DURING THE FIXED PERIOD OF THE CEASEFIRE;
E. IF THE FIXED PERIOD EXPIRED AND THERE WAS NO SETTLEMENT, THEN UAR WOULD BE AT LIBERTY TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.

10. SADAT THEN REITERATED HIS POSITION ABOUT THE DEMILITARIZATION OF SINAI. UAR INSISTED ON DZ'S ON BOTH SIDES OF LINE. SADAT WOULD NOT TOLERATE ANY DISCUSSIONS ABOUT AN ISRAELI "LEASE" OR "PRESENCE" AT SHARM AL-SHEIKH. IF THIS WAS PUSHED MUCH FURTHER HE WOULD BREAK OFF DISCUSSION. THESE IDEAS WERE "DISGUSTING".

11. SADAT NOTED THAT FONMIN RIAD WOULD BE RETURNING TO EGYPT ABOUT APRIL 10. AFTER THAT SADAT WOULD BE CALLING UAR "INSTITUTIONS" TOGETHER TO GIVE A REPORT AND HIS DECISION. HE HOPED THAT BY THEN WE COULD REACH ANYTHING. HE WOULD WELCOME ANY SUGGESTION WHICH LED TO PEACE, WITH OPEN MIND AND OPEN HEART, UNTIL THE LAST HOUR. BUT HE HAD TO DEMONSTRATE HIS READINESS TO DEFEND HIS LAND AT WHATEVER COST OR DAMAGE.

12. SADAT THEN ALLUDED TO SOVIETS. HE SAID BATTLE WAS EGYPT'S, NOT USSR'S. UP TO NOW, AND DESPITE THE FACILITIES UAR HAD GIVEN TO SOVIET FACILITIES WHICH HE HAD TOLD ME ABOUT ON DECEMBER 24, EGYPT WAS NON-ALIGNED. EGYPT WOULD ALWAYS BE ALIGNED ON THE SIDE OF ITS OWN INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY. HE THEN REFERRED TO STATEMENT HE HAD TOLD HEYKAL TO PASS ME AND REAFFIRMED IT. ONCE PEACE WAS ACHIEVED EGYPT WOULD NOT RPT NOT NEED CONTINUED SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE. WHY DID HE NEED THEM NOW? BECAUSE USG HAD GIVEN SO MUCH TO ISRAELIS.

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13. SADAT THEN REFERRED TO MY REMARKS ABOUT UAR'S MILITARY CAPABILITY. HE SAID REGARDLESS OF WHAT SOVIETS MAY HAVE PUT INTO EGYPT RECENTLY, IT WOULD TAKE THEM TEN YEARS TO CATCH UP WITH WHAT USG HAS GIVEN ISRAEL. THE DAY WOULD COME WHEN EGYPTIANS AND AMERICANS COULD COMPARE NOTES AS TO WHAT HAD BEEN DELIVERED TO EGYPT AND WHAT TO ISRAEL AND WE WOULD SEE THAT THIS WAS RIGHT.

14. SADAT SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO PRESIDENT NIXON THAT IF ISRAEL RAIDED EGYPTIAN HEARTLAND, HE WOULD RAID THE INTERIOR OF ISRAEL. IF THEY USED NAPALM, HE WOULD USE NAPALM. (COMMENT: LATTER STATEMENT WAS REPEATED THREE TIMES.) HE DIDN'T LIKE CONCEPT OF "EYE FOR EYE, TOOTH FOR TOOTH". AFTER ALL IT WAS ISRAELIS WHO FIRST GAVE THIS IDEA TO MANKIND. BUT HE WAS NOW IN POSITION PLAY THE GAME THIS WAY IF THAT WAS WHAT ISRAELIS WANTED.

15. SADAT FEARED THAT IF THERE COULD BE NO PROGRESS ON HIS INITIATIVE, THERE WOULD BE REAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN USG AND UAR IN SECURITY COUNCIL. EGYPT WAS READY TO FIGHT THIS BATTLE IN S.C. IF IT HAD DONE ITS UTMOST. THEY COULD SHOW BEFORE THE WHOLE WORLD THAT THEY HAD DONE THEIR BEST FOR PEACE.

16. SADAT SAID MOST DANGEROUS IDEA BEING FLOATED BY ISRAELIS WAS EBAN'S STATEMENT THAT "TENACITY" HAD PAID OFF WITH EGYPTIANS AND THAT EGYPTIANS WOULD SOON BE READY TO CEDE TERRITORY. THIS WAS VERY DANGEROUS. EGYPT WOULD NOT KNEEL.

17. SADAT TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT HIS DIFFICULTIES IN STICKING TO HIS PEACE POLICY WITHIN EGYPT AND OUTSIDE. HE SAID HE HAD HAD A VERY BAD TIME WITH KADDAFI IN LIBYA. FORTUNATELY, SUDANESE HAD BEEN "MORE UNDERSTANDING".

18. COMMENT: WE WILL IN COURSE NEXT FEW DAYS, ONCE WE HAVE CONGRESSMAN LONG VISIT BEHIND US, FORWARD SOME REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS ON THIS LENGTHY CONVERSATION. A LOT OF INSIGHTS INTO SADAT'S RELATIONS WITH NASSER WERE GIVEN, WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED AND WHICH ARE OF MORE THAN HISTORICAL INTEREST. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF DEPARTMENT, ONCE IT HAS HAD OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THIS TELEGRAM IN DEPTH, WERE TO POSE QUESTIONS TO US ABOUT THIS CONVERSATION.

BERGUS

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